

Project Title:

Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE)

ATLAS Award ID: 00101020

Annual Progress Report

January - December 2020

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Date:	February 2021
Award ID:	00101020
Project ID:	00103730
Project Title:	Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE)
Project Start Date:	April 1, 2017
Project End Date:	March 30, 2024
Donor:	GEF
Implementing Partner:	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
Total Project Budget (all years):	USD 72,364,192
Core Resources:	0
Non-Core Resources:	USD 11,544,192
Government contribution:	USD 60,820,000

Project Brief Description and Outputs:

Despite the immense biological, socio-cultural and hydrological values of the Himalayan ecosystems, these natural ecosystems are under severe threat from high dependence of local communities on natural resources, pressures from economic development, selective removal of medicinal and aromatic plants, and the emerging threat of illegal wildlife trade and wildlife crime. To address these threats, the project will adopt a landscape approach to conservation and management, by ensuring that key biodiversity areas, buffer zones, corridors and areas outside traditional protected areas that are critically important for conservation of endangered snow leopard, wild prey and their associated and threatened species and habitats are managed in tandem with the sustainable use of these resources and improvement and diversification of the livelihoods of a large number of local communities living in this region. The project's incremental value lies in promoting the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems to secure conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats and ensure sustainable livelihoods and community socio-economic benefits in the four high altitude landscapes in the Trans and Greater Himalayan region (that consists of alpine pastures, sub-alpine forests and critical watersheds). The four inter-related components of the project are aimed at Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services, improved and diversified sustainable livelihood for communities to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems, enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife related threats, and improved knowledge and information systems for landscape conservation approaches. These actions are aimed at conserving the snow leopards, wild prey and associated species and habitats contained within these landscapes, maintaining their ecosystem values and ameliorating climate change impacts, enhancing surveillance, monitoring and trans-boundary cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats, and improving knowledge and communications.

The project objective:

The project objective is to promote the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems that secures conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard and their habitats, ensures sustainable livelihoods and community socioeconomic benefits.

List of focus States/districts				
State/UT	Landscapes			
Ladakh	Changthang			
Himachal Pradesh	Lahaul-Pangi, Kinnaur			
Uttarakhand	Gangotri - Govind, Darma - Byans			
Sikkim	Khangchendzonga, Upper Teesta			
Overall Project Quality Rating (mark on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria): 4				
Exemplary (5) *****	High (4) ****	Satisfactory (3) ***	Poor (2) **	Inadequate (1) *
All outputs are rated High or Exemplary	All outputs are rated Satisfactory or higher, and at least two criteria are rated High or Exemplary	One output may be rated Poor, and all other criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher	Two outputs are rated Poor, and all other criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher	One output is rated Inadequate, or more than two criteria are rated Poor
Budget 2020	USD \$ 2 million			
Expenditure 2020	USD \$ 1802033.03			
Delivery %	90.1%			

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ACRONYMS

1. Access and Benefit sharing - ABS
2. Animal Intrusion Detection and Repellent System - ANIDER
3. Annual Work Plan- AWP
4. Biodiversity Heritage Sites - BHS
5. Biodiversity Management Committee- BMC
6. Chief Wildlife Warden -CWLW
7. Community Based Organisations - CBO
8. Conference of Parties- COP
9. Conservation Area- CA
10. Convention on Migratory Species- CMS
11. Coronavirus Disease 2019- COVID-19
12. Detailed Project Report- DPR
13. Developing a Unique Ecotourism Model for Generating Alternative Economic Means - UEM-GAEM
14. Direct Benefit Transfer - DBT
15. Forest Research Institute- FRI
16. Geographic Information Systems- GIS
17. Geographical Indicators- GI
18. Global Environment Facility - GEF
19. Global Positioning System- GPS
20. Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program - GSLEP
21. High Conservation Value Forests - HCVFs
22. Himachal Pradesh Forest Department - HPFD
23. Human Wildlife Conflicts- HWC
24. IHR- Indian Himalayan Region
25. Indo- Tibetan Border Police- ITBP
26. International Snow Leopard - ISL
27. Joint Forest Management Committee- JFMC
28. Land Use and Land Cover - LULC
29. Landscape Level Project Management Committee- LLPMC
30. Legal literacy Manual - LLM
31. Level Project Steering Committee - LLPSC

32. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act- MGNREGA
33. Management effectiveness Tracking Tool- METT
34. Management Information System- MIS
35. Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Conservation and Development Areas - MPCDA
36. Medicinal and Aromatic Plants- MAPs
37. Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change- MoEF&CC
38. Mutanchi Lom Aal Shezum- MLAS
39. Natural Resource- NR
40. Nature Conservation Foundation - NCF
41. Nehru Institute of Mountaineering- NIM
42. Non- Timber Forest Products- NTFPs
43. People Biodiversity Register -PBR
44. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana - PMFBY
45. Protected Area - PA
46. Protection of Plant Variety and Farmers Right Act - PPVFRA
47. Rare Endangered Threatened- RET
48. Remote Sensing- RS
49. Reserved Forests- RF
50. Self-help Group- SHG
51. Snow Leopard Census- SL census
52. Snow Leopard Population Assessment of India - SPAI
53. Standard Operating Procedures - SOPs
54. State Biodiversity Board- - SBB
55. State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans - SBSAPs
56. State Medicinal Plants Board - SMPB
57. State Project Management Unit- SPMU
58. State Rural Livelihood Mission- SRLM
59. Technical Support Group- TSG
60. The Conservation Assessment and Management Prioritization - CAMP
61. The Energy and Resources - TERI
62. Tonnes of CO₂- tCO₂
63. Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce- TRAFFIC
64. Training Needs Analysis - TNA
65. Training-of-Trainers - ToT
66. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation -TRIFED
67. Union territories - UT
68. Uttarakhand Forest Department - UKFD
69. Uttarakhand Renewable Energy Development Agency- UREDA

- 70. Village Voluntary Protection Force - VVPF
- 71. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau- WCCB
- 72. Wildlife Institute of India - WII
- 73. Wildlife Sanctuary- WLS
- 74. World Wild Fund for Nature- WWF
- 75. Zoological Survey of India - ZSI

1. Executive Summary

The executive summary is a concise brief on the progress towards the project outputs during the reporting period. The section also includes key implementation challenges, lessons learned and way forward. It is also suggested to include key financial information, such as expenditure for the reporting period, cumulative expenditure and a delivery rate against budget.

(Suggested length - 400 words maximum)

The project is working in some of the remotest landscapes of the country characterized by challenging terrain, harsh weather and marginalized communities. To strengthen conservation mechanisms, the project is implementing a landscape-based approach by mainstreaming community participation in conservation, create opportunities for alternative and augmenting existing livelihoods, and enhancing capacities of managers and frontline staff in addressing the larger issue of illegal trade in wildlife.

In Outcome 1, the project has made substantial progress. Landscape level management strategies and plans drafted for all project landscapes to address site specific threats. Multi-stakeholder alliances have been built with various stakeholders in the states. Landscape level

Coordination Committees have been established in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh to ensure implementation of the landscape level strategies.

High Conservation Value Areas providing essential ecosystem services have been identified in 4 project landscapes for enhanced protection and conservation of globally and nationally significant biodiversity. Five high altitude critical wetlands have been identified and prioritised for site specific conservation action and model management planning framework has been developed for four critical wetlands.

One biodiversity heritage site and community reserve have been identified in Uttarakhand for designation. Sustainable harvest protocols are being designed 10 medicinal and aromatic plants in each state.

METT scores have been reviewed and revised for all protected areas and an average increase of 9 points has been achieved. Revised METT parameters have been adopted as Himalayan-Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (Him-METT) by the Project States/UT.

500 frontline forest staff have been trained from project landscapes in all states/ UT through 10 training and capacity building programmes and 5 learning visits. 300 community members (30% female) have been trained from project landscapes in all states/ UT through five training and capacity building programmes.

Draft State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans have been developed for Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim. The first ever "Training of Trainers" (ToT) workshop on Snow leopard Population Estimation and Monitoring was conducted in Uttarakhand with 41 participants (including 05 women).

In Outcome 2, the progress has been hampered a bit due to the COVID-19 pandemic as interactions with communities and capacity building programmes were affected. However, with the lockdown restrictions being lifted, the project teams have realigned the livelihood strategies in light of the changing economic scenarios on the ground by conducting a rapid situation analysis.

In the pre-COVID scenario, the project has established grassroots institutions for biodiversity management and promoting nature-based livelihoods. 64 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) have been constituted in Himachal Pradesh (35) and Uttarakhand (29) in partnership with respective State Biodiversity Boards and National Biodiversity Authority. Capacities of 30 BMCs have been strengthened on the provisions of Biological Diversity Act, 2002, and laws and policies related environment protection and conservation.

Training of 150 youth (30% women) conducted across diverse sectors including para-taxonomy, adventure tourism and mountaineering, nature interpretation and birdwatching, and medicinal and aromatic plant nursery management to enhance employability and promote conservation-oriented livelihoods. To protect traditional knowledge in the project landscapes

and provide benefits to local communities for geographically unique products and practices, the project is facilitating Geographical Indication for six products.

In Outcome 3, Hotspots and Pathways of Illegal Wildlife Trade in the project landscapes have been identified. To strengthen the capacities of enforcement agencies, Wildlife Crime Database Centre has been established in Uttarakhand for digitization of data pertaining to poaching, illegal trade in wildlife and human-wildlife conflict. Anti-poaching cells for Wildlife Division in Uttarakhand have been strengthened, including installation of closed-circuit television cameras and other security equipment for monitoring of illegal activities related to wildlife crime.

Hotspots of Human Wildlife Conflict have been identified along with figures of seasonal and diurnal patterns of conflict. Technology interventions have been undertaken to digitize Management Information System in Uttarakhand to collect and collate information related to human wildlife-conflict, wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade. Infra-red based animal detection devices have been installed to prevent animal encroachment in village areas. Legal Literacy Manuals have developed for building capacities of local communities w.r.t their legal rights, responsibilities and other provisions related to environment and livelihoods.

Towards Outcome 4, 500 community stakeholders have made aware on conservation, sustainable NRM, wildlife conservation, mitigation of illegal trade and human wildlife conflict through focused group discussions, participation in landscape level fairs and festivals. Three Green Inception workshops (no use of plastics) were organized in project states/ UT with 300 participants including community members, government agencies and line departments including agriculture, animal husbandry, tourism and rural development. Traditional practices and community-based knowledge systems have been documented. Curriculum for promotion of nature-based education is being developed and disseminated in vernacular languages.

More than fifteen awareness campaigns launched on social media to target audiences at the national level including celebration of key environment and biodiversity days through blogs, photo stories and social media campaigns. Fellowships have been provided to 15 youth from the local community for community radio and video documentation and dissemination to document biodiversity and spread awareness on conservation related issues.

360-degree films and virtual reality experiences being developed for snow leopard landscapes. For the first time in the world, snow leopards in the wild have been filmed in high-definition 360-degree cameras. With increased uptake of virtual learning platforms due to COVID-19 induced lockdown, these films are an important tool to provide a near-realistic experience of high-altitude landscapes to policymakers, communities and civil society.

Overall, the project has made significant progress towards Outcomes 1 and 4, while progress on Outcomes 2 and 3 were impacted by COVID-19. Going ahead, the project has realigned the implementation plans to work around the lockdown induced issues and ensure that progress is achieved across all outcomes.

2. Project Background

The background should be a short introductory of the project. The situation analysis and the objective sections of the Project Document can be referred to for this section. Also include an up-to-date overview of changes in the context and situations. (Suggested length - maximum half a page)

The SECURE Himalaya project (Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems) is a part of “Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development” (Global Wildlife Program) funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with projects across 19 countries.

The project aims to augment Government of India’s efforts for conservation of the snow leopard and its habitat by developing and implementing a landscape-based approach for high-altitude Himalayan ecosystems, and address key issues of habitat degradation, threatened livelihoods and illegal trade in wildlife.

It also contributes to the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP), a joint initiative of 12 range country governments, international agencies, civil society, and the private sector.

The project’s incremental value lies in promoting the sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems to secure conservation of globally significant wildlife. This includes conservation of the endangered snow leopard and its habitat, ensure sustainable livelihoods and socioeconomic benefits for communities in select landscapes in the Trans- and Greater Himalayan region (that consists of alpine pastures, sub-alpine forests and critical watersheds).

3. Project Performance and Results

3.1. Contribution towards Country Programme Outcome

CPD Output 3.2: Effective solutions developed at national and sub-national levels for sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems, ozone depleting substances, chemicals and wastes.			
Indicator(s): 3.2.1 Number of policies and programme	Baseline: 4	Target(s): 6	Achievement(s):

promoting sustainable livelihoods and incorporating gender responsive strategies for natural resources and ecosystems management.			Demonstrative actions being undertaken under the project to inform policy decisions
<p>Description of output level/outcome level <u>results achieved</u> in 2020:</p> <p>The project has been putting extra effort to ensure gender mainstreaming in all the components. There are sectors such as adventure tourism where the participation of women is negligible in the project area, and this is being addressed. In the project landscape the women play important role in agriculture, animal husbandry and forest sectors.</p> <p>Special efforts have been undertaken to enhance participation of women in decision making and reducing drudgery in day to day tasks and livelihood activities so that their participation in consultative activities can be increased. For example, in institutions like BMCs membership and participation of women is being ensured, promotion of technologies such as equipment for value addition of produce are being provided to women groups for drudgery reduction, energy efficient solutions are being implemented to reduce dependency on natural resources, especially wood for fuel which involves a lot of time and effort in collection.</p> <p>Women participation in the project landscapes and their role in biodiversity conservation is critical in the places where collectives of women are involved in the use of natural resources for subsistence. Out-migration of men has also meant that many rural women are increasingly getting involved in subsistence and commercial production, as well as taking on much of the community and environmental management work which was formerly shared by women and men. Thus, the involvement and active participation of women is critical to ensure sustainable use of natural resources in the project landscapes and successful implementation of management strategies.</p> <p>A 15-day course in basic mountaineering and guiding skills was conducted for 10 women participants from the project villages in Gangotri landscape of Uttarakhand. The course included a mix of basic skills like rope craft and orienteering and then the participants were taken outdoors to test some advanced level skills like ice climbing, safety and rescue. In order to contribute to the conservation objectives, participants are also briefed about local flora and fauna and taught about their importance to high-altitude ecosystems. The trained girls are now illegible to access various employment generation schemes of the government. Further involvement of trained girls in Village Voluntary Protection Force and Snow Leopard Census Volunteers is planned by Forest Department. Community radio fellowship programme with 5 female participants has also been launched in this landscape.</p>			
<p>Means of Verification Quarterly and annual progress reports by UNDP, Government stakeholders' (including relevant line departments and State Governments) annual reports, and media coverage and records.</p>			

3.2. Progress towards Project Results/Outputs

Project Output I: Improved management of high Himalayan landscapes for conservation of snow leopard and other endangered species and their habitats and sustaining ecosystem services

Output 1.1. Landscape level management strategies that integrate biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate mitigation, sustainable community resource use and socio-economic considerations are developed, discussed with stakeholders and supported.

