



GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

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GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	GEF-8 Inclusive Conservation Initiative		
Region:	Global	GEF Project ID:	
Country(ies):	tbd	Type of Project	FSP
GEF Agency(ies):	WWF	GEF Agency Project ID:	G0065
Anticipated Executing Entity(s) and Type:	WWF	GEF AGENCY	
		(choose executing agency type)	
GEF Focal Area(s):	BD	Submission Date:	September 20, 2024 October 23, 2024
Type of Trust Fund:	GEFTF	Project Duration (Months)	60
GEF Project Grant: (a)	22,535,780	GEF Project Non-Grant (b)	n/a
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	2,028,220	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant: (d)	n/a
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	24,564,000	Total Co-financing:	
PPG Amount (e):	400,000	PPG Agency Fee(s) (f):	36,000
Total GEF Resources (a+b+c+d+e+f)	25,000,000		
Project Tags:	<input type="checkbox"/> CBIT <input type="checkbox"/> NGI <input type="checkbox"/> SGP <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation		
Project Sector (CCM only)	(select)		

Project Summary***

Section Instructions:

Provide a brief summary description of the project, including: (i) what is the problem and issues to be addressed? (ii) what are the project objectives, and if the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved? (iii), how will this be achieved (approach to deliver on objectives), and (iv) what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits, and other key expected results. The purpose of the summary is to provide a short, coherent summary for readers. The explanation and justification of the project should be in section B “project description”. (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

***POP-UP material start

Please provide a summary of the proposed project. A brief description of what is the problem to be addressed; what is the project’s objective; how is this objective to be achieved; and what are expected outcomes (GEBs and/or adaptation benefits). If the project is an NGI, please briefly mention the financial structure of the project. Be explicit about the project’s location, and the sectors it covers. If the project is intended to be transformative, or innovative, briefly explain how this ambition will be achieved, and how barriers or enablers will be addressed.

***POP-UP material end

GEF-8 ICI is being launched at a time of profound ecological degradation and biodiversity loss driven by land conversion for agricultural and urban use, intensifying climate change-related events, direct exploitation of natural resources,

pollution, and invasive species¹. These factors are exacerbating pressures and threats to Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPs and LCs), their territories, lands, waters, resources, and the biodiversity they conserve (referred to hereon as “territories, lands, waters and resources”). In tandem, recognition of IPs’ and LCs’ contributions to Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs), commitments to support them in securing land and tenure rights, and the use of their traditional knowledge to steward their territories, lands, waters and resources, are growing yet remain insufficient. This is resulting in IPs and LCs being under-supported at this important time as threats continue to grow and when their solutions are critical to achieving global biodiversity and climate goals. The GEF-8 ICI seeks to directly address this nexus of issues.

Specifically, the project’s objective is to: **Increase resources, organizational strength, and recognition for IPs and LCs governance and stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources to deliver global environmental benefits.** This will be achieved by directing eighty percent of the project grant’s support to IPs, LCs and their organizations, including for their self-determined priorities and self-strengthening activities under Components 1 and 2. Taking a [systems change](#) approach, GEF-8 ICI will 1. enhance the capacities of key actors within the ecosystem of IPs and LCs-led organizations, as well as 2. help strengthen the overall functioning of the system of funding for IP and LC organizations, which together will promote the long-term durability of the project results.

The project is comprised of five components. **Component 1:** On-the-ground IPs and LCs-led projects deliver GEBs. **Component 2:** Self-Strengthening of IPs and LCs organizations to govern territories, lands, waters and resources. **Component 3:** IPs and LCs representation and recognition at global and large-scale decision-making levels. **Component 4:** Experience and lessons learned to support and enhance broader IPs and LCs initiatives. **Component 5:** Monitoring and evaluation.

Based on initial consultations with IPs and LCs, allied organization representatives, and refined with the GEF Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG), the GEF-8 ICI will have two Executing Partner categories that will receive direct grants from the GEF Agency to self-strengthen and to deliver GEBs based on self-determined plans: **1. Impact Partners** - IPs and LCs organizations with adequate institutional capacity (including administrative, project management and M&E capacities) who will receive direct grants to execute local work and be supported with organizational strengthening and networking, as requested. **2. Accelerator Partners** - IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms who will receive direct grants to strengthen their institutional and technical capabilities and make sub-grants to IPs and LCs organizations of various sizes that are well positioned to deliver significant biodiversity outcomes, but not yet on the level of Impact Partners. Additional partners will also be engaged, for example, for strengthening partners, policy leadership, and knowledge and learning.

The project activities will be driven by the self-determined priorities of the selected Impact Partners and Accelerator Partner sub-grantee organizations to enhance stewardship of their territories, lands, waters and resources. This document outlines the framework and processes that will guide the GEF-8 ICI, however the specific details will be directed by the IPs and LCs ICI Partners in their planning.

The project benefits as reported against the GEF Core Indicators will be further refined after the Partners are selected and begin to develop their plans in the PPG stage. At the PIF stage, it is estimated that there will be 125,000 beneficiaries; 150,000 ha of terrestrial protected areas and 100,000 ha of marine protected areas created or under improved management; 10,000 ha of land and ecosystems under restoration; and 2.5M ha of landscape and 150,000 ha of marine habitat under improved practices. Carbon benefits are also anticipated and will be quantified once partners are selected and their plans developed.

¹Five Drivers of the Nature Crisis (2023) <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/five-drivers-nature-crisis>

Indicative Project Overview

Project Objective:		Increase resources, organizational strength, and recognition for IPs and LCs governance and stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources to deliver global environmental benefits.				
Project Components	Component Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
					GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
1. On-the-ground IPs and LCs-led projects deliver global environmental benefits	INV	<p>1.1 A diverse, global portfolio of ICI sub-projects led by IPs and LCs organizations² enhances stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources and delivers global environmental benefits</p> <p>1.2 Increased recognition, where relevant, of IPs and LCs contributions in national plans and strategies (e.g. NBSAPs, NDCs) following FPIC and in locally-appropriate ways</p>	<p>1.1.1 Impact and Accelerator Partners contracted</p> <p>1.1.2 Plans developed and approved for IPs and LCs-led sub-projects</p> <p>1.1.3 Sub-project Plans (1.1.2) implemented by IPs and LCs to improve conservation, sustainable use and restoration of natural ecosystems</p> <p>1.2.1 Support toward self-designation of IPs and LCs contributions to national strategies and plans (e.g. NBSAPs, NDCs), including land and territory designations (e.g., Protected Areas, Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures, Indigenous and Traditional Territories)</p>	GEFTF	18,000,000	66,933,483
2. Self-Strengthening of IPs and LCs organizations to	TA	2.1 IPs and LCs Partners have self-strengthened	2.1.1 Institutional, technical and operational strength assessment of	GEFTF	2,000,000	7,437,054

² IPs and LCs organizations encompass Impact and Accelerator Partners (collectively called “Partners” in this proposal) which are organizations that are led and governed by IPs and LCs

<p>govern territories, lands, waters and resources</p>		<p>to steward territories, lands, waters and resources, and scale support to IPs and LCs organizations</p> <p>2.2 IPs and LCs organizations and networks self-strengthened</p>	<p>Partners and development or update of institutional strategic development plans</p> <p>2.1.2 Identification of and support to existing IPs and LCs strengthening resources and mechanisms</p> <p>2.1.3 Implement self-strengthening plans to support institutional, technical and/or operational capabilities (indicatively, as needed): leadership, governance, fundraising and financial sustainability, organizational strategy, project management, grantmaking, local to national legal empowerment, land and tenure security, self-designation of appropriate conservation pathways, communications, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)</p> <p>2.2.1 Collective strengthening through learning exchanges between IPs and LCs project partners, including GEF-7</p>			
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			ICI executing agencies, and external organizations delivered			
3. IPs and LCs representation and recognition at global and large-scale decision-making levels	TA	3.1 Increased representation and influence of IPs and LCs in national to global level decision-making processes, with focus on where there is less representation, e.g. Rio Conventions subsidiary and technical bodies and other fora (e.g. World Economic Forum)	3.1.1 Strategy developed to increase IPs and LCs representation and influence in global level and within large-scale decision-making processes, based on a gap analysis 3.1.2 ICI Policy Leadership program (with a focus on women and youth) established	GEFTF	505,169	1,878,484
4. Experience and lessons learned to enhance broader IPs and LCs initiatives	TA	4.1 Body of knowledge and practice on IPs and LCs-led stewardship is advanced 4.2 Increased awareness of key project findings and lessons by broader IPs and LCs community and allied people and organizations	4.1.1 ICI Knowledge Platform(s) identified 4.1.2 ICI Knowledge Products developed with ICI Partner organizations 4.1.3 Proven, replicable models for advancing IPs and LCs governance and stewardship, strength building, sustainable finance and increased participation of	GEFTF	500,000	1,859,263

			women and youth disseminated 4.2.1 Effective Communications Strategy developed and delivered to disseminate project lessons to target audiences 4.2.2 Dialogues with key project stakeholders			
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	TA	5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation plan finalized with data collection, reflection and reporting on time to aid in results-based decision-making and adaptive management	5.1.1 Project monitored regularly at all levels through multi-source knowledge collection (for annual work plans, results framework, project progress reports, core indicators) 5.1.2 Completion of MTE and Terminal Evaluation	GEFTF	457,479	1,683,437
Subtotal				GEFTF	21,462,648	79,791,721
Project Management Cost (PMC) (if this is an MTF project, please report separate PMC lines for each TF). ***If amount requested is above limits, a pop-up menu should open for the Agency to provide an explanation***				GEFTF	1,073,132	4,008,181
Total Project Cost					22,535,780	83,799,902

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

Section Instructions:

Briefly describe the current situation: the global environmental problems and/or climate vulnerabilities that the project will address, the key elements of the system, and underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, including conflicts, or technological changes. Describe the objective of the project, and the justification for it.

(Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here***

***POP-UP material start

- To develop the project rationale:
- Develop simple **narratives** of how an uncertain future could unfold, based on an understanding of trends and interactions between the key elements of the system and its drivers.
-
- Describe the baseline in the absence of the project, and identify the outcomes that the project needs to achieve, how these will change the baseline, and what the key barriers and enablers are to achieving those outcomes.
-
- Briefly explain why this particular project has been selected to address the drivers of environmental degradation and/or climate vulnerabilities in preference to other potential options, and how its outcomes will endure in the face of changes in the drivers described in the future narratives.
-
- Describe the relevant stakeholders, private sector, and local actors and their roles in the system, and how they will be critical to deliver on the GEBs, adaptation benefits, and other proposed outcomes.
-
- The description should include: how the project will fit within the current landscape of investments; how the project will build on the baseline and ongoing investments, both GEF and non-GEF, and on lessons learned from previous projects in the country and region, and more widely; and how this approach fits with country priorities.
-
- If this is an NGI, please include a brief explanation on the financial barriers and how the project- and the proposed financial structure- responds to the financial barriers.

***POP-UP material end

Context and Background

There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPs and LCs) are effective stewards of nature^{3,4,5} including maintaining intact forests⁶, terrestrial mammal habitats⁷, vertebrate diversity, and often with better outcomes than protected areas⁸. Their application of traditional knowledge and cultural practices, as determined through their systems of governance and stewardship is critical to conserving biodiversity. However, if IPs and LCs do not have support for their stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources and adequate funding, they will not be able to effectively defend against increasing threats to their territories, lands, waters, biodiversity, resources, cultures, spiritual beliefs, languages, traditional knowledge, and practices⁹ (referred to hereon collectively as “territories, lands, waters and resources”). More communities will lose the fight to protect¹⁰ and conserve their territories and lands and maintain their sustainable ways of life that contribute to Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs). The world will not reach its climate and biodiversity goals in the absence of fully financed partnerships that deliver the necessary resources to IPs and LCs organizations to implement their self-determined priorities to enhance stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources^{11,12}.

