



**SGP** The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme  
**OPERATIONAL PHASE 8**



**SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY**

**Georgia**





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## OP8 Financial Resources - SGP Country Programme (estimated US\$)<sup>1</sup>

Total SGP Grants to date since Country Programme start date (2012)	<b>USD</b>
OP8 GEF Core Funds	USD 456,818.18
OP8 GEF STAR Funds	USD 120,600.00
Other funds (secured)	<b>USD 0</b>
Other funds (expected/to be mobilized)	<b>USD 0</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Eighth Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme (SGP OP8) builds on 30 years of successful experience in empowering local civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in designing and leading community driven initiatives that have enhanced household wellbeing, increased awareness and resilience regarding environmental threats, and generated global environmental benefits. With economic development pressures intensifying in many parts of the developing world and the associated rising inequalities, local communities, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are becoming more and more marginalized, unable to cope with threats associated with ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change. Lessons learned and experience gained in previous SGP Operational Phases have demonstrated that integrated, landscape-seascape approaches are effective in mobilizing multiple stakeholder collaboration, linking local CSOs/CBOs with enabling partners and achieving mutually supportive livelihood and environmental outcomes at scale.

The objectives of the SGP OP8 are to engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.

The OP8 objectives reflect the key features of Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme 2.0, including new approaches to support youth and women, linking up with complementary mechanisms, such as the Microfinance Initiative and CSO Challenge Programme, cooperating with other GEF Agencies, and leveraging opportunities with GEF strategies, including the delivery of the GEF-8 Integrated Programmes. In addition, OP8 will facilitate opportunities for innovation and scaling up, catalyze multi-stakeholder alliances to test new approaches through CSOs, and leverage its dialogue platforms towards greater impact. OP8 will also align and contribute to the UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025) and its subsequent frameworks.

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<sup>1</sup> The level of SGP OP8 resources is an estimated total of: (a) the GEF8 core grant allocation; (b) approved STAR resources; as well as (c) other sources of cost sharing & co-financing (country, regional and/or global levels). SGP countries with remaining OP7 balances that have not been pipelined will be expected to use these balances in line with the OP8 strategic approach in order to be coherent in terms of SGP programming and results expected.



## 2. COUNTRY PROGRAMME SUMMARY: Key results and achievements

Under SGP OP7, out of 28 funded projects in Georgia, a total of USD 960,984 was generated as co-financing, which included USD 608,675 from various international donors, the private sector, and local governments. Combined, OP5 and OP6 produced USD 2,164,442 in co-financing, with USD 1,166,620 in cash contributions from multiple international donors, the private sector, and local governments.

SGP Georgia's OP7 projects achieved significant global environmental benefits, contributing to the fulfillment of the GEF's mandate. The highest number of projects (11, or about 39%) were in the field of biodiversity, accounting for 35% of all grant funds. These projects focused on (i) enhancing the management effectiveness of protected areas through increased community participation and (ii) improving community-led biodiversity-friendly practices, such as pasture management, forestry, tourism, and infrastructure. One notable project demonstrated sustainable management over 500 hectares in the Chachuna Reserve, submitted a business plan, and enhanced ecotourism infrastructure, leading to a 10% increase in tourist numbers (as reported by project monitoring data). This project benefited 35 locals through ecotourism services, promoted gender equality, and created jobs while strengthening local skills in sustainable tourism and development.

Climate change was the second-largest thematic area by total allocated funds (20%). Supported projects focused on (i) applying low-carbon energy-efficient technologies and renewable energy sources (such as solar and biomass) and (ii) raising awareness about climate change and low-carbon energy technologies. Solar energy systems were installed, benefiting over 1000 individuals from across selected landscapes. Successes included the installation of solar power stations in remote areas of Georgia and the distribution of energy-efficient stoves to vulnerable communities. The project received strong support from local municipalities, which contributed through co-financing.

Projects focused on sustainable land management trained 116 farmers in Tianeti Municipality on sustainable fruit growing and business proposal development, enhancing their skills in intensive orchards and bio-based methods. Eighteen local farmers initiated demonstration projects, establishing five greenhouses, six vermicompost farms, and four new orchards with irrigation systems. These vermicompost farms are expected to produce 3-4 tonnes of biofertilizer annually, potentially increasing yields by 30-40% and farmer incomes by 1,300-5,000 GEL. The project also established three composting sites at farms and ten at public schools, collecting 300 m<sup>3</sup> of green waste and producing 0.9 tons of compost. In Imereti region sessions reached 115 participants, enhancing knowledge of composting among farmers, local officials, and teachers. Workshops and informational meetings improved environmental awareness for 606 individuals, with a focus on youth and women. Through SGP initiatives in Tsalka, the project achieved the regeneration of approximately 1 hectare of land, reduced soil degradation, and promoted climate-smart agricultural practices, benefiting around 1,000 farmers and enhancing local food production and sustainability.

Several projects were funded outside the selected landscapes, primarily focusing on establishing dialogue platforms between local communities and local authorities. Successful projects included improving capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive, and integrated solutions in the areas of energy, transport, and ecosystem services in the cities of Rustavi, Tbilisi, and Chiatura.



In total, 46% of the funded projects were led by women, and eight projects included youth involvement initiatives, contributing to the empowerment of women and youth and the capacity building of small CBOs.

### 3. COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

#### 3.1 Alignment with national priorities

Georgia has ratified all three Rio conventions and other relevant protocols, which are directly or indirectly related to the GEF strategic priorities (see Table 1).

Table 1. List of relevant conventions and national/regional plans or programmes

Conventions + national planning frameworks	Date of ratification / completion
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	August, 1994
Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)	December 2022
CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	2014-2020 , (under revision)
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)	October, 2014
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	November 3, 1994.
UNFCCC National Communications	First National Communication 1999 Second National communication 2009 Third National Communication 2016 Fourth National Communication 2021
UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)	February 2010
UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA)	May, 2009
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	February 1, 1999.
UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP)	December 2014
Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	January 2007
SC National Implementation Plan (NIP)	April 2011
Minamata Convention (MC) on Mercury	October 2018
UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	2015
Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN SDGs	2016, 2020
Strategic Action Programmes (SAPs) for shared international waterbodies (IW) - Georgia is part of the <b>Strategic Action Plan for the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation of the Black Sea</b>	adopted in 1996 and updated in 2009
Ecoregional Plan of the Caucasus	2000
Aarhus Convention	March 2002
GEF National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA)	2002
Bern Convention	MAY 2009
National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP, 2012-2016)	2012





Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for Paris Agreement	May 2017, 2021, 2026
Social-economic Development Strategy of Georgia “GEORGIA 2020”	2020
Government Programme "For Strong, Democratic and Unified Georgia"	December, 2015
Strategy for Agricultural Development in Georgia (2015-2020)	2015
National Waste Management Strategy	2016

### 3.2 Gaps and opportunities

The involvement of civil society is crucial for implementing the Rio Conventions and national environmental plans at both national and local levels. Many actions in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2020 (NBSAP) and other frameworks rely on the active participation of Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) and local communities. Public involvement should be more recognized by society, including local and central governments.