Output 1.2: Site specific participatory management plans for Protected Areas, and other Key Biodiversity Areas, including High Conservation Value Forests, Biodiversity Heritage Sites and biological corridors, and sustainable natural resource use areas designed and tested under community governance, management and enforcement regimes

Output 1.3 Alpine meadows and sub-alpine forest restoration plans are developed and introduced to local communities to improve biological connectivity and habitat productivity

Output 1.4 Biodiversity participatory monitoring for Snow leopard and associated species is developed, tested and adopted

Output 1.5: Lessons learned on biodiversity and multiple use landscape management approaches are developed

Output 1.6 Capacity development for key government staff and community members for long-term effective conservation of biodiversity developed and implemented

Indicator(s)	Baseline	Target(s)	Achievement(s)
Indicator 1.1 Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape	Changtang WLS (22), Govind Pasu WLS (25) Gangotri NP (35), Khangchenjunga National Park - KNP (29) Seichi Tuan WLS (13), Shingba Rhododendron WLS (16)	Average increase by at least 30 points in METT from current PAs baselines	Improvement of METT scores of the two focal PAs, namely Khangchendzonga National Park and Shingba RS: Sikkim. Landscape Level Management Strategy and Plan for multi-stakeholder, multi-sector coordination and governance mechanisms drafted for each landscape involving all the stakeholders. Landscape-level multi-stakeholder coordination committees have been formed in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand with representation from Government departments,

			<p>Community based organizations and local community institutions.</p> <p>State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (SBSAPs) of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim drafted and strategy for resource mobilization for the implementation of SBSAPs prepared.</p> <p>The Snow Leopard Population Assessment of India (SPAI) protocol was launched by Hon'ble Minister of Forest, Mr. Prakash Javadekar during the 4th Steering Committee meeting of Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP), held on October 23-24, 2019 in New Delhi.</p> <p>Assessment of the feral dog's population and their impacts on native wildlife, livestock's and humans and to design a strategy for their effective control and management in Lahaul Pangi Landscape.</p>
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			Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) maps have been prepared for all the states.
Indicator 1.2. Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard	Limited institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiple use landscapes. UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline score of 18	Increase of institutional capacity as measured by a 50% increase in UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard baseline value	<p>Training Needs Analysis (TNA) for various stakeholders in project carried out in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim in order to develop capacity development framework along with relevant modules and curriculum on biodiversity conservation, participatory natural resource management and livelihood enhancement.</p> <p>105 BMCs formed and engaged in sustainable management of natural resource (including 29 BMCs in Uttarakhand and 21 BMCs in Ladakh)</p>
Indicator 1.3. Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests	Approximately 700,000 ha of alpine meadows under unsustainable grazing with average 75 livestock units/km ² and forests around villages lack sustainable management arrangements	Reduced grazing pressure on 700,000 ha of alpine meadows by at least 20% (from 75 to 60 livestock units/km ²) and prevented degradation in around 10,000 ha of sub-alpine forest under community-based management resulting in projected 0.46-0.50 and 0.31-0.36 m tCO ₂ /30-year period	Areas prone to degradation in alpine and sub-alpine forest areas and factors responsible for degradation have been identified in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

		sequestered and avoided respectively.	
Indicator 1.4. Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes	Approximately 40,000 ha of alpine pastures and 2,000 ha of sub-alpine forests under continued degradation through overuse	40,000 hectares alpine pastures and 2,000 hectares sub-alpine forests under sustainable regeneration regimes resulting in projected 0.16 - 0.18 and 0.42 – 0.05 m tCO ₂ /30 year period sequestered and avoided respectively.	<p>Management planning framework and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) has been drafted and presented to stakeholders workshop at national level including Wetland Division and Wildlife Division of MoEF&CC.</p> <p>Wetland Brief Documents and Wetland Health Cards have been prepared for 13 high-altitude wetland areas across Changthang landscape. This shall help in determining conservation priorities for the entirety of High-altitude Wetlands in the landscape.</p> <p>16 units of innovative solar water heaters have been provided to 16 households in Khanjar and Chasak Bhatori Villages, Himachal Pradesh to reduce pressure on natural resources.</p> <p>Energy efficient solutions proposed in Uttarakhand and submitted to UREDA</p>

			to initiate the convergence with the project have been done.
Indicator 1.5: Area of high conservation forests under improved management	High Conservation value forests lack proper management regimes	<p>(a) Reduced direct pressure on at least 60,000 ha covering at least 18 newly designated and managed key biodiversity areas, including 30,000 ha of HCVFs to ensure connectivity and species conservation resulting in projected avoided 1.38-1.47 m tCO₂ over 30-year period</p> <p>(b) Reduced direct pressure on at least 20,000 ha of moist and dry alpine areas and sub-alpine forests managed as Biodiversity Heritage Sites¹¹ resulting in projected avoided 0.46 – 0.49 m tCO₂ over 30-year period</p>	<p>High Conservation Value Areas have been identified across 6 project landscapes covering a tentative area of 5,000 Ha. The identified areas are Tso Kar, Chushul and Hanle marshes, and Tso Moriri in Ladakh; Miyar Valley in HP; Panchachuli region in Uttarakhand, and Dombang Valley and Yumesamdong Complex in Sikkim. Management strategies for these areas are under development.</p> <p>MPCDA covering an area of 999 Ha have been studied, identified and mapped in and around the Changthang landscape. One of those sites i.e. Wari La region (with an area of 222 ha) has been proposed for MPCDA designation. This is the first time that a MPCDA has been proposed for designation in the Union Territory of Ladakh.</p>

Description of project output level results achieved in 2020:

Indicator 1.1 Improved management effectiveness of protected areas and biological rich areas in alpine and sub-alpine landscape

Traditionally, natural resources have been managed through the Protected Area (PA) approach, with limited involvement of line departments and local communities. The project is focusing not just on PAs, but areas beyond PAs that are important for wildlife (especially snow leopard and prey), and have considerable human use through grazing, farming, natural resource extraction, and infrastructure development.

Through the landscape-based approach, the project is impacting an area of 35,67,100 Ha across snow leopard landscapes in the project states/ UT.

The project focused on the improvement of METT scores of all the PAs in the landscape. In the last year, an exercise was conducted to review the status of METT score of all the PAs in the project state. Based on the baseline scores, activities to improve the score are under implementation, including capacity building of PA staff at various land strengthening monitoring systems.

Support to Secihu Tuan Nalla WL Sanctuary for METT score improvement: Himachal Pradesh

Camera Traps have been installed at the strategic location of the Sechu Tuan Nalla WL Sanctuary for effective wildlife monitoring. Awareness workshop was done with the residents of Chasak Bhatori village by PA staff with the aim of community welfare and trust-building. Under the programme, solar lights were distributed to some households. The programme was a collaborative one in which the cost of solar lights was covered from the division's own funds and the programme was organized by SECURE funds.

Improvement of METT scores of the two focal PAs, namely Khangchendzonga National Park and Shingba RS: Sikkim

An exercise was conducted to review the METT scores of the 02 PAs and gap areas were identified for further improvement in scores. In close consultation with the park management renovation of tourist toilets inside KNP, Interpretation center in Shingba, support for field patrolling equipment to frontline staff and Himal Rakshaks has been provided.

Preparation of Landscape Management Strategy and plans:

Landscape Level Management Strategy and Plan for multi-stakeholder, multi-sector coordination and governance mechanisms drafted for each landscape involving all the stakeholders. The strategy deals with addressing landscape specific threats, their categorization and prioritization. Detailed strategies and plans have been prepared for each prioritized threat. The major threats/gaps identified are:

- Lahaul and Pangri, Himachal Pradesh: Human-wildlife conflict, wildlife crime/ poaching, retaliatory killing, limited focus on conservation outside PAs, unsustainable harvesting of MAPs/NTFPs, lack of alternate livelihood options, habitat degradation and fragmentation, need for more interdepartmental cooperation, solid waste management, high dependency of the local community on natural resources, unsustainable grazing practices and feral dogs (Predation of wild fauna/livestock by feral dogs). The detailed strategies for individual threats with actionable points, stakeholders involved and convergence with relevant government schemes were drafted.
- Gangotri-Govind and Darma-Byans, Uttarakhand: The extent of both the landscapes have been defined with clear boundaries, area covered (3549 km²), core zone, buffer zone and villages located in the project landscapes. Key threats to snow leopard and its habitat have been identified along with the gaps in management effectiveness within and outside Protected Areas (PAs). Major threats/ gaps identified are unsustainable livestock grazing practices and lack of veterinary care, habitat degradation & fragmentation, lack of peoples' participation in conservation and increased incidences of human-wildlife conflicts, unsustainable harvest of high-value medicinal plants, high dependency on natural resources; poor status ecotourism facilities and activities, lack of knowledge on wildlife occurrences and threats to conservation and local livelihoods, poaching and illegal trade of wildlife parts and products, climate change induced increase in natural hazards and extreme weather events, predation of wild mammals and birds by feral dogs. In the Gangotri-Govind landscape, 352 km² area falls under the subalpine zone and 2,073 km² under the alpine zone. In Darma Byans, the area under subalpine and alpine zones is 100 km² and 1,024 km² respectively.
- A Participatory Integrated Landscape Management Strategy and plan has been finalized for Changthang landscape. The said management strategy and plan has been prepared for 10 years and was drafted after series of consultations at Union Territory and landscape levels with all relevant stakeholders, whose actions have been enlisted in the strategy to ensure conservation and effective management of the landscape and its biodiversity.

Constitution of Landscape Level Project Management Committee in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh:

Landscape-level multi-stakeholder coordination committees have been formed in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand with representation from Government departments, Community based organizations and local community institutions, so that discourse and decision making on conservation and management of natural resources at the landscape level can happen inclusively. The committees also form the platform for knowledge sharing and participatory work-planning, allowing the stakeholder departments and agencies to incorporate mutually beneficial activities in sectoral plans.

Preparation of State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (SBSAPs) and resource mobilization strategy

State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (SBSAPs) of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim drafted and strategy for resource mobilization for the implementation of SBSAPs prepared. Existing SBSAP of state Uttarakhand updated and adopted by the SBB. Financial solutions (Himachal Pradesh: community fodder bank, cultivation of MAPs, Sikkim: community fodder bank, restoration of land, Uttarakhand: provisioning of climate-smart energy solutions and ecotourism) identified and selected for implementation in consultation with the states. The draft SBSAP of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim presented to the multi-stakeholders for validation. Based on the inputs received the SASAP will be finalized by first quarter of 2021.

Development of Participatory Snow Leopard Monitoring Protocol and capacity building of stakeholders on Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI)

The Snow Leopard Population Assessment of India (SPAI) protocol was launched by Hon'ble Minister of Forest, Mr. Prakash Javadekar during the 4th Steering Committee meeting of Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP), held on October 23-24, 2019 in New Delhi. Following activities were implemented in the project states towards implementation of SPAI:

- In **Himachal Pradesh**, the statewide population assessment of Snow Leopard and associated species is being carried out by HP Forest Department in collaboration with Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF). As per the assessment, 52 individual snow leopards have been recorded across the 10 sites. Besides, work on developing participatory monitoring protocol for snow leopard and associated species is under progress in collaboration with WII. The work will also focus on training community stakeholders on participatory monitoring using the protocol.
- A total number of 20 community stakeholders including 07 females were trained under the training programme on wildlife monitoring during Oct-Nov 2020 in Lahaul Pangri by Wildlife Institute of India. A field guide prepared under the project was also circulated to the trainees for their enhanced learning in future. The participants were trained on different aspects of animal behaviour as well as format filling during the trail walk and demonstrated the use of GPS and camera trap on field. During the trail walk, participants found scat of musk deer and Wolf in live demonstration etc.
- In **Uttarakhand**, development of participatory snow leopard monitoring protocol has been prepared by WII. The first ever Training-of-Trainers (ToT) workshop on snow leopard population estimation and monitoring in Uttarakhand was held on Feb 10-11, 2020 in partnership with the Uttarakhand Forest Department (UKFD) for Directors/ Deputy Directors, DFOs and Range Officers of forest department. 41 participants (including 05 women) participated in the workshop. The entire Uttarakhand Himalayan region was divided into 15 km x 15 km grids to implement a grid-wise approach for snow leopard monitoring, and trails were identified within these grids for future monitoring in the next phase of the project.
- Total 21 Para-taxonomists including 5 females trained in two days on Participatory Snow Leopard Monitoring Protocol organised by WII in Gangotri-Govind landscapes on November 5-6, 2020. Out of these 21 para-taxonomists, 09 males specifically trained on SPAI for Snow Leopard census by the Forest Department.
- In **Ladakh**, Camera Trapping and Occupancy surveys for Snow Leopard and Prey population estimation are underway in the Changthang Landscape. The said activity is being conducted in convergence with the Department of Wildlife Protection Ladakh. The Camera Trapping and Occupancy work was concluded recently in the adjacent Hemis National Park, thereby ensuring landscape level monitoring efforts of the Snow Leopard and associated species in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Assessment of the feral dog's population and their impacts on native wildlife, livestock's and humans and to design a strategy for their effective control and management in Lahaul Pangri Landscape.