This project builds on the GEF-7 ICI and other key initiatives, with the understanding that comprehensively addressing the resource-related challenges faced by local IPs and LCs organizations requires interventions at multiple strategic points within the broader ecosystem that facilitates finances reaching the ground - where they are most needed and most effective. This project proposes to **increase resources, organizational strength, and recognition for IPs and LCs governance and stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources to deliver global environmental benefits.**

It is estimated that IPs and LCs own or govern over 43.5 million km² of global land and associated inland waters, of which 65% have zero to low levels of human modification and 27% have moderate levels. In total, 91% of their territory is estimated to be in good or moderate ecological condition¹³. An analysis of 73 countries identified 1,264.6 Mha of land owned by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples (ADPs), and local communities in 2020, with 1,375 Mha of communities’ lands that were still unrecognized^{14,15}.

3 Dawson, NM et al. (2021) The role of Indigenous peoples and local communities in effective and equitable conservation. *Ecology and Society* 26(3):19. <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cobi.13620>

4 Indicators of Social and Governance Issues: Indigenous and Community Forests (2024) WRI Global Forest Review <https://research.wri.org/gfr/social-governance-issues-indicators/indigenous-community-forests>

5 IPBES. (2019) *Global Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*

6 Fa JE et al. (2020) The importance of indigenous peoples’ lands for the conservation of intact forest landscapes. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*. 18(3):135-140. <https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/fee.2148>

7 O'Bryan, C.J. et al. (2021) The importance of Indigenous Peoples’ lands for the conservation of terrestrial mammals. *Conservation Biology*, 35: 1002-1008. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13620>

8 Sze, J. S., et al. (2024) Indigenous Peoples' Lands are critical for safeguarding vertebrate diversity across the tropics. *Global Change Biology*, 30, e16981. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.16981>

9 Camino, M. (2023) Indigenous Lands with secure land-tenure can reduce forest-loss in deforestation hotspots, *Global Environmental Change*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2023.102678>.

10 Undermining Rights: Indigenous Lands and Mining in the Amazon (2020) World Resources Institute. <https://doi.org/10.46830/wriipt.19.00085>

11 Veit, P. (2021) 4 Ways Indigenous and Community Lands Help Fight Climate Change <https://www.wri.org/insights/4-ways-indigenous-and-community-lands-can-reduce-emissions>

12 Nitah, S. (2021) Indigenous peoples proven to sustain biodiversity and address climate change: Now it’s time to recognize and support this leadership. *One Earth* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2021.06.015>.

13 The State of Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities’ Lands and Territories (2021).

https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/report_the_state_of_the_indigenous_peoples_and_local_communities_lands_and_territor.pdf

14 Mapped: The World’s Indigenous Peoples. World Bank. [Mapped: The World’s Indigenous Peoples \(visualcapitalist.com\)](https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-the-worlds-indigenous-peoples/)

15 Fragile States Index | The Fund for Peace <https://fragilestatesindex.org/>

Enhanced stewardship of their territories, lands, waters and resources improves the ability of IPs and LCs to protect their ways of life, resulting in enhanced biodiversity outcomes,¹⁶ and derive customary sustainable livelihoods. However, rights are often weak, unrecognized or not enforced.

The global commitment and recognition of the urgent need to equitably and effectively partner with IPs and LCs to support their security and successful stewardship of nature has not yet resulted in the delivery of financial resources to fund necessary actions at the local level. For example, the findings of a recent report by the Forest Tenure Funders Group (FTFG) on the disbursement of the \$1.7b pledge made in 2021 highlighted that despite the strong commitment demonstrated by the pledge, of the \$493m provided in 2022 to support IPs and LCs forest tenure, only 2.1% went to IPs and LCs-led organizations¹⁷.

Analysis^{18,19,20,21} undertaken to understand and address the obstacles to delivering funding to IPs and LCs organizations has identified key recommendations, which inform the design of GEF-8 ICI. These include:

- Taking an ecosystem, holistic approach to strengthening IPs and LCs organizations.
- Supporting the development of IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms to meet the needs of a wide variety of IPs and LCs organizations.
- Respecting and following the lead of IPs and LCs leadership and worldviews.
- Engaging in on-going dialogue, regional consultations, and a strong Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process to develop strategies that support the self-determined priorities of IPs and LCs.
- Ensuring inclusion and effective participation of women, youth, LGBTQ, and other socially marginalized groups.
- Tailoring organizational strengthening to the self-determined priorities of IPs and LCs.
- Incorporating flexibility and adaptability.
- Ensuring mutual accountability and transparency.
- Documenting and sharing the lessons learned and best practices to support the development of the field and advocacy efforts.
- Building capacity of donors to adjust complex funding requirements and better partner with IPs and LCs.
- Providing financial and political support for effective participation of IPs and LCs in regional and global decision-making processes.

Future Scenarios

There are several scenarios that could emerge across key factors that could influence the project's implementation and durability of outcomes. The degree to which IPs and LCs have government and private sector support for their

16 Rayna Benzeev, Sam Zhang, Marcelo Artur Rauber, Eric A Vance, Peter Newton, Formalizing tenure of Indigenous lands improved forest outcomes in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil, *PNAS Nexus*, Volume 2, Issue 1, January 2023, pgac287, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgac287>

17 Forest Tenure Funders Group (2023). Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Forest Tenure Pledge: Annual Report 2022–2023. [Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Forest Tenure Pledge | Land Portal](#)

18 Forging Resilient Pathways: Scaling up Funding in Support of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' Tenure and Forest Guardianship in the Global South. Prepared by Indufor for the Ford Foundation on behalf of the Forest Tenure Funders Group. (2023) <https://landportal.org/library/resources/forging-resilient-pathways>

19 Directing Funds to Rights: Principles, standards and modalities for supporting indigenous peoples' tenure rights and forest guardianship Prepared by Charapa Consult for the Forest Tenure Funders Group (2022) <https://charapa.dk/wp-content/uploads/Directing-Funds-to-Rights-Full-report.pdf>

20 Funding With Purpose: A Study to Inform Donor Support for Indigenous and Local Community Rights, Climate, and Conservation, Rights and Resources Initiative & Rainforest Foundation Norway (2022) <https://rightsandresources.org/publication/funding-with-purpose/>

21 Funding Trend Analysis on Indigenous Peoples Philanthropy. Prepared for International Funders of Indigenous Peoples. Archipel Research & Consulting (2024). <https://internationalfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Funding-Trend-Analysis-on-Indigenous-Peoples-Philanthropy-compressed.pdf>

stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources will impact on the respective communities' ability to deliver GEBs, with greater support enabling increased conservation outcomes²². Additionally, there are potential variations in the extent to which IPs and LCs are remaining on their traditional lands and territories versus moving to more urban settings due to economic pressure, social trends, insecurity, climate change, lack of education, health or other factors. Population trends could further affect project implementation. Finally, access to existing or new funding sources (additional to this project funding) could affect the long-term durability of the project outcomes. These are three significant factors that have the potential to be drivers in the future scenarios of inclusive conservation.

Baseline

Global and regional IPs and LCs networks and funding mechanisms: IPs and LCs are currently represented by local, sub-national, and national networks. Many of them coordinate to form some of the largest regional and global networks of IPs and LCs. The networks include a variety of women's, youth, and other organizations. Through these networks, IPs and LCs are calling for the recognition and full realization of their rights and greater access to direct funding to support their local activities that result in stronger, healthier communities and in turn, GEBs. For example, the Global Alliance for Territorial Communities ([GATC](#)) represents 35 million people in 24 countries through five regional organizations and hosts the [Shandia Platform](#) to support direct finance to IPs and LCs. There are additional networks in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Many of the networks have already established, or are in the process of establishing, IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms to support IPs and LCs in their networks and regions.

Allied Organizations:

There are a number of allied organizations dedicated to partnering with IPs and LCs organizations and providing increased access to funding, such as:

Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) [Strategic Response Mechanism](#) enables timely, flexible responses to unforeseen opportunities and threats related to land rights, allowing IPs, ADPs, and LCs to effectively respond to changes in the national, regional or global political landscape, providing grants of \$10,000-\$100,000 in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

RRI and Campaign for Nature [The Community Land Rights and Conservation Finance Initiative](#) (CLARIFI) provides grants for self-determined priorities of IPs and LCs to achieve land tenure and conservation goals in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The [Tenure Facility](#) works in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and local communities to strengthen their tenure and ability to preserve, protect and enjoy the benefits of their traditional lands, territories, and resources, providing grants in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

[Nia Tero](#) works in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples who sustain thriving territories and cultures to strengthen guardianship of Earth and all beings, providing grants primarily in the Amazon and Pacific.

Conservation organizations and funds supporting IPs and LCs as part of their strategy include, but are not limited to:

Conservation International leads the [Indigenous Leaders Conservation Fellowship Program](#) and has managed [The FIP Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities](#) with projects through 2026.

²² Garnett, S.T., Burgess, N.D., Fa, J.E., Fernández-Llamazares, Á., Molnár, Z., Robinson, C.J., Watson, J.E., Zander, K.K., Austin, B., Brondizio, E.S. and Collier, N.F., 2018. A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation. *Nature Sustainability*, 1(7), pp.369-374.

IUCN has partnered with the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) on the [Podong](#) initiative to increase funding and capacity-building for Indigenous peoples and organizations and the [ACT30](#) initiative to bring together governments, IPs and LCs to map diverse and effective pathways to conservation.

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN) launched a [fund](#) in 2023 for IPs and LCs to protect forests in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Conservation Trust Funds such as the [Micronesia Conservation Trust](#) are well established with systems and processes to support IPs and LCs by providing funding and technical support.

WWF continues to build on a long history of working with IPs and LCs, including in the context of the Namibian communal conservancies, launching the Inclusive Conservation Academy and co-authoring the [State of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' Lands and Territories](#) report. WWF has numerous ongoing inclusive conservation projects, including: **1.** The [People Protecting Landscapes and Seascapes](#) (PPLS) initiative which aims to counter biodiversity loss, climate change and environmental decline through supporting IPs and LCs in advocacy, securing and strengthening their rights to land and occupied territories. **2.** Through the [Coastal Communities Initiative](#) (CCI), WWF works with more than 1,000 coastal Indigenous and small-scale fisheries communities engaging around 300,000 rightsholders. The Initiative scaled to 128 sites in 29 countries and a [recent report](#), based on a rigorous monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework, demonstrates impact at local, national and regional level. **3.** The [Stewarding Landscapes and Seascapes](#) work was co-designed with IPs and LCs in select landscapes and seascapes in Peru, Bolivia and Chile. **4.** At their invitation, WWF International is working with the [Global Alliance of Territorial Communities](#) (GATC) to build a collaborative agenda of action. **5.** Recent global research, guidance, sharing and thought leadership on Inclusive Conservation including: a. Launch of a Network-wide inclusive conservation action plan, which aims to support WWF organizational change to strengthen inclusive approaches in learning, project management, communications, partnerships, etc., b. WWF is a lead author on the [Site-level Tool for Identifying OECMs](#) and the forthcoming OECM guidelines which also explicitly make the linkages with “Indigenous and traditional territories” (GBF Target 3).

Multilateral institutions supporting IPs and LCs as part of their strategy include, but is not limited to:

UNDP [Small Grants Program](#) supports the [ICCA Consortium](#), a membership-based organization supporting IPs and LCs to protect, conserve and defend their territories of life.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) [The Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility](#) (IPAF) provides small grants (\$20,000-50,000) to IPs and LCs in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean.

World Bank [Forest Carbon Partnership](#) provides capacity building for Indigenous Peoples and civil society and the [Enable](#) program designed to enhance the inclusion of IPs and LCs and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and people with disabilities in emissions reduction programs (ERPs) under the Climate Emissions Reduction Facility (CERF).

Donors:

Private philanthropic foundations, such as those represented in the [Forest Tenure Funders Group](#) (FTFG) and the [Protecting Our Planet Challenge](#), are also supporting IPs and LCs alongside donor governments such as Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, the UK, the US, and Sweden.