However, opportunities for public engagement in environmental decision-making are still limited, and interest remains low, particularly among local communities. This is especially true for vulnerable groups, such as women, who are often underrepresented. Empowering these groups is essential for building a more inclusive and effective environmental movement.

To tackle these challenges, targeted awareness campaigns, capacity-building for communities, and incentive programs should be created to encourage greater participation. Strengthening partnerships between government, civil society organizations, and local communities through participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E) can help ensure national environmental priorities are effectively implemented from the bottom up.

### 3.3 OP8 strategic priorities of the SGP Country Programme

Table 2. SGP Country Programme’s alignment with SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives and country priorities/projects/programmes

SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives - Global	SGP Country Programme’s OP8 Priorities	SGP Country Programme’s complementarity with GEF, UNDP, and other projects and programmes
<b><i>Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species</i></b> 1) Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve management effectiveness of protected areas through increased community participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity and Sustainable Local Development in Georgia / German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and</li> </ul>



<p>and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of local communities.</p> <p>2) Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.).</p> <p>3) Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.)</li> <li>• Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species</li> </ul>	<p>Development (BMZ) / German Credit Bank for Development and Reconstruction (KfW)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Save the nature - Georgia /SIDA</li> <li>• Implementation of sustainable forest management in the protected landscape of Aragvi - CzDA/ ADA 2021-2025</li> <li>• Supporting climate-friendly forest management in Georgia - GIZ/ GCF /SDC 2021-2028</li> <li>• Enhancing Financial Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Georgia – CNF / UNDP/GEF</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security</i></b></p> <p>1) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, and other ecosystems, etc.).</p> <p>2) Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.</p> <p>3) Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase diversification and livelihood improvement</li> <li>• Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Management of Agricultural Biodiversity in Vulnerable Ecosystems and Rural Communities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region in Georgia - RECC / (GEF) and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) 2023-2026</li> <li>• Accelerated Rural Development in Imereti &amp; Kakheti – EU4 Business 2022-2025</li> <li>• ENPARD-4: Supporting Rural Development in Georgia – UNDP 2021-2025</li> <li>• Inclusive Rural Development and Sustainable Agriculture – FAO/ADC 2023-2027</li> <li>• Sustainable and Inclusive Irrigated Agriculture Development Programme in Georgia – European Commission 2024-2030</li> </ul>



<p><b>Low-carbon energy access co-benefits</b> Support implementation of Paris Agreement and the NDCs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</li> <li>2) Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</li> <li>• Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Georgia's V National Notification and I Biennial Transparency Report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – UNDP /GEF 2022-2025</li> <li>• Scaling-up Multi-Hazard Early Warning System and the Use of Climate Information in Georgia – UNDP / GCF 2018-2025</li> <li>• Improved Resilience of Communities to Climate Risks – UNDP/SDC -2020-2025</li> <li>• EU for Energy Security and Sustainable Development Policies – 2022-2025</li> <li>• Georgia Climate Action Project (GEO-CAP): Promoting Civil Society Engagement in Climate Change Policy Design and Implementation 2021-2025</li> <li>• Support to Environmental protection and fight against Climate change in Georgia 2022-2025</li> <li>• Strengthening of Community Based Climate Smart Programming in Georgia (SCBCS) -2023-2026</li> <li>• Strategies to Ensure a Climate-friendly, Resilient and Eco-friendly Economy – GIZ</li> <li>• Promotion of green economy and sustainable energy in Georgia – CENN / ADA 2022-2027</li> </ul>
<p><b>Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Improve capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development</li> <li>• Demonstrated innovative socially-inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water Supply and Sanitation in Rural and Semi Urban Communities of Adjara / KFW -2018-2027</li> <li>• Circular Cities and Regions in Georgia: Building Local Capacities to Advance Waste Prevention and Circular</li> </ul>





<p>resilient urban development.</p> <p>2) Demonstrate innovative socially inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity).</p> <p>3) Implement public-private partnership approach for low carbon energy access for marginalized urban communities.</p>	<p>chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement public-private partnership approach for low carbon energy access for marginalized urban communities</li> </ul>	<p>Economy in the Regions of Georgia – CENN 2024-2028</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Caucasus Regional Water Management Program -Deloitte 2024-2028</li> <li>Kutaisi: Integrated Transformation for Sustainable Development 2023-2025</li> <li>Investment Support to the Kutaisi Waste Water Project (KWWP) -EIB -2016-2025</li> <li>Georgia Hazardous Waste EBRD -2018-2025</li> </ul>
<p><b>CSO-government-private sector policy and planning dialogue platforms</b></p> <p>1) Promote/enhance community voices and participation in global and national policy, strategy development related to global environment and sustainable development issues.</p>	<p>Promote/enhance community voices and participation in global and national policy, strategy development related to global environment and sustainable development issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening community engagement in the local decision-making process in Marneuli, Bolnisi and Dmanisi municipalities -2024-2025</li> <li>Strengthening of Community Based Climate Smart Programming in Georgia (SCBCS) 2023-2026</li> <li>Fostering Decentralisation and Good Governance at the Local Level – UNDP/Danish gov. 2018-2024</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enhancing social inclusion</b></p> <p>1) Promote inclusive targeted initiatives.</p> <p>2) Mainstream social inclusion in all projects. (e.g. women/girls, youth, and persons with disabilities).</p>	<p><b>Enhancing social inclusion</b></p> <p>1) Promote targeted inclusive initiatives.</p> <p>2) Mainstream social inclusion in all projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting Well-being Competence in Youth Work /European Commission 2024-2025</li> <li>Youth Voices for a Better Future – ADA 2023-2025</li> <li>Accelerating Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Georgia (Phase II) – UNDP -2024-2025</li> <li>Civil Society's Coordinated Advocacy for Implementing Disability Rights Commitments in Georgia 2022-2025</li> <li>EU4Youth phase III - Youth employment and Entrepreneurship – 2021-2025</li> </ul>