The feral dog problem has emerged as one of the key threats for the snow leopard and associated species in Lahaul and Pangri landscapes. However, there is no assessment of their population and impact on wildlife in the landscape. Considering this, an assessment for assessment of feral dog population and their impacts on native wildlife, livestock and humans has been initiated involving Zoological Survey of India. The multi-pronged approach of camera trapping, trail sampling, non-invasive genetics and questionnaire survey was used to gather information on the feral dogs in Lahaul-Pangri landscape. Based on the SCER model, feral dog density was found to be 2.78 individuals/ 100 Km² on an average ranging from 1.4 to 5.5 individuals/ 100 km² in the Lahaul and Pangri landscape. The micro-histological analysis of the feral dog scats suggested that some of the wildlife species such as marmot, blue sheep and rodent species are present in the diet of feral dogs, but the diet is dominated by domestic livestock. The department will start the implementation of strategy proposed by ZSI for feral dog management under which dog sterilization and awareness generation activities on responsible dog ownership will be undertaken on priority this year.

Preparation of land use, vegetation cover and status report and detailed mapping of natural resource use in the landscape

- Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) maps have been prepared for all the states. The land use classes are further classified into vegetation type, biological richness, disturbance index, fragmentation and eco-sensitive zones to prioritize degraded areas for conservation action. In Himachal Pradesh, work is completed and socio-ownership categorization, eco-sensitive zone maps of WL sanctuaries, Vegetation type, Biological richness, IVI of important floral species identified. The landscape of Lahaul-Pangi has been classified into 24 land use/land cover classes to understand which classes represent how much proportion of the study area whereas the Kinnaur landscape is classified into 26 land use land cover classes. Kinnaur landscape has better vegetation distribution than the Lahaul-Pangi landscape. 10 permanent monitoring plots have also been identified under the assignment for long term biodiversity monitoring from climate change point of view.
- The Land-Use Land Cover assessment using high-resolution satellite imagery of Changthang landscape with an enormous area of more than 13000 sq km has been finalized in consultation with UT administration. This is expected to provide the administrators with valuable data to prepare conservation strategies and land-use plans at landscape level. It shall also aid decision making with respect to land diversion cases in the landscape.

Indicator 1.2. Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation and monitoring of multiuse landscape level plans as measured by UNDP Capacity Development Scorecard**Capacity need assessment of stakeholders**

Training Needs Analysis (TNA) for various stakeholders in project carried out in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim in order to develop capacity development framework along with relevant modules and curriculum on biodiversity conservation, participatory natural resource management and livelihood enhancement. Based on the assessment, capacity gaps identified, capacity development framework and training modules prepared.

Improved institutional capacities for planning, implementation

In Uttarakhand, the following priority areas have been identified, (i) importance of ecosystem, (ii) landscape-level approach to conservation planning, (iii) wildlife management and wildlife crime, (iv) interpretation and application of laws pertaining to forest biodiversity and wildlife, (v) computer application and role of GIS & RS, (vi) nature interpretation techniques, (vii) environmentally responsible tourism, (viii) sensitization on local biodiversity and awareness generation, (ix) sustainable harvesting practices of MAPs, (x) sustainable livestock and pasture management and (xi) entrepreneurship development and livelihood activities. Detail curriculum and modules developed on sensitization to local biodiversity and awareness generation for local communities, frontline staff of forest and line department and paramilitary forces, interpretation and Application of laws pertaining to forest biodiversity and wildlife for community institutions, frontline staff and enforcement agencies and environmentally responsible tourism for local communities, frontline staff and tourism sector stakeholders. The modules were tested in a three-day ToT programme held from February 12-14, 2020. A total of 60 (7 female and 53 male) participants attended the workshop.

In Himachal Pradesh, training needs assessment conducted on three key parameters, viz. Biodiversity conservation in Himalaya (conservation biology and ecology of high altitude rangelands, handling, management and transportation of wild animals, wildlife conflict management and resolution, BMC formation and PBR preparation, appreciation of nature and biodiversity conservation, mainstreaming biodiversity), Biodiversity monitoring of high altitude Ecosystems (wildlife health management, wildlife management, policies & laws, wildlife trade & forensics, monitoring plant species of high range Himalayan ecosystems) and Sustainable management and livelihood in Himalayan landscapes (eco-development for biodiversity conservation, management and conservation of MAPs, sustainable agricultural management, sustainable horticultural management, natural resource management and livelihood enhancement and skill development for sustainable management of natural resources.

In Sikkim, based on a detailed assessment, areas have been identified for capacity improvement on monitoring and evaluation of biodiversity, environment planning, strategizing and understanding of environment policy and regulatory frameworks. Accordingly, capacity development activities have been included in the annual work plans. Detailed modules have been developed on conservation of agro-biodiversity and sustainable tourism.

Following training programmes conducted addressing various aspects of conservation, livelihoods and illegal trade in wildlife.

- A Training of Trainers (ToT) was organized in 1st week of Nov. 2020 at Udaipur, Distt Lahaul and Spiti on Human Wildlife Conflicts with 28 officials from forest and other line departments participated in the training programme. HWC mitigation measures with reference to selected species in the landscape (before, during and after conflict) were discussed and demonstrated with forest staff. A group discussion was organized to map the major human wildlife

conflict areas and Dr. S. Sathyakumar, Scientist-G, WII explained some new innovative techniques including fox lights to mitigate human wildlife conflict.

- A 3-day training programme on conservation and management of NTFPs and medicinal plants was organized from January 16-18, 2020 for the field forest staff of the project landscapes of Lahaul, Pangri and Kinnaur. A total of 21 participants including DFO, Range Officer, Deputy rangers and forest guards were trained. The outcome of the training will contribute to sustainable harvesting, cultivation and value addition of MAPs and sustainable management of alpine pastures.
- A one-day workshop with various law enforcement agencies was organized on Feb 07, 2020 at Dehradun, Uttarakhand for 27 participants including 6 females. The gaps in combating illegal wildlife trade were identified as an outcome of the workshop and they are being fed into the strategies for mitigation.
- A 2-day training program for the ground staff was organized on Jan 10-11, 2020 on law enforcement and legal aspects of the forest and wildlife conservation in the landscape which includes, human habitat, PA, RF and CA areas. A total of 150 frontline staff participated in the training program.
- Learning cum exposure visit for 08 frontline forest staff from Uttarakhand was organized from January 20-24, 2020 to Yuksom, Sikkim to demonstrate best practices in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in and around the PA.
- 1st "Training of Trainers" (ToT) Workshop on Snow Leopard Population Estimation and Monitoring in Uttarakhand organized on 10-11 Feb 2020, at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, in partnership with the Uttarakhand Forest Department (UKFD) with 41 participants (5 Female and 36 male). All Directors / Deputy Directors, DFOs and Range Officers from the mountain divisions of Uttarakhand Forest Department, who will be the major stakeholders in the SPAI were trained on monitoring protocols for snow leopards and associated prey species. The entire Uttarakhand Himalayan region was divided into 15 km x 15 km grids to implement a grid-wise approach for snow leopard monitoring, and trails were identified within these grids for future monitoring in the next phase of the project. 26 youth have also been trained as para-taxonomists and will be engaged for implementation of SPAI.
- A Three-Days Training of Trainers programme organised by TERI from February 11-14, 2020 on interpretation and application of laws pertaining to forest biodiversity and wildlife, environmentally responsible tourism and sensitization to local biodiversity and awareness generation for the frontline staff (mainly Foresters, ACFs and Rangers) under the SECURE Himalaya Project. A total of 60 (7 Female and 53 Male) participants attended over 3 days.

Strengthening mandate of SBBs and BMCs

Under the collaborative project with State Biodiversity Board, Himachal Pradesh, in total, 14 sensitization meetings/ workshops with the BMCs of Lahaul and Pangri were held in 2019. The BMCs were oriented on PBR, GI and Protection of Plant Variety and Farmers Right Act (PPVFRA). The species (*Fagopyrum tataricum* (Phaphra, Kathu), Black Pea (*Pisum sativum* var. *arvense*), Naked Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) & Maize (*Zea mays*) for Lahaul and winter Wheat (Strain of *Triticum aestivum*) & Naked Barley (*Hordeum vulgare* for Pangri) were also identified for registration under PPVFRA.

In Uttarakhand, 29 BMCs have been formed and PBRs have been prepared. The BMCs have been trained on general management, roles and responsibilities and provisions of BD Act, 2002. Kanda Dhar - Kandara Bugiyal covering 26.30 Ha identified as Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) in Gangotri landscape. Formal notification of sites is under progress. Capacity building programmes for community/BMC members from Nov 2-12, 2020 in project villages of Govind landscape. Total 133 (30% female) community people capacitated on access benefits sharing modules & awareness on cultivation of medicinal aromatic plants in the landscape.

In the newly constituted UT of Ladakh, Ladakh Biodiversity Council formed, and 21 BMCs has been constituted under the project.

In Himachal Pradesh, a total of 35 BMCs constituted. The process of preparation of PBRs, documentation of natural resources, registration of traditional varieties under PPVRF, promotion of cultivation of MAPs for ABS is under progress.

The Conservation Assessment and Management Prioritization (CAMP)

Ladakh

The Conservation Assessment and Management Prioritization (CAMP) process, was initiated for the Union Territory of Ladakh, which is for prioritization of species, assembling many experts (e.g., government officials, representatives of the academic community or private sector, researchers etc.) to evaluate threat status and provide recommendations for intensive management of medicinal plants as well as provides specific conservation-oriented research recommendations for more comprehensive management and recovery programs in situ and ex situ. Ladakh requires conducting CAMP to evaluate threat status and provide recommendations for intensive management of medicinal plants. Previously, CAMP process had been undertaken for Jammu and Kashmir along with Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand in 2003. However, there has not been an exclusive CAMP exercise

organized for Ladakh or for the erstwhile state of J&K. Hence, TDU Bangalore was hired under the project to conduct the CAMP process for the UT wherein capacity building of 3 local institutes was also initiated so that future CAMPs can be conducted by local institutions of Ladakh. To date, a pre-CAMP workshop was conducted for selection of medicinal plants for the CAMP workshop with experts (forest officials, scientists, representatives of institutes and NGOs, research scholars, amchis and farmers) from Ladakh and other States having knowledge and working experience on medicinal plants of Ladakh.

Training conducted for capacity building of grassroots level stakeholders like TSGs, community trainers, students and youth groups on implementation of Biological Diversity Act at the landscape level under SECURE Himalaya project. 2 local organizations from Ladakh (one from each district) trained under the programme. One of the organizations was hired to aid in the implementation of the Biological Diversity Act in the landscape.

Indicator 1.3. Reduced pressure and prevented degradation of alpine meadows and sub-alpine forests

Conduct assessment on habitat degradation and developing site-specific mitigation strategies

Areas prone to degradation in alpine and sub-alpine forest areas and factors responsible for degradation have been identified in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

- The assessment of habitat degradation in Himachal Pradesh reveals grazing, change in cropping pattern and tourism as the key factors responsible. Based on biodiversity assessment, spatial mapping, vulnerability assessment and ecosystem services-based analysis of hotspots of degradation, 4 micro-landscapes have been identified for interventions.
- In Uttarakhand, unregulated grazing and landslide are the key factors responsible for habitat degradation in Darma-Byans landscape, whereas, in case of Gangotri-Govind landscape, unsustainable tourism, grazing and landslides are the major causes. 2253 and 617 landslide points in high landslide probability zone have been identified in Gangotri-Govind and Darma-Byans landscapes respectively.

Traditional grazing lands in alpine pastures in both landscapes in Uttarakhand have been mapped (12.17 km² and 330.980 km² in Gangotri-Govind and Darma-Byans respectively) Unsustainable resource utilization practices, such as harvesting of *Betula utilis*, *Cedrus deodara*, *Pinus wallichiana* and *Juniperus indica* for fuelwood and unsustainable harvesting of Medicinal and Aromatic plants, e.g. *Picrorhiza kurroa*, have been validated as primary reasons for degradation of alpine and sub-alpine habitats.

Indicator 1.4. Extent of degraded alpine pastures/rangelands and sub-alpine forests under sustainable management regimes

Development of management framework for High Altitude Wetlands

The high-altitude wetlands are important ecosystems in the project landscapes on which the snow leopard and associated species directly or indirectly depend. However, due to natural and anthropogenic pressures and improved management, the wetland and its complexes are deteriorating in the landscape. A basin-level wetlands conservation and management strategy has been adopted, in partnership with State Wetlands Authority and local community institutions by the WWF-India and Wetlands International-South Asia. In all the landscapes across the project states, inventorisation has been done. Based on the multi-stakeholder consultations, five wetlands (i.e. Ladakh: Hanle Marshes, Himachal Pradesh: Chandrataal, Uttarakhand: Sattal and Ruinsara Tal, Sikkim: Gurudongmar) has been prioritized for preparation of model framework for conservation and management. The findings of assessment of wetlands complexes indicate that glacial receding has resulted in increased size of all the wetlands of the complex. For example, in Gurudongmar lake, area has been expanded by 8.38% between 1988 and 2014. Also, tourism pressure to the wetland has increased by 200% in the last five years. Management planning framework and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) has been drafted and presented to stakeholders workshop at national level including Wetland Division and Wildlife Division of MoEF&CC.

