COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY
OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY'S
SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME (GEF SGP) IN UZBEKISTAN
FOR OP6
(2015-2019)

Country:	**UZBEKISTAN**
OP6 resources (estimated US$)[1]	**1,197,596 USD**
a. Core funds:	**400,000 USD**
b. OP5 remaining balance:	**198,798 USD**
c. STAR funds:	**0 USD**
d. Other Funds to be mobilized:	**598,798 USD (project level co-financing)**

[1] The level of SGP OP6 resources is an estimated total of: (a) the GEF6 core grant allocation; (b) remaining OP5 balances that have not been pipelined, will be expected to use these balances in line with the OP6 strategic approach; (c) approved System of Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) resources; as well as (d) other sources of third party cost sharing and co-financing (country, regional and/or global levels).

Acronyms

ACR	Annual Country Report
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
BD	Biodiversity
BC	Biodiversity Conservation
CACILM	Central Asia Countries Initiative on Land Management
CC	Climate Change
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CPMT	Central Programme Management Team
CPS	Country Programme Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FSP	Full Sized Project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GHG	Green House Gas
GIZ	German International Development Agency
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
LD	Land Degradation
MAWRM	Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources Management
NC	National Coordinator
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP	Operational Phase
PA	Protected Area
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
SEPL	Socio-Ecological Resilience Indicators for Production Landscapes
SGP	Small Grants Programme
STAR	System of Transparent Allocation of Resources
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WB	World Bank

Background

As a Global Environmental Facility (GEF) corporate programme, Small Grants Programme (SGP) aligns its operational phase strategies to those of the GEF, and provides a series of demonstration projects for further scaling up, replication and mainstreaming. Action at the local level by civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities is deemed a vital component of the GEF 20/20 Strategy (i.e. convening multi-stakeholder alliances to deliver global environmental benefits and contribute to UNDP's Strategic Plan and focus on sustainable development).[2] At the global level, the SGP OP6 programme goal is to "effectively support the creation of global environmental benefits and the safeguarding of the global environment through community and local solutions that complement and add value to national and global level action."

At the country level, the SGP country programme 2015-2019 will be implemented within the framework of UNDAF 2016-2020 (Uzbekistan United Nations Development Assistance Framework). The brief visualization of the Programme's organizational structure and process of projects' endorsement are given in Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively.

1. SGP country programme - summary background

1.1 The Programme was launched in Uzbekistan in 2008 when the GEF SGP in Uzbekistan[3] approved its first two projects on September 18, 2008 and shortly thereafter started their implementation. Over the past seven years, the Programme has supported 78 projects totaling $2,316,126 USD funded by GEF. The Programme also has raised additional co-financing from various sources in the amount exceeding $4,000,000. Among the 78 projects that the Programme implemented, 13 were in the biodiversity (BD), 39 – in climate change (CC), 20 in land degradation (LD), and 6 in capacity building focal areas.

1.2 It should be noted that even though many projects have been formally identified as belonging to one focal area, in practice they are frequently crosscutting through several themes and are interlinked. For example, a project on no-tillage in Karakalpakstan was labeled as a climate change project because its main objective was GHG (nitrous oxide) emissions mitigation, however it can also be identified as a land degradation combating project because the proposed solution also restores soil fertility.

1.3 The key breakdown of projects by focal areas is provided below.

[2] The initial GEF SGP OP6 concept was incorporated into the strategic directions for the overall GEF-6 replenishment, and subsequently approved by the GEF Council paper "GEF Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF-6" (GEF/C.46/13) in May 2014.

[3] The references: "GEF SGP", "GEF SGP in Uzbekistan" and "Programme" are used interchangeably unless stated otherwise in the text.