<b>Knowledge Management (KM)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities.</li> <li>2) Improve capacities of CSOs/CBOs.</li> <li>3) Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices.</li> </ol>	<b>Knowledge Management</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities.</li> <li>2) Improve capacities of CSOs/CBOs.</li> <li>3) Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry-led Skills Development Program (ILSD) 2023-2025</li> <li>• Promoting Green Skills for Sustainability (PROGRESS) – 2024-2025</li> <li>• Strengthening community engagement in the local decision-making process in Marneuli, Bolnisi and Dmanisi municipalities 2024-2025</li> </ul>
<b>Results Management, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Administer new M&amp;E strategy in Country Programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.</li> </ol>	<b>Results Management, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Administer new M&amp;E strategy in Country Programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.</li> </ol>	

## 4. OP8 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### 4.1 Grantmaking within the priority landscape/seascapes

#### a) Process for selecting priority landscapes and seascapes

The target landscapes/seascapes for OP8 in Georgia, where most OP8 grant-making will be focused, remain the same as those selected for OP7, as confirmed by the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC). This decision was primarily based on the fact that national priorities have remained largely unchanged across various parts of the country, and no significant shifts were observed in the criteria initially used for selecting these landscapes/seascapes during OP7.

The original selection of target landscapes/seascapes was conducted through an extensive and inclusive stakeholder consultation process. This process involved a series of meetings and discussions with key stakeholders, including:

- (i) members of the SGP National Steering Committee,
- (ii) Focal Points of the Rio Conventions,
- (iii) representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection (MoENRP), now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA),
- (iv) relevant non-governmental organizations, and



(v) coordinators of ongoing projects and programmes.

The following key criteria were applied during the initial selection process and were later used by the CPS project team to finalize the list of proposed landscapes/seascapes:

- Global Environmental Characteristics: Conservation value, vulnerability, and environmental challenges.
- Socio-economic Characteristics: Ecosystem services and the level of dependency of local communities on those services.
- National Priorities: Alignment with Georgia's national environmental and development goals.
- Co-financing Potential and Stakeholder Capacities: The availability of co-financing opportunities and the presence of capable stakeholders, such as civil society organizations and community-based organizations, to support the successful implementation of SGP initiatives.

#### **b) Selected landscapes/seascapes for OP8**

As a result of consultations with stakeholders and the National Steering Committee, and applying the criteria mentioned earlier, the following landscapes/seascapes have been selected for OP8. These are the same as those chosen for OP7, based on the continued relevance of national priorities and environmental challenges in these areas:

#### **Selected Landscapes/Seascapes**

1. **High Mountains (>1,200 meters above sea level)**
  - **Greater Caucasus Mountains**
  - **Lesser Caucasus Mountains**
2. **Black Sea Coast (<100 meters above sea level) and marine waters up to 10 km off the coast**
3. **Semi-arid Zone of Georgia**

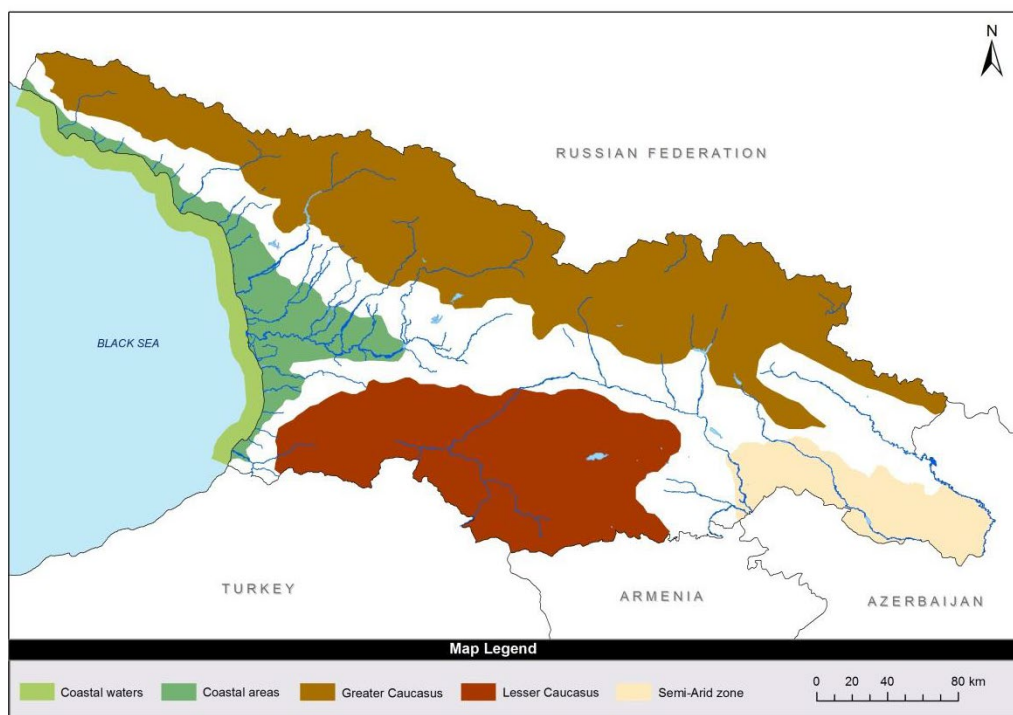
These areas are still considered the most vulnerable to climate change in Georgia, where key sectors such as agriculture, water resources, and biodiversity remain at significant risk. The selected landscapes/seascapes were identified based on their vulnerability and adaptation needs in relation to climate change.

SGP has been actively investing in these landscapes/seascapes since 2013. The decision to maintain focus on the same areas for OP8 stems from the following considerations:

- **Unchanged National Priorities:** National priorities regarding biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, and sustainable development in these regions have remained largely consistent since OP6.

- **Continued Environmental Significance:** The high biodiversity, vulnerability to climate change, and other environmental factors of these landscapes/seascapes remain critical.
- **Cumulative Impact:** By continuing work in the same areas, greater cumulative impacts can be achieved. Building on the progress made in OP6 and OP7 allows for deeper, more sustainable interventions.
- **Capacity Development:** Continued engagement allows local NGOs and communities to further develop their capacities and contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development of their respective regions.

The boundaries of these landscape/seascapes were drawn primarily along the geophysical and ecological borders or where appropriate along the municipal borders.