In the **Changthang Landscape**, High-altitude wetlands and their associated marshes and rangelands, are the most critical habitats for biodiversity. Keeping this in mind, an Integrated Management Plan has been prepared for Hanle Marshes with a total area of 1272700 Ha. Apart from this Wetland Brief Documents and Wetland Health Cards have been prepared for 13 high-altitude wetland areas across the landscape. This shall help in determining conservation priorities for the entirety of High-altitude Wetlands in Changthang landscape.

Himachal Pradesh

An evaluation of ecological character, threats and management needs of the high-altitude wetland for Chandertaal lake in Himachal Pradesh was carried out. On the basis of these assessments and national guidelines for conservation of wetlands, a

draft model management plan for Chandertal Wetland and Guidelines/SOPs for management planning of High-Altitude Wetlands has been drafted.

Eco-friendly energy solutions implemented in Lahaul-Pangi Landscape in selected villages to reduce direct pressure on natural resources i.e. Solar based/ design upgradation/ fuel alternatives

Himachal Pradesh

The assignment has been completed by HRG and the 16 units of innovative solar water heaters have been provided to 16 households in Khanjar and Chasak Bhatari Villages. In order to assess the efficiency of the systems some data loggers has also been placed in some systems by the agency which will be taken after one year to take their readings. 2 thermosiphon-based room heating panels (not covered under project) were also placed by the agency in two households on an experimental basis to assess the efficiency of the system.

Uttarakhand

Energy efficient solutions submitted to UREDA to initiate the convergence with the project have been done. The proposal includes a list of beneficiaries along with budget for Solar Chulah, Solar Cooker, Solar Heater, village locations for installing solar streetlights and renewal of solar hydropower station in Govind landscape.

Ladakh

Process of procurement and installation of an Organic Waste Composting machine initiated in the landscape. Due to increased presence of Armed Forces in the landscape, increased food waste is encouraging the proliferation in the population of free-ranging dogs. Free-ranging dogs are emerging as the most prominent threat to the population of mammals and avi-fauna in the landscape. Ground nesting birds are an easy target and ungulates & carnivores are also predated on by packs of free-ranging dogs. While sterilization and capture of dogs is taking place under the local administration, food waste generation must also be addressed in a serious manner. In this regard, SECURE Himalaya developed a prototype biogas digester in 2018 however due to extremely cold temperatures in the winter this approach was not found to be effective for the landscape. This year, under SECURE Himalaya, a suitable technological solution has been identified which does not require anaerobic processes and processes food waste simply through electric energy. The identified machine has been modified further for the extreme cold temperatures of Changthang and shall be transported to an identified location in the landscape in the next quarter. The Indian Army has been brought on board for provision of a suitable location in the landscape wherein the machine will be installed at an Armed Forces camp where it shall be operated. It is envisioned that once the machine successfully undergoes its temperature trial, it shall be upscaled to all armed forces bases and camps in the landscape and beyond and that the food source for free-ranging dogs is thus cut-off.

Demonstration of Biodiversity Resource Centre

The Concept note on Biodiversity resource centre in Gangotri landscape finalized based on ground information. It will be a high-altitude biodiversity Garden & resource centre, which will include herbal - medicinal plant, RET species, fossil plant, Ashtbarga plant, orchid etc. This will promote biodiversity conservation & knowledge sharing in stakeholders and tourists.

Indicator 1.5: Area of high conservation forests under improved management

Identification and management of High Conservation Value Areas (HCVAs) in the project landscapes

High Conservation Value Areas have been identified across 6 project landscapes covering a tentative area of 5,000 Ha. The identified areas are Tso Kar, Chushul and Hanle marshes, and Tso Moriri in Ladakh; Miyar Valley in HP; Panchachuli region in Uttarakhand, and Dombang Valley and Yumesamdong Complex in Sikkim. Management strategies for these areas are under development.

Identification and management of MPCDAs in the project landscape

Medicinal Plants Conservation Areas have been identified across all project landscapes covering a tentative area of 2,000 Ha.

- 6 MPCAs in HP, viz. Hadsar, Karu Nala, Thanpatan (Lahaul), and Chasak Bhatari, Hudan Bhatari, Sural Bhatari (Pangi) in HP;
- 5 MPCDAs in Uttarakhand, viz. Sangosti Bugyal, Gabbe Bugyal, Dedang (Darma Byans Landscape) and Har ki Doon, Dayara Bugyal (Gangotri-Govind Landscape);
- 3 MPCDAs in Ladakh, viz. Tanglang-La, Chang-La and Mahe.

<p>Ladakh Potential Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDA) covering an area of 999 Ha have been studied, identified and mapped in and around the Changthang landscape. One of those sites i.e. Wari La region (with an area of 222 ha) has been proposed for MPCDA designation. This is the first time that a MPCDA has been proposed for designation in the Union Territory of Ladakh.</p> <p>As planned under AWP 2020-21 of UT Ladakh, the High Conservation Value Area of Tso Kar Wetland Complex (9577 Ha) in Changthang Ladakh has now been officially designated as a Ramsar Site. The activity was led by LPMU Ladakh, in close coordination with O/o Commissioner/Secretary Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment UT Ladakh and CWLW Ladakh with support from Wetlands Division MoEF&CC. The link to the news on Ramsar Convention's website is given below for reference: - https://www.ramsar.org/news/india-adds-a-high-altitude-wetland-complex-to-the-ramsar-list.</p> <p>Tweet by Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India:- https://twitter.com/PrakashJavdekar/status/1341979097447067649.</p> <p>As part of the work on identification of High Conservation Value Areas a plethora of HCVA's have been identified and mapped across 6 HCVA categories using high-resolution satellite imagery, both in and outside Changthang landscape. A total of 17 High-priority HCVA's with a combined area of more than 8000 sq kms have been identified and mapped for various conservation values. This is a very significant development for the conservation planning and management for Changthang landscape.</p>				
Overall Output Status (mark the output on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria): 4				
Exemplary (5) *****	High (4) ****	Satisfactory (3) ***	Poor (2) **	Inadequate (1) *
The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality, and there is evidence that outputs are contributing to targeted outcomes	The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality	The project is expected to achieve targeted outputs with expected levels of quality	The project is expected to partially achieve targeted outputs, with less than expected levels of quality	Project outputs will likely not be achieved and/or are not likely to be effective in supporting the achievement of targeted outcomes
<p>Means of Verification: Quarterly and annual progress reports by UNDP, Government stakeholders' (including relevant line departments and State Governments) annual reports, and media coverage and records.</p>				

<p>Project Output II: Outcome 2: Improved and diversified livelihood strategies and improved capacities of community and government institutions for sustainable natural resource management and conservation</p> <p>Output 2.1 Participatory community-based village level micro plans developed for enhancing and diversifying livelihoods and improving natural resources management</p> <p>Output 2.2 Pilot projects on sustainable community based natural resources management, and sustainable livelihood activities are supported</p> <p>Output 2.3 New and enhanced value chain products and services providing ecologically sustainable livelihood are developed and implemented by local communities</p>			
Indicator(s):	Baseline:	Target(s):	Achievement(s):

<p>Indicator 2.1: Extent under sustainable natural resources management practices</p>	<p>0 (Currently sustainable land management natural resources practices at the village level are absent or limited)</p>	<p>At least 10,000 ha under sustainable natural resources management practices</p>	<p>54 village micro plans/ livelihood plans have been prepared covering 30 Van Panchayats (2,067 Ha) in landscapes of Uttarakhand and 24 villages in Sikkim for sustainable natural resource management practices.</p> <p>A rapid assessment of the impact of COVID 19 on the project landscape and beneficiaries conducted through telephonic and personal discussion.</p>
<p>Indicator 2.2. Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community)</p>	<p>Baseline yet to be validated</p>	<p>30% increase in average incomes from sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and business activities (At least 40% of beneficiaries are women)</p>	<p>Baseline on average income established: A baseline survey has been carried out across the states on the status of financial inclusion in the project landscape through primary and secondary data collection including its impacts upon the overall rural economy and livelihoods. The survey established the average baseline monthly income of INR 4,821 in Himachal Pradesh and INR 17,000 in Ladakh.</p> <p>210 participants including 40 women trained on adventure tourism through a</p>

			one-day training programme organized in January 2020 in Nehru Institute of Mountaineering for members of Van panchayat, newly elected Pradhans and Forest officials.
Indicator 2.3. Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities	0 (currently training at the community level is limited and sector specific.) and limited effort at comprehensive training that integrates the multiple dimensions of managing resources across the different sectors and for multiple use	At least 2,500 community members trained and adopting community-based sustainable resource use, agro-pastoral, agricultural and other sustainable livelihood activities and receiving detectable conservation and livelihood benefits	<p>Field Level Training of 23 Para taxonomists in Sankri area of Govind and Harshil area of Gangotri in Feb-March 2020.</p> <p>Training and internship of 8 fellows under Youth Video Fellowship</p> <p>6 Fellows (05 Female and 01 Male) trained under Youth Community Radio Fellowship which is a four-month (February to May 2020) aimed to develop informative programmes for community radio stations in order to raise awareness.</p> <p>Training of 15 youth on professional nature guide & promote the birdwatching for livelihood improvement of local youths and community.</p>

			<p>21 Para-taxonomist (5 female) trained on Participatory Snow Leopard Monitoring Protocol in a two days training/ field visit organised by WII in Gangotri-Govind landscape from 5-6 November 2020.</p> <p>4 months paravets training for 10 youth of Gangotri-Govind landscape beginning November 2020.</p>
<p>Description of project output level <u>results achieved</u> in 2020:</p> <p><u>Indicator 2.1: Extent under sustainable natural resources management practices</u></p> <p>Prepare livelihood strategies and plan for project landscape A bottom-up participatory community planning process has been adopted to engaging local communities to enhance existing livelihoods, diversification and develop new options that promote natural resources and establish governance arrangements. Through this strategy, the project is impacting an area of 4,200 Ha across all project landscapes. Following activities have been undertaken to increase the extent under sustainable natural resources management practices:</p> <p>54 village micro plans/ livelihood plans have been prepared covering 30 Van Panchayats (2,067 Ha) in landscapes of Uttarakhand and 24 villages in Sikkim for sustainable natural resource management practices. Successful implementation of these plans will lead to an increase in income of the local community through diversified livelihood options. Based on the micro-plans livelihood strategies prepared.</p> <p>Situational assessment of impact of COVID-19 of project landscape and beneficiaries A rapid assessment of the impact of COVID 19 on the project landscape and beneficiaries conducted through telephonic and personal discussion. The findings indicate adverse impact on the communities involved in tourism-related activities such as porters, cooks, small homestay owners and tour guides. The case of Human Wildlife Conflicts and dependency on fuel wood increased in the landscape because of limited supply of clean cooking fuel. The findings of the assessment were shared with the Government of Uttarakhand and District Administration Pithoragarh and Uttarkashi. Based on the finding, the livelihood strategy has been modified.</p> <p>Buyer Seller meet at Gangotri landscape for increasing their income and business To support the women groups in the Uttarkashi landscape in selling their products which were not sold due to COVID 19 induced situations, a buyer-seller meet was organized on Dec 23-24, 2020 at Uttarakashi. More than 100 sellers (75-80% women) and 11 buyers have participated in the meet. The outcome of the meet (i) Budera Himalayan Craft Brand was launched in the event (ii). The cash sale of the handloom artisans of Budera craft in two days has been around 2.00 lakhs (iii). Total four companies have confirmed to sign MoUs of Rs. 11 lakhs (TRIFED –Rs. 5 Lakh, The divine Company – Rs. 2.0 Lakh, Rural India Craft – Rs. 2.00 Lakh and Naini- International – Rs. 2.0 Lakh). (iv). The MoU will be signed after legal vetting.</p> <p>Formation and strengthening of Biodiversity Management Committees, JFMCs, Van Panchayat and other CBOs and engage them in conservation and use of sustainable natural resources The institutional framework for the successful implementation of the Biological Diversity Act 2002 in the Union Territory of Ladakh has been established. The Ladakh Biodiversity Council, which is the nodal body for ensuring implementation of the Biological Diversity Act 2002 has been constituted, with representation from the SECURE Himalaya Project. A local agency hired to</p>			

aid in the implementation of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 in the landscape. Training and meetings held with the agency to train them on the process of Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) constitution. Subsequently, 20 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) constituted in the project landscape and 22 BMCs outside the landscape to implement Biological Diversity Act at local level. Meetings were conducted with panchayats and they were explained about the process of BMC constitution, roles and responsibilities and were asked to constitute the BMCs under Section 41(1) of the Act.

Documentation of traditional knowledge of local communities

As part of the assignment on documenting traditional knowledge and traditional natural resource management practices, Village level micro plans have been prepared for Rupshu, Kharnak, Angkung, Korzok areas of the landscape. These areas cover an area of 11,500 hectares. Documentation of traditional natural resource management practices will contribute towards piloting and mainstreaming the identified practices at community level institutions like Biodiversity Management Committees and Panchayats.

Indicator 2.2. Average percentage increase in community incomes from sustainable livelihood, natural resource management and business activities (calculated for each community)

A baseline survey has been carried out across the states on the status of financial inclusion in the project landscape through primary and secondary data collection including its impacts upon the overall rural economy and livelihoods. The survey established the average baseline monthly income of INR 4,821 in Himachal Pradesh and INR 17,000 in Ladakh.

While key livelihood investments for capacity building are being supported under the project, convergence with other government departments and programmes including State Rural Livelihood Missions are being finalized to ensure broader financial support and long-term commitment in improving the economic well-being of local communities.

Development of sustainable harvesting and collection protocols for high value medicinal plants in Himachal Pradesh

Sustainable harvesting, collection and cultivation protocols for identified 10 species developed for Himachal Pradesh.