Figure 1. Number of projects

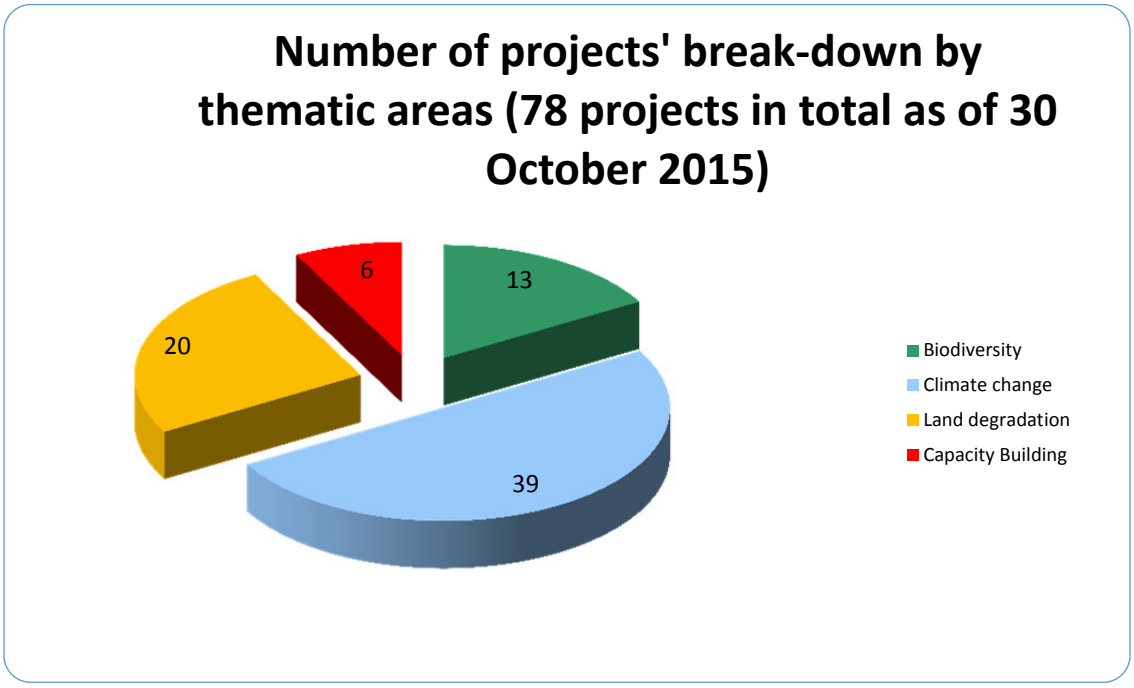


Figure 2. Total GEF SGP Project Funding

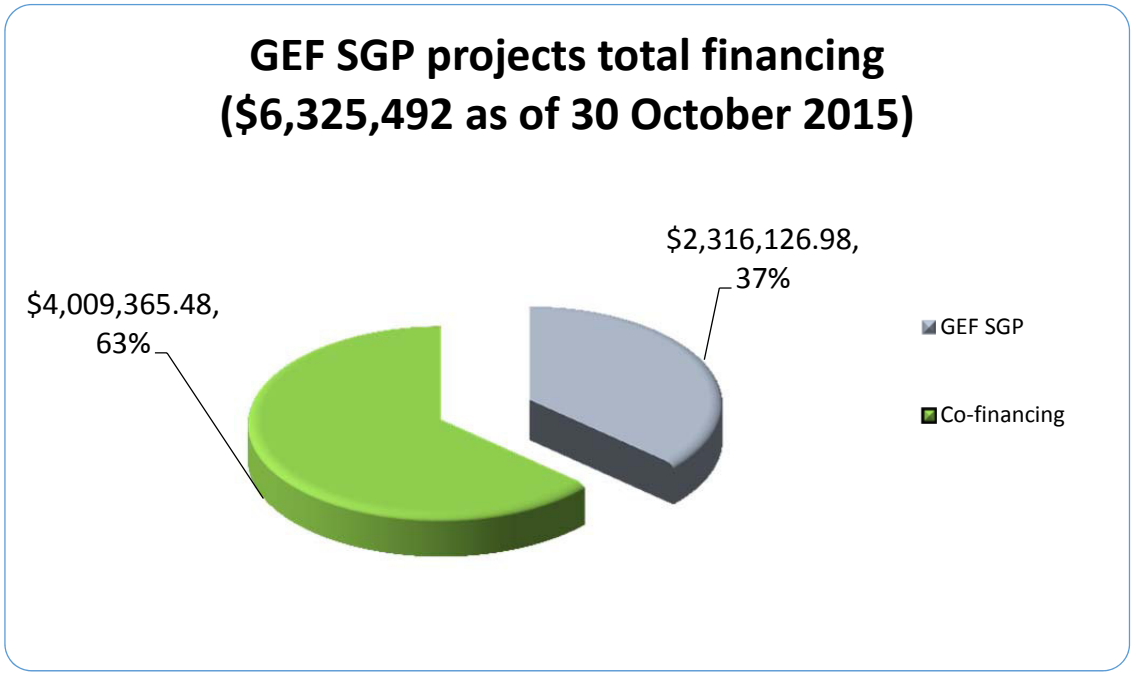


Figure 3. Distribution of Funds among thematic focal areas

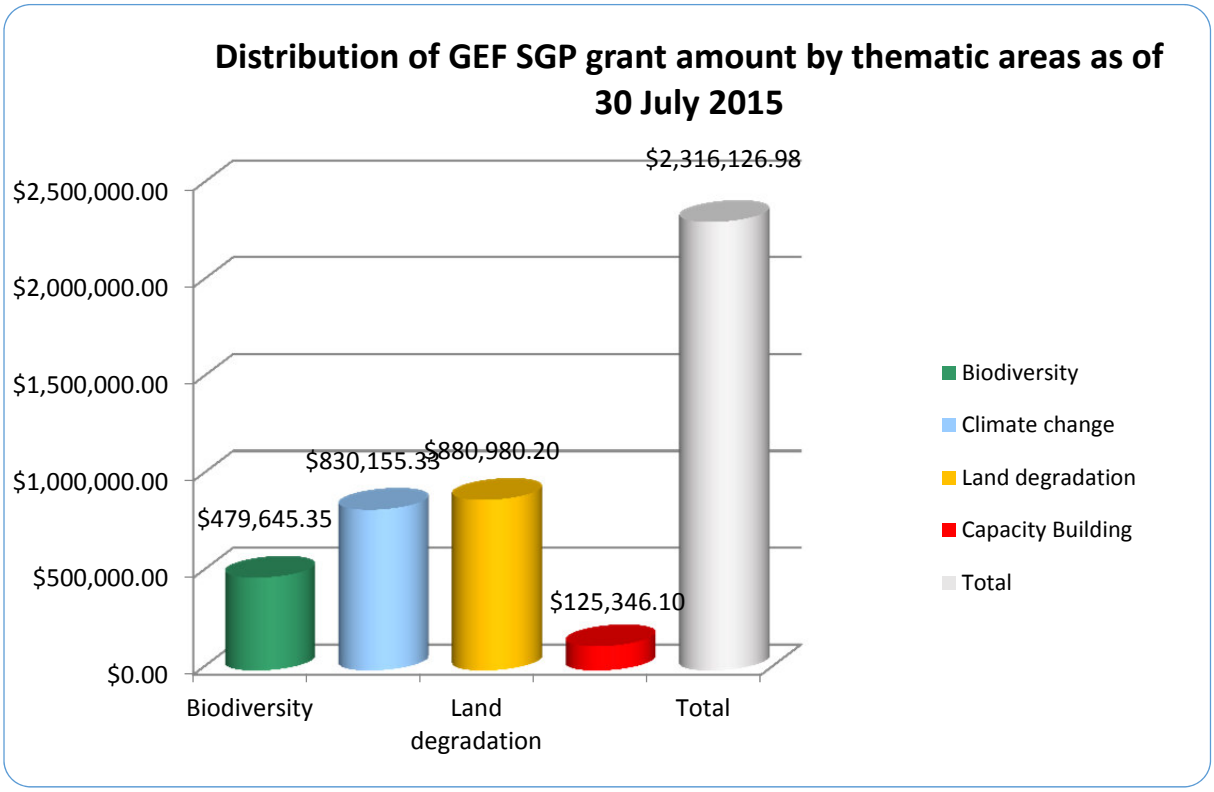
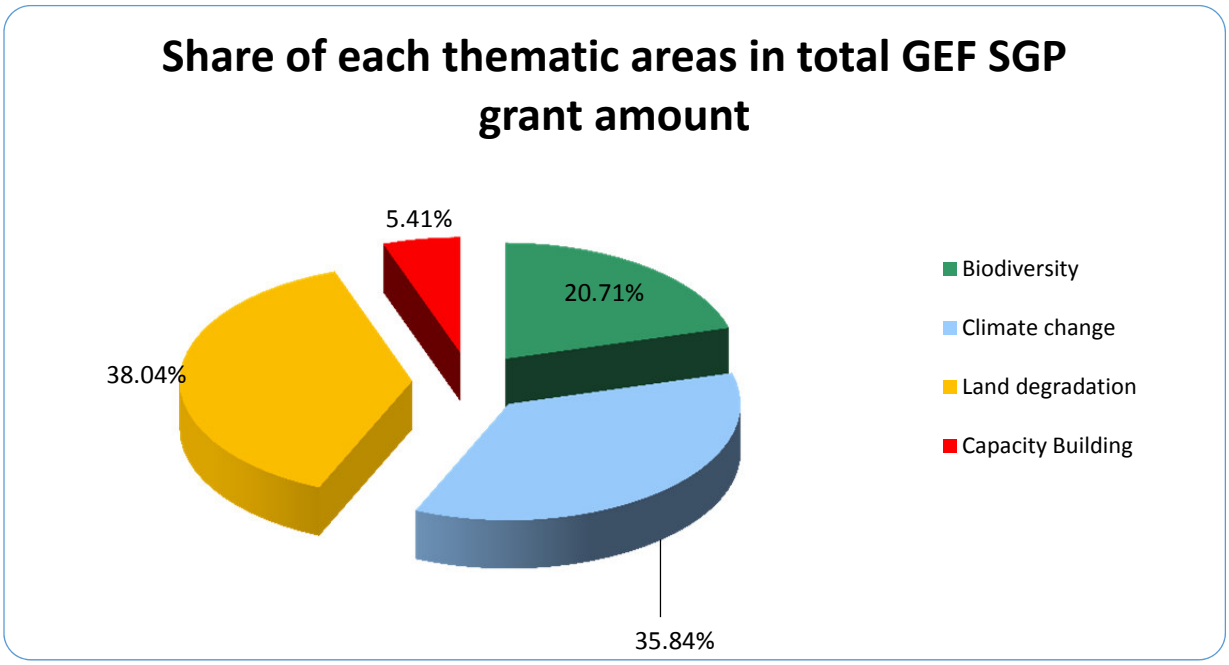


Figure 4. Share of funds by focal areas



1.4 Since its inception, the Programme has been assisting its partners in delivery of multiple environmental benefits across the entire country. These benefits include, among others,

improved land management practices over 2,400 hectares of agro/ecosystems[4] ; prevented, avoided and reduced GHG emissions in the amount of 39,500 tons of CO_2 equivalent. Over 157 thousands trees have been planted and over 43 million m^3 of irrigation water has been saved preventing secondary salinization in many areas. The Programme has been supporting reintroduction of cheetah to Uzbekistan, has assisted in expansion of protected area (PA) system coverage by 11,000 ha, has been supporting conservation of a small Amu-darya shovelnose sturgeon (*Pseudoscaphirhynchus hermanni*) -- a rare and fish species, and has implemented a number of other biodiversity conservation initiatives.

1.5 However, the most significant result of the Programme cannot be expressed in numbers listed here. Much more important is the example that GEF SGP projects demonstrate to others. The key essence of the Programme is to show that others can replicate a demonstrated example without the need to seek assistance from the Programme or other donors and therefore the effect of demonstrated practices is multiplied many fold. The Programme in Uzbekistan has facilitated a number of initiatives that have been replicated and further scaled up by various organizations and partners. Below are just a few examples of these initiatives:

a) *Afforestation of arid foothills of the country through establishment of pistachio plantations by the local population* – This initiative started with a simple demonstration project in the Djizzak province. After implementation of six similar pilot/training projects in various provinces in which the Programme invested $262,000, we achieved a noticeable impact – people throughout the country have started to establish pistachio plantations. Local governments have started to develop regional plans for arid foothills land coverage with pistachio and other drought resistant tree species. For instance, the Djizzak province alone plans to reforest 4,500 ha with pistachio and almond plantations. The key for success of this land use practice upscaling was a detailed cost-benefit analysis that showed to local residents graphically and in monetary terms how much they would benefit from this land use practice. A cost benefit comparison with other more damaging practices has also been conducted. Efforts and activities on wide dissemination of this practice and knowledge sharing carried out over six years have also been very important. Potential area where this practice, which is sustainable and beneficial for land across the country, can be replicated represents over 78, 000 km^2 or 7,800,000 ha.