**Fig. 1** Priority landscapes/seascapes for OP8

#### Coordinates of the Landscapes/Seascapes

- **Greater Caucasus Mountains:** Latitude 42.5° N, Longitude 44.5° E
- **Lesser Caucasus Mountains:** Latitude 41.6° N, Longitude 43.3° E
- **Black Sea Coast:** Latitude 42.0° N, Longitude 41.7° E



- **Semi-arid Zone:** Latitude 41.8° N, Longitude 44.7° E

#### Total Hectarage of the Landscapes/Seascapes

- **Greater Caucasus Mountains:** 2,600,000 hectares
- **Lesser Caucasus Mountains:** 1,500,000 hectares
- **Black Sea Coast:** 300,000 hectares (land and marine waters up to 10 km)
- **Semi-arid Zone:** 800,000 hectares

#### Typology of Landscapes/Seascapes

- **Greater and Lesser Caucasus Mountains:** These are mountainous landscapes with high elevation, alpine ecosystems, and unique biodiversity. They are also home to important river basins that provide water to surrounding regions.
- **Black Sea Coast and Marine Waters:** Coastal lowlands and marine ecosystems, including sandy beaches, wetlands, and marine areas extending up to 10 km off the coast. This area includes important habitats such as seagrass beds and fish spawning grounds.
- **Semi-arid Zone:** A dry, low-lying landscape characterized by sparse vegetation and limited water resources. This area is highly vulnerable to desertification and land degradation.

The baseline assessment for the selected landscapes/seascapes was based on a combination of stakeholder participation and expert analysis. This involved:

- **Literature Review:** Experts reviewed existing scientific literature, national reports, and project documents related to each landscape/seascape. Key topics such as geography, socio-economy, biodiversity conservation, waste and water management, and climate change impacts were covered.
- **Stakeholder Consultations:** Meetings and discussions were held with key stakeholders, including the National Steering Committee, local NGOs, government representatives, and project coordinators. These consultations ensured that both internal stakeholders (within the landscape/seascape) and external actors influencing these areas were actively engaged in the process.
- **Data Compilation:** The information gathered during the literature review and stakeholder consultations was compiled into a comprehensive baseline assessment that served as the foundation for OP8 planning.

The engagement of local communities and civil society organizations (CSOs, CBOs) was an important element of the process, ensuring that the design of OP8 reflected both national priorities and the needs of the communities living in and depending on these landscapes/seascapes.



Given the continued relevance of the selected landscapes/seascapes and the potential for greater cumulative impact, the decision to retain the same areas for OP8 is well-founded. The rigorous process of stakeholder consultation, combined with expert analysis, has ensured that the selection is both transparent and aligned with national and global environmental goals.

### **c) OP8 Strategic Initiatives in the landscapes/seascapes**

To ensure synergies between various initiatives within the same landscape/seascape, the following strategic actions will be implemented:

**Integrated Project Selection:** Proposals will be evaluated based on their alignment with the landscape/seascape context. Projects with a clear multi-focal and integrated approach, or those with potential to complement existing or planned initiatives, will be prioritized for funding.

**Coordination Among Projects:** Once projects are awarded, grantees will be encouraged to actively coordinate their activities with one another. Where possible, joint actions will be promoted to maximize impact at the landscape level. This coordination will ensure that individual projects contribute to a holistic and cumulative effect across the landscape/seascape.

**National and Regional Support:** While OP8 will primarily focus on community-driven and locally implemented initiatives in the selected landscapes/seascapes, broader strategic initiatives at the national and regional levels will also be supported. These initiatives will aim to complement and strengthen local SGP projects, helping to create a more cohesive and impactful approach across multiple levels.

**Achieving Maximum Impact:** By encouraging both localized and larger-scale initiatives, OP8 seeks to foster collaboration across various sectors and stakeholders. This multi-focal approach will ensure greater resilience and sustainability in tackling environmental and socio-economic challenges across the selected landscapes/seascapes.

General SGP Georgia country programme niches by SGP OP8 strategic initiatives are as following:

#### ***Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species***

- 1) Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of local communities.
- 2) Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.).
- 3) Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species.

#### ***Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security***

- 1) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, and other ecosystems, etc.).
- 2) Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.
- 3) Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.





***Low-carbon energy access co-benefits***

- 1) Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.
- 2) Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.

***Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions***

- 1) Improve capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development.
- 2) Demonstrate innovative socially inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity)

**Table 3.** below describes which OP8 strategic initiatives will be prioritized for each of the four selected landscape/seascapes.

Landscape/Seascape	SGP Country Programme's OP8 Priorities
The Greater Caucasus mountains (>1,200 meters above sea level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of local communities.</li> <li>● Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.).</li> <li>● Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species.</li> <li>● Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, and other ecosystems, etc.).</li> <li>● Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.</li> <li>● Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.</li> <li>● Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</li> <li>● Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.</li> <li>● Improve capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development.</li> <li>● Demonstrate innovative socially inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity)</li> </ul>
The Lesser Caucasus mountains (>1,200 meters above sea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of local communities.</li> </ul>



Landscape/Seascape	SGP Country Programme's OP8 Priorities
level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.).</li> <li>● Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species.</li> <li>● Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, and other ecosystems, etc.).</li> <li>● Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.</li> <li>● Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.</li> <li>● Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</li> <li>● Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.</li> <li>● Improve capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development.</li> <li>● Demonstrate innovative socially inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity)</li> </ul>
Black Sea coast (<100 meters above sea level) and marine waters up to 10 km off coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of local communities.</li> <li>● Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.).</li> <li>● Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species.</li> <li>● Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, and other ecosystems, etc.).</li> <li>● Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.</li> <li>● Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.</li> <li>● Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</li> <li>● Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.</li> <li>● Improve capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development.</li> <li>● Demonstrate innovative socially inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity)</li> </ul>



Landscape/Seascape	SGP Country Programme's OP8 Priorities
The semi-arid zone of Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of local communities.</li><li>● Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.).</li><li>● Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species.</li><li>● Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, and other ecosystems, etc.).</li><li>● Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.</li><li>● Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.</li><li>● Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</li><li>● Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.</li><li>● Improve capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development.</li><li>● Demonstrate innovative socially inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity)</li></ul>

#### **d) Grantmaking outside the priority landscapes/seascapes**

In OP8, SGP Georgia will allocate up to 30% of resources for projects outside the selected landscape/seascape to promote innovation, inclusion, and impact in broader geographical areas. These projects will focus on the following key areas:

- CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms
- Social Inclusion and
- Knowledge Management

SGP Georgia will expand its innovative dialogue platforms that engage CSOs, government, and the private sector. These platforms will leverage private sector investment and expertise to support sustainability at the local level and encourage a shift in relevant policies and practices to promote environmental sustainability and socio-economic development. These platforms will also serve as a forum to influence policy discussions and create enabling environments for CSOs and private sector partnerships in areas such as climate change, land management, and sustainable development.