Capacity building of youth on adventurous tourism

A one-day training program for members of Van panchayat, newly elected Pradhans and Forest officials was jointly organized on January 24, 2020 in Nehru Institute of Mountaineering for 210 participants including 40 women. The training program focused on convergence at Gram Panchayat level through planning and mobilization of resources from various schemes. Preventive measures to reduce cases of forests fire through community participation were discussed during the training.

Organize exposure visit to showcase sustainable eco-tourism and allied activities initiated by Women groups in Uttarakhand

A four-day exposure visit cum training program was organized for 15 community members (including 06 females) with the objective of developing skills of the local community on promoting eco-tourism.

An eco-tourism model is being promoted to showcase conservation efforts done by Sukkhi Village in 02 Hectare of area for conserving *Taxus baccata*. Various facilities are being developed engaging 50 villagers. Additionally, few rest and viewpoints also developed in Harsil to encourage more tourists to be visited the area again.

Besides, following initiatives has been started in Uttarakhand to enhance income of target communities:

- Enhance capacity of key stakeholders involved in traditional art/craft and sustainable local architecture in Gangotri landscape, Uttarakhand
- Developing a Unique Ecotourism Model for Generating Alternative Economic Means (UEM-GAEM) in Govind Landscape.
- Developing a Unique Ecotourism Model for Generating Alternative Economic Means (UEM-GAEM) in Gangotri Landscape.
- Developing a Solid Waste Management Model through capacity building and establishment of monitoring systems in Govind Wildlife Sanctuary/National Park.

Registration of unique products under Geographical Indication (GI) and prepare marketing strategy for the registered products

Three Geographical Indication (GI) tag under process; (i). Harsil Rajma (ii) Uttarakhand Ramdana and (iii). Purola Red-Rice. Society registration meeting held in Gangotri-Govind landscape on Dec 2, 2020 (20 participants) in Gangotri and Govind on Dec 18 2020 in Govind (37 participants). Documentations have been done for society registration.

Indicator 2.3. Number of community members trained, adopting community-based agricultural, agro-pastoral, natural resource management and livelihood activities

Seabuckthorn Value Chain Development in Tingret Panchayat (Urgos)

To support the Seabuckthorn value chain, 20 women beneficiary households have been identified and multiple consultations held with the women and Rural Development department. A SHG group to be constituted under SRLM. The SHG will be linked to the credit facility with the bank as well as juice extraction and packaging machines will be provided along with capacity building and marketing support.

Dairy Development Pilot at Pangi Landscape

A meeting held with Director, Animal Husbandry Department at Shimla for facilitating the early preparation of DPR by the Animal Husbandry department for the initiative. Requests made to MoEFCC to the approval of the activity under re-appropriation proposals.

Number of community members trained in livelihood activities:

(a) Field Level Training of Parataxonomists

Field Level Training of Para taxonomists in Sankri area of Govind and Harshil area of Gangotri on the date 29/02/2020 to 5/03/2020. Total numbers of 23 candidates (18 Males and 5 Females) participated. The learning outcome of this training was to understand the flora and fauna in ground, their Identification and learn their properties.

(b) Training and Internship of Youth Video Fellows

Youth Video Fellowship is a four-month (February to May 2020) fellowship programme. There are 08 fellows (all males), including 02 forest frontline staff. Training included sessions on natural history, hands-on technical sessions on photography, videography and editing by external resource persons – professionals. During the 3-month internship period, the monthly stipend of INR 7000 will be given to each Fellow.

SECURE Himalaya Youth Community Radio Fellowship

The Youth Community Radio Fellowship is a four-month (February to May 2020) with initiative to develop informative programmes for community radio stations in order to raise awareness.

There are 06 Fellows (05 Female and 01 Male) in total, with 02 Fellows from each project landscape. Kumaon Vani community radio based in Mukteshwar is the Fellowship partner.

During the training, a monthly stipend of INR 7000 to each Fellow for the 3-month internship period.

Training on professional nature guide & promote the birdwatching for livelihood improvement of local youths and community.

A Five-days training program was organized in Munsyari Nature education and Eco-Park, center at Pithoragarh from September 18-23, 2020.

Total 15 youth (Para-taxonomists, Video Fellows, Local Guides, SHG members) of which 6 were female got benefitted to become professional nature/bird guides.

Training of Youth on Development of Participatory Snow Leopard Monitoring Protocol

Total 21 Para-taxonomist (5 female) trained on Participatory Snow Leopard Monitoring Protocol in a two days training/ field visit organised by WII in Gangotri-Govind landscapes from 5-6 November 2020. They learned about the Snow leopard, its pre-based species and habitat, sign survey etc.

Involve trained youth in SPAI.

Out of which 9 (all male) para-taxonomist trained on (SPAI) Snow-Leopard Population Assessment in India. They are involved in 1st step of SL census by the Forest Department. They accompanied forest staff during sign survey for SL & co-predators, identification of grids falling in the jurisdiction of Uttarkashi and Gangotri Divisions, data collation, collection of samples during transacts, scat samples in areas above 3000 meters elevation.

Para-vat training program for local youth of Gangotri- Govind landscape

A 120 days (4 months) Paravet training for 10 youth (all males) of Gangotri-Govind landscape had begun on 24 November 2020 at livestock board Pashulok, Rishikesh. They will also be associated with Veterinarians to assist and learn practical aspects of animal husbandry in the field & will be certified as Para-vet after completing the entire training module.

A detailed assessment of current state of tourism in the landscape was conducted, consisting of carrying capacity study, status of nature-based and all forms of tourism in the landscape, best practices to be upscaled, stakeholder mapping, existing business models etc.

Based on the said baseline assessment, detailed recommendations with business models and revenue projections have been made on various sustainable eco-tourism initiatives in the landscape. Implementation plans for selected interventions on nature-based eco-tourism have been drafted consequently. These selected interventions shall now be taken up in the forthcoming Quarters of this year. These include: -

- Training and capacity building of nature guides from the landscape.
- Developing a community-based, sustainable snow leopard tourism initiative in Rong Valley.

25 youth from the landscape of which 52% are women, began their training to be Nature Guides under the Nature Guide Training programme being organised by SECURE Himalaya project. Experts on biodiversity and sustainable tourism and other field and outdoor skills, from the landscape, have been engaged to train the youth over a period of 30 days. The Administration of UT of Ladakh has proposed that the format and curriculum of the Nature Guide Training Programme will be adopted into the upcoming tourism policy of Ladakh. Additionally, SECURE Himalaya will also guide the department of Tourism in the institutionalisation of nature guides as a recognised formal category of tour guides.

The technical partner for this, MLAS (Mutanchi Lom Aal Shezum) is currently building capacities for 50 beneficiaries from the project villages on enhanced extraction, manufacturing and marketing of nettle-based products in Dzongu, North Sikkim. The main components of this assignment are the training sessions on extraction, processing and product designing based on nettles and a detailed market linkage analysis.

Overall Output Status (mark the output on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria): 4

Exemplary (5) *****	High (4) ****	Satisfactory (3) ***	Poor (2) **	Inadequate (1) *
The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality, and there is evidence that outputs are contributing to targeted outcomes	The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality	The project is expected to achieve targeted outputs with expected levels of quality	The project is expected to partially achieve targeted outputs, with less than expected levels of quality	Project outputs will likely not be achieved and/or are not likely to be effective in supporting the achievement of targeted outcomes

Means of Verification:

Quarterly and annual progress reports by UNDP, Government stakeholders' (including relevant line departments and State Governments) annual reports, and media coverage and records.

Project Output III: Outcome 3: Enhanced enforcement, monitoring and cooperation to reduce wildlife crime and related threats

Output 3.1 Wildlife Agencies enforcement supported through intelligence have information on hotspots and pathways of illegal trade to organize targeted operations against wildlife crime

<p>Output 3.2. Law enforcement agencies are provided with technical support and training to increase capacity for combating wildlife crime</p> <p>Output 3.3. Community based surveillance, monitoring and wildlife crime and conflict prevention system developed and tested</p> <p>Output 3.4 Mechanisms for partnerships on inter-state and transboundary cooperation for tackling wildlife crime and improving species conservation in Himalayan ecosystem are developed and implemented</p>			
Indicator(s)	Baseline	Target(s)	Achievement(s)
<p>Indicator 3.1. Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance</p>	<p>0 (There is no coordinated program for community participation in surveillance and monitoring of wildlife crime)</p>	<p>200 community members actively engaged in wildlife crime monitoring and surveillance in community battalions (At least 20% women) to serve as deterrent to wildlife crime</p>	<p>TRAFFIC has prepared wildlife crime status report of Himachal Pradesh with focus on project landscapes.</p> <p>DPR prepared through Wildlife Institute of India (WII) for the establishment of a Wildlife Forensic Centre.</p>
<p>Indicator 3.2. Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India</p>	<p>0 (a number of trans-boundary plans exists, but coordination is limited)</p>	<p>At least 3 trans-boundary agreements effective and collaborative implementation</p>	<p>Training on combating the illegal wildlife trade and strengthening enforcement with various law enforcement agencies in Feb 2020 at Dehradun, Uttarakhand.</p>
<p>Indicator 3.3. Annual Number of human-wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife</p>	<p>Baseline yet to be validated</p>	<p>At least 50% decrease in HWCs</p>	<p>Human Wildlife Conflicts assessment done, conflict species and locations identified, some baselines generated, species-specific SOP's developed, HWC mitigation strategies suggested for Himachal Pradesh.</p> <p>Development of 30 "Village Voluntary Protection Force" units with 60 volunteers (2/village) as immediate respondents to reduce "Human Wildlife Conflict" is under progress in 30 Villages duly facilitated by SH team with a co-finance by CAMPA scheme as per the order issued by CWLW Uttarakhand in June 2020.</p>

Description of project output level results achieved in 2020:

Indicator 3.1. Number of community members actively volunteering in security monitoring and surveillance

Strengthening wildlife enforcement mechanism and mitigation of wildlife crime & illegal trade in wildlife in SECURE Himalaya Project landscapes

As per the detailed field surveys and analysis of wildlife crime records the partner agency i.e. TRAFFIC has prepared wildlife crime status report of Himachal Pradesh with focus on project landscapes. The surveys in total 54 villages (Lahaul: 14, Pangi: 24 and Kinnaur: 16) was conducted covering 596 systematic household interviews (Pangi 224 households; Lahaul 145 households, Kinnaur 227 households) and reviewing 54 wildlife crime cases reported from Forest and Police Department records of which 39 cases were registered in the last two years, namely 2018 and 2019.

- The crime status report reveals a total of seven mammalian species and one bird species Himalayan Monal *Lophophorus impejanus* were targeted by poachers in the project landscape.
- Poaching of Musk Deer was reported in majority (20) of villages as the most targeted and preferred species. A higher proportion of respondents reported poaching of musk deer in Saichu (64.2%), Ghanghit (58.3%) and Chasak (53.3%). For Asiatic Ibex poaching was reported in nine villages. It is perceived to be high on the list of poachers in Ghanghit (37.6%), Kurchud (35.1%) and Bhujund (35.5%). Even a low proportion of respondents [(Shalkhar (8%); Maling (6.6 %); Nako (4.1%)] reported snow leopard killing as well. Asiatic Black bear and brown bear poaching were reported in 14 and 8 villages respectively. The highest proportion of respondents (43.1%), reporting Goral poaching was observed in Sach village. Himalayan wolf poaching activity was reported in 4 villages of Pangi area. Himalayan Monal poaching was observed in 16 villages.
- Among the flora, illegal extraction of van lehsoun, Karoo and Patish were reported in 29 villages.
- According to the official database, the maximum number of wildlife seizures, 54%, (26 incidents) were of Common leopard in the last two years. Furthermore, seizures have been undertaken for species that do not have their distribution within Himachal Pradesh such as Tiger skin Panthera tigris from Pali in Mandi District and Solan District and Elephant ivory powder from Bilaspur District.
- The highest probabilities of poaching/extraction of plants were reported in Pangi Division, followed by Lahaul sub-division and the least in Kinnaur.

As part of the detailed analysis carried out by TRAFFIC India in 20 of the 27 villages in the project landscape, with 8 being in West Sikkim and 12 in North Sikkim, the following facts have emerged:

- Chirouto (*Swertia chirata*) is the most targeted species in the project site of SECURE Himalaya. It is widely collected and consumed in North and West Sikkim, with West Sikkim being the major District where this collection occurs. A total of 14 project site was reported to collect Chirouto. In North Sikkim, it is collected in the following six sites; Salim Pakel, Leek, Naga Namgor, Hee-Gyathang, Kusung and Sakyong-Pentong while in West Sikkim, it is collected in eight sites, they are Maneybung, Sopakha, Sendrabung, Kyongtey, Yuksam, Topung, Nessa and Labdang. For each of the villages in North and West Sikkim the number of respondents (in percent) is as follows: Salim Pakel, it was reported by 19.05% of respondents; Leek 50% of respondents; Naga Namgor 6.67% of respondents; Hee-Gyathang 12.50% of respondents; Kusung 45% of respondents; Sakyong-Pentong 50% of respondents; Maneybung 60% of respondents; Sopakha 40% of respondents; Sendrabung by all of the respondents. Kyongtey 45.45% of respondents; Yuksam 76.92% of respondents; Topung 83.3% of respondents; Nessa 66.67% of respondents and Labdang, it was reported by all respondents.
- Cordyceps collection is done in 3 villages namely Thangu, Lachen and Lachung in North Sikkim only. It was reported by maximum number of respondents in Thangu (27.27%) then Lachen (12.50%) and the least by Lachung (5%). Jatamansi collection and trade was reported in two villages namely Lachen (3.13%) and Lachung (5%) in North Sikkim district only.
- From the surveys in the project villages of West Sikkim, Musk Deer was reported for meat in Dhoopi and Karjee in West Sikkim and poaching of Barking Deer has been recorded from the Dentam Range West (WL) Forest Division there were six plant species were reported namely Chirouto, Satua, Kurki, Bikhma, Himalayan Yew and Ginseng. Chirouto a targeted species was reported by 71.01% of the interviewees, Kurki by 13.04%, Satua and Bikhma was reported by 5.80% each, Himalayan Yew and Ginseng by 1.45% each

DPR for Wildlife Forensic Laboratory in HP

DPR prepared through Wildlife Institute of India (WII) for the establishment of a Wildlife Forensic Centre. (Grant-in-Aid from MoEF & CC) The centre will be established under existing State forensic Laboratory at Junga. Proposal sent to WCCB for funding.