The GEF-8 ICI will build on the work of the above networks and organizations operating in the regions of the selected ICI Partners on multiple levels. Informal dialogues with representatives from several of the IPs and LCs organizations and funding mechanisms have begun to inform the development of the project concept. Further dialogues and

consultations will be conducted during the PPG stage. Additionally, once the IPs and LCs ICI Partner organizations are selected, regional collaboration will be pursued to minimize duplication, maximize sharing of effort and learnings, and harmonize activities with the ICI Partner organization.

Barriers to Action

Despite the growing number of donors and organizations working to support IPs and LCs, the funding is not reaching the ground at the pace and scale commensurate with their role as biodiversity stewards²³. There are a number of interconnected barriers that disrupt the flow of funds to IPs and LCs that limit their ability to access the resources necessary to advance legal recognition and implement their self-determined plans for organizational strengthening and management of their territories, lands, waters and resources that result in GEBs.

Barrier 1: Under-developed funding ecosystem that lacks the ability to deliver adequate direct funding to IPs and LCs

While large multilateral donors are making an effort to support IPs and LCs, their structures and bureaucracies are complex and require lengthy processes to change to effectively provide direct support to IPs and LCs. Access to funds requires specialist knowledge and extensive experience, which then takes a long time to reach the ground. While regional and international organizations may play an intermediary role, their structures to meet the demands of donors adds another layer between IPs and LCs and the donors and thus dilutes the funding that reaches the ground. IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms have been established to deliver more timely, flexible, and predictable funding, however most are newly established (less than five years old) and need institutional strengthening to access more complex funding and deliver it to IPs and LCs organization at the scale of the demands. GEF-7 ICI was indicative of this barrier of the unmet demand, receiving over 400 expressions of interest for 10 grants.

Barrier 2: Gaps in technical knowledge resulting from mainstream models of conservation and development aid that are inconsistent with IPs and LCs' culturally-rooted accountability and administrative practices used to govern and steward their territories, lands, waters and resources

IPs and LCs have systems of governance, accountability, and administration to manage their activities that align with their worldviews, knowledge systems, spiritual beliefs and cultural practices. These systems differ from those used by most funders. The gap between these two systems has to be bridged from both sides with mutual respect and strength building to meet in the middle. This includes access to technology and technical expertise, if it is of interest and requested by IPs and LCs, to support their activities.

Barrier 3: Limited financial and technical support for activities that advance territorial, and resource security

Advancing the security of IPs and LCs can be a non-linear process that requires sustained, multifaceted effort to achieve and maintain progress. Funding is often not "fit-for-purpose" which includes being led by IPs and LCs, mutually accountable, flexible, long-term, gender inclusive, timely and accessible²⁴. Although support for IPs and LCs is increasing, the scale of the threats requires a matching level of fit-for-purpose funding.

Barrier 4: Inadequate support for holistic long-term planning for financial sustainability

Project-based funding that is focused on immediate activities and preferences short-term outcomes is necessary, but often does not adequately address the long-term financial needs of IPs and LCs organizations to maintain the progress made during the project cycle. A holistic approach that includes both project activities and long-term planning is necessary to ensure durable results.

²³ Kennedy, Christina M. et al. *Indigenous Peoples' lands are threatened by industrial development; conversion risk assessment reveals need to support Indigenous stewardship* One Earth, Volume 6, Issue 8, 1032 – 1049 [https://www.cell.com/one-earth/fulltext/S2590-3322\(23\)00340-8](https://www.cell.com/one-earth/fulltext/S2590-3322(23)00340-8)

²⁴ Funding with Purpose: A Study to Inform Donor Support for Indigenous and Local Community Rights, Climate, and Conservation (2022) Rights and Resources Initiative & Rainforest Foundation Norway <https://rightsandresources.org/publication/funding-with-purpose/>

Barrier 5: Limited participation, influence, and decision-making authority in national, regional, and global environment and development arenas

IPs and LCs have historically been marginalized, excluded, and subjected to a myriad of human rights abuses within the context of global power structures. Although progress has been made²⁵, for instance the recognition of the rights of IPs and LCs in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in many national and global decision-making bodies, IPs and LCs still lack equitable influence on the decisions that affect their lives and that could benefit the world.

Barrier 6: Limited external recognition and understanding of Indigenous and traditional knowledge and successful solutions for achieving GEBs

Due to the marginalization and exclusion noted above, there is also limited recognition and understanding of IPs and LCs traditional knowledge and practices that have been used to successfully protect and live sustainably as a part of nature. More examples and best practices are needed to advance the transition to a human-rights based approach and inclusive conservation.

Without the GEF Scenario

The urgency of the biodiversity and climate crisis calls for a significant increase in funding by all parties to meet this moment wherein IPs and LCs leadership is desperately needed. The GEF-8 ICI will contribute to dismantling the barriers outlined above by providing financial and organizational strengthening to support the ecosystem of IPs and LCs of organizations to enhance their stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources and deliver their solutions for the benefit of their communities and for GEBs. Additionally, it will provide lessons learned to enhance partnerships with IPs and LCs and achieve the goals of inclusive conservation.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Section Instructions:

Project Description

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole. The project description is expected to cover the key elements²⁶ of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF’s policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the PIF guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here***

*****POP-UP material start**

Develop the project description to cover the following points, in a joined-up way, not as a series of responses to the individual points; this description should take into account the GEF’s policy requirements (in section D). For example, by weaving into the description how gender issues will be addressed in the project, rather than describing gender as a standalone point. The theory of change will help in joining up the other key elements of good project design:

25 Zurba, M. et al. (2024) Enhancing meaningful Indigenous leadership and collaboration in international environmental governance forums. Environmental Science & Policy. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2024.103864>

26 Enabling Elements for Good Project Design: A synthesis of STAP guidance for GEF project investment: <https://stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/enabling-elements-good-project-design-synthesis-stap-guidance-gef>

- Provide a concise account of the theory of change that describes the project’s logic for addressing the problems described in Section A and achieving the intended global environmental benefits. Include a diagram to help show the overall project’s logic, outputs, and outcomes.
- The theory of change should provide an “explicit account of how and why the proposed interventions would achieve their intended outcomes and goal, based on outlining a set of key causal pathways arising from the activities and outputs of the interventions and the assumptions underlying these causal connections”.
- The project logic should show how the project would ensure that expected outcomes are enduring and resilient to possible future changes in the drivers identified in the simple future narratives (section A), and to the effects of any conflicting policies (section C).
- Briefly describe in more detail the project components (interventions and activities) identified in the theory of change. Provide brief information on each intervention, the main thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they address the problem, their justification as a robust solution, and the critical assumptions and risks to achieving them.
- Explain how the project will generate global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits which would not have accrued without the GEF project (additionality).

As part of the project description:

- Indicate how relevant **stakeholders** will contribute to developing and implementing the project, and their respective roles, and how they will benefit from the project to ensure that the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits will be enduring (**co-benefits**).
- Explain how the project will generate knowledge, how that knowledge will be managed and **exchanged**, and how lessons learned will be captured to benefit future projects.
- Explain how this project will improve or develop national policies, including an improved alignment of existing policies (**policy coherence**).
- If the project is specifically intended to be **transformative**, or **innovative**, explain how **scaling up** could be achieved.

***POP-UP material end

The overarching purpose of GEF-8 ICI is to advance an inclusive and transformational approach to conservation that strengthens the rights of IPs and LCs and increases their ability to advance their self-determined pathways for a sustainable future and defend against the threats that seek to undermine their ways of life, natural stewardship, and their well-being (which is inextricably linked to the well-being of their territories, lands, and waters). The self-determined priorities of IPs and LCs, identified through a consultative and grassroots process, will drive the design and implementation of project activities. The governance and leadership of IPs and LCs (with special attention to women and youth) is integrated at every stage of the project and is a fundamental requirement to achieving the project’s objectives of increasing resources, building strength and recognition for IPs and LCs governance and stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources to deliver GEBs. This project description outlines the process through which IPs and LCs will take the lead role in developing the specific activities, which will be supported by eighty percent of project funds being directed to IPs, LCs and their organizations. As specific sites and activities have not been selected yet, LOEs will be required prior to initiating project activities and first disbursement by the Agency.

In alignment with consultations with the GEF IPAG (2-3 September 2024), the GEF-8 ICI will take a [systems change](#) approach to deploy finances to IPs and LCs organizations and support self-strengthening that enhances their ability to deliver the project outcomes and increase long-term sustainability beyond this project. A key strategy to accomplish this is the inclusion of two Partner categories that serve different, but complementary functions within an ecosystem supportive of IPs and LCs self-determined priorities. Partners include:

Impact Partners are IPs and LCs organizations with significant institutional capacity that will receive direct grants to execute self-determined local work to deliver GEBs. They will be supported with tailored organizational strengthening and a broad range of networking opportunities. This partner category corresponds to the “IPLC Executing Agencies” who received direct grants under GEF-7 ICI.

Accelerator Partners are IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms, distinct from other IPs and LCs organizations in that their primary mission is to deploy finance to other IPs and LCs organizations. Accelerator Partners will receive direct grants to strengthen their institutional and technical capabilities and make sub-grants to IPs and LCs organizations. The sub-grantees will be IPs and LCs organizations that do not yet have the institutional capabilities and/or interest to be Impact Partners but are well positioned to work with communities to deliver GEBs.

IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms represent an emerging field that has significant potential for bridging a gap in the current system of delivering finance to IPs and LCs organizations, and scaling up the delivery of more flexible, consistent, and predictable funding to support the IPs and LCs self-determined priorities. They have deep connections to communities based on cultural understanding and trust; close relationships with local, national, and regional IPs and LCs coalitions and networks; the ability to convene local partners; and the ability to harmonize donor requirements to better meet the needs of IPs and LCs organizations of various sizes, especially women’s and youth organizations²⁷.

Thus far, the primary source of funding for IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms has been private philanthropy. As ICI Accelerator Partners, they will build a track record and implement the policies, systems, and practices necessary to secure additional funding from bilateral and multilateral funders. Thus, GEF-8 ICI will be a catalyst to ‘accelerate’ the IPs and LCs funding mechanisms’ development to the next level, which will in turn catalyze greater funding for the IPs and LCs organizations they support.

The following Project Foundations section describes the cross-cutting elements underpinning the project. This is followed by the Theory of Change and each project Technical Component, including what the Outputs are and why they will lead to the Outcomes. The issues of how relevant stakeholders will contribute to developing and implementing the project, how GEBs will be generated and be enduring, the impact on policy, how knowledge will be generated and shared, and the way in which the Project is transformative is addressed throughout the description. Critical assumptions and risks to the project are assessed. The inclusion, participation, rights, and well-being of women, youth and other marginalized social groups will be of particular focus and integrated in every aspect of the project.

Project Foundations

27 Forging Resilient Pathways: Scaling up Funding in Support of Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities’ Tenure and Forest Guardianship in the Global South. Prepared by Indufor for the Ford Foundation on behalf of the Forest Tenure Funders Group. (2023) <https://landportal.org/library/resources/forging-resilient-pathways>

Based on consultations with the GEF IPAG, GEF Secretariat and other key partners, the following cross-cutting guidelines and processes have been established to support an inclusive and equitable process that is designed to build trust and result in a high level of confidence in achieving outcomes, while also allowing for a deeply consultative process that is responsive to existing and emerging on-the-ground realities of IPs and LCs across a wide geographical scope.

Governance: During the project development (PPG) stage, an Interim Steering Committee (ISC) made up of representatives from the GEF IPAG, GEF Secretariat, and IPs and LCs communities, will govern and guide project development, including the selection of Impact and Accelerator Partners. The WWF Project Development Team (PDT) will be responsible for the day-to-day work and delivery of the final project package under the oversight of the ISC. During project implementation, the ISC will transition to become the Global Project Steering Committee (GPSC).