Initiatives aimed at social inclusion will be a core focus of these projects. Empowering women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PwD) will be enhanced through both specific targeted initiatives and by mainstreaming inclusion throughout all SGP projects. This will ensure that these groups actively participate in environmental actions, and benefit from livelihood improvement opportunities. The resources allocated outside the selected landscape/seascape will also contribute to replicating successful approaches developed within the landscape/seascape, thus extending the reach of inclusive environmental solutions.

SGP will prioritize knowledge management initiatives to enhance project-level activities both inside and outside the selected landscape/seascape. These initiatives will focus on scaling up and replicating successes and disseminating best practices to other regions. The goal is to ensure that the lessons learned from projects in the selected landscape/seascape can be applied more broadly, contributing to national-level environmental and social inclusion goals.

Projects outside the selected landscape/seascape will be strategically aligned with the overall objectives of the Country Programme. These initiatives will support the work within the landscape/seascape by providing opportunities to:

- Share best practices developed within the selected area to other regions, particularly around environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and innovative approaches to community engagement.
- Create synergies between projects inside and outside the landscape/seascape to promote larger-scale environmental outcomes and support policy advocacy.
- Engage a wider range of stakeholders, including government entities and the private sector, to further extend the impact of successful models from the landscape/seascape to other areas.
- By ensuring that resources outside the landscape/seascape are used in a complementary and supportive manner, the SGP in Georgia aims to amplify its impact, strengthen cross-sectoral collaborations, and enhance the social and environmental outcomes both within and beyond the selected areas.

#### **4.2 CSO-government-private sector dialogue platforms**

The SGP will foster and sustain various CSO-Government-Private Sector dialogue platforms at both the landscape and national levels. At the landscape level, special efforts will be made to create or enhance existing opportunities for effective dialogue between CSOs and local governments. This will include supporting joint initiatives, activities, and roundtable discussions on specific environmental topics. At the national level, the SGP will engage with existing dialogue platforms and facilitate the inclusion of relevant local CSOs to ensure their voices are heard. In OP8, SGP Georgia will expand its dialogue platforms to include greater engagement with the private sector by establishing a CSO-Government-Private Sector Forum to enhance environmental dialogue.



Additionally, SGP Georgia will actively participate in key policy-making processes, ensuring that grassroots issues identified at the landscape level are reflected in national policy development. This includes contributing to the revision of Georgia's NBSAP and National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP). The GEF SGP will encourage participating NGOs to incorporate capacity strengthening and "local to national" partnerships into their project designs, thereby enhancing their involvement and influence in policy-making processes at local, regional, and national levels. These efforts will be informed by experiences and lessons learned, contributing to more effective policy and program influence and better integration of good practices.

#### **4.3 Promoting social Inclusion, including gender equality and women's empowerment**

SGP Georgia has a strong history of engaging women in environmental projects, particularly through OP5, OP6, and OP7. Moving forward, the Country Programme will continue to build on these efforts by applying "gender mainstreaming" across all SGP-supported projects. This involves ensuring that at least 40% of projects are either women-led or have mechanisms for increasing female participation and decision-making. Additionally, women and girls will represent at least 50% of all project beneficiaries.

To specifically address the situation of women in the selected land/seascapes, the Country Programme will focus on activities that enhance women's decision-making capacities around natural resources, such as land, forests, and other biological resources. It will promote their equal involvement in community, rural, and urban planning processes. The programme will also provide policy-level training to support women's participation in decision-making forums and will create sustainable livelihood opportunities through projects involving conservation, rehabilitation, and restoration actions.

Furthermore, these efforts will target specific challenges faced by women in the selected land/seascapes, tailoring approaches to local contexts to empower women economically and socially. The SGP aims to support the equal engagement of women in planning, decision-making, and environmental stewardship at community levels.

SGP Georgia will continue to highlight the participation of PwD in its portfolio programming and projects. Building on lessons learned from previous operational phases, the programme will share good practices on how environmental projects can better involve PwD, ensuring impactful results on environmental and socio-economic fronts.

In collaboration with Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs), SGP Georgia will integrate their perspectives into project guidelines and design. SGP will ensure that PwD perspectives are included in planning and implementation phases, contributing to more inclusive outcomes. Guidelines for project proposals will emphasize the importance of addressing social inclusion, particularly related to PwD, alongside gender equality and women's empowerment.



Each project proposal will be required to reflect these social inclusion aspects, and NSC members will assess proposals based on these criteria. SGP will invest in capacity development for both women and PwD through training, mentorship, and other forms of support, ensuring these groups are equipped to actively participate in environmental actions.

Focal points within the NSC will be designated to oversee the promotion of women's empowerment, gender equality, and PwD inclusion. These focal points will ensure that social inclusion is not only a priority in project design but is also monitored throughout project implementation. Targeted projects will be developed to further mainstream these approaches, ensuring that gender equality, women's empowerment, and PwD participation are foundational across the entire SGP portfolio.

This comprehensive approach ensures that gender equality and social inclusion are integrated into every facet of the SGP Country Programme, fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and participatory environmental movement.

#### 4.4 Knowledge Management

During OP8, SGP Georgia will prioritize capturing, sharing, and disseminating lessons learned and good practices across its country portfolio, with a focus on civil society, government, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders. The program will generate knowledge and facilitate greater impact through several key initiatives:

**Knowledge Generation and Collection:** SGP Georgia will focus on centralizing knowledge by organizing knowledge fairs and strengthening NGO-to-NGO platforms, which will serve as hubs for social networking, exchanging best practices, and learning from lessons gained. This will foster collaboration among NGOs, CBOs (Community-Based Organizations), and other stakeholders to consolidate knowledge in line with good environmental practices.

**Knowledge Products:** Knowledge will be documented through various formats such as booklets, brochures, reports, video materials, and films. The program will ensure that both electronic and hard copy materials are available, with grantees required to document and evidence their project processes and outcomes. These knowledge products will be disseminated to local and national stakeholders to support replication and scaling up.

**Training and Capacity Building:** Thematic training workshops will play a key role in facilitating learning, while networks of NGOs and CBOs will be nurtured to strengthen collaboration. Emphasis will also be placed on experience sharing via electronic networks, the publication of information materials, and making training products widely accessible to the public.

**Knowledge Sharing Mechanisms:** SGP Georgia will utilize demonstration sites, project site visits, and thematic workshops to gather first-hand experiences and insights. The knowledge gained will be shared through publications, electronic networks, and during meetings and workshops. Seminars and





conferences with key stakeholders will also be organized to enhance knowledge transfer and influence policy development.

**Peer-to-Peer and South-South Exchanges:** SGP Georgia will promote exchanges at both the regional and international levels through participation in SGP regional and international meetings. South-South collaboration will be encouraged to foster knowledge sharing among countries with similar environmental challenges.