b) Implementation of *laser leveling for efficient agricultural land use* results in water savings and prevents soil salinization. The SGP started to support this technology at the outset of the Programme seven years ago. Thanks to multiple demonstrations throughout the country and promotion of the technology's benefits, the practice has received recognition and is applied in farming. In consideration of the benefits derived from the installation and use of laser leveling on irrigated fields, the Government has adopted a programme for domestic production of the laser leveling equipment and wide implementation of this technology throughout the country. Pursuant to Republic of Uzbekistan President's Resolution No. PP-2460, dated December 29, 2015, at least 26,000 ha of agricultural land must utilize this technology in 2016 alone with gradual increase of the land area in each subsequent year. The SGP has approved a strategic project aimed at the establishment in Uzbekistan of a domestic laser leveling equipment production line. The cycle from production to wide scale implementation of this technology s has been supported by the GEF SGP in Uzbekistan.

c) Rollout of *biogas technology* for energy and organic fertilizer production for rural populations – the GEF SGP also has started pilot programs for demonstration of biogas

[4] While natural ecosystems are self regulating and self managing, agro-ecosystems are not. Humans actively interfere in regulation and management of ecosystem processes, especially those relating to soil in agricultural landscapes. Considering that agricultural landscapes occupy 38% of the world's land area and the majority of this land is being degraded to various degrees, one of GEF's main objectives is to arrest these processes. GEF strategy in addressing land degradation in the next cycle is focused primarily on agro-ecosystems/landscapes. That is why we also use this term in our strategy. Please refer to this webpage for a more detailed description of the GEF land degradation global strategy.

plants in various provinces across the country. Based on these results, the relay has continued through Low Carbon Development Strategy Project (UNDP) contributing to adoption of a number of governmental resolutions and norms on national biogas development, and through the World Bank's WB-GEF FSP project for promotion of alternative energy in agriculture enabling farmers to receive a loan for construction of a biogas plant on their farm.

1.6 There are many other initiatives that currently are being implemented with the help of the GEF SGP in Uzbekistan from previous GEF OP4 and OP5 cycles and that are building a foundation for their further replication and scaling up. Among the most sustainable ones are various practices in conservation agriculture, alternative energy and agro forestry.

1.7 Currently, a National Programme and Action Plan for combating desertification, land degradation and droughts, National Programme for development of the forestry sector and other programs are under development. Land degradation is one of the key environmental problems for Uzbekistan with over 2.17 mln ha of agricultural lands salinized, over 643.2 thousand ha of irrigated lands eroded, and over 1.6 mln ha of pastures and rangelands degraded[5]. The State Committee for nature protection has developed and stated implementation regional environmental plans in all provinces of the country. These documents share a key objective - sustainable use and conservation of Uzbekistan's natural resources to ensure the country's economic and social development.

1.8 Climate change thematic area has immense potential for change and improvement. Mitigation through reductions of hydrocarbon energy production and use, and addressing climate change impacts on various sectors of the economy, including agriculture, is set as one of the priorities for the Government. Reduction of the impact of Uzbekistan within the global climatic system is directly driven by sustainable energy production and use, and implementation of improved land use practices, including agriculture and forestry conservation initiatives.

1.9 For the last 15 years, energy intensity of Uzbekistan's economy has decreased 2.5 times. However, energy use inefficiency represented 4.5% of GDP in 2011[6]. In 2013, potential energy consumption reductions were estimated at 47.5% of total consumption of primary energy sources[7]. Between 1990 and 2005, Green House Gases (GHG) emissions in Uzbekistan increased by 9% to 199.8 mln tons of CO_2-equvivalent[8]. More than half (55.7%) of these emissions are represented by combustion of organic fuel, and 8.4% (approximately 16.8 mln tons of CO_2-equvivalent) are attributed to agriculture. In fact, there is enormous potential for increasing energy use efficiency and reducing GHGs emissions both in production and consumption of energy at local communities' level as well as in land use and energy use in agriculture.

1.10 On biodiversity conservation side, the situation analysis shows that for the last 10-20 years as a result of intensive use of natural resources, multiple species of plants and animals of Uzbekistan have been subjected to increasing anthropogenic impacts, and consequently their population and habitats have decreased. Certain species are at the brink of extinction or have completely become extinct while populations of other species have continued to decrease. Among the most immediate threats are (a) direct use of biological resources beyond the carrying capacity of ecosystems; (b) encroachment of human activities on animal and plant habitats; (c) fragmentation; and (d) environmental pollution. However interest of local communities and NGO sector to problems of biodiversity conservation has been very low and the GEF SGP cannot show any prominent successes that have potential for replication. The only success the Programme has is in introduction of aquaculture technologies for wide replication.

[5] National Report on State of Environment and Use of Natural Resources in Uzbekistan 2007.
[6] World Bank, Uzbekistan: Energy/Power Sector Issues Note, 2013.
[7] Assessment of the Center for Effective Use of Energy, Moscow, 2013.
[8] Second National Communication to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2008.

1.11 Determination of GEF SGP activities in OP6 relies heavily on (1) what has been accomplished to date by the Programme, (2) available partnership relationships; and (3) demand/interest from potential beneficiaries. All three elements are strongly interlinked and their features have been described above.

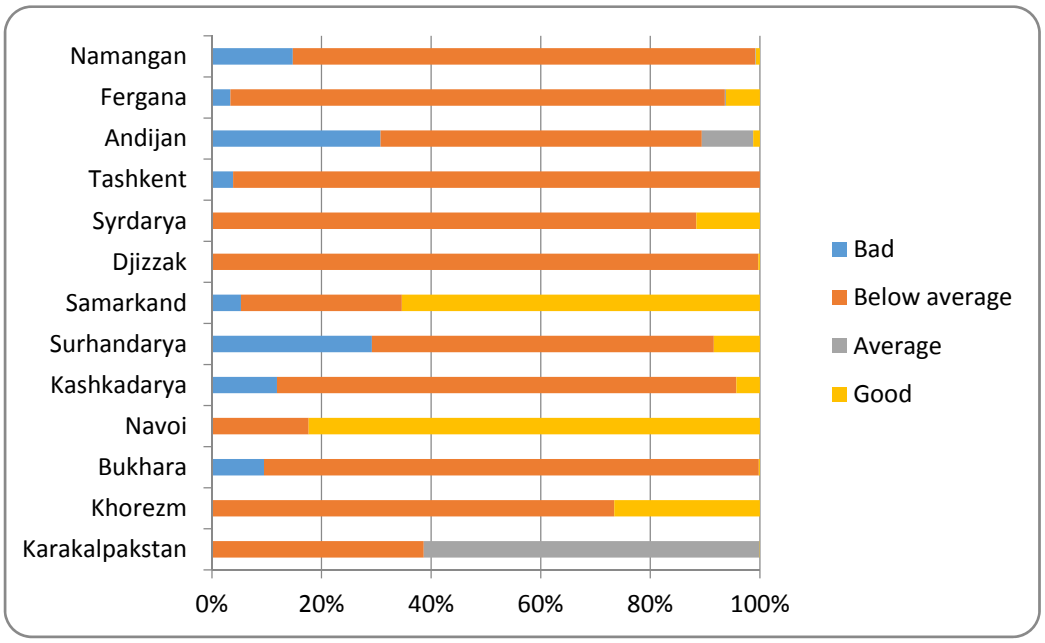
1.12 To maximize the benefits of limited GEF funding allocated to GEF SGP in OP6, the Programme is planning to focus its activities ***on conservation, improvement and restoration of agricultural landscapes/ecosystems, including irrigated and rain-fed areas***. The criteria and assumptions described further have determined selection of the landscape/ecosystem.

Severity and scope of threats to environment

1.13 Among all landscapes of Uzbekistan, agro ecosystems contain the most number and the biggest scope of threats to environmental sustainability.