The ISC will be convened by WWF. Potential characteristics may include the following:

- **Role - Inform and advise the project development and the structure and membership of the GPSC, including relating to:**
 - Guiding principles (to be refined with GPSC)
 - Selection of executing agencies (Impact and Accelerator Partners), including the selection criteria and process
 - IPs and LCs and other stakeholder engagement plan for the project development, ensuring gender and social inclusion and equity
 - IPs and LCs and other stakeholder engagement plan for the project implementation, ensuring gender and social inclusion and equity
 - Environmental and Social Management Framework and other safeguards related documents
 - Conflict Mitigation Strategies (including conflicts of interest and recusal protocols during Partner selection and recommendations to minimize conflict and build solidarity in the selected regions)
 - Policy Adoption and/or Development (Grievance Mechanism, Gender Mainstreaming, others as recommended by the ISC)
 - Selection criteria and terms of reference for the Global Project Steering Committee
- **Composition - The ISC composition will be driven by the following considerations:**
 - Majority representation from IPs and LCs
 - Regional balance
 - Gender balance
 - Technical expertise
 - GEF Secretariat representation
 - GEF IPAG representation
- **Convening (in person or virtually): beginning, midpoint and end of the PPG phase**

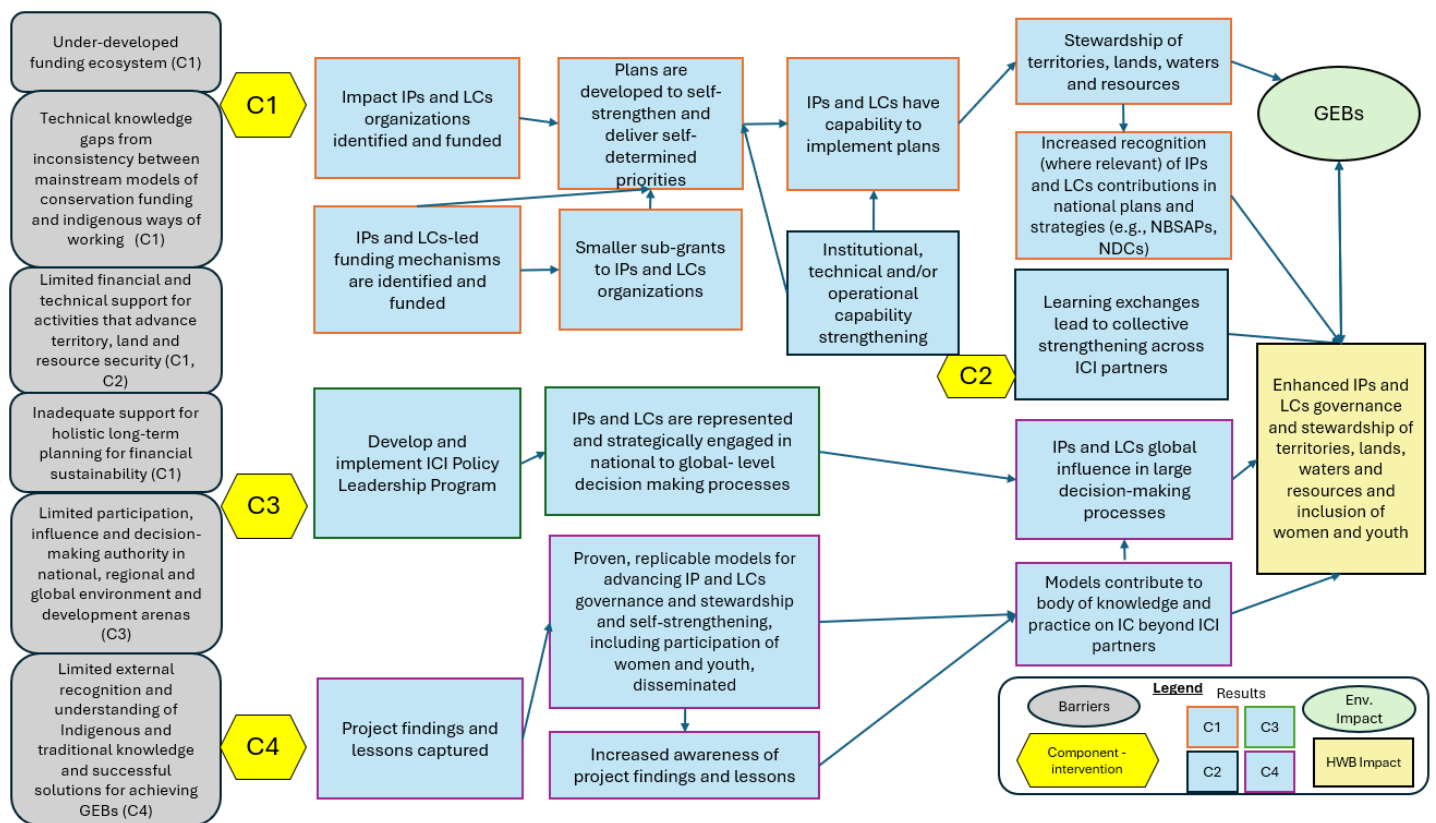
During project implementation, GPSC will take over governance responsibilities from the ISC and provide advice and oversight to the WWF PMU, ICI Partners and other contributing organizations on the implementation of sub-projects in Component 1 and the implementation of Components 2-5 of the project.

Stakeholder Engagement: Once ICI Partners are selected, they will conduct more extensive consultations and dialogues in ways that represent the diversity of their respective regions and ecosystems, to gather additional feedback on the identified barriers and interventions, and inform the development of their project plans. Special

attention will be paid to ensuring the participation of IPs and LCs women and youth in these dialogues, which in some cases may be best achieved through separate designated spaces for women and youth.

Guiding Principles: As noted above, during the PPG stage the ISC will establish an initial set of guiding principles to direct the process and activities of the project development. The GEF-7 ICI Principles and Values will be a starting point, which may be adapted by the ISC. In the implementation stage, the Guiding Principles may be further adapted to reflect the realities and perspectives of the GEF-8 ICI IPs and LCs Partners. This approach is aligned with the overall counsel received from the GEF IPAG, which emphasized self-determined priorities emerging from the ground up, through dialogues with a strong process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), IPs and LCs governance, recognition of traditional and cultural knowledge and practices, and mutual respect.

Theory of Change



The high-level theory of change of this project is that **if** IPs and LCs organizations are provided direct funding and self-strengthening support needed to develop and implement their self-determined plans for strengthening their governance and stewardship of their territories, lands, waters and resources; and **if** IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms are provided funding to self-strengthen and make sub-grants to IPs and LCs organizations; and **if** IPs and LCs effectively engage in national to global decision making processes; and **if** the knowledge of their successful models is disseminated to key audiences; **then** IPs and LCs organizations will **1.** have enhanced long-term delivery of GEBs in biodiversity conservation, land restoration, and climate change mitigation and increased recognition of these contributions in national plans and strategies; **2.** be self-strengthened for governance of territories, lands, waters and

resources; **3.** have increased influence on global and high-impact decision-making processes; **and** the broader ecosystem of IPs and LCs initiatives will be strengthened and advance their self-determined priorities.

Assumptions

1. IPs and LCs organizations' and funding mechanisms' aspirations are aligned with GEF ICI goals
2. IPs and LCs organizations and funding mechanisms are interested in partnering with the GEF and the GEF Agency
3. IPs and LCs funding mechanisms are interested in accessing funding from potentially complex multilateral and bilateral funding sources
4. IPs and LCs organizations have the interest and ability (or can develop the ability) to absorb increased resources
5. ICI Partners' self-determined planned activities will result in enduring GEBs
6. IPs and LCs organizations value increased collaboration and dialogue within and beyond ICI
7. Lessons from ICI will be applicable to other IPs and LCs organizations and regions
8. Enhanced representation and engagement of IPs and LCs in global decision-making bodies will influence outcomes in ways that are viewed as beneficial by IPs and LCs
9. International policy achievements translate to positive national and local policy achievements for IPs and LCs
10. Evidence of successful IPs and LCs-led initiatives resulting in GEBs will be an effective advocacy tool to increase funding for human rights-based and inclusive conservation
11. Funding to maintain increased organizational capacity and sustain initiatives is attainable
12. IPs and LCs Partner communities will continue the sustainable use of natural resources and maintain GEBs achieved
13. Investments in livelihoods will lead to long-term social and environmental benefits

Component 1 – On-the-ground IPs and LCs-led projects deliver global environmental benefits

In Component 1, IPs and LCs partner organizations (including funding mechanisms) will be selected and funded to design and implement projects based on their self-determined priorities that advance land and tenure rights, guard against territorial land conversion and degradation threats, and include strategies for long-term sustainable livelihoods based on Indigenous and local traditional knowledge.

Outcome 1.1 A diverse, global portfolio of ICI sub-projects led by IPs and LCs organizations supporting IPs and LCs-led stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources and delivers global environmental benefits

The diversity across the portfolio of sub-projects will result from various stages in process, starting with global scope of the ICI, which includes diverse ecosystems, unique threats and pressures, and a variety of national political, economic and social contexts. The diversity of Partner categories will also support sub-projects at different scales - Impact Partners may include larger scale sub-projects and Accelerator Partners will support an aggregate of small to medium size sub-projects. Each Partner will contribute to the global ICI portfolio to achieve goals related to governance and stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources, sustainable finance and GEBs in biodiversity conservation, and associated benefits in land restoration, and climate change mitigation.

Outputs

1.1.1 Impact and Accelerator Partners contracted

WWF will sign agreements with and provide direct grants to selected Impact and Accelerator Partners.

Selection of Partners: The process for selecting Impact and Accelerator Partners will be initiated in the PPG phase with guidance from and oversight by the ISC.

- **Criteria:** Incorporating lessons learned from the GEF-7 ICI process and criteria (See Annex I for GEF-7 ICI criteria), the criteria considerations may include elements such as:
 - Organization is registered in a GEF eligible country, including MICs, LDCs and SIDS (required)
 - Diversity of regions and ecosystems important for biodiversity (required)
 - Vulnerability of IPs and LCs lands, territories, and/or waters to threats
 - Complementarity to GEF-7 ICI projects, including:
 - Significant or unique opportunities for the application of lessons learned through GEF-7 ICI projects
 - Landscape connectivity
 - Regional or context scaling of successful projects or models

Based on consultations with the GEF IPAG, criteria for Accelerator Partners (IPs and LCs funding mechanisms) may include factors such as:

- IPs and LCs hold decision making authority
 - Funding priorities are determined by IPs and LCs at the community level
 - Experience deploying funds directly to IPs and LCs organizations to advance their self-determined rights and resource stewardship goals
 - Experience supporting IPs and LCs organizations to increase their capacity to manage funds
 - Have co-finance from other sources
- **Communication:** GEF-8 ICI will share information on criteria, tools, and templates for each stage of the selection process, including who the decision makers are and how they were chosen. This information will also be proactively sent to national, regional, and global IPs and LCs networks, including women-led and youth organizations. Every effort will be made to include historically marginalized communities, such as Afro-descendants in Latin America. Broad communication will serve to share the information and enhance inclusivity. However, given the limited number of organizations the GEF ICI-8 can support, every effort will be made to clearly communicate the criteria to enable IPs and LCs organizations to determine their interest in becoming a partner in the GEF-8 ICI. This transparent process and the tools created will not only support the GEF-8 ICI communications and selection process, but also adapt lessons from and provide a template for other funders seeking to build greater transparency in their processes.
 - **Call for Expression of Interest (EOI):** For the purposes of transparency and fairness, there will be a call during the PPG stage for interested IP and LC organizations that meet the selection criteria for Impact Partners or Accelerator Partners to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). A self-assessment checklist with the selection criteria and information on GEF-eligible activities will be provided to prospective applicants to ensure a high percentage of applicants have a high likelihood for selection, thereby eliminating unnecessary work and disappointment for potential applicants that do not meet the minimum requirements.
 - **Due Diligence/Needs Assessments:** ICI Partners will go through a tailored due diligence process to assess and ensure fiduciary capacity. This assessment will feed into the PMU's needs assessments of each organization to establish the baseline for organizational and safeguards and gender mainstreaming. Results of these assessments will inform the development of self-strengthening plans customized to the specific needs of each organization (in Component 2).

- **Accelerator Partner Sub-Grantees:** Accelerator Partners, with the guidance of the ISC and support of the PMU, will determine the best approach for selecting their sub-grantees based on the regional context, the Accelerator Partners' established approach to funding, the ability to achieve the goals and meet the minimum requirements of the GEF-8 ICI.