**Collaboration with National and Local Stakeholders:** SGP Georgia will work closely with UNDP Georgia's Energy and Environmental portfolio, participating in retreats and other project-related events. Additionally, every engagement with local communities, regional, and municipal authorities will be used as an opportunity to disseminate best practices and lessons learned.

**Scaling and Replication of Innovations:** A special focus will be placed on supporting project proposals that demonstrate potential for replication and scaling by other NGOs and CBOs. Applicants will be required to incorporate knowledge management components into their proposals, ensuring that successful innovations can be effectively replicated across different regions.

**Knowledge Products for Policy Impact:** The National Coordinator (NC) will oversee the preparation of SGP knowledge products to contribute to the broader GEF SGP knowledge management plan. This will include contributions to policy papers and participating in international knowledge-sharing platforms. Press conferences, workshops, and seminars at both the local and national levels will be organized to highlight the role of SGP in achieving global environmental benefits and supporting the implementation of UN conventions.

## 5. COMMUNICATION PLAN

The communication strategy for SGP Georgia will be designed to effectively engage key stakeholders and CSOs while promoting participation, building relationships, and fostering partnerships. The strategy articulates the contribution of SGP to national priorities, GEF programming, and UNDP strategies.

The core objectives of the SGP Georgia communication strategy will be following:

Promoting awareness and understanding of global environmental issues and sustainable development, including topics such as livelihoods, poverty reduction, gender equality, and climate resilience.

Fostering partnerships and advocacy by engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including government, private sector, and CSOs.

Raising awareness and mobilizing resources and action at both the local and national levels to support the work of SGP in addressing environmental challenges.



SGP Georgia will operate through a multi-stakeholder, participatory approach, engaging a diverse group of actors, including:

- CSOs, who are both beneficiaries and participants in program implementation through their inclusion in the NSC.
- NGOs and CBOs, who will continue to be directly engaged through regular consultation meetings, ensuring an open dialogue to address project proposal development, implementation challenges, and lessons learned.
- Governmental bodies, donor organizations, academia, and the private sector, who will be involved as active partners in project management and implementation.
- Local and municipal governments, who play a critical role in scaling up and replicating best practices at the grassroots level.

These stakeholders will be regularly consulted to align SGP activities with national environmental priorities and global commitments, ensuring coherent and coordinated efforts across sectors.

SGP Georgia will utilize a variety of communication tools and platforms to engage stakeholders, raise awareness, and promote the program's impact, including:

Visual media, website, and social media platforms: These will be key in disseminating stories of success, showcasing innovations, and engaging a broader audience with timely updates.

Events and knowledge fairs: In celebration of milestones like the 10th anniversary of SGP in Georgia, knowledge fairs and other events will highlight the role of civil society in driving national environmental change, as well as their contributions to the empowerment of local communities.

Reports, publications, and newsletters: These will be used to share detailed project outcomes, lessons learned, and innovative practices with national and international stakeholders, ensuring the broader replication of successful models.

Storytelling and advocacy: SGP will use storytelling as a powerful tool to convey the voices and experiences of local communities, demonstrating the impact of SGP-supported projects on livelihoods, the environment, and community resilience.

Workshops and training: These will serve as platforms for exchanging best practices, promoting partnerships, and building the capacities of local CSOs and CBOs.

SGP Georgia's communication efforts will align with and articulate the program's contribution to:

- National priorities, by demonstrating how SGP projects support Georgia's environmental goals and sustainable development agenda.
- GEF programming, by highlighting the program's focus on promoting innovative, scalable projects that can serve as models for broader replication.



- UNDP strategies, by showcasing the synergy between SGP initiatives and UNDP's broader mandate for poverty reduction, sustainable development, and environmental protection.

The communication strategy will emphasize building strong partnerships with UN agencies, the private sector, and governmental bodies. Through advocacy efforts, SGP Georgia will aim to raise awareness about the importance of community-driven solutions and engage partners to mobilize resources for further action. Special attention will be given to CSO-led advocacy initiatives, leveraging their role in policy development and environmental governance.

The SGP Georgia will actively promote its success stories and lessons learned to attract further support and investment in environmental projects. Public campaigns, media engagement, and strategic partnerships will be used to inspire additional resource mobilization at both national and local levels.

## 6. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN

### a) Secured and planned cash and in-kind co-financing

At the **project level**, each applicant and awarded organization will receive tailored guidance and mentoring to strengthen their capacity to secure adequate co-financing both prior to and following project approval. While local municipalities have been key sources of co-financing in previous phases, the NC will also actively pursue regional and national-level funding opportunities. As information about potential funding sources emerges, the NC will assist local applicants in reaching out to these potential donors, where appropriate.

At the **landscape/seascape level**, several large, ongoing programs with regional focuses have already been identified. These programs, in many cases, overlap with the selected landscapes/seascapes under SGP OP8. Based on the geographical scope of each application, specific programs will be targeted, and applicants will receive guidance on securing additional co-financing or exploring follow-up funding opportunities.

The **private sector** is also viewed as a significant potential source of co-financing, particularly at the project level. NC will play a crucial role in establishing connections with private sources and exploring project-specific co-financing opportunities. Additionally, the NC will work to develop public-private partnerships to further expand funding possibilities.

At the **national level**, efforts will focus on securing co-financing from large-scale government programs, national development funds, and international donor agencies active in the country. The NC will collaborate with national stakeholders, including government ministries and agencies, to align the SGP's objectives with national priorities, ensuring access to a broader range of co-financing opportunities. Partnerships with national private sector actors and international financial institutions will also be pursued to support projects across multiple landscapes and seascapes.



#### **b) Co-financing opportunities**

The resource mobilization strategy will focus on mobilizing resources from both GEF and non-GEF partners, including multilateral and bilateral donors, EU funds, international organizations (e.g. GIZ, WWF, IUCN, CNF, PIN, DRC), ongoing large-scale programmes (see Table 2), national and local government institutions, and state and municipal/local government programmes. Partnerships will directly contribute to the implementation of the CPS Strategic Initiatives and support progress toward the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with an emphasis on forest management, food security, and climate change.

To ensure the sustainability of the Country Programme, cost-sharing mechanisms will be strengthened, involving contributions from UNDP resources, government institutions at national and local levels, and bilateral donors. Regular dialogue with these partners will help secure long-term financial commitments and alignment with CPS priorities.

Opportunities for SGP to serve as a delivery platform for larger projects and programmes will be expanded, including cooperation with EU-funded programmes, multilateral financing mechanisms (such as the Green Climate Fund), and international financial institutions (e.g. Asian Development Bank, World Bank). Such partnerships will enable scaling up of tested community-based models and ensure broader national impact.