Drone Pilot intervention in Govind landscape for monitoring & surveillance

A Drone Pilot intervention has been initiated Govind Wildlife Sanctuary. The DFO Purola/DD Govind has submitted a proposal to CWLW Uttarakhand requesting the pilot intervention in certain locations. The proposal includes the mapping of marked proposed

locations, geo coordinates and national and district boundaries. This pilot will further be linked with the forest server established under the project.

A one-day stakeholder consultation of Prevention of Illegal Wildlife Trade was organized in Jammu aimed at bringing together all concerned stakeholders such as Forest/Wildlife Dept., Army/Paramilitary, Postal Services, Airport authorities, Police etc. A detailed discussion was held on the current status of Illegal Wildlife Trade in the region and plan for collaboration to mitigate the same. Capacity building requirements for all stakeholders was also discussed, resulting in development of capacity building plans for the same.

A report has been prepared on best practices and case studies of Snow Leopard Insurance models being operated in other Snow Leopard rangelands. Currently, livestock depredation by snow leopards and other carnivores is compensated for by the local government. However, often the cumbersome process of applying for compensation, the distance between the villages and the government office, and the lack of connectivity deters livestock herders from availing compensation benefits. This increased human-wildlife conflict, herders lose the incentive of rearing livestock, and transactional compensation does not incentivize predator proofing of herding practices. It is in this regard that community-based livestock insurance models have proven to be a success in rangelands of Nepal, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. While the same models cannot be replicated in the Changthang landscape, one needs to adapt and improvise in order to cater to the unique risk factors, and other socio-ecological characteristics of the landscape. The potential livestock model will receive initial support from the government as well as the private sector.

Indicator 3.2. Number of international agreements for enhancing trans-boundary cooperation between China, Nepal, Bhutan and India

Training on combating the illegal wildlife trade and strengthening enforcement

TRAFFIC India organized a one-day workshop with various law enforcement agencies in Feb 2020 at Dehradun, Uttarakhand. 27 (21 males and 6 females) representatives of various agencies have participated in the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to identify the gaps in illegal wildlife trade and to discuss how the enforcement agencies can support the processes and activities of combating the illegal wildlife trade and strengthening enforcement activities in the landscapes. The major outcome of the meeting was as follows.

- 26 BoPs (ITBP) can help forest department in implementation of the enforcement activities along with share information with the forest department and WCCB.
- Site specific Communication materials. Module for training and capacity building of the frontline staff required.
- Communication materials regarding awareness generation needed to be placed in Dehradun Airport, Rail and Bus stations.

Apart from this, agency has also expressed their active involvement in crime control, better coordination and timely response.

Concurrence has been provided from the Union Territory of Ladakh on an Inter-state agreement on mitigating Illegal Trade in Wildlife between 6 Himalayan states and Union Territories. This is a first of its kind agreement between states in India and shall go a long way in ensuring effective coordination and cooperation between provincial governments to ensure prevention of illicit trade in wildlife.

Indicator 3.3. Annual Number of human-wildlife conflicts leading to livestock and crop losses and retaliatory killings of wildlife

Human Wildlife Conflicts assessment and developing a comprehensive strategy for mitigating the HWCs

Assignment on Human Wildlife Conflicts and developing a comprehensive strategy. Assessment done, Conflict species and locations identified, some baselines generated, species-specific SOP's developed, HWC mitigation strategies suggested for Himachal Pradesh.

The following actions were proposed for human wildlife conflict mitigation:

- Monitoring of animal populations
- Creation of Compensation Task Force for
- Awareness and timely settlement of claims
- Temporary watcher facility to prevent crop loss by wild ungulates
- Predator proofing corrals
- Fox lights (Pilot mitigation measure)

- ANIDER (Animal Intrusion Detection and Repellent System; Pilot mitigation measure)
- Awareness campaign to increase enrolment under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

A detailed analysis of the nature, extent and magnitude of HWC has been carried out through sampling in 26 project villages in Sikkim with 214 village interviews and 28 focus group discussions.

The agency has submitted its final report and an SOP for responding to conflict situations. Following are the major observations and recommendations from the same:

- Asiatic Black bears were identified to be the top conflict animals, especially in North Sikkim, both in terms of crop and livestock damage.
- Other conflict species included wild boars, macaques, masked palm civets, barking deer etc.
- The crops reported attacked and damaged most are maize and cardamom. Bears and porcupines raided maize fields primarily during the harvest months of August to October.
- A new and streamlined system of compensation seems necessary if village life in West and North Sikkim is to be protected. As it is, HWC is causing families to reduce their investments of time and labour in agriculture, and to seek alternative employment, whether in daily wage construction, MGNREGA or tourism-related activities.
- The strategies recommended are enhancement of existing compensation norms, creation of district and cluster-based rapid response units, piloting of different innovative solutions based on animal deterrents, bio-fencing.

A three-year micro-level “Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation Management Plans” of three landscapes (Gangotri, Govind, Darma-Byans) developed by project landscape team under the guidance of respective DD/ DFOs to assess the status of HWC in their divisions in the past five years and what required steps/actions have been taken to mitigate such incidents. Based on this assessment, the three-year management plan has been submitted to CWLW, Uttarakhand from landscape.

- Submission of the fifth and final deliverable report for the SECURE Himalaya project component on Human Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy by WII.

Based on which pilot interventions are proposed at 04 sites of project landscapes.

Pilots of Composite Fencing with Agriculture Department, Pangi under Crop Diversification proposal.

An MoA was signed with the Deputy Director Agriculture, Pangi for the implementation of a solar fencing project in the Mojhi village in Pangi landscape on co-finance basis in which the 80 % cost will be borne by the Agriculture Department and the rest 20% will be from SECURE project. The fencing component completed on community agriculture land to mitigate the incidences of crop raiding by wild animals especially black and brown bear. A similar MoA to be signed to Tai Village in Sural Panchayat this year.

HWC MIS strengthening

To promote the MIS 5000 VC printed and shared with forest divisions to circulate among community so that they report HWC cases.

MIS dashboard updated as per dept requirement. Data Entry work is progressively going on. Based on the data analysis, the top 12 Hotspot Human-Wildlife Conflict areas came in light to setup up the Awareness camp.

Village Voluntary Protection Force

Development of 30 “Village Voluntary Protection Force” units with 60 volunteers (2/village) as immediate respondents to reduce “Human Wildlife Conflict” is under progress in 30 Villages duly facilitated by SH team with a co-finance by CAMPA scheme as per the order issued by CWLW Uttarakhand on 24th June 2020. A notification was issued by Uttarakhand forest and wildlife department on 4th November 2019 to constitute VVPF in HWC hotspot areas.

Successful rescue-operations in Ladakh for the following wild animals has been done by the wildlife department in the landscape: - 3 Snow Leopards, 2 Eurasian Lynx, 2 Asiatic Ibex, 1 Wolf, 1 Red Fox, 1 Blue Sheep and 5 other species from the landscape conducted successfully. The said animals were rescued post various accidents after which they were brought to rescue facility, rehabilitated and released successfully into the wild. The community involved were also sensitized to avoid retaliation along with ensuring future cooperation.

As part of the strategy to mitigate human-wildlife conflict, participatory predator-proofing of corral pens in Changthang landscape is nearing completion. The said initiative is one of a kind wherein, the project is providing for some basic raw material in form of chain-link fencing and wood; whereas the community contributes with stones and their labor. Through this initiative 26 predator-proof corral pens are being built across 7 severe conflict-prone villages in the landscape, namely; Sumdo Gongma, Shriyul, Relay

Iching, Samad Rokchen, Khera Pullu, Yurgo and Mugleb, with the eventual outcome of reduced cases of human-wildlife conflict in the region.				
Overall Output Status (mark the output on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria): 4				
Exemplary (5) *****	High (4) ****	Satisfactory (3) ***	Poor (2) **	Inadequate (1) *
The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality, and there is evidence that outputs are contributing to targeted outcomes	The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality	The project is expected to achieve targeted outputs with expected levels of quality	The project is expected to partially achieve targeted outputs, with less than expected levels of quality	Project outputs will likely not be achieved and/or are not likely to be effective in supporting the achievement of targeted outcomes
Means of Verification: Quarterly and annual progress reports by UNDP, Government stakeholders' (including relevant line departments and State Governments) annual reports, and media coverage and records.				

Project Output IV: Outcome 4: Improved knowledge and information systems for promotion of landscape conservation approaches			
Output 4.1. Project implementation achievements inform policy and legislative changes for conservation of high range Himalayan areas			
Output 4.2. Communication and gender strategies and awareness campaigns to increase awareness on conservation, sustainable resource use and reduction of wildlife crime, and mainstream gender in promotion of community-based conservation developed and implemented at national, state and local Level			
Indicator(s)	Baseline	Target(s)	Achievement(s)
Indicator 4.1: Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned	0 (A number of areas where policy reform is required exists)	3 policy recommendations officially approved and implemented	Framework on high altitude wetlands developed SBSAP for UK, HP and Sikkim drafted
Indicator 4.2: Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives	0 (A few best practice publications etc., but the project will make efforts for additional project	10 best practices documented, disseminated and up scaled in non-project areas	SECURE Magazine launched by Hon'ble Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh in the 9th meeting of State Wildlife Board

	specific lessons to be documented)		<p>meeting in H.P Secretariat, Shimla on 29th June 2020.</p> <p>A unique Snow Leopard Conservation Centre is being designed in Gangotri landscape to be developed as India's 1st SL conservation centre. The design part is completed, approved by SPSC, funds have been raised from various state schemes, the construction phase is about to be started soon. This will become a good example of co-financing.</p>
Indicator 4.3: Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	Baseline yet to be validated	50% of participating households have good awareness of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits	<p>Launch of SECURE Himalaya Youth Video Fellowship Films on the International Mountain Day, December 11, 2020.</p> <p>In Gangotri Landscape a knowledge management centre has been strengthened through a collection of books related to Wildlife, Forest, Tourism, Livelihood.</p> <p>A documentary film was made to encourage people's participation in fighting forest fires in the landscape.</p>

			1000 saplings were planted covering 14 villages of Gangotri landscape through a plantation drive on a local cultural festival known as “Harela Parv”.
<p>Description of project output level <u>results achieved</u> in 2020:</p> <p><u>Indicator 4.1: Number of policy and regulatory mechanisms for improved management of high Himalayan areas provisioned</u></p> <p>Policy Documents/Plans prepared under project</p> <p>Himachal Pradesh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model Management Plan for high altitude Chandertaal wetland drafted. ▪ SOP’s for model management planning of high-altitude wetlands ready ▪ State Biodiversity strategy and action plan validated in the validation workshop held on 22nd Dec 2020 by HP State Biodiversity Board and will be finalised by agency by March 2021 ▪ High Conservation areas identified, delineated and management recommendations drafted. ▪ Participatory integrated landscape-level management strategy drafted for Lahaul-Pangi landscape ▪ 3 BHS’s, 1 CR, 2 MPCDA’s under process/proposed <p>Sikkim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model Management Plan for high altitude Gurudongmar wetland complex drafted. ▪ SOP’s for model management planning of high-altitude wetlands ready ▪ State Biodiversity strategy and action plan drafted through NIPFP and presented through a validation workshop. The draft copy is being revised and is to be finally submitted by March 2021. ▪ High Conservation areas identified, delineated and management recommendations drafted. ▪ Participatory integrated landscape-level management strategy drafted for Khangchendzonga-Upper Teesta Landscape <p>Meeting conducted with Global Tiger Forum in November 2020 to discuss the status of information available on Big cats in Sikkim.</p> <p>This agency has undertaken an assignment in Sikkim related to preparation of a big cat conservation masterplan for Sikkim in collaboration with SECURE Himalaya, wherein they had requested all agencies undertaking assignments under SECURE Himalaya Sikkim to briefly present their progress and salient findings related to their individual assignments. For the same purpose, a webinar was organized on 11th November where all the agencies engaged under SECURE Himalaya in Sikkim presented their findings and recommendations. It was decided that GTF will review the work and get back if they need further information.</p> <p><u>Indicator 4.2: Number of project best practices used in development and implementation of other conservation initiatives</u></p> <p>Launch of SECURE Magazine</p> <p>Himachal Pradesh</p> <p>SECURE Magazine launched by Hon’ble Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh in the 9th meeting of State Wildlife Board meeting in H.P Secretariat, Shimla on 29th June 2020. This magazine on the ‘SECURE Himalaya Project’ in Himachal Pradesh highlights the unique geography and culture of these landscapes, and the challenges they face in balancing conservation with sustainable livelihoods. It also highlights the key finds of some assignments under SECURE project like Livelihoods, Financial inclusion, Human wildlife conflicts, High conservation value areas, Landscape maps etc.</p> <p>Uttarakhand</p>			

CMS COP 13- The State Forest Department participated in CMS COP13 that was held at Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India from 15-22 February 2020. The SECURE Project team assisted in the following manner –

- Exhibition/Stall of SFD for 5 days, where a total of 79 national and international visitors visited the stall, collected publications and knowledge products of various schemes and projects of the department
- Developed an online app for immediately sharing the digital copies of all the above publications.
- Facilitated the side event of all SL range states in India Pavilion.
- Snow leopard Mascots performed a skit and quiz at India pavilion and spread the important message of biodiversity conservation at high range Himalayas.
- A case study of Skill development of youth in SL conservation through various courses in NIM, WII, FRI, Radio and Video fellowships was shared and appreciated in CMS-COP 13 hosted by India.