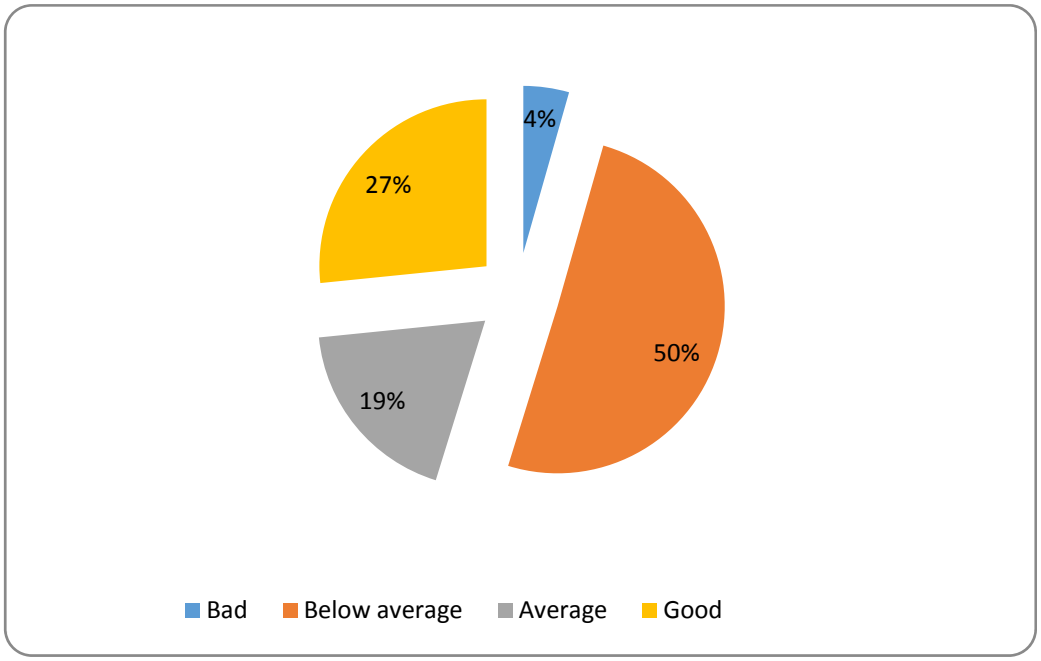
i. Over and misuse of natural resource – productive agro landscapes remain one of the main, if not cumulatively the biggest, users of natural resources. Agricultural sector consumes more than 20% of the country electrical energy. Population consumes another 28%, where more than half of the population resides in rural areas. Consumption of biomass and wood fuel by rural communities can hardly be correctly estimated but leads to mass deforestation especially in energy deficit regions. As mentioned previously, more than 2.17 mln ha of agricultural lands salinized. More than 50% of soils have decreased (bad or below average) their fertility potential. Almost 80% of soils are prone to strong erosion of both wind and water[9] nature. Whereas water consumption has generally decreased for the whole agricultural landscape, inefficiencies in irrigation still remain to be a serious problem. More than 90% of total water withdrawal by the country (50.4 km^3 out of 56 km^3) is consumed by agricultural sector[10]. There is great potential to improve efficiency in a holistic manner to decrease the scope and ways of natural resource use.

Figure 5. Quality of agricultural landscape soils across provinces



[9] Data from the report prepared by Uzhydromet under the GEF SGP project.
[10] FAO Aquastat, http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/countries_regions/uzb/index.stm

Figure 6. Share of agricultural landscape by its quality



ii. Ecosystem amendment – agro ecosystems is by definition an amended and not a natural ecosystem. It is both a result and a driving factor for amendment of natural ecosystems that lead to multiple consequences for environment. Uzbekistan agro ecosystems are heavily dependent on or cannot exist without irrigation. Irrigation implies that a number of dams and artificial irrigation channels are created that distort and divert natural water flows heavily affecting natural ecosystems (such as riverine 'tugay' forests that decreased by 90% for the last 100 years, for instance, or Aral Sea that almost disappeared). Construction of dams stopped natural fish migratory ways putting many species on the brim of extinction. Vast areas of land are withdrawn from natural habitats of wildlife and turned into amended and affected ecosystems. In many instances it happens because of inefficient agro production processes that overexploit available productive agro landscapes beyond their carrying capacity. Because of that more and more lands have to be converted into amended ecosystems. Certainly, such land and water withdrawal severely affects ecosystems and wildlife. Improvements in management of the landscape can decrease the size and severity of amendment.

iii. Deforestation and vegetation loss – ways of livelihoods by rural population, in majority, leads to excessive vegetation loss that serves as a basis for multiple ecological processes. Logging for wood fuel, overgrazing and agricultural practices of plowing are leading to excessive vegetation loss and prevent natural revegetation. Whereas hardly much can be done by GEF SGP in pasture management, other practices can be improved to help vegetation recovery.

iv. Loss of biodiversity – Current agricultural practices serve as a cause of high loss of agrobiodiversity. Agro landscapes are also encroaching onto wildlife habitats causing their deterioration, destruction, fragmentation, and eventually wildlife loss. Agro ecosystems' practices also frequently cause loss of wild pollinators undermining both natural and agro ecosystems processes.

v. Climate change – management of agro landscapes are both causing climate change and suffering from its consequences. On one hand, agro ecosystems are emitting CO_2 in great

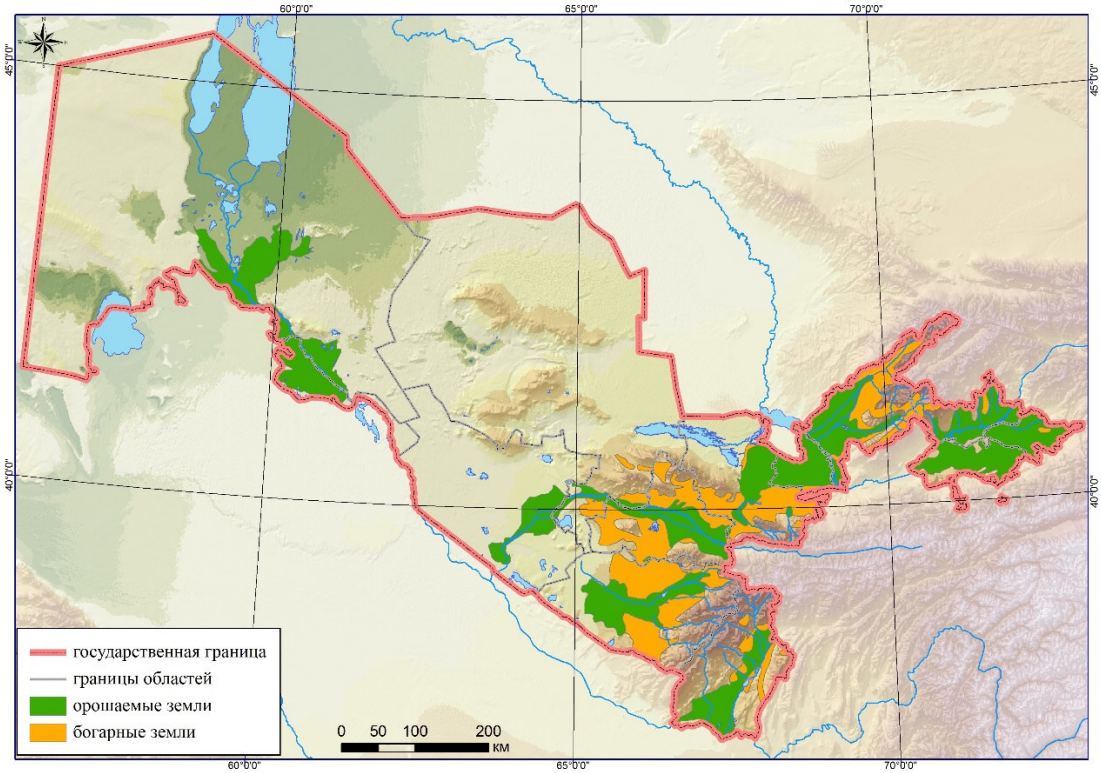
volumes. Agricultural sector is responsible directly for 8.2% of total Uzbekistan CO_2 emissions. Plus 20% of emissions made by energy sector, which constitutes 86.2% of total country emissions, are also associated with agricultural sector as electric energy is consumed by the sector. For instance, if efficiency of irrigation pump stations is increased by 25%, more than 6.1 billion kW*h of electric energy can be saved[11], which corresponds to curbing of more than 3.7 mln tons of CO_2 equivalent annually. Whereas big infrastructural projects is not the mandate of the SGP, much can also be done to decrease the volume of consumed water in irrigated agricultural landscapes by communities which will also decrease the need to using pumping equipment and as such will reduce CO_2 emissions. Plowing practices are a source of nitrous oxide emissions and constitute a great source of emission reduction. On the other hand, agro ecosystems is the first to suffer from climate change consequences and adaptation potential needs to be strengthened. Rain-fed agricultural landscape will suffer from changed precipitation patterns, volume of precipitation, and temperature shifts (aridization, increased dynamics or hot and cold waves, etc). Irrigated agricultural landscapes are also greatly prone to increased drought events.

vi. others - there are other types of impact on environment that agricultural landscapes is a source of, such as pollution by fertilizers, chemical use and others.