1.1.2 Plans developed and approved for IPs and LCs-led sub-projects

Sub-project plans to deliver GEBs will be developed by Partners, supported by the PMU as requested, through community consultations to determine on-the-ground activities. Partners will determine the extent to which they will engage with local and national government bodies, IPs and LCs networks, private sector, and other stakeholders, to most effectively achieve the project goals. Accelerator Partners will be the primary source of support for the development of their grantees' Plans.

Sub-project Plans will be unique in their approach to achieving their self-determined goals for stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources, GEBs, land and tenure rights and may include some combination of the following:

- Activities to strengthen traditional governance practices
- Activities to improve management of natural and cultural resources in IPs and LCs Lands and Territories
- Activities to address the drivers of environmental degradation affecting IPs and LCs sustainable development
- Activities to enhance IPs and LCs land, territory and natural resources rights
- Activities to support sustainable economies, livelihoods, and well-being
- Activities to support cultural revitalization and intergenerational transfer of knowledge
- Activities to support the long-term economic and financial sustainability of IPs and LCs-led livelihoods and conservation activities
- Activities to share knowledge and build solidarity with other communities
- Activities to protect territorial rights and environmental human rights defenders
- Activities to engage in local, national, or regional biodiversity and climate policy decisions, strategies and implementation activities
- Activities to engage the with the private sector
- Political Economic Analysis and conflict sensitivity analysis, with a conflict prevention and resolution plan (required)
- Policy and activities related to advancing the inclusion and equitable participation of women, youth and other marginalized groups, including gender-responsive actions, processes and decision-making related to biodiversity (required)
- Policy and activities for environmental and social safeguards (required)
- A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan, inclusive of IPs and LCs developed biocultural indicators, to track achievement of project objectives (required)

1.1.3 Sub-project Plans (1.1.2) implemented by IPs and LCs to improve conservation, sustainable use and restoration of natural ecosystems

Impact Partners (or their sub-grantees) and Accelerator Partner sub-grantees will execute activities outlined in their Plans. They will benefit from self-strengthening as outlined in Component 2 and will share lessons learned along the way as outlined in Component 4.

Outcome 1.2 Increased recognition, where relevant, of IPs and LCs contributions in national plans and strategies (e.g. NBSAPs, NDCs) following FPIC and in locally-appropriate ways

IPs and LCs are critical partners in achieving global goals for biodiversity, climate change mitigation, and sustainable development, however they often are not consulted in national planning, their contributions are often not included, or conversely their lands and territories are included without an FPIC process and without recognition of their traditional knowledge and stewardship. Where the IPs and LCs Partner communities deem it feasible and desirable within the national context, their project plan will include efforts for inclusion in the national planning and reporting consultations and processes.

Outputs

1.2.1 Support toward self-designation of IPs and LCs contributions to national strategies and plans (e.g. NBSAPs, NDCs), including land and territory designations (e.g., Protected Areas, Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures, Indigenous and Traditional Territories)

Where desired, the ICI IPs and LCs Partners may plan and engage in activities such as community workshops, dialogues with government, participation in national consultations, etc., to determine if and how their traditional practices (e.g. sustainable agriculture and resource stewardship) and their lands and territories could contribute to national and global conservation and climate planning (e.g. NBSAPs and NDCs) and designations (e.g. PAs, OECMs, ICCAs, Indigenous and Traditional Territories, also referred to as the three “[transformative pathways](#)”) or other reporting databases (e.g. [Protected Planet Database](#)).

Component 2 – Self-Strengthening of IPs and LCs organizations to govern territories, lands, waters and resources

Component 2 is designed to enable Impact and Accelerator Partners to strengthen their systems to be increasingly effective, enable their sub-grantees to enhance their stewardship of territories, lands, waters and resources and deliver GEBs, and support sharing of the strengthening activities with neighboring or regional communities and networks (where appropriate and feasible). It is anticipated that both the ICI Partner specific strengthening and the collective activities will provide valuable lessons to be shared as outlined in Component 4.

Outcome 2.1 IPs and LCs Partners have self-strengthened to steward territories, lands, waters and resources, and scale support to IPs and LCs organizations

Robust plans tailored to community-identified needs for self-strengthening will be implemented to enable Partners to execute their project activities and achieve continued development and sustainability beyond the project duration. This includes unique plans for each Partner - Impact, Accelerator, and the Accelerator sub-grantees.

Outputs

2.1.1 Institutional, technical, and operational strengths assessment of Partners and development or update of institutional strategic development plans

Institutional, technical, and operational strength assessments, developed with the support of WWF and led by project Partners, will be carried out to inform the development or update of their institutional strategic development plans to ensure each Partner has a roadmap to implement self-strengthening that will enable them to successfully implement the GEF-8 ICI and future projects. Areas of strengthening might include, for example, governance, administration and financial management, consultation and FPIC processes, safeguards, gender mainstreaming, and monitoring and evaluation.

2.1.2 Identification of and support to existing IPs and LCs strengthening resources and mechanisms

The PMU will identify where there are existing resources (e.g. the GEF-7 ICI Learning Academy) and mechanisms to

support the strengthening requirements identified through the assessment. Where there are gaps, new resources will be developed as needed. Based on the findings, the PMU will work closely with the Partners to ensure resources and activities that are selected or co-developed for self-strengthening are appropriate for the local context and include the full participation of women and youth. Opportunities will be explored to provide options for more advanced training including university degree programs or certificates (e.g. WWF Russell E. Train Education for Nature Program and the Fonseca Leadership Program), fellowship programs, and other requested learning modalities.

2.1.3 Implement self-strengthening plans to support institutional, technical and/or operational capabilities (indicatively, as needed): leadership, governance, fundraising and financial sustainability, organizational strategy, project management, grantmaking, cultural due diligence, local to national legal empowerment (land and tenure rights, selection of appropriate conservation pathways), communications, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)

Each Partner will implement their unique self-strengthening plan with support, as requested. Indicative support may include technical assistance, consultancies to develop internal guidelines or tools, training, systems development, technology and software integrations, etc. Some elements of each plan may contribute to the collective capacity building as outlined under Outcome 2.2.

Outcome: 2.2 IPs and LCs organizations and networks self-strengthened

Aligned with the systems approach, the GEF-8 ICI Partners will identify opportunities to share self-strengthening activities with other IPs and LCs organizations to share some of the benefits of the ICI Partners to equip more organizations to advance their priorities and be better prepared to participate in similar initiatives to the ICI in the future.

Outputs

2.2.1 Collective strength building learning exchanges between IPs and LCs project partners, including GEF-7 ICI executing agencies, and external organizations delivered

Learning exchanges between ICI Partners, including GEF-7 ICI executing agencies and other IPs and LCs organizations will be carried out. Examples of how this could work include, but are not limited to:

- The Accelerator Partners could, if desired, be supported by the PMU to organize themselves into a learning cohort and identify areas of strengthening to address collectively. They could learn from each other's experience and share ideas on the best ways to integrate external resources in local contexts.
- Opportunities could be identified at the sub-national, national, or regional level for joint strength building and sharing of lessons learned. For instance, if an Accelerator Partner identifies a training topic that is required for one of their grantees to execute their project activities, they could host the training and invite their other grantees in the region that are not ICI funding recipients, but who will benefit from the training.
- Partners can be supported to invite other communities or organizations to participate in their capacity building activities.
- Partners could develop strength building in partnership with national or regional IPs and LCs bodies, whereby ICI Partners receive the training they need, but other communities also benefit.

Component 3 – IPs and LCs representation and recognition at global and large-scale decision-making levels

Component 3 seeks to support IPs and LCs to overcome centuries of marginalization and exclusion, and to help ensure the traditional knowledge and perspectives of IPs and LCs are respected and can influence policy at the national to global levels.

Outcome 3.1 Increased representation and influence of IPs and LCs at national to global level decision-making processes, with focus on where there is less representation, e.g. Rio Conventions subsidiary and technical bodies and other fora (e.g. World Economic Forum)

Increased representation and influence of IPs and LCs across decision-making processes will be prioritized in accordance with a strategic plan that identifies the convenings that have the highest potential for impact and influence, and where IPs and LCs representation is lacking.

Output

3.1.1 Strategy developed to increase IPs and LCs representation and influence in global level and within large-scale decision-making processes, based on a gap analysis

A strategy for enhanced representation and influence will be co-developed by ICI Partners and subject experts, with guidance from the GPSC, based on an analysis of the level of representation and opportunities for influence of IPs and LCs, especially women and youth, looking across:

- UN global convenings, including the technical and advisory bodies that inform higher level decision making at the Rio Conventions and Ramsar
- Private sector convenings that influence government and international policies, such as the World Economic Forum
- The nations and regions of the ICI Partners (e.g. national consultative processes, regional bodies etc.)

3.1.2 ICI Policy Leadership program (with a focus on women and youth) established

The ICI Policy Leadership program will be developed under the guidance of the GPSC and implemented to achieve the objectives in the strategy for representation and influence (developed under 3.1.1). With a focus on gender equity and youth inclusion, the Policy Leadership program will complement other strengthening activities, and curate a plan with the necessary training, guidance, and mentoring based on the specific needs of the participants.

Component 4 – Experience and lessons learned to enhance broader IPs and LCs initiatives

In Component 4, the body of knowledge and practice on IPs and LCs-led stewardship and funding will be advanced. Documenting and disseminating lessons learned from the ICI will target four objectives:

- Provide IPs and LCs outside of the ICI projects with practical information to advance their own self-determined priorities and strengthen their local, regional, and global movements.
- Share lessons learned for partnering with IPs and LCs organizations with other organizations to advance and mainstream rights-based approaches to inclusive conservation and climate mitigation strategies to achieve GEBs
- Share best practices regionally and globally as a part of advocacy efforts that create the enabling conditions for IPs and LCs to support IP and LC-led stewardship and sustainable livelihood goals
- Share models to support the development of IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms.

Outcome 4.1 Body of knowledge and practice on IPs and LCs-led stewardship is advanced

The project will document and disseminate demonstrated successes of the GEF-8 ICI IPs and LCs-led conservation and stewardship and the interconnected issues of land, tenure and resource management rights. Identifying, incorporating and sharing lessons learned will be an ongoing practice, integrated with the Monitoring and Evaluation framework outlined in Component 5.

Outputs

4.1.1 ICI Knowledge Platform(s) Identified

A project knowledge management platform(s) will be identified to house the project materials and knowledge products developed. It is important that the platform is easily accessible and user friendly for IPs and LCs, including multilingual functionality. To the extent possible, knowledge products will be shared across multiple relevant Platforms, such as:

- GEF-7 ICI Knowledge Management hosted on [UNDP Learning for Nature Platform](#)
- High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People [Online Toolkit](#)
- Global Alliance for Territorial Communities [Shandia Platform](#)

4.1.2 ICI Knowledge Products developed with Partner IPs and LCs organizations

The approach to documenting knowledge, including gender dimensions (e.g., best practices, lessons learned, challenges and constraints in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, successful models, etc.) will be developed under the guidance of the GPSC and ICI Partners to ensure it is driven from the community up and meets the needs of IPs and LCs organizations. Materials developed will be made available in multiple languages.

4.1.3 Proven, replicable models for advancing IPs and LCs governance and stewardship, strength building, sustainable finance and increased participation of women and youth disseminated

It is expected that the GEF-8 ICI will result in the development of proven, replicable models that will contribute to enhancing broader IPs and LCs initiatives and advance a human rights-based approach and inclusive conservation within government processes to better respond to IPs and LCs priorities beyond the life of the project. This could include a wide variety of subject areas, including:

- Examples of the recognition of Indigenous and Traditional Territories as a “third pathway” (in addition to PAs and OECMs) in achieving T3 of the GBF could support IPs and LCs engagement with national governments to support IP and LC stewardship of natural resources. This builds on the GEF-7 ICI’s Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Briefing Document²⁸, which highlights opportunities to demonstrate how a rights-based approach can contribute to achieving the GBF targets (Targets 1, 3, 5, 9, 19, 21 and Goal C).
- Demonstrating how investing in IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms to support small and medium size organizations, including women and youth led organizations, supports the achievement of GEBs.
- Providing examples of mechanisms to support IPs and LCs’ management of territories, lands, waters and resources, intergenerational knowledge transfer to preserve traditional cultural practices and language, strengthen governance (including best practices, lessons learned, challenges and constraints in advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment in IPs and LCs natural resource governance), and promote sustainable livelihoods could garner more funding for similar activities.
- Addressing gaps in knowledge on IPs and LCs conservation and stewardship where the research to inform sector-wide approaches is most lacking, such as:²⁹
 - The role of IPs and LCs as custodians of coastal, marine and freshwater resources and associated habitats (building on initial research on this topic by WWF Canada)
 - Technological mechanisms that might support enhanced monitoring and appropriate enforcement measures for IPs and LCs lands (for example, as related to preventing illegal resource extraction).