Establishment of Snow Leopard Conservation Centre at Lanka near Gangotri National Park –

A unique Snow Leopard Conservation Centre is being designed in Gangotri landscape to be developed as India's 1st SL conservation centre. The design part is completed, approved by SPSC, funds have been raised from various state schemes, the construction phase is about to be started soon. This will become a good example of co-financing.



Ladakh

The SECURE Himalaya team from the Union Territory of Ladakh participated at the CMS COP 13 held at Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India. The team showcased the various best practices of the SECURE Himalaya project to a diverse audience in events held at the Convention. Relevant initiatives such as the novel bio-digester, participatory bird survey and ringing programme, rescue and release of carnivores etc. were showcased. Apart from this, the gaps in implementation of CMS priorities in Ladakh were addressed and plans were drafted for furthering CMS priorities in the Ladakh landscape. Partnerships for furthering CMS priorities in Ladakh were also successfully identified.

A booklet on the valuation of ecosystem services in high Himalayan mountain landscape was prepared. This booklet covers the basic methodologies that could be adopted and implemented for valuation, which can be used by policymakers/researchers and wider audiences as it offers practical guidance for types of valuation techniques, fundamentals of different techniques, data and information required for conducting such estimation and finally the application of the valuation study for overall impact assessment.

Launch of SECURE Himalaya Sikkim environmental awareness posters

Sikkim

On the occasion of World Environment Day 2020, a series of posters on awareness on different aspects of Environment & biodiversity, including human-wildlife conflict, illegal wildlife trade, bat conservation was launched at the State Function through the Honourable Governor and the Honourable Chief Minister of Sikkim. The same posters were also widely circulated through social media platforms to increase outreach.

Indicator 4.3: Percentage of participating households aware of conservation, sustainable natural resource use and wildlife crime prevention benefits

Developing a communication strategy with tools and implementation plans to sensitize stakeholders and public involved which can be consecutively linked to a wider policy and public consciousness framework

Himachal Pradesh

- The **International Snow Leopard Day 2020** was celebrated by Himachal Pradesh Forest Department Wildlife Wing in association Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, the communication agency hired by UNDP for SECURE Himalaya Project. The event was organized under Gol- GEF UNDP- SECURE Himalaya Project which is being implemented by H.P. Forest Department in Lahual-Pangi Landscape for conservation of the Snow Leopard the elusive and endangered animal found in the landscape.
- A **short video animation** formed on safe driving to stop road killing which will be the first step in a state-wide campaign on it. It will be launched by Hon'ble Forest Minister of State in Wildlife Week Closing ceremony in Oct. 2020.
- **SECURE Table Calendar 2021** designed with beautiful animal/bird hand drawn illustration
- **Tour Operators Workshop:** As a part of the SECURE Himalaya Project by UNDP, with the HP Forest Department as the implementing agency, a workshop was organised by Srishti Films, the Communication agency of the project, who invited many tour operators of the region for a conversation on the Tourism sector over tea and snacks. Participants brought in expertise and experience from the sectors of adventure tourism, hospitality, trekking, mountain biking etc. As the scope of the landscape-based project, SECURE Himalaya, is directly concerned with the livelihoods and economy of the Pangi-Lahaul region, the main objective of the workshop was to understand the perspective of one of the key stakeholders of the tourism sector. All participants actively contributed to the conversation moderated by Srishti Films, have shared about several challenges that affect not just the tourism sector, but also local communities and the local economy.
- Communication material was designed for the project and further printed i.e. Note Pads, Fact Sheets, Brochures, Folders, Calendars. These materials are being used in the various events and meetings of SECURE Himalaya project.

Uttarakhand

Total 15 sign boards placed to earmark the "Bio-diversity rich area in Gangotri landscape", which is 10000 Hac. Approx. It sensitization various stakeholders providing information about the rich Biodiversity of specific locations, earmark sensitive areas, Do & Don'ts for its conservation.

The **Uttarakhand Spring Bird Festival** was organized from February 7th - 9th, 2020, in Kyari village at Pawalgarh Conservation Reserve situated near Ramnagar (Nainital) with following objective

(i) To increase awareness on bird conservation.

(ii) To promote community-based tourism enterprise.

(iii) To provide an opportunity for networking to bird guides and rural tourism operators of the landscape.

- A total of 32 participants (29 males and 03 females) from SECURE Landscapes have participated in the festival, which includes trainees of Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (10 youth from Gangotri-Govind), Parataxonoists (10 youth from Gangotri-Govind & Darma-Byans) Local community, local tour operators and local guides (8 no. Gangotri-Govind & Darma-Byans).
- Few Participants came from Sikkim-3, Kerela-1.
- Wildlife Department 2nd Newsletter "Vanyajeev" prepared by SECURE team, was launched by Hon'ble Minister Forest and Env. Government of Uttarakhand in the inaugural ceremony of the event.
- During the festival A stakeholder consultation programms was organized by Titli Trust in Chunakhand, Ramnagar. The participants were oriented on various possibilities of being involved in ecotourism associated with bird watching activities, Trekking, Heritage walk/trails, Homestay etc.
- A stall to showcase SECURE knowledge products and project efforts was facilitated by the project team. Total 42 visitor had visited the exhibition/stall for three days.

In Gangotri Landscape a knowledge management centre has been strengthened through a collection of books related to Wildlife, Forest, Tourism, Livelihood. The centre aims to provide continuous support to forest officials with updated information, tools and techniques related to wildlife conservation, combat wildlife crime and reduce man animal conflict.

A documentary film was made to encourage people's participation in fighting forest fires in the landscape. The target is to make at least 2000 community members (50% women) aware of forest fire prevention, Surveillance and active management of the area.

The efforts can save approx. 20,000 Hac. of the area for further development under sustainable management of the forest.

Celebration of Wildlife Week, in which Inauguration of Snow Leopard, Brown Bear, Monal and Blue Sheep posters, Brochures and Poster prepared by TRAFFIC on illegal hunting, short animation film on bear-human conflict, Legal Literacy Manual, Human Wildlife Conflict Bulletin Board.

Wildlife week celebration at Darma-Byans Landscape, Pithoragarh that focused to aware the tourist on wildlife conservation and their habitat in landscape. Total 25 tourists have participated in the event.

The SPMU team has simplified of Legal literacy Manual (LLM), translated into Hindi. Agency has been engaged to deliver legal training in the landscapes.

Facilitation of Himal Sanrakshak application at landscape level done and around 500 applications submitted.

Launch of SECURE Himalaya Youth Video Fellowship Films on the International Mountain Day, December 11, 2020. A total of 8 films prepared on different aspects of SECURE Himalaya project landscape have been screened. Similarly, this, a total of 6 community radio episodes were also launched in Kumaon Vani radio station developed by trained radio fellows.

Forest plantation activity in project landscapes: The landscape project unit converged with District Administration and other schemes of forest department to spread awareness among the community on environment protection and tree plantation. 1000 samplings were planted covering 14 villages of Gangotri landscape through a plantation drive on a local cultural festival known as "Harela Parv".

Nature Education and outreach for schools. The said training & capacity building programme was tailored for eventual application in high-altitude landscapes such as Ladakh. The programme was a huge contribution in building capacities of the government of Union Territory of Ladakh and is expected to now result in better infrastructure and management of key flora/fauna and habitats in the landscape. After the culmination of the training programme all participants were given certificates for due completion of the course by the competent authority.

SECURE Himalaya took the initiative of mainstreaming nature-based education in the curriculum of schools in the landscape. The objective was to engage children in conversations around the value and importance of the resources in their landscape. Children would be made to reflect on the dependency of their communities on biodiversity and ecosystems while also questioning human impact on the same. A storybook and workbook have been developed in this endeavour. In the next quarter, the developed material will be reviewed by relevant stakeholders in the government and a procedure for the introduction of the books into the next academic year shall be determined. A total of 150 school children are being targeted under this activity.

International Snow Leopard Day Events 23rd October: International Snow Leopard day was celebrated with multiple events. Webinar on International Snow Leopard day: On the eve of the ISL day a webinar was organized on "Environment, Wildlife, Snow Leopard in Sikkim" organized by SECURE Himalaya Sikkim on 22nd October 2020 at 5:30 PM. The webinar was Facebook live. It was moderated by State Project Officer and there were four subject matter experts on various topics.

Short Poem Competition and "You decide the end" drawing competition was organized.

State-level review workshop: State-level review workshop was organized on 23rd October with participation from forest department, animal husbandry, college students, ITBP and SSB officials and NGOS like WWF and TRAFFIC. As the event Chief Guest, the Hon'ble Forest Minister Karma Lodey Bhutia released the SECURE masks (made by SHGs) and the WISA factsheets (Armed forces manual and Gurudongmar wetland complex).

Landscape level meetings on ISL: ISL day was celebrated in Yuksam, West Sikkim with KNP staff, Himal Rakshaks and local NGOs. Second interaction was conducted in Hee Gyethang Dzongu Secondary school with the help of local NGO MLAS. SECURE masks were distributed prepared by SHG in East Sikkim. A small interaction was also planned with students of Life vision Academy private school.

III. CMS Vatavaran Workshop: A webinar on Environment and Wildlife Reporting in the Indian Himalayan Region (Sikkim) was organized on 13th and 14th October 2020 through Zoom online Virtual Conference. The webinar was organized by SECURE Himalaya Sikkim in collaboration with CMS Vatavaran. This webinar is a part of a series to involve and orient local regional media professionals on wildlife and Environment concerns of Sikkim with the purpose of improving the quality and quantity of reportage on conservation issues in the IHR region.

<p>The State level Stakeholders webinar on Geographical Indication (GI) on 12th November: The webinar on discussing the status of GI was organized on 12.11.2020. Participants were oriented on Geographical Indications registration, provisions for registration, process of registration, certification and advantage of registration and business practices. It was attended by various stakeholders such as local artisans, Sikkim Forest Department and State Biodiversity Board (SBB), State Medicinal Plants Board (SMPB), Department of Textile and handicrafts, Department of Science & Technology,</p>				
<p>Overall Output Status (mark the output on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria): 4</p>				
<p>Exemplary (5) *****</p>	<p>High (4) ****</p>	<p>Satisfactory (3) ***</p>	<p>Poor (2) **</p>	<p>Inadequate (1) *</p>
<p>The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality, and there is evidence that outputs are contributing to targeted outcomes</p>	<p>The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality</p>	<p>The project is expected to achieve targeted outputs with expected levels of quality</p>	<p>The project is expected to partially achieve targeted outputs, with less than expected levels of quality</p>	<p>Project outputs will likely not be achieved and/or are not likely to be effective in supporting the achievement of targeted outcomes</p>
<p>Means of Verification Quarterly and annual progress reports by UNDP, Government stakeholders' (including relevant line departments and State Governments) annual reports, and media coverage and records.</p>				

Project Management Expenses	
Planned Activity	Progress
<p>Conduct SPSC and STC meetings to review the progress of implementation of the project</p> <p>LLPMC meeting at Keylong, Lahaul Landscape</p>	<p>Himachal Pradesh</p> <p>Following meetings were held to review the progress of the project implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The third meeting of State Project Steering Committee for the GoI-UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalaya project was held on 7th March 2020 under the Chairmanship of Sh. Ram Subagh Singh, Addl. Chief Secretary (Forests), Government of H.P. - The 3rd meeting of the State Project Steering Committee of SECURE Himalaya-Sikkim was held on February 12, 2020 at the Forest Secretariat, Gangtok and was chaired by Shri Karma L. Bhutia, Honorable Minister for Forest, Government of Sikkim. Shri M.L. Srivastava, Principal Secretary-cum-PCCF & State Project Director, SECURE Himalaya-Sikkim was also present in the meeting alongside other committee members and special invitees including senior officers of the forest department. - The first meeting of Landscape Level Project Management Committee for the GoI-UNDP-GEF SECURE Himalaya Project "Securing livelihoods, conservation, sustainable use and

	<p>restoration of high range Himalayan ecosystems (SECURE Himalaya)” Project was held on 26th October 2020 at 02:30 pm under the Chairmanship of Sh. Pankaj Rai, the Deputy Commissioner Lahaul & Spiti district, Government of H.P.</p> <p>Uttarakhand</p> <p>a) A meeting to review the study assignments was held on Feb 24, 2020 In a meeting it was suggested that agency should share the report with each other to avoid any discrepancy and any kind of overlapping in the outcomes of all the assignments and studies.</p> <p>b) The SPSC meeting was held on Feb 25, 2020 In the meeting, convergence and co-finance action plan for the upcoming financial year 2020-21 was approved.</p> <p>Key highlights were-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the model of other projects working on livelihood enhancement in the state and prepare a strategy for the implementation of Secure Himalaya Project. • Send a proposal to the government regarding the formation of Landscape Level Project Steering Committee (LLPSC) in both the Districts. • Conduct a meeting to explain the status on collection & compilation of information from entire state in Wildlife MIS, in which all divisional forest officers and deputy directors will be called to participate. <p>(C) The project, Inception/Mid-term workshop was organized in Dharali Gangotri landscape on 24/10/2020.Total 50 Multi-stakeholders including DFO Uttarakashi, BMC chairman, Van Panchayat Sarpanchs, Gram-Pradhans & Eco-development committee chairman, representatives from line departments actively participated in the workshop. The discussion was focused on development of Eco-tourism and marketing of Handicraft-Handloom products considering the most affected sector during COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outcome of the workshop was identification of new avenues to involve atleast 200 unemployed youth/women in employment schemes initiated by the department with the help of project are as follows: (i). Gangori- Vatika development, (ii). nursery development in Sone -Gaard (iil). Lake & biodiversity park development & Planning in Harsil; (iv). Snow leopard conservation center designed and constructed etc. Around 50 youths will be engaged in adventure tourism, Home stay and bird watching guides. <p>(d)The first Landscape Level Project Management Committee meeting was held in Uttarkashi on 21st September 2020 under the Chairmanship of DM Uttarkashi. The chair discussed the field implementation of the project to date and the progress of various assignments given to the agencies under the project.</p>
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4. Project Risks and Issues

This section identifies and analyses project risks and issues that:

*1) had an impact on project deliverables¹ (quality, schedule, etc.) During the reporting period, or
2) were newly identified during the reporting period and are being addressed by the project (in the case of risks, “addressed” means to mitigate their effects or decrease the likelihood of impact, and in the case of issues, how to resolve them).*

Brief overall narrative of project risks and issues:

RISKS

Project Risk 1: COVID-19 global pandemic and associated lockdown have created risk to live and livelihoods of the communities in the landscape.