Representativeness

1.14 The agricultural landscape is present in all provinces of Uzbekistan. The selected landscape covers 4,389.5 thousand hectares, including 3,658.6 thousand hectares of irrigated agricultural landscapes, 376.9 thousand hectares of rain-fed landscapes and 354 thousand hectares of perennial plantations, which totals to 10.73% of the country territory[12].

Map # 1. Distribution of irrigated (green) and rain-fed (yellow) agro ecosystems across the country[13]



[11] Strategy of low carbon development of Republic of Uzbekistan, 2015, published by UNDP
[12] Data is taken from statistical report «Agriculture of Uzbekistan», Tashkent, 2014, pages 22-23.
[13] The map is produced by Natalya Beshko, PhD in biology, Institute of plant and animal genofund under the Academy of Science of Uzbekistan.

1.15 Whereas the strategy identifies geographical focus as well (described further), the representativeness is important for further replication and upscaling of landscape management approaches in other provinces of the country. The map #1 depicts how the landscape is distributed across the country.

1.16 The representativeness is also strengthened by the presence of the landscape in all larger landscape complexes – in mountainous, foothill and valley landscapes of Uzbekistan.

Comparison with other landscapes

1.17 The agricultural landscape has been selected on the base of various criteria comparison between landscapes. The summary of the comparison are provided in the table below. As it can be seen from the table, and taking into account other criteria, described separately, antropogenical ecosystem, namely irrigated and rain-fed cultivated agro landscapes, represents the most interesting and the most productive in terms of potential cumulative environmental benefits that GEF SGP is capable of producing within current limitations.

Table # 1. Comparison of landscapes

Landscape/Criteria	Size	Importance for people livelihood	Presence of potential beneficiaries and applicants	Accessibility	Presence of governmental support and partners
Nival and subnival	-	-	-	-	-
Grasslands	-	+	-	-	-
Foothill and mountainous forests	++	+	+	-	+
Steppe	-	+	-	+	-
Desert and semi-desert	+++	+	-	-	-
Salt-march	-	-	-	-	-
Tugay (riverine)	-	+	+	-	-
Marine (Aral and exposed seabed)	+	+	-	-	+
Agro	++	++	++	++	++

Comparative advantage and experience

1.18 The GEF SGP should be active in the niche that can produce the best results for the available limited resources. In other words, alternative costs and benefits analysis has been done to identify where the GEF SGP would be the most useful and effective. Being a community, people oriented Programme, the GEF SGP serves their interests in the first instance. For instance, it is environmental and country priority to improve management of protected areas (PA) system. But unfortunately current PA system of management does not provide enough incentives for local people to have enough ownership and interest to preserve wildlife protected by the governmental PA system. There was only one and unsuccessful example of when the civil-society tried to preserve wildlife together with PA system management with support of the Programme. The area of PA management demands greater political will and changes before engaging communities. Similar situation exists with pasture management - it is in the best interest from environmental point of view, but of little interest for local people and limited support from the country perspective. Figure 7 below best describes the focus of the Programme implementation. The previous experience shows that there are two distinctive

thematics that are of great interest for communities in Uzbekistan – effective land use for productive purposes and alternative energy solutions. Being the demand-driven Programme, the SGP should not ignore the signs of the interest from the communities and civil-society institutions. Other areas are of topical importance as well but other development agents are active there and trying to work with the Government to change programmatic and policy environment. The GEF SGP can only provide support to other bigger interventions of other donors Programmes and projects (including those of GEF), working directly with the Government, by providing successful and proven scenarios for certain areas of natural resources management.

Figure 7. Scheme of GEF SGP interventions' focus

1.19 The analysis showed that the majority of applications made to SGP from local and farming communities involved agricultural landscapes. The interest in various energy-efficient measures to reduce CO_2 emissions also stems from rural settings and is closely related to agro-ecology landscapes. Furthermore, the focus of governmental investments and development banks lies mainly in big infrastructure projects. Yet there is a need to make transformational change in common and routine agricultural practices. Most of the agricultural technologies continue to replicate methods that were widely used 50 years ago. Farmers commonly do not prioritize conservation agriculture objectives that aim for long-term soil fertility conservation and food security agenda. This is where the GEF SGP has the comparative advantage. Old practices can be changed through multiple demonstration projects with subsequent scaling up. This is where the SGP has demonstrated its strength in its ability to demonstrate benefits to local communities from economically and environmentally preferred practices and to initiate further replication of such practices through bottom-up dialogue.

1.20 The Programme has accumulated extensive experience in various technologies and practices for soil conservation farming/agriculture, forestry and agroforestry practices, sustainable biodiversity resources use and management, and efficient energy production and use in agriculture. The majority of the Programme's projects were implemented specifically for the purpose of improving agricultural landscapes/ecosystems. The Programme was able to scale up

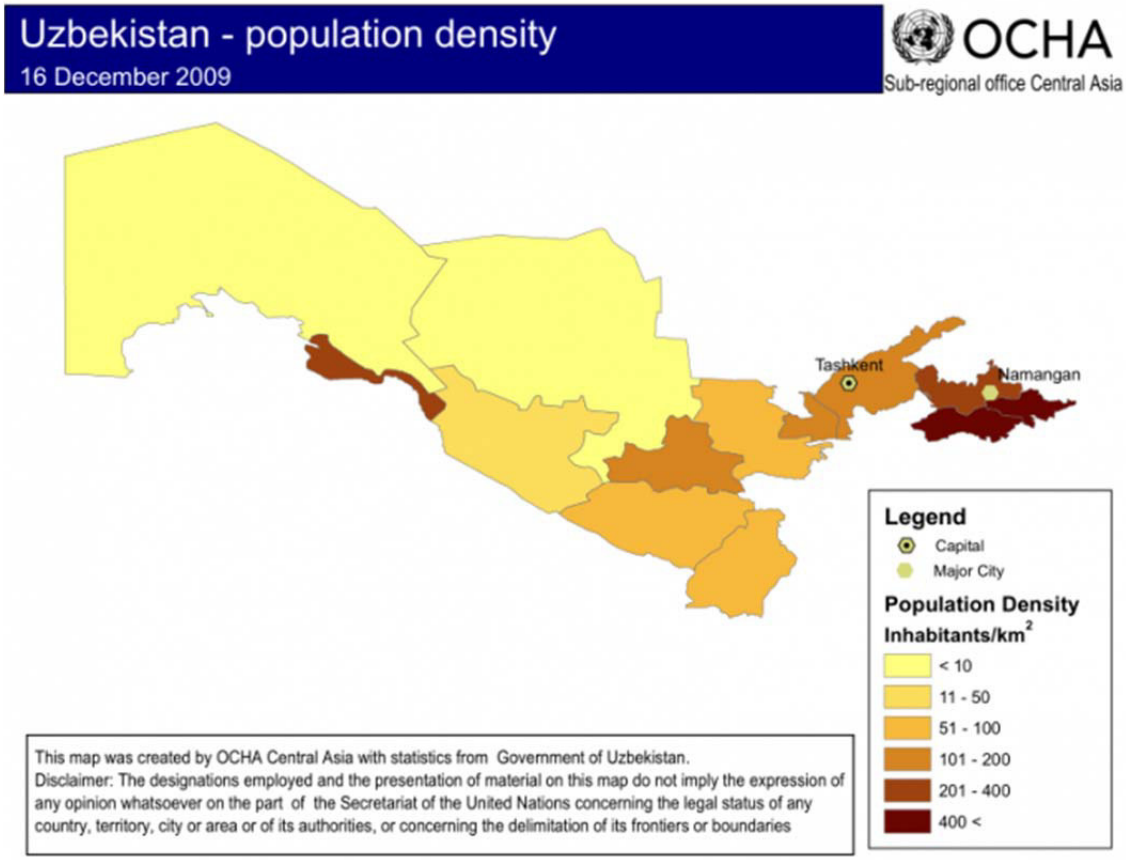
implementation of certain technologies and practices (laser leveling, pistachio planting, biogas) to a new level – the national level. As mentioned above, such a scale up would not have been possible without a prior critical mass of successful demonstrations that serve as an impressive example for the Government and direct users. The Programme also has substantial capacity in development of other technologies, which with more focused efforts can be widely disseminated and implemented throughout the country. These represent, among others, soil conservation farming and agroforestry practices and technologies, and energy generation from water resources for rural settings

1.21 The productive agro landscapes has been the most demanded previously and the Programme has accumulated enough experience in issues connected with management of the landscape. Our objective is to build on this experience even further to ensure higher rate of buy-in by communities and of upscale interest from the Government.