28 Figueroa, V., Batzin, R. (2023) Achieving the Global Biodiversity Framework Through Guaranteeing the Roles, Rights, and Contributions of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities https://inclusiveconservationinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/IPLC-Brief_English_.pdf

29 The State of Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities Lands and Territories (2021)

https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/report_the_state_of_the_indigenous_peoples_and_local_communities_lands_and_territories.pdf

Outcome 4.2 Increased awareness of key project findings and lessons by broader IPs and LCs community and allied people and organizations

Key project findings and lessons will be effectively disseminated to increase awareness by broader IPs and LCs community and allied people and organizations, and national and global governing and convening bodies.

Outputs

4.2.1 Effective Communications Strategy developed and delivered to disseminate project lessons to target audiences

To achieve increased awareness of key project findings and lessons learned, the project will develop and deliver an effective Communications Strategy to reach key audiences with the most relevant project findings.

4.2.2 Dialogues with key project stakeholders

Opportunities to share findings through dialogues with key stakeholders will be identified and/or created with guidance from and oversight of the GPSC. This could include participating in existing events or creating side events on the sidelines of large convenings (for example organizing an IPs and LCs financing summit at a convening such as the GEF Assembly or events on specific high-profile targets such as IPs' and LCs' contributions to the UN CBD GBF Target 3).

Component 5 – Monitoring and Evaluation

In Component 5, the project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan will be developed and implemented to aid in result-based decision-making, adaptive management, and effective project execution, as well as to monitor positive results that lead to impact on the ground.

Outcome 5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation plan finalized with data collection, reflection and reporting on time to aid in results-based decision-making and adaptive management

The PMU and Partners will develop and follow an M&E plan that is tailored to bridge community practices and GEF requirements to monitor and report on project progress and to adapt as experience grows. Where appropriate and desired by Partners, technology will be incorporated, while also supporting traditional and preferred forms of narrative, oral, visual, or other methods of reporting. ICI Partners will report yearly to the PMU on progress against the project level and core indicators, and in addition, will determine the most relevant additional indicators to best share their progress, including biocultural indicators emerging from Indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices.

The project will implement a robust IPs and LCs-informed gender responsive Monitoring and Evaluation plan that collects both gender and sex-disaggregated data with gender sensitive collection methods and will include gender-specific indicators to record progress in gender mainstreaming efforts and women's empowerment. All Partner reports will include information on the implementation of the gender mainstreaming plan.

Outputs

5.1.1 Project monitored regularly at all levels through multi-source knowledge collection (for annual work plans, results framework, project progress reports, core indicators)

M&E data will be collected and reported through methods identified as most appropriate for IPs and LCs Partners to support monitoring at all levels. The following reports will be provided by Impact and Accelerator Partners: Annual Work Plan and Budget; Bi-annual Project Progress Report; Quarterly Financial Report; Annual adaptive management workshop; and all partners will participate in independent, external Mid-term and Terminal Evaluations of the project.

5.1.2 Completion of MTE and Terminal Evaluation

Independent mid-term and terminal evaluations of the project will be completed.

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

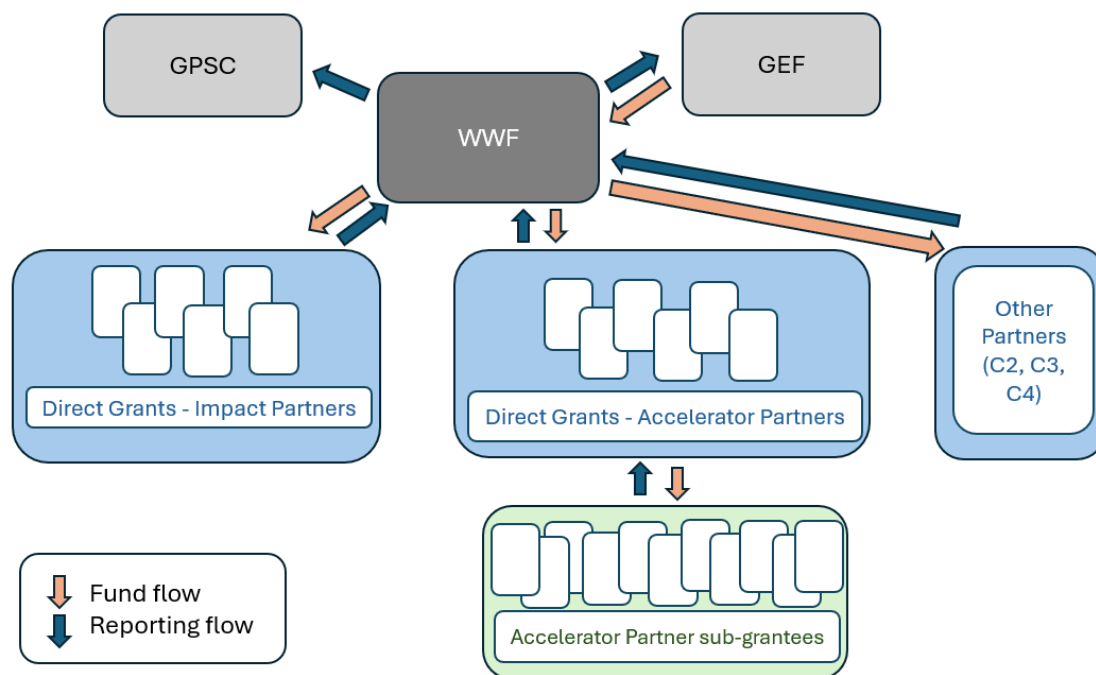
Does the GEF Agency expect to play an execution role on this project?

X Yes No

If so, please describe that role here. Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing (*max. 500 words, approximately 1 page*)

Executing Role: The proposed implementation arrangements include WWF as GEF Agency and with a role in execution to host the Project Management Unit (PMU), issue direct grants to Impact and Accelerator Partners, support their strength building, and to provide partner coordination, project management, and overall project monitoring and reporting. It is the GEF Agency’s responsibility to approve any organization that may serve as an Executing Agency (EA) (providing the required financial systems and support) for their ability to ensure that the Minimum Fiduciary Standards Requirements are met at all levels of project implementation. Over the course of project development, WWF US will be reviewing and revising its policies, procedures and templates around grant-making to ensure that they appropriately respond to the IPs and LCs context.

The PMU will be governed by the Global Project Steering Committee (GPSC) and housed in WWF’s Conservation Areas team and have day-to-day responsibility for project execution, including overall financial and programmatic progress oversight, monitoring and reporting. It will share expertise and staffing in the areas of legal counsel, operations, finance, M&E, social and environmental safeguards, stakeholder engagement, and gender mainstreaming. The PMU will oversee grants to IPs and LCs organizations; prepare the overall project annual workplans and oversee the development of annual workplans of the individual sub-projects; manage project expenditure in line with annual budgets and workplans; recruit and contract partner institutions and specialist support services as requested by IPs and LCs partners to deliver project outputs and activities; ensure technical quality of products, outputs and deliverables; produce quarterly expenditure and cash advance requests from project partners; report to the GPSC and WWF GEF Agency on project delivery and impact via semi-annual Project Progress Reports; coordinate with the GEF-7 ICI and other partner institutions to link the project with complementary local, national and regional programs and initiatives. The PMU will also manage the overall project M&E system and Knowledge Management Platform. The GPSC is anticipated to be comprised of leadership from the selected Impact and Accelerator Partners, GEF Secretariat, and WWF, pending guidance from the ISC.



Coordination with GEF-7 ICI: WWF will work with CI and IUCN (GEF-7 ICI Agencies) during project development to find ways to ensure ongoing collaboration and coordination between GEF-7 ICI and GEF-8 ICI throughout implementation of both projects, as well as to maintain the ICI identity. Some of the specific lessons from the GEF-7 ICI that the GEF-8 ICI will consider and seek to build on include:

- Simplification and integration of GEF and WWF project requirements (such as Stakeholder Engagement Plans, Gender Action Plans, Environmental and Social Safeguards screens and management plans) into unified and customized templates.
- Tailored training (in culturally appropriate formats) related to implementation of sub-project specific Gender Action Plans and Environmental and Social Safeguards mitigation plans for their effective implementation.
- Evaluating financial and legal language, systems and processes to maximize flexibility while maintaining fiduciary and programmatic requirements.
- The CEPF-adapted GEF-7 ICI Organizational Capacity Assessment tool which includes a Financial Capacity Questionnaire, Organizational Capacity Tracking Tool and Safeguards Capacity Assessment Tool.
- Early messaging regarding ICI programming and objectives and amplifying project leadership voices.
- Ensuring the global governance systems of initiatives like ICI have IPs and LCs governance structures and systems at the core to ensure a bottom-up governance that respects and advances indigenous and local governance principles.
- Planning inclusively around time zones and different languages.
- Co-creation of gender-responsive and youth-oriented cultural indicators can help ensure equity, support intergenerational transmission of Indigenous and traditional knowledge and provide evidence of how IPs and LCs-led initiatives and rights-based approaches to conservation contribute to global environmental benefits.

The GEF-8 ICI will also seek to collaborate on knowledge, learning, and organizational strengthening initiatives with GEF-7 ICI at the global level and in project territories. This includes coordinating with the ICI Knowledge Management Platform and ICI Community of Practice and learning from the GEF-7 ICI Learning Academy curricula, modules and learning exchanges, as well as the ICI International Environmental Policy Fellows Program to avoid duplication of

efforts.

WWF GEF-funded Projects: WWF has several GEF-funded projects currently underway with which the GEF-8 ICI will coordinate with and build on.

- **National and Regional Projects:** Several national WWF GEF projects that include focus on IPs and LCs biodiversity conservation: 1. [Integrated Management of Cameroon’s Forest Landscapes in the Congo Basin](#) (GEF ID 10287). 2. [Promoting Integrated Sustainable Management of the Peruvian Amazonian landscape Madre de Dios](#) (GEF ID 11203). 3. [Securing a Living Amazon through Landscape Connectivity in southern Guyana](#) (GEF ID 10288). 4. [Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Two Priority Landscapes in the Ecuadorian Amazon Region](#) (GEF ID 10259). 5. [Caatinga Protected Areas Program - ARCA](#) (GEF ID 11509). 6. [Addressing Outstanding Barriers and Leveraging Durable Financial Mechanisms to achieve Target 3 in Gabon](#) (GEF ID 11512).
- **Global research, guidance, sharing and thought leadership on Inclusive Conservation:** Recent work includes: 1. Development of a GBF [Target 3 Guide](#), supported by the GEF (ID [10916](#)), that puts an emphasis on “inclusive, equitable and effective” approaches to the 30x30 target, clearly drawing attention to important considerations regarding IPs and LCs, and co-produced the [30x30 solutions website](#) – both of which were launched at the GEF Assembly in August 2023. 2. WWF is one of the GEF Agencies implementing the [Fonseca Leadership Program](#) through the Russell E. Train Education for Nature Program.