Actions taken: A detailed analysis of impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on project landscapes was undertaken through the project. Tourism emerged as the most vulnerable sector, followed by employment of migrant workers. Activities related to facilitating sustainable tourism and capacity development of local communities have been included accordingly in the current year’ Annual Work Plan.

Project Risk 2: Additionally, risk of increasing road mortality in the wake of phase-wise unlocking across the country and project States/UT was identified.

Actions taken: UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Govt. of India, has launched a campaign to address the matter at the national, State/UT and landscape levels. Print and social media will be duly used to reach out to stakeholders at all levels.

ISSUES

Project Issue 1: Project implementation in 2020 has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The government implemented a complete lockdown in April 2020. The project reported impacts from limited staff in government, slowing down file moments and delaying key decisions; delays in Project Steering Committee and Technical Committee meetings; delays in constituting a new Project Steering Committee in Ladakh after bifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir into the Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir; and an inability to visit project villages to consult with communities members and community institutions like Biodiversity Management Committees and Van Panchayats or conduct field visits to collect technical data which slowed down deliverables of technical partners. The project reported high impacts of COVID-19 on project beneficiaries through negative impacts on socio-economic

¹ A deliverable is defined as the result of an activity or in other terms the product which contributes to the achievement of project outputs).

situations at project landscapes, especially on households that depend on the tourism sector.

Actions taken: The COVID-19 crisis impacted the project activities significantly as most project landscapes start becoming accessible from March onwards. However, alternative strategies were set in place. For capacity building and training activities, virtual platforms were activated. Technical agencies with assignments on the ground were guided to recruit local staff (including those trained under the project) to continue with their fieldwork. The project team has conducted a rapid situational analysis and realigned the livelihood plans to cater to the emerging needs of the community stakeholders.

The timeline for implementation of tourism-based alternative livelihood promotion activities will be reviewed due to complete lockdown of the sector to confirm feasibility and resilience of project livelihood support. Other livelihoods-based activities have also been delayed, although these implementation challenges are expected to improve over the next few months as restrictions are slowly lifted. In support of COVID-19 recovery, the project will focus livelihoods improvements towards the most impacted communities. As part of the effort to prevent future pandemics, the project will be integrating information on zoonotic virus and its prevention in awareness-raising activities as part of its focus on illegal wildlife trade and promoting a One Health approach. Rapid assessments will be conducted in the project landscapes to assess at-risk species and areas and suggest management measures to increase disease preparedness and response to prevent future pandemics. These do not require any changes to project scope or budget, rather a rescheduling/profiling of existing activities to account for delays and capitalize on opportunities.

Project Issue 2: Fund Transfer related concerns

The Sanction order for year 2020-21 was released by MoEFCC extremely late in the last week of Dec 2020 for Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim. Further, the project has been put under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) modality by Himachal Pradesh government as per the sanction order. Thus, the process of streamlining fund flow under DBT may take considerable time. In Uttarakhand, transfer of funds to state forest departments is being delayed due to change in government modalities of fund flow. Sikkim Government has put the project under the State Treasury Mode, with final approval for financial release being granted by Finance Department. The systems and protocols under the same are elaborate, therefore requiring considerable time to be spent for each approval.

Actions taken: NPMU and MoEFCC have been raising these concerns to the relevant state government departments.

Project issue 3:

Extreme weather conditions (Snowfall/road blockage) in the project landscapes results in limited working period ranging between 4-5 months. Majority of the project landscapes become inaccessible during October -April.

Actions taken: The implementation of the activities are planned in such a way that maximum output can be derived during the year. However, the COVID-19 related restrictions further slowed down the implementation.

a. Updated Project Risks and Actions

Project Risk 1: COVID-19 global pandemic and associated lockdown have created risk to live and livelihoods of the communities in the landscape.

Actions taken: A detailed analysis of impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on project landscapes was undertaken through the project. Tourism emerged as the most vulnerable sector, followed by employment of migrant workers. Activities related to facilitating sustainable tourism and capacity development of local communities have been included accordingly in the current year' Annual Work Plan.

b. Updated Project Issues and Actions

Project Issue 1: Project implementation in 2020 has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The government implemented a complete lockdown in April 2020. The project reported impacts from limited staff in government, slowing down file moments and delaying key decisions; delays in Project Steering Committee and Technical Committee meetings; delays in constituting a new Project Steering Committee in Ladakh after bifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir into the Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir; and an inability to visit project villages to consult with communities members and community institutions like Biodiversity Management Committees and Van Panchayats or conduct field visits to collect technical data which slowed down deliverables of technical partners. The project reported high impacts of COVID-19 on project beneficiaries through negative impacts on socio-economic situations at project landscapes, especially on households that depend on the tourism sector.

Actions taken: The COVID-19 crisis impacted the project activities significantly as most project landscapes start becoming accessible from March onwards. However, alternative strategies were set in place. For capacity building and training activities, virtual platforms were activated. Technical agencies with assignments on the ground were guided to recruit local staff (including those trained under the project) to continue with their fieldwork. The project team has conducted a rapid situational analysis and realigned the livelihood plans to cater to the emerging needs of the community stakeholders.

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5. Lessons Learned

This section should capture the lessons learned to ensure on-going learning, knowledge sharing and communication within the organisation and with the partners/donors. It should include analysis on the following contents:

- 1) *Key project successes and factors which supported these successes;*
- 2) *Difficulties encountered and measures taken to overcome these difficulties;*
- 3) *Analysis on what could have been done differently / better to attain the project results;*
- 4) *Recommendations to improve future programming.*

(Suggested length – half a page to 1 page)

In the first year of implementation, there were delays while the National and State Project Management mechanisms were being set up, after which the landscapes became inaccessible due to harsh weather. However, the project has picked up pace this year and there has been substantial implementation on the ground.

KEY PROJECT SUCCESSES

- The project has contributed towards skill and capacity development of local communities, especially women, in the project landscapes. For example, local communities were involved in biodiversity surveys in Changthang, Ladakh; local youth were trained on mountaineering, para-taxonomy, Peoples' Biodiversity Register (PBR) preparation and eco-tourism in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, leading to employment in respective sectors. Himal Rakshaks have been identified in Sikkim as an important group of local.
- Climate smart energy solutions, e.g, bio-gas stoves for cooking, solar-based appliances for space and water heating, have been piloted to reduce dependency on natural resources, especially during extreme weather conditions.
- The project is implementing conflict mitigation measures through bio-fencing, crop guarding and predator proofing livestock corrals, thereby preventing loss of livestock and agricultural produce.
- Awareness of communities has been increased on the importance on financial inclusion and using formal institutions to improve access to credit, insurance and other financial services, especially

for women for whom this can be an effective tool to empower and mainstream them in major financial decisions of the household.

- The project has facilitated participation of local communities, especially women, in international events and conferences, e.g. Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Program's Steering Committee Meeting held in New Delhi during October 2019. This offered the local people from extremely remote areas of the Indian Himalayas an opportunity to interact with delegates from other parts of the country as well as other nations, highlight their concerns for environment and initiatives being taken by them locally, and learn from best practices being implemented in other areas.
- The project is engaging with children to impart nature education, awareness on environment and conservation of natural resources across the project States/UT, to create future stewards and also influence the elders in their families to work towards environmental conservation.
- The project has been putting extra effort to ensure gender mainstreaming in all the components. There are sectors such as adventure tourism where the participation of women is negligible in the project area, and this is being addressed. In the project landscape the women play important role in agriculture, animal husbandry and forest sectors.
- Special efforts have been undertaken to enhance participation of women in decision making and reducing drudgery in day to day tasks and livelihood activities so that their participation in consultative activities can be increased. For example, in institutions like BMCs membership and participation of women is being ensured, promotion of technologies such as equipment for value addition of produce are being provided to women groups for drudgery reduction, energy efficient solutions are being implemented to reduce dependency on natural resources, especially wood for fuel which involves a lot of time and effort in collection.
- With the launch of the Snow Leopard Population Assessment for India (SPAI) methodology, the framework for snow leopard population assessment has been set in place and government staff as well as community members are being trained to undertake field surveys.
- Around 30 capacity building and training programmes have been conducted across all project areas on both conservation and livelihood areas impacting more than 1,500 stakeholders. Inception workshops and community consultation have been conducted in all project landscapes. Community-based institutions including Biodiversity Management Committees, Van Panchayats and Praja Mandals have been established and strengthened to mainstream their participation in biodiversity monitoring and conservation.
- Technology based interventions to mitigate illegal trade in wildlife and human wildlife conflict have been put in place to ensure better management through accurate data collection and enhanced monitoring.
- Project insights and best practices shared with over 1,000 delegates through global partnerships for South-South Cooperation like Global Wildlife Program (GWP), Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) as well as international UN conventions including the UNCCD and CMS COPs.

KEY CHALLENGES

The COVID-19 crisis impacted the project activities significantly as most project landscapes start becoming accessible from March onwards. However, alternative strategies were set in place. For capacity building and training activities, virtual platforms were activated. Technical agencies with assignments on the ground were guided to recruit local staff (including those trained under the project) to continue with their fieldwork. The project team has conducted a rapid situational analysis and realigned the livelihood plans to cater to the emerging needs of the community stakeholders.

Extreme weather conditions (Snowfall/road blockage) in the project landscapes results in limited working period ranging between 4-5 months. Majority of the project landscapes become inaccessible during October -April. The implementation of the activities are planned in such a way that maximum output can be derived during the year. However, the COVID-19 related restrictions further slowed down the implementation.

The Sanction order for year 2020-21 was released by MoEFCC extremely late in the last week of Dec 2020 for Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim. Further, the project has been put under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) modality by Himachal Pradesh government as per the sanction order. Thus, the process of streamlining fund flow under DBT may take considerable time. In Uttarakhand, transfer of funds to state forest departments is being delayed due to change in government modalities of fund flow. Sikkim Government has put the project under the State Treasury Mode, with final approval for financial release being granted by Finance Department. The systems and protocols under the same are elaborate, therefore requiring considerable time to be spent for each approval. The NPMU and MoEFCC have been raising these concerns to the relevant state government departments.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Finalize a consolidated project-level SESP based on the five-landscape level SESP and thereafter review the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and update as needed to reflect any new risks or updated virtual engagement measures.
- Strengthen attention on M&E and ensure finalization of the outstanding baselines and submission of these to Bangkok, along with collation and synthesis of clear data against targets.
- Maintain close attention on delivery to correct as far as possible for slippages due to COVID-19 impacts.
- Continue efforts to recruit a national project manager to take overall leadership and coordination of the PMU and State-based efforts.
- Continue excellent attention on best practices and knowledge exchange, including sharing with the GWP knowledge exchange platform as opportunities arise.

6. The Way Forward/ Key Priorities for 2021

This section should summarize the achievements, challenges and lessons learned as well as explain the way forward, including relevance of the project and necessary revisions that will be made to the project and plans of the upcoming reporting period. Any funding gaps, resource requirements as well as further partner engagement plans can be specified in this section. This should include any modifications that need to be made to indicators, baselines, targets as well data collection and monitoring to track progress

*If this is a Final Report and if applicable, also mention on sustainability of the project and/or plans on future projects that may supplement / scale up the achievements of this project.
(Suggested length – half a page to 1 page)*

The project is working in some of the remotest landscapes of the country characterized by challenging terrain, harsh weather and marginalized communities. To strengthen conservation mechanisms, the project is implementing a landscape-based approach by mainstreaming community participation in conservation, create opportunities for alternative and augmenting existing livelihoods, and enhancing capacities of managers and frontline staff in addressing the larger issue of illegal trade in wildlife.

Key Priorities for 2021:

- Mainstreaming the One Health Approach in the SECURE landscapes to build resilience against future zoonotic outbreaks.
- Support communities in livelihood promotion through pilots on ecotourism, solid waste management, natural fibre based handloom and handicrafts. These would not only support the livelihoods but will also promote sustainable management of natural resources.
 - Product design, diversification and marketing of traditional handloom and handicraft products (bagori wool, nettle fibre/Bamboo etc.) mainly with women community members.
- Integrating coordination to combat IWT through convergence
- Framework and guidelines for preparation of Landscape Management Strategy for conservation developed in consultation with the stakeholders, experts, and Ministry
- 100 Community Volunteer trained and engaged as Himal Sanrakshak in snow leopard range five states (UT of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh)
- Capacity building of 100 frontline staff conducted on wildlife enforcement mechanism and mitigation of wildlife crime & illegal trade
- 800 households supported for implementing improved and diversified livelihood strategies in 6 landscapes across 3 states and 1 Union Territory
- 10 Knowledge material prepared on Illegal trade in wildlife and Human Wildlife Conflict and legal literacy modules for frontline government staff, armed forces, line departments and communities in Himalaya Landscapes

Anusha Sharma

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