Number of effected population

1.22 A strive of the Programme to serve maximum number of beneficiaries is also positively overlapping with comparative advantage rationale. It is not surprising that most of the population resides close to the most productive landscapes, which in Uzbekistan happens to be the selected agro landscape (compare Map #1 with Map # 2) located along major rivers and within their watersheds. Selecting the agro landscape the Programme will ensure high degree of potential beneficiaries' coverage.

Map # 2. Population distribution and density.



Demand

1.23 One of the strongest features of the Programme is that it provides targeted assistance and responds to interests of beneficiaries and fully demand driven. The Programme advocates for and advertises best technologies and practices, fosters experience, knowledge and its sharing among all possible partners. SGP defines areas of activities, generates frameworks and then

responds only to motivated requests from communities on specific practices rather than going to localities and imposing preferred practices

1.24 As it has been mentioned and can be seen from the Figure # 4 above, most of the demand comes for land use and alternative energy thematic areas. Both of the Programme's areas particularly targeted increasing effectiveness of natural resource use in agricultural landscapes. Rural population engaged in agricultural production keeps being the key user of natural resources (soil, water, energy, biodiversity impacts). On the other hand, there is tremendous potential for change and shifting to sustainable land use practices. This interest stems from a growing demand by agricultural process participants for innovative and more efficient technologies demonstrated by farmers in various projects.

Potential for upscaling

1.25 The potential for upscale exists only there, where there are clear and distinct benefits for national and people's individual priorities/interests. As mentioned in Figure # 7, the Programme focuses on interests of both people and the Government and adds priority of environmental sustainability. By having "win-win" situation, the Programme will serve as a testing ground for most demanded successful practices in the selected landscape.

1.26 To ensure upscale, the Programme will take into account immediate Governmental priorities in this sphere and interventions of partners. The Programme has directly and successfully collaborated with many organizations working in various areas of agricultural landscape/agro-ecosystem management, including UNDP and ICARDA projects, and the initiatives of the Farmers Council, international donors and local government authorities.

1.27 Exemption of lands from degradation processes as well as enhancement of soils fertility to ensure higher yields per 1 ha using the least amount of water has become one of the key priorities pronounced on various governmental levels. In land degradation area, there are many partners who have wide experience and multiple initiatives and where the GEF SGP can be complementary to and not overlapping. For instance, ICARDA has been actively engaged in conservation agriculture in Karakalpakstan. The GEF SGP could potentially contribute to replication and scaling up in other provinces of the country.

1.28 The key partnership in the land degradation focal area exists and must continue with farmers' communities across the country where Farmers Councils represent the interests of local farmers. There are also strong linkages with forthcoming FAO programmes on forestry and agroforestry led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources Management (MAWRM), and Central Asia Countries Initiative on Land Management (CACILM) Phase 2 that are coordinated by multiple partner organizations, including Hydrometeorological Services Center under the Cabinet of Ministers (Uzhydromet) and MAWRM.

1.29 In the climate change mitigation area UNDP is launching a new energy efficiency project in rural housing. The GEF SGP could facilitate energy efficiency in rural settings by implementing initiatives on energy efficiency in agricultural sector.

2. SGP country programme niche

2.1 Uzbekistan is a signatory to many international environmental conventions and agreements. Those directly related to GEF focal areas are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. List of relevant conventions and national/regional plans or programmes

Rio Conventions + national planning frameworks	Date of ratification / completion
UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	17 October 1995
CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	01 April 1998
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)	Not adopted

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	20 June 1993
Uzbekistan National Communications to UNFCCC (1st, 2nd, 3rd)	22 October 1999, 3 December 2008, Under Preparation
UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)	n/a
UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA)	n/a
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	31 October 1995
UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP)	Not adopted
UN Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES)	8 October 1995
UN Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (The Bonn Convention)	1 May 1998
UN Convention on Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (RAMSAR Convention)	30 August 2001
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	Not adopted
SC National Implementation Plan (NIP)	n/a
World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)	n/a
GEF National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA)	2008 (c)
GEF-6 National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE)	n/a
Strategic Action Programmes (SAPs) for shared international water-bodies	n/a
Minamata Convention on Mercury	Not adopted
National Action Plan for Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Droughts	1999 – Under Preparation

2.2 The GEF SGP in Uzbekistan continues to follow a model that proved to be effective: demonstration of an environmentally sustainable and economically attractive practice → analysis of benefits and costs → knowledge sharing → replication if possible → enabling activities, promoting scaling up. The previous and ongoing projects are acting as integral part of this model and represent preparatory steps in further scale up of selected practices, which will be replicated in OP6 and thereafter.

2.3 The SGP country programme strategy of Uzbekistan for the next GEF OP cycle is entirely based on the following rationale and principles:

a. Grant-making activities will cluster around global environmental and country development priorities in selected geographical focus areas of Uzbekistan to aim for strategic impact achievement that eventually leads to sustainable development of Uzbekistan and environmental conservation;

b. Grant–making will focus around one selected globally recognized critical ecosystem/landscape – agro-ecosystems/agricultural landscapes to reach greater impact and more aggregated result in light of GEF resources limitations. Any projects and initiatives of the Programme under GEF-6 will foster synergies among GEF focal areas and immediate objectives related to Uzbekistan circumstances and conditions;

c. Promotion of solid innovative technologies and practices for protection and sustainable management of the global and country environment continues to be the corner stone of the GEF SGP grant making. The experience and lessons learnt in Uzbekistan will become a valuable asset which is to be shared with global community to gain more environmental benefits around the globe;

d. The Programme in GEF-6 will keep supporting communities and civil society organizations in building their potential for serving as champions and examples of best environment and sustainable resource use management. These communities and civil society organizations are to serve as the initiators of potential constructive dialogue with governmental entities in regional (province) and national-level environment and sustainable development planning and policy development.

2.4 The GEF SGP Country Programme will be complementary to other initiatives that plan to be realized in Uzbekistan including but not limited to:

- National Programme of improving melioration state of agricultural lands for the period of 2013-2017;
- National Programme and Action Plan for combating desertification, land degradation and droughts;
- National Programme for development of forestry sector;
- UN Development Action Framework for the Republic of Uzbekistan (UNDAF) signed on September 2015 outlining Outcome 6 "By 2020, rural population benefit from sustainable management of natural resources and resilience to disasters and climate change";
- GEF funded projects, including FAO-GEF regional FSP «Integrated Natural Resources Management in Drought-prone and Salt-affected Agricultural Production Systems in Central Asia and Turkey (CACILM2)» GEF ID 9094; UNDP-GEF FSP "Sustainable Natural Resource and Forest Management in Key Mountainous Areas Important for Globally Significant Biodiversity" GEF ID 8031;

2.5 The SGP country programme niche can be briefly outlined in the following Table 3.

Table 3. SGP contribution to national priorities / GEF-6 corporate results

1 **SGP OP6 strategic initiatives OP6**	2 **GEF-6 corporate results by focal area**	3 **Briefly describe the SGP Country Programme niche[14] relevant to national priorities/other agencies [15]**	4 **Briefly describe the complementation between the SGP Country Programme and UNDAF**
Community landscape/seascape conservation	*Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society*	To introduce on community level and disseminate widely sustainable resource use practices that adequately ensure interests of long term conservation of Uzbekistan biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services, which provide economic benefits to communities from agricultural landscape/ecosystem	GEF SGP work will complement outcome 6 of UNDAF "By 2020, rural population benefit from sustainable management of natural resources and resilience to disasters and climate change" in the thematic area "Environmental protection, to ensure sustainable development" in the following areas:

[14] "Niche" refers to the role or contribution that the Country Programme is best fitted to perform and to which all stakeholders have agreed.
[15] Describe only for those OP6 strategic initiatives that have been included in the SGP country programme.