Additional Coordination: GEF-8 ICI will also coordinate and collaborate with other programs and initiatives including the [GEF Small Grants Program](#) (providing small grants of up to \$150,000 for strategic projects). During project development, potential collaboration will be explored with the [IFAD Indigenous People’s Assistance Facility](#) (providing small grants (\$20,000-50,000)) in addition to international and regional organizations supporting IPs and LCs in the nations or regions where the selected ICI Impact and Accelerator Partners operate. The GEF-8 ICI will work in a complementary manner to other small grants programs in its flexible grant size that can serve as follow-on funding. It’s further distinct in that Accelerator Partners can apply a “portfolio approach” whereby they look beyond individual grantees and support multiple grantees of varying sizes as a collective who will work synergistically to achieve greater impact in aggregate. Where there is overlap with Partner organizations, GEF-8 ICI will seek opportunities for harmonizing requirements, building on previous strengthening and project activities, and co-convening whenever possible as preferred by the IPs and LCs partners.

Core Indicators

Project Core Indicators		Expected at PIF
1	Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (hectare)	150,000 ha
2	Marine protected areas created or under improved management (hectare)	100,000 ha
3	Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (hectare)	10,000 ha
4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectare)	2,500,000 ha
5	Area of marine habitat under improved practices (hectare)	150,000 ha
6	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (metric tons of CO ₂ e)	TBC
7	Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management (count)	
8	Globally over-exploited marine fisheries moved to more sustainable levels (metric ton)	

9	Chemicals of global concern and their waste reduced (metric ton of toxic chemicals reduced)	
10	Persistent organic pollutants to air reduced (gram of toxic equivalent gTEQ)	
11	People benefiting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (count)	125,000 Women: 62,500 Men: 62,500

Section Instructions:

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

GEF-8 ICI is proposing ambitious GEBs in biodiversity conservation, land degradation, and climate change mitigation. Understanding that the figures may change significantly once the Partners are selected and their self-determined plans developed, it is estimated the GEBs will contribute to the core indicators outlined in table above. The figures associated with the indicators are estimated based on WWF’s field experience co-creating projects with IPs and LCs and reviewing data from other organizations delivering direct funding to IPs and LCs organizations. The target for greenhouse gas emissions mitigated will be calculated once the ICI Partners are selected in the PPG stage. The total number of terrestrial and marine hectares estimated at the PIF stage is 2,910,000.

A [2021 report](#) indicates that 91% of global land and associated inland waters owned or governed by IPs and LCs are in good or moderate ecological condition. Thus, less focus is anticipated on restoration (Indicator 3) and more on improved conservation practices (Indicators 4 and 5) inclusive of OECMs, [ICCAs](#), and other IPs and LCs-led conservation categories depending on the national contexts. Given 13% of IPs and LCs lands overlap with protected areas (PAs), there is possible - but likely the smallest - impact on PAs (Indicators 1 and 2) with a focus on improved management rather than creation of new PAs.

Beneficiaries (Indicator 11) will include Impact and Accelerator Partners, their sub-grantees and their communities who directly benefit from the project activities and capacity building. Additionally, the collective capacity building model and events to disseminate lessons learned will further extend the number of beneficiaries. With a focus on increasing the participation of women and youth, the estimated total direct beneficiaries include the following categories: **1.** Direct beneficiaries of Impact and Accelerator Partner grantees’ sub-project activities (including improved management of terrestrial or marine protected areas, land and ecosystem restoration, landscapes under improved practices, tenure rights, job creation, improved livelihoods, capacity building for community-based activities, etc. (Component 1). **2.** Impact and Accelerator Partners and their grantees’ organizational strengthening specific to administrative, financial, operational, and strategic strength building (Component 2). **3.** Collective strength building participants not directly involved in the projects, but invited to participate in strength building events, and events to disseminate lessons learned (Component 2 and 4). **4.** Policy Leadership Program participants (Component 3). **5.** IPs and LCs leaders (including women and youth) supported to participate in global convenings (Component 3).

NGI (only): Justification of Financial Structure³⁰

Please describe the financial structure and include a graphic representation. This description will include the financial instrument requested from the GEF and terms and conditions of the financing passed onto the Beneficiaries.

³⁰ Note: Make this into a pop-up which appears only if “NGI” was selected in the “General project Information”

Risks to Achieving Outcomes

Section Instructions:

Summarize risks that might affect the achievement of desired outcomes and the mitigation measures which are planned or already undertaken to address these. The risk rating should reflect the residual risk to achieving outcomes after considering the implementation of mitigation measures. The rating scale is: High, Substantial, Moderate, Low. See the GEF Risk Appetite document (GEF/C.66/13) for more information and its Annex B for a description of each risk category. Note that the rating for the “Environment and Social” category should be the same as the risk rating for Safeguards.

RISK CATEGORIES	RATINGS	ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES
CONTEXT		
Climate	Moderate	<p>Extreme weather events coupled with the high vulnerability of many IPs and LCs territories could hamper implementation progress or eliminate some activities. Project planning will include a Climate Change Risk Screen and related guidance for climate resilience.</p> <p>If project work or a community is heavily impacted by an extreme weather event, the PMU will work with the GPSC and the Partner to assess options and revise plans to support delivery/recovery of GEBs to the extent possible.</p>
Environment and Social	Moderate	<p>Activities of the project will be driven by the self-determined priorities of communities, which can serve to mitigate potential environmental and social risk, but also create a certain degree of uncertainty.</p> <p>The overall project and each ICI Partner will have an IPs and LCs informed Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), a Gender Action Plan (GAP), and a protocol and plan for the work and activities with children, which will be developed during project preparation to help ensure any risks to the environment and communities are managed appropriately. The project will have a Grievance Redress Mechanism and a plan for equitable benefit sharing.</p> <p>There is a risk of in-migration into IPs and LCs lands or territories resulting in conflict. A Political Economic Analysis and conflict sensitivity analysis will be conducted at the start of the project. Partners will develop context specific conflict mitigation plans which include prevention measures and resolution plans should conflicts arise.</p>
Political and Governance	Moderate	<p>Across the possible countries, government support of and relationship with IPs and LCs will vary. There is a risk of low government support or of a negative change in support with a change in government during the project cycle.</p>

Early outreach to governments will be conducted to build support. Projects will be fully owned and managed by IPs and LCs to mitigate the effects of changing governments or their support.

INNOVATION		
Institutional and Policy	Low	The project is global in nature and no specific countries have yet been identified, and the project strategy does not currently include policy innovation so at this stage the risk is considered low.
Technological	Low	The strategy is not focused on technological innovation, however if an IPs and LCs activity includes the use of new technology, there is a low risk that the technology will not work in the setting. For plans that include the integration of technology, an assessment of the most appropriate options for the setting will be conducted to inform the selection of the specific technology to be used.
Financial and Business Model	Low	As a part of organizational strengthening, ICI Partners may adopt new financial or business models. This will be undertaken based on a strengths analysis and any new models will be derived from the IPs and LCs culturally rooted approach to ensure successful adoption of the new models.
EXECUTION		
Capacity for Implementation	Moderate	By issuing a broad call for Expressions of Interest with clear criteria, the project will be able to identify organizations with the basic level of required capacity. Selected ICI Partners will have varying levels of capacity, which will be assessed in the due diligence, and addressed in their project planning stage through the organizational strength assessment and tailored strengthening plan. Partners will also have varied absorptive capacity, which will be addressed by modulating the grant design and size accordingly.
Fiduciary	Moderate	<p>There is a risk that ICI Partners receiving direct funding do not have the processes in place to meet the GEF fiduciary requirements. This will be addressed in the same manner as the above. In some cases, the Partner may choose to work with a fiscal sponsor chosen by the Partner and trusted by both parties to manage the fiduciary responsibilities.</p> <p>In any circumstance of non-compliance with the WWF-US GEF Fiduciary Standards, project funding to that sub-project will be paused until there is an acceptable resolution.</p>
Stakeholder	Moderate	There is a risk that stakeholder expectations may be higher than what the project can deliver. The project will work through the channels outlined above to clearly communicate the project criteria and timeline and support organizations to do self-assessments on their ability to meet the basic criteria.

		<p>There is a risk of elite capture and inequitable benefit sharing on multiple levels, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The organizations that are not connected at the global level will not be aware of the ICI and not apply, resulting in the selected ICI Partners being the same IPs and LCs organization that already have the greatest support. This will be mitigated through the Accelerator Partners that have a broad network of IPs and LCs at the regional, national and local levels. 2. At the local level, women, youth or other minority or vulnerable groups might be excluded, thus potentially resulting in inequitable participation and/or sharing of project benefits. This will be mitigated through the inclusion of safeguards, stakeholder engagement and Gender Action Plan protocols in the planning phase. In the event that exclusionary practices are discovered, the GPSC will work with the Partner organization to develop and implement a corrective action plan. <p>There is also a risk that the project is not able to reach all project stakeholders (selected Partners) due to remote locations, or unreliable internet and cell service of some IPs and LCs organizations. Information will be shared through IPs and LCs networks, including those of women and youth, using email, WhatsApp, and other channels as recommended by regional experts.</p>
Other	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	<p>The overall risk rating is moderate, given six risk categories are rated moderate (Climate, Environment and Social, Political and Governance, Capacity for Implementation, Fiduciary, and Stakeholder) whilst three categories are rated low (Institutional and Policy, Technological, Financial and Business model). This also aligns with the moderate Environmental and Social Safeguards Risks rating. The project will track risks throughout and identify mitigation and management approaches as risks arise.</p>

Safeguards Rating (PIF level):

Based on the available ESS pre-screen, this project has been categorized as a medium risk or B. Although this risk categorization is not expected to change, a more extensive ESS screening tool will be applied when the project enters its PPG phase and the assessment of the environmental and social standards triggered will be updated.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Section Instructions:

Describe how the proposed interventions are aligned with GEF- 8 programming strategies and country and regional priorities, including how these country strategies and plans relate to the multilateral environmental agreements.

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how.

(max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The GEF-8 ICI is aligned with GEF- 8 programming directions and global priorities as outlined below. Given the broad scope of possible locations for project Partners, it is not possible to determine alignment or conflict with country priorities at this stage. Where feasible and desirable by the IPs and LCs partners and the country governments, opportunities to contribute IPs and LCs to national NBSAP and NCDs will be pursued.

The project will contribute to the GEF-8 Biodiversity Focal Area Objective 1 "To improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems" by:

- Assisting IPs and LCs organizations to have the financial and strength building resources to develop and implement plans to achieve their self-determined priorities for biodiversity conservation, land restoration, and climate change mitigation in the territories, lands and waters.
- Enabling greater access to funding for IPs and LCs-led conservation, sustainable use and restoration by strengthening IPs and LCs-led funding mechanisms
- Advancing knowledge of lessons learned to increase the adoption of effective inclusive conservation models led by IPs and LCs.

The project is aligned to, amongst others, the following multilateral agreements:

- Convention on Biodiversity (UNCBD): The project is directly aligned to contributing to a significant number of the targets in Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework because of the variety of anticipated IPs and LCs projects that will be developed. Additionally, it is anticipated that projects will integrate multiple targets as part of holistic approach to achieving the self-determined priorities of IPs and LCS organizations. The targets that are expected to be integrated in one or more projects include:
 - Target 1: Plan and Manage All Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss
 - Target 2: Restore 30% of All Degraded Ecosystems
 - Target 3: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas
 - Target 4: Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts
 - Target 5: Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species
 - Target 9: Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People
 - Target 10: Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry
 - Target 11: Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People
 - Target 13: Increase the Sharing of Benefits from Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge
 - Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level
 - Target 19: Mobilize \$200 Billion Per Year for Biodiversity from All Sources, Including \$30 Billion Through International Finance
 - Target 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity
 - Target 21: Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action

- Target 22: Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for All
- Target 23: Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- The Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*:**

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes No (If –and only if– NO is selected, a pop-up field should open for the Agency to provide an explanation)

Section Instructions:
 ***POP-UP material start
 Please upload to the portal documents tab any gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assessment that identifies and describes any gender differences, gender differentiated impacts and risks, and opportunities to address gender gaps and promote the Empowerment of Women that may be relevant to the proposed activity; this should include any corresponding gender-responsive measures to address differences, identified impacts and risks, and opportunities through a gender action plan or equivalent. If gender-responsive measures have been identified (mostly relevant at project development phase, the results framework or logical framework include actions, Gender-Sensitive Indicators and sex disaggregated targets.
 ***POP-UP material end

Stakeholder Engagement

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during PIF development as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes and plan to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan before CEO endorsement has been clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes No (If –and only if– NO is selected, a pop-up field should open for the Agency to provide an explanation)

Were the following stakeholders consulted during project identification phase:

- Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities? Yes No
 Civil Society Organizations? Yes No
 Private Sector? Yes No

Provide a brief summary and list of names and dates of consultations

Initial informal consultations were conducted with representatives from IPs and LCs networks, IPs and LCs funding mechanisms, and allied organizations to inform the development of the concept note. An in-person consultation with the GEF IPAG was also conducted (2-3 September 2024) to refine the concept for the PIF submission. More extensive formal consultations and dialogues will be held during the project development.