A stronger effort will be made to attract private sector participation through co-financing and investments in sustainable enterprises. The NC will facilitate partnerships with companies and business associations, promoting the integration of sustainable business models. In addition, financial instruments such as concessional loans from development banks (e.g. ADB, WB) will be explored as complementary sources of funding.

Bilateral meetings, workshops, and donor coordination forums will be organized to present GEF SGP results and the CPS for OP8, emphasizing co-funding and cost-sharing opportunities. The NSC, with its representative composition from governmental, academic, international, and non-governmental sectors, will play a central role in mobilizing additional funds at both the project and country levels (for more details, see Annex 2).

## **7. PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

The SGP country team, including the NSC and Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs), can play a pivotal role in helping communities and CSOs develop proposals to access other donors and funding facilities. This can be achieved through concrete actions such as sharing information on available funding opportunities, providing technical assistance in proposal writing, and facilitating partnerships with other stakeholders.



By leveraging their expertise and networks, the NSC and TAGs can guide CSOs and communities in identifying and pursuing suitable funding sources.

While the funds may not go directly to SGP, these activities contribute to resource mobilization by increasing the flow of financial resources to stakeholders supported by SGP. The **Grantmakers Plus** initiative fosters an enabling environment for scaling up SGP's Strategic Initiatives through enhanced networking, capacity building, and knowledge exchange at local, regional, and global levels. This collaborative approach helps communities and CSOs expand their access to resources and extend the impact of their environmental projects.

## 8. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table 4. Description of risks identified in OP8

Describe identified risk	Degree of risk (low, medium, high)	Probability of risk (low, medium, high)	Risk mitigation measure foreseen
Lack of capacity among the local NGOs to plan and implement projects derived from the local and landscape context.	Medium	Medium	Extensive explanatory and guidance work will be conducted in each of the selected landscapes; NGO/NGO partnerships will be actively encouraged to achieve greater impact at the landscape level; the possibility of a short-term targeted grant for local NGO capacity building will be considered if necessary.
Social conflicts over resource allocation or inequitable access to project benefits	Low	Low	Conducting stakeholder consultations to ensure inclusivity and fair benefit-sharing.
Political instability or escalation in areas near the occupied territories.	High	Low	The respective applicant will be requested to come up with an alternative scenario(s) to pursue



			should the situation occur.
Risks associated with occupational health and safety	Medium to High	Medium	For projects involving high risk activities (such as fieldwork in high mountains, hazardous chemicals, etc.) the proposal will have to include detailed safety measures and risk mitigation/management plans.
Extreme weather and disasters	Medium to High	Medium	Project components sensitive to extreme weather conditions and/or disasters will be identified and relevant mitigation or preventive measures will be drafted.
Lack of co-funding and poor sustainability of projects.	Medium	Low	Meetings/workshops/press conferences will be conducted to promote SGP OP8 and mobilise additional resources at various levels.
Disproportional interest and uneven distribution of applications among the different strategic initiatives.	Medium	High	Extensive promotional and explanatory work will be conducted on the ground to ensure that proposals cover the whole diversity of thematic areas.
Low interest among vulnerable social groups.	Medium	Medium	In addition to the planned activities relevant national advocacy groups (such as women's and youth organisations) will be





			invited to get involved and promote SGP OP8.
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During the implementation of the OP8 CPS, these risks will be tracked and reviewed during the annual CPS review and the preparation of the AMR. The degree of risk, or probability of risk, may be adjusted as needed, and risk mitigation measures will be jointly discussed and agreed upon with NSC members. Identified risks may be removed and new risks added, if necessary, with appropriate mitigation measures identified.

## 9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

In line with the SGP M&E Country Programme Guidelines (2019), progress tracking and results aggregation will be guided by the Project Roster of Indicators, which SGP projects select from and report on in their mid-term and final progress reports. Each project is required to allocate 4-6% of the total grant amount towards M&E activities, covering costs related to progress reports and monitoring GEF-8 indicators. If an evaluation is included in the grantee's M&E plan, it will also be funded from this budget. Additionally, incorporating an Impact Review is recommended to produce evidence-based knowledge on the results achieved during the operational phase, highlighting strengths such as social inclusion, scaling up, policy influence, and the effectiveness of delivery mechanisms. This approach ensures that M&E practices are comprehensive and aligned with the overarching guidelines and objectives of the SGP programme.

### 9.1 Monitoring approaches at project and country levels

Progress at the project level will be tracked systematically through regular monitoring visits, data collection, and the submission of progress reports by grantees. Results will be aggregated and analyzed at the Country Programme portfolio level, with particular attention to data quality assurance. A systematic process will be implemented to record both project- and country-level data in the SGP database on an ongoing basis, ensuring consistency and reliability of the information.

SGP projects will be monitored by the National Coordinator (NC), and M&E capacities of SGP grantees will be strengthened through workshops and trainings. A key step in this process will be the organization of an M&E inception workshop by the SGP country team, where the cohort of grantees will convene to build capacities on the new M&E strategy. This approach will foster participatory, representative, and credible data collection and reporting.

Monitoring visits will occur at least twice during the lifetime of each project, with the frequency potentially increasing based on specific project needs. To be cost-effective, joint-monitoring partnerships



will be explored, involving other grant-makers, foundations, or academic institutions. A third-party monitoring agency may also be engaged to support project monitoring and report back to grantees, in consultation with CPMT for guidance.

All SGP projects will be required to include a detailed M&E plan with appropriate indicators in the project document prior to approval. Involving key stakeholders in project design and monitoring will ensure community ownership and participatory M&E. Grantees (NGOs/CBOs) will submit regular progress reports and a final report, which will be used as the basis for grant fund disbursements.

The NC will oversee the implementation of each project through an M&E plan that is coordinated with the NGOs/CBOs work plan. Monitoring site visits will be conducted by the NC and NSC members as needed. After each visit, the NC or NSC members will prepare a monitoring record, noting any deviations from the original project indicators.

Independent experts may be engaged to monitor or evaluate GEF-SGP projects when appropriate. Their advice, alongside regular consultations with the NC and NSC members, will strengthen the adaptive and results-based management capacities of NGOs/CBOs. Capacity-development workshops and M&E training will be organized as necessary to improve community monitoring and adaptive management.

The NC will maintain the project database, ensuring all lessons learned and case studies are recorded. The table below provides details of M&E activities, responsible parties, and timeframes at the project level.