			Area of work 1. Promoting integrated rural development mechanisms to enhance income of rural poor and enable sustainable management of natural resources **Area of work 2.** Promoting resource-efficient agricultural practices
Innovative climate-smart agro-ecology;	*Sustainable land management in production systems (agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes)*	To test on community level and disseminate widely agro-ecology practices incorporating measures to reduce CO_2 emissions and enhancing resilience to climate change in protected area buffer zones and forest corridors	Same.
Community landscape/seascape conservation	*Promotion of collective management of trans-boundary water systems and implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services*	n/a	Not applicable to this strategy
Energy access co-benefits	*Support to transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path*	To introduce on community level and disseminate widely low carbon community energy access solutions	GEF SGP work will complement outcome 6 of UNDAF "By 2020, rural population benefit from sustainable management of natural resources and resilience to disasters and climate change" in the thematic area "Environmental protection, to ensure sustainable development" in the following areas: **Area of work 3**. Integrating principles of climate resilience and green economy into national development agenda
Local to global chemicals coalitions	*Increase in phase-out, disposal and reduction of releases of POPs, ODS, mercury and other chemicals of global concern*	n/a	None
CSO-Government dialogue platforms	*Enhance capacity of civil society to contribute to implementation of MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and national and sub-national policy, planning and legal frameworks*	To facilitate dialogue between CBOs and governmental entities on development and subsequent implementation of best environmental practices and approaches	All listed above

Social inclusion (gender, youth, indigenous peoples)	*GEF Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Gender Equality Action Plan and GEF Principles for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples*	To seek higher involvement of youth and gender equality in dialogues, practices and benefits sharing of SGP activities.	All listed above
Contribution to global knowledge management platforms	*Contribute to GEF KM efforts*	To channel all possible knowledge products into national and global knowledge platforms to disseminate experience and lessons learnt for wider global environmental benefits.	All listed above

3. OP6 strategy

3.1. *Cross-cutting OP6 grant-making strategies*

3.1.1. In response to the reduction in SGP resources in GEF-6 as well as to promote mainstreaming and scaling up of SGP results, it has been agreed upon that each country Programme will focus on only one landscape within selected geographical area where most of the Programme resources will be channeled to (60%). The Programme can still utilize up to 40% of the SGP OP6 grant allocations (Core and STAR) on cross-cutting projects outside of specific selected landscape/seascape area and in other geographical areas.

3.1.2. In case of Uzbekistan, where only limited CORE resources have been allocated and no STAR resources are available for the Programme, cross-cutting areas are also identified for further fund-rising as considered similarly important for sustainable development of Uzbekistan as the selected agricultural landscape conservation. Apart from identified agricultural ecosystem/landscape conservation, from national level consultations, assessments and scoping exercise, sustainable energy production and consumption acts as one of the most critical factor of country sustainable development.

3.2. *Landscape/seascape-based OP6 grant-making strategies*

3.2.1. The identification of the focused landscape – *agricultural ecosystem/landscape* was made following several stages. First, NGO ECOSAN conducted the baseline assessment, results of which are cited across the strategy text body and have become its integral part. Various reasoning and criteria were used to identify the most evident landscape that can potentially become a focus of the GEF SGP strategy for the forthcoming OP-6 period. Then the NGO drafted the strategy. The agro landscape was chosen as the one, where a holistic and integrated approach to solving environmental problems can be applied. To summarize the selection process in favour of *agro ecosystems*, the following can be stated:

- Numerous threats to environmental sustainability are present within the landscape that can be tackled by communities and should be addressed in the most holistic and integrated manner;
- Size of the landscape is big enough to make substantive environmental benefits that will have a beneficial spill-over effect to other, contiguous landscapes;
- Focus on the landscape will have the most productive output for the limited resources of the Programme;
- the Programme has comparative advantage and substantive experience and appropriate foundation that can be built on;
- the work in the landscape will positively effect a great number of potential beneficiaries;
- focus on this landscape has the best potential for further upscaling of the results in comparison with other landscapes

– the area is most widely demanded and has interest both by population, Government and other development partners.

3.2.2. The proposal on the selected landscape was then made available to the public through various Internet resources, including web-site of the Programme and NGO, and distributed by post to local rural communities in provinces and various governmental partners (more than 40 recipients received the letter by post). Eight partners replied by post with their opinion. The partners were also invited to openly discuss the proposed strategy during the national round table that took place on November 16. This is where other comments on the selected landscape were received. *The consultation process revealed no other landscapes that could potentially become a focus of the Programme*. The entire process of focused landscape identification ensured that voices of various partners were heard to ensure fullest participation and transparency.

3.2.3. During identification process, the baseline assessment process included the country environment situation analysis that has been described in various programme/projects documents of international donor initiatives (incl. UNDP, UNEP, ICARDA, GIZ, WB, others). The findings also confirm that agricultural ecosystem/landscapes are the most heavily exploited and need urgent conservation for further food security and sustainable development of the country. As it was mentioned, majority of Uzbekistan's population concentrates in valleys, along river watersheds where arable agriculture is possible. High population density in certain provinces of the country leads to high stress on available soil, water, energy and biodiversity resources. Various land degradation processes impact long-term sustainability of agricultural ecosystems for future food and other crop production. Deteriorating conditions of the available arable lands, in turn, force population to marginal lands, taking away more territories from biodiversity habitats.

3.2.4. After the consultation process with the Government and civil society sector, there was a round of internal consultations between UNDP and GEF SGP CPMT to sharpen the strategic focus and see how the Programme interventions can be integrated into one UN and UNDP development agenda. During consultations it was decided that the focus should be further sharpened not to dissolve the limited resources for OP-6 by incorporating geographical focus.

3.2.5. The call for identification of the geographical focus was disseminated through distribution lists of the GEF SGP partners and web-site. To identify the geographical focus of the strategy, the following rationale was applied:

(i) The area should contain the most typical threats and problems relevant to the selected landscape and be representative for the majority of the landscape across the country;
(ii) The area should contain both arable land segments – irrigated and rainfed;
(iii) The area should be accessible and easily monitored;

3.2.6. After thorough examination of the landscape composition, characteristics and threats, it was decided to focus interventions of the GEF SGP on the agro landscape area of Syrdarya river watershed beyond Fergana valley. The area is distinctively demarked in bright green (irrigated) and yellow (rain fed) on the map # 3 below.

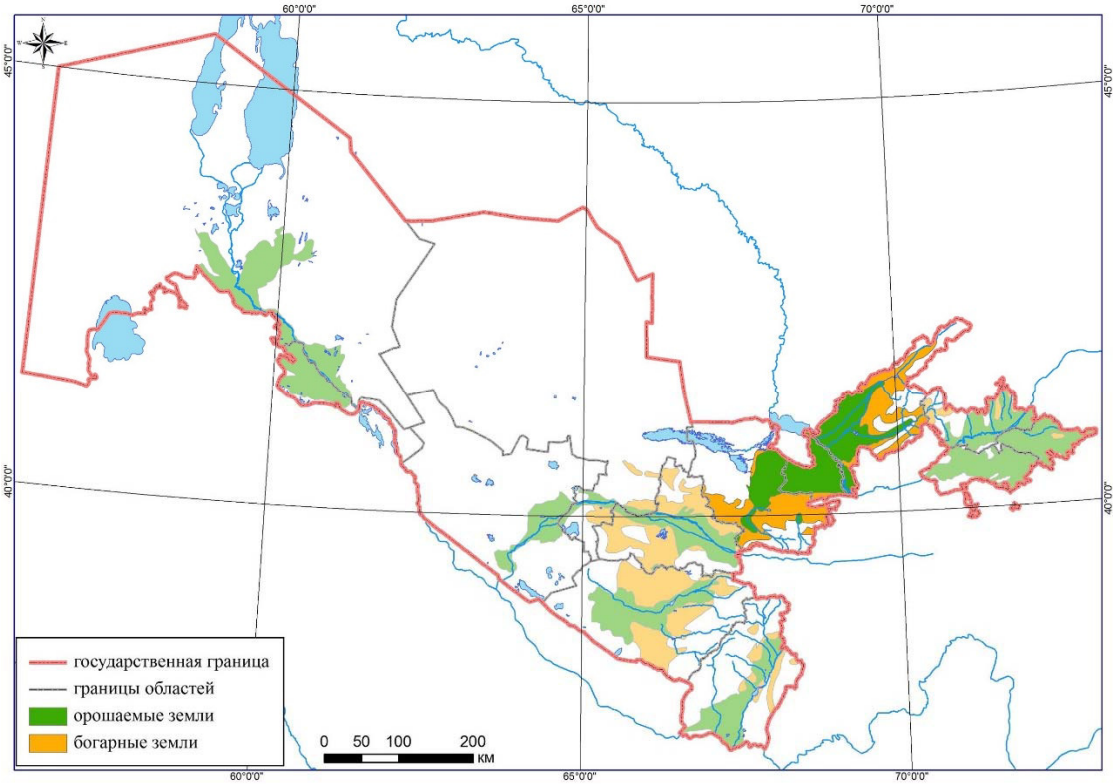
3.2.7. The area administratively resides in three provinces of Uzbekistan – Tashkent, Syrdarya and Djizzak provinces. The total landscape territory in these provinces occupies an area of 1,061,900 ha, where 810,600 ha of irrigated landscape and 251,300 ha of rain fed arable lands. The share of provinces is 332,400 ha, 261,300 ha and 249,000 ha of irrigated lands in Tashkent, Djizzak and Syrdaya provinces respectively, and 32,100 ha, 219,200 ha and 0 ha of rain fed lands in the provinces[16]. The geographical focus area constitutes 24.19% of the total selected landscape of Uzbekistan and 0.24% of the total country area. The quality of the landscape is similar to most of the landscape lands in Uzbekistan with 59, 50 and 51.5 bonitet score in Tashkent, Djizzak and Syradarya provinces respectively (see Figure # 5).

[16] As of January 1, 2016, data from MAWR.

3.2.8. The examination took into account the following characteristics of the area that helped to select it as the geographical focus of the Programme for OP-6 period:

a. Geomorphological characteristics of the area are typical for the rest of the agricultural landscape of the country. It contains various types of valley, foothill and mountainous areas typical for other territories of the agricultural landscape across the country.
b. It shares similar agro climatic characteristics with most of the agricultural landscape of the country, including those in Fergana valley, Samarkand, Kashkadarya provinces. Zones of precipitation levels are similar to almost all other areas apart from parts of the landscape in Khorezm and Karakalpakstan;
c. Soils types are typical for the landscape in other part of the country;
d. Scopes of threats to environment taking into account approaches to use and management of the landscape are identical to those in other parts of the country, including overexploitation and mismanagement of soil, water, energy and biodiversity resources, climate change risks mismanagement, deforestation and vegetation loss. Those threats lead to various land degradation, biodiversity and climate change problems, including primary and secondary salinization of soils, loss of soils fertility, deficit of water resources for ecological needs, extinction of plant and animal species, and many others.
e. The area lies within the day-trip vicinity from the capital of the country and easy to access and monitor.
f. It is convenient to make knowledge sharing activities as most of the people from all provinces come to the capital – Tashkent from time to time.

Map # 3. Selected geographical focus of the priority agro landscape.



3.2.9. Hence, the GEF-6 country programme will be focusing on conservation of *agricultural landscapes/ecosystems* with specific geographical focus on Syrdarya river watershed beyond Fergana valley. The emphasis will be made on building harmonious relationships between people and nature whereby human socio-economic activities in and outside of rural communities, including agriculture and forestry, will align with natural processes in the most

sustainable manner. The resources and services provided by agricultural ecosystems include but are not limited to:

a. Soil formation and provision for agricultural production, including various food, fodder for livestock and other types of crops, representing the most important function. Without productive soil there is no agricultural production and no food security;

b. Water cycle circulation for all socio-economic and ecological functions;

c. Effective energy use and flow within the landscape;

d. Availability of habitats for biodiversity that provides multiple services like pollination of crops, a gene bank of various species, which is critical for society's well-being, food productions and mitigation of risk due various extreme biological events, among others;

e. Circulation of important nutrients and chemical elements;

3.2.10. Sustainable co-existence of human communities with nature where different types of land uses such as farmland, woodland, pastures and grassland, lakes, rivers and irrigation canals correlate with nature's carrying capacity is on the forefront of the Programme's objectives. The Programme aims to support community innovative interventions:

- where farm lands are managed to sustain long term soil fertility and sustainable use of ecological products and services in long term perspective;
- water is used with regard to existence of other uses including ecological;
- forests are planted additionally to naturally grown and only artificially planted wood stands are cut. The planting is made to maintain healthy vegetation cover, water purification, carbon sequestration, etc. and satisfying human need for wood fuel;
- vegetation is used to maintain soil fertility and feed animals;
- patches of habitats are sustained to conserve biodiversity and decrease fragmentation;
- energy is sustainably produced and used;
- and other initiatives that help to preserve healthy environment and meet the needs of humans in rural localities.

3.2.11. The nature of the selected landscape focus dictates that primary stakeholders for the Programme will be rural population, including farmers' communities and communities of individual households. Whereas the country Programme does have a geographical focus on Syrdarya river watershed beyond Fergana valley, it still does not seclude any of the country regions.

3.2.12. To make the most out of available limited resources, the country Programme will make focused and identical interventions in selected three provinces, trying to use economy of scale for knowledge sharing. Therefore knowledge from one project can be applied and disseminated though various channels to other parts of the country. Moreover, some elements or components in various projects can be complementary to other projects. For example, findings from a conservation agriculture projects in one province having a component on sideration can be complementary to those projects that do not have such a component. Knowledge management initiatives for similar projects can be combined to save resources where possible.

3.2.13. If the nature of a project allows, a strategic project can be launched to have a more widespread result across the entire country. It should be noted that the selected landscape focus is strongly related to another GEF SGP strategic initiative – the Innovative Climate-Smart Agro-Ecology, which will attract resources from other sources, and thus both projects will be complementary and overlapping with one another.

3.2.14. The Programme also identifies the following strategic initiatives for GEF-6 as a possible area for intervention with allocation of the permitted share of 40% of available resources and additionally attracted resources:

- Alternative energy production for community needs;
- Efficient energy consumption on the community level; and
- Conservation of other ecosystems to preserve biodiversity globally and nationally.

These strategic initiatives will also be proposed to potential donors to raise additional funding for the benefit of communities in Uzbekistan. If additional financial resources are found, these areas will supplement the objectives for the SGP in Uzbekistan programme strategy.

3.2.15. The National Steering Committee will exercise judiciousness in the decision-making process regarding the strategic importance of appropriating funding for the proposed ideas to ensure that limited funds of the Country Programme are spent in the most value added manner.

3.3. *"Grant-maker+" strategies* [17]

3.3.1. CSO-Government Dialogue Platform

The Country Programme will also act as a facilitator and participant of the CSO-government dialogue platforms to ensure promotion of the best practices and lessons learnt during OP6 projects and other nature conservation projects and initiatives. The Programme will be linking voices from communities-partners with higher level national planners and policy-makers. This will take place in form of various round tables, conferences, seminars, meetings, etc. The knowledge management components of the Programme will also complement efforts of the SGP in establishing "the bridge" between communities and governmental authorities.

3.3.2. Policy influence

Aside from the CSO-Government Dialogue Platform initiative, the SGP country programme will use experiences and lessons learnt from SGP to inform and influence policy as part of its role as 'Grant-makers+' in OP6 at the local, regional and national levels through knowledge products dissemination and participation in various discussion processes regarding implementation of the global environmental agreements.

3.3.3. Promoting social inclusion

The SGP will keep paying particular attention to empowering and attracting women into using and promotion of the innovative practices and technologies. The number of women-farmers in Uzbekistan is limited due to various reasons. Now out of more than 70,000 farm entities, only around 4,550 farms are headed by women. Plus, around 43% of total number of employees are also women. Extra efforts will be made to ensure that women enjoy preferential possibilities during projects implementation processes and number of women-owners of business engaged in the landscape increases thanks to SGP demonstrations and activities. The same particular attention will be allocated to inclusion of youth into the country Programme's activities.

3.3.4. Knowledge management plan

The knowledge management activities of the Programme are by far is the foundation for capacity development of partners. The final objective of the knowledge sharing is to develop capacities of all potential beneficiaries to a level when they have respective potential to sustainable use natural capital. Plus, by training partners through projects and Progamme knowledge sharing activities, the Programme hopes to develop various skills of the beneficiaries that will help them to reach required level of efficiency in resource management.

The knowledge plan largely bases on lessons learnt and successes from the previous country strategies. The previous knowledge sharing activities of the Programme proved its efficacy and the SGP is widely recognized as an effective capacity development and outreach partner.

[17] The OP6 Grant-maker+ strategies and related activities will promote partnership building, networking and policy development within the target areas of SGP interventions.

Each project or a cluster of similar projects will capture results and lessons learnt from on-the-ground activities. Big attention will be paid to cost-and-benefit analysis of each proposed practice as regular people are first interested in monetary attractiveness. Environmental dimension cannot serve as a motivator to shift to a proposed technology alone without clearly identified economic incentives. The results are then shared widely with other resource users, civil society, government, and other relevant stakeholders to foster replication and scaling up of community innovations.

The strategy is to use the following instruments and approaches:

- Manuals on practices and technologies;
- Newsletters with analytical papers with economic justification of a practice/technology;
- Organization and participation of Field Days with direct demonstration;
- Organization and participation of Peer-to-peer exchanges;
- Organization and participation in fairs, round tables, seminars, etc.

All available knowledge products and manuals together with available analytical papers will be downloaded to