(Please upload to the portal documents tab any stakeholder engagement plan or assessments that have been done during the PIF development phase.)

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes No

Private sector engagement is dependent on the specific context and priorities of each ICI Partner and will be determined in their project planning work.

And if so, has its role been described and justified in the section B project description?

Yes No

Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided indicative information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program and any measures to address such risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex D).

Yes No (If –and only if– NO is selected, a pop-up field should open for the Agency to provide an explanation)

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described in the Project Description (Section B)

Yes

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)			
					Grant/Non-Grant (For NCI Projects Only)	GEF Project Grant	Agency Fee	Total GEF Financing
WWF-US	GEFTF	Global	BD	BD Global Regional Set-Aside		22,535,780	2,028,220	24,564,000
Total GEF Resources						22,535,780	2,028,220	24,564,000

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested? Yes No

If yes³¹, fill in PPG table (incl. PPG fee)

	Country/	Focal Area	Programming	(in \$)
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³¹ Note: Make this into a “pop-up” which appears only if PPG was selected, and if amount requested is above limits, they have to justify it

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Regional/Global		of Funds	PPG	Agency Fee	Total PPG Funding
WWF-US	GEFTF	Global	BD	BD Global Regional Set-Aside (select)	400,000	36,000	436,000
Total PPG Amount					400,000	36,000	436,000

Sources of Funds for Country STAR Allocation

GFEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/Regional/Global	Focal Area	Source of Funds	Total
WWF-US	GEFTF	Global	Biodiversity	(select as applicable)	
Total GEF Resources					

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
BD-1-5 (select) BD Global set aside	GEFTF	22,535,780	83,799,902
Total Project Cost		22,535,780	83,799,902

Indicative Co-financing

***POP-UP material start

Please provide indicative information regarding the expected amounts, sources and types of Co-Financing, and the sub-set of such Co-Financing that meets the definition of Investment Mobilized.

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Donor Agency	The Tenure Facility	Grant	Investment Mobilized	30,000,000
		In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	10,000,000
GEF Agency	WWF	Grant	Investment Mobilized	33,002,382
		In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	10,797,520
Total Co-financing				83,799,902

Please provide indicative information regarding the expected amounts, sources and types of Co-Financing, and the sub-set of such Co-Financing that meets the definition of Investment Mobilized.

The Tenure Facility investment mobilized is identified as \$30M in grant disbursements to IP and LC organizations during the period 2026-2031. WWF investment mobilized is indicatively identified as \$33M from a variety of bilateral and philanthropic grant sources to WWF.

Funding from IPs and LCs-led funds have not been included as not to influence the selection process. Co-financing will be further refined during the project development stage after the selection of Impact and Accelerator Partners.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

Name of GEF Agency Coordinator	GEF Agency Coordinator Contact Information
Renae Stenhouse	Renae.stenhouse@wwfus.org
Name of Agency Project Coordinator	Agency Project Coordinator Contact Information

Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/dd/yyyy)
<i><<additional fields to be added for regional projects or global projects with on the ground investments>></i>			

NGIs do not require a Letter of Endorsement if beneficiaries are: i) exclusively private sector actors, or ii) public sector entities in more than one country. However, for NGI projects please confirm that the agency has informed the OFP of the project to be submitted for Council Approval YES

Compilation of Letters of Endorsement

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) in this Annex. For SGP, use the SGP OFP endorsement letter format. For regional and global projects (as appropriate): please include a compilation of the signed LOEs in one PDF file in this annex.

ANNEX C: PROJECT LOCATION

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place

The GEF-8 ICI is a global project. Specific project locations will be determined in the PPG stage.

ANNEX D: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

(PIF level) Attach agency safeguard screen form including rating of risk types and overall risk rating.

ANNEX E: RIO MARKERS

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Desertification
(multiple selection)	(multiple selection)	(multiple selection)	(multiple selection)

<< Rio Markers may be expanded in GEF 8 beyond markers for CCM and CCA>>

ANNEX F: TAXONOMY WORKSHEET

<<Table below for now taken from GEF-7 PIF>>

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
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Influencing Models	Strengthen institutional capacity/decision-making		
	Demonstrate innovative approaches		
Stakeholders	Indigenous peoples		
	Local Communities		
Capacity, Knowledge and Research	Knowledge Generation and Exchange	Training	
	Capacity development		
	Knowledge exchange		
Gender Equality	Gender results areas	Participation and leadership	
		Capacity development	
		Access and control over natural resources	
		Awareness raising	
		Access to benefits and services	
		Knowledge generation and exchange	
	Gender mainstreaming	Sex-disaggregated indicators	
		Gender-sensitive indicators	
	Beneficiaries		
Focal Area/Theme	Biodiversity	Protected Areas and Landscapes	Community Based Natural Resource Management
			Productive Seascapes
			Productive landscapes
			Coastal and Marine Protected Areas
			Terrestrial Protected Areas
		Financial and Accounting	Conservation Trust Funds

ANNEX G: NGI RELEVANT ANNEXES

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1. Annex X (currently existing in NGI projects): Template for Indicative Financial Termsheet
2. Annex X (currently existing in NGI projects): Reflow table
3. Annex X (currently existing in NGI projects): GEF Agency Eligibility to Administer Concessional Finance
4. Annex X. Management Capacity of Executing Agency and Governance Structure

³² Annex H: Only if NGI was selected on top

ANNEX H: WWF FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSIVE CONSERVATION

The last 5 years (2019-2024) represent a pivotal period in WWF’s work with IPs and LCs. WWF first adopted a Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation in 1996, making WWF the first major conservation organization to formally adopt a policy recognizing the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Since then, WWF has worked with IPs and LCs in diverse ways across nearly 100 WWF offices, at the local to international levels. In 2019, after allegations of human rights violations by government employed rangers linked to WWF, WWF undertook an Independent Review of its work, especially in the locations of these allegations. The [Independent Review Panel](#) commissioned to investigate those allegations confirmed there were no allegations that WWF staff ‘directed, participated in or encouraged’ abuse and no evidence they had done so. The panel recognized significant steps taken by WWF to support the communities in the places it reviewed. However, it also identified that WWF could have done more to help staff and communities recognize, address, and escalate human rights risks and concerns within the organization and with government partners. Key findings were that WWF had good policies but needed to strengthen oversight of its programs; needed to improve how it listened to communities; and should use its voice more clearly to raise human rights concerns. The process of deep institutional reflection and review spurred by the Independent Review and action plan to address its findings led to a multi-faceted response (see [Year 3 report](#)). 1. Institutional roll-out of an [Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework](#) (ESSF) (aligned with GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards) that aims to ensure that in every place WWF works it better anticipate conflict, manage risks, and reflect the policies to which it is committed. 2. WWF has put in place a structure, including the ESSF, Standard Operating Procedures, [IP Consultative Group](#), and additional capacities to enhance its interactions with IPs and LCs and to more clearly express and implement the commitments WWF has to Indigenous Peoples, other historically marginalized groups, and local communities. 3. New Indigenous board members in at WWF International ([Dr. Ramy Bulan](#), Kelabit) and WWF US ([Clara Lee Pratte](#), Navajo Nation) - the number of Indigenous and First Nations Peoples representatives on WWF governance boards and advisory groups now totals 18. 4. New versions of WWF commitments, including: [Statement of Principles on Human Rights](#), [Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples](#), [Safeguard on Indigenous Peoples](#), [Safeguard on Cultural Heritage](#), [Safeguard on Community Health, Safety, and Security](#), and a [Safeguard on Stakeholder Engagement](#). 5. Reinforcing the importance of human rights and FPIC as a central cornerstone of this work by releasing updated guidance, conducting internal training and making additional hires. 6. In May 2024 the WWF’s highest decision-making body, the WWF Network Executive Team, endorsed the [WWF Guidance on Inclusive Conservation](#), the product of over two years of broad network consultation to co-develop nine best practices to continue building organizational culture, mindsets and approaches to embed rights-based and inclusive approaches in all WWF work.

ANNEX I: GEF-7 ICI EXECUTING AGENCY CRITERIA

Experience & strengths relevant to the proposed Indigenous territory, landscape/seascape

- Importance of the Indigenous territory, landscape/seascape for biodiversity, with additional consideration to climate benefits
- Geographical focus in an area managed by IPLCs
- Vulnerability of the proposed IPLC lands/waters/natural resources to environmental threats

- Opportunities for ICI results, including enabling policy conditions, positive government support and presence of successful IPLC-led conservation initiatives that could be scaled up
- Co-finance and synergies with existing investments
- Long term sustainability of proposed approach

Consideration also was given to including a diversity of regions, ecosystems, cultures, and ways of life across the portfolio as a whole.

Quality and ability of the proposed approach and interventions to achieve transformational impact that generate the global environmental benefits

- Quality of proposed approach and ability to support traditional structures, knowledge and community practices in the delivery of global environmental benefits
- Potential of the proposed activities to achieve IPLC-led transformational impact that generates global environmental benefits
- IPLC-led conservation that advances national and global environmental priorities
- Demonstrated gender mainstreaming in all activities
- Innovation and Potential to scale up

Qualifications and experience of the Organization

- Indigenous Peoples or Local Community organization legally recognized under national laws
- Demonstrated on the ground leadership related to Indigenous Peoples and/or Local Community Conservation
- Proven relevant experience in working with IPLC networks, alliances and organizations/ strength of partnerships on the ground
- Technical expertise and capacity to address environmental problems, root causes and barriers
- Project Management capacity
- Past projects

LIST OF KEY REQUIREMENTS LEADING TO CEO ENDORSEMENT SUBMISSION

During project design/by endorsement:³³

- **Stakeholders:** provide list of stakeholders, roles in the project and means of engagement; specifically address civil society organizations, vulnerable groups and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) (as applicable) and their roles in the project
- **Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment:** carry out gender analysis and prepare gender action plan; include relevant gender aspects in Theory of change and gender-sensitive indicators in results framework (i.e. including the process to collect sex-disaggregated data and information on gender); include gender equality considerations/gender-responsive measures and actions in relevant activities in project components.

³³ Note: This **a list to remind agencies of key requirements** to address during project **preparation** and include in the endorsement request. No text is, therefore, to be entered here.

- **Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) related documents:** depending on types of ESS risks to be prepared (such as Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, Environmental and Social Management Framework/Plan, Indigenous Peoples Plan and Grievance Mechanism) and made public in country/location in relevant language/s (provide publication date and locations)
- **Private sector involvement mechanisms** (for non NGI projects: anticipated roles and type of PS; this will already be central to the project document for NGI projects)
- **Knowledge Management Plan** - develop “Knowledge Management Approach” for the project and how it will contribute to the project’s overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant previous and ongoing projects; proposed tools and methods for knowledge exchange and learning; knowledge outputs; strategic communication plan; and budget and timeline.
- **Results.** Inclusion of final Core Indicator targets, along with a comprehensive results framework with indicator name, units of measurement, and baseline and target data.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation.** Include a budget, along with an explanation of monitoring arrangements and deliverables.
- **Institutional arrangements** (incl. reporting arrangements and flow of funds) and cross-sector integration approaches, as relevant
- **Sustainability:** Post-project financing sustainability plan
- **Co-finance:** Confirm amount and type of co-financing and the definition of investment mobilized
- **To be complemented by new GEF8 policies and requirements.**