The GEF SGP database will be updated monthly by the NC, covering key topics such as the selection process of projects, NSC meetings, project monitoring and evaluation activities (including site visits), relationships with project stakeholders, resource mobilization efforts, and public outreach activities.

In general, the CPS will form the foundation for the assessment and development of programme review reports. The CPS will remain a dynamic document, subject to regular review and revision by the NC and NSC, in agreement with CPMT. While the NC will take the lead in preparing the Programme Review Report, the NSC will play an active role in assessing the country programme's performance.

The table below describes M&E activities, responsible parties and time frames at the programme level.

Table 5. M&E Plan at the Country Programme level

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
Country Programme Strategy elaboration	Framework for action including identification of community projects	NC, NSC, country stakeholders, grantees	A SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to update OP8 CPS	At start of OP8



M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
As part of NSC meetings, ongoing review of project results and analysis. This includes an Annual CPS Review	Assess effectiveness of projects, country portfolio; learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, UNDP Country Office. Final deliberations shared/ analyzed with CPMT colleagues	Staff time, Country Operating Budget	At least one annual CPS review to ensure OP8 CPS is on track to achieve its results and make timely and evidence-based modifications to CPS as may be needed <sup>2</sup>
Annual Monitoring Report Survey <sup>3</sup>	Enable efficient reporting to CPMT and GEF. It serves as the primary tools to record and analytically present results to donors	NC/PA in close collaboration with NSC. CPMT provides technical guidance support and receives final country submission for further action	Staff time	Once per year in June- July
Country Portfolio Review	Methodological results capture of the portfolio at a given point to note impact level change as well as broader adoption. The goal is to support reporting to stakeholders, learning, and	NC, NSC	SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to undertake previous operational cycles impact review and utilize lessons for both OP8 CPS development and its implementation	Once per operational phase

<sup>2</sup> It is recommended that the Annual CPS review is done close to AMR submissions for both processes to benefit from each other (suggested timeframe is May- July). Note that OP8 CPS will be regarded as a dynamic document and can be updated by the SGP country team and NSC on a periodic basis to reflect any necessary adjustments to ensure maximum impact.

<sup>3</sup> Timely and quality country level submissions to Annual Monitoring Process are mandatory. As a Global Programme, it enables aggregated reporting by CPMT to GEF, UNDP and other stakeholders.



M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
	support to strategic development/ implementation of CPS		Global technical M&E support can be expected	
SGP Database	Ensure recording of all Project and Country Programme inputs in SGP database	NCs, PAs	Staff time	Throughout the operational phase. Ensure quality assurance and completion of data prior to annual monitoring cycle (May- June of every year)
Audit	Ensure compliance with project implementation/ management standards and norms	External/independent auditors. NC/ PA to provide requisite support.	Global Operating Budget	Annually for selected countries on risk-assessment basis

In addition, Table 4 will be utilized for M&E as it outlines the logical framework approach of the CPS at both the programme and project levels, providing a foundation for monitoring and evaluation. The table details the expected results at the programme level, including the outcome target indicators and means of verification within the selected landscape/seascape(s). It also specifies the approximate number of projects and the features of the project activities planned under each respective Outcome.

## 9.2 CPS Results Framework

Table 6: Results Framework of SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategy

<p><b>Alignment with SDGs</b></p> <p>CPS will contribute to SDG goal 15 (Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss) SDG Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts and SDG Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>
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**Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD):**

*CPS is synergized with UNDP Georgia CPD Output 2.1. Environmental governance and institutional capacity enhanced to enable rational, equitable and sustainable use of natural/land resources, to ensure conservation of ecosystems, use of innovative and climate-friendly technologies for inclusive green economy, energy efficiency and clean energy production, and make communities more resilient to environmental shocks and Output 2.2. Climate -sensitive, resilient and risk -informed development promoted across all sectors in rural and urban areas to increase adaptive capacities and mitigate climate change impact*

**OP8 SGP Programme Goal:** Engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.

<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>OP8 SGP CPS Strategic Initiatives</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>CPS Indicators and Targets</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Means of Verification</b></p>
<p><u>Strategic Initiative 1:</u></p> <p>Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species</p>	<p>10,000 hectares of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (GEF core indicator 4.1 and 4.3)</p> <p>At least 3 PAs are positively influenced through the SGP projects.</p> <p>At least 2 projects focused on the conservation of vulnerable species were funded.</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>
<p><u>Strategic Initiative 2:</u></p> <p>Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security</p>	<p>100 hectares of land and ecosystems under restoration (GEF core indicator 3.1)</p> <p>at least 2 partnerships to advance sustainable agriculture and fisheries and/or food security (such as diversification, sustainable intensification, sustainable fisheries management, agroecological farming practices, climate-smart agriculture, certification programmes, local sourcing initiatives, waste reduction and circular economy, etc.)</p> <p><i>At least 50 households involved in or benefit from sustainable agriculture fisheries and food security practices.</i></p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>



<p><u>Strategic Initiative 3:</u></p> <p>Low-carbon energy access co-benefits</p>	<p>1 ton of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated/avoided (GEF core indicator 6)</p> <p>100 kW increase in installed renewable energy capacity from community-scale systems (e.g., biomass, micro-hydro, solar, etc.)</p> <p>at least 3 locally adapted solutions promoting low-carbon technologies (such as new/modified biogas technology, locally developed energy-efficient stoves, innovative uses of solar/wind energy, etc.)</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>
<p><u>Strategic Initiative 4:</u></p> <p>Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions</p>	<p><i>At least 2</i> community-based sustainable solutions in urban landscapes (e.g., transport, biodiversity conservation, chemical and waste management, energy efficiency, watershed protection, etc.)</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>
<p><u>Strategic Initiative 5:</u></p> <p>CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms</p>	<p><i>At least 2</i> CSO-government-private sector dialogues formed or strengthened</p> <p>50 representatives from social inclusion group (women, youth, farmers, other marginalized groups) meaningfully engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>
<p><u>Strategic Initiative 6:</u></p> <p>Enhancing social inclusion</p>	<p>500 people benefitting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (GEF core indicator 11)</p> <p>10 projects with focused interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment</p> <p>3 projects that demonstrate social inclusion models</p> <p>3 grants with targeted support for 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups;</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>





	at least 20% of total grant portfolio accessed by 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups	
Strategic Initiative 7:  Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management	<p><i>At least 2</i> projects with meetings involving local CSOs/CBOs or communities to monitor project results, assess impacts, and identify lessons learned</p> <p><i>At least 1</i> South-South exchanges between communities, NGOs/CSOs, or other partners within or across countries to transfer knowledge, replicate technology, tools or approaches on global environmental issues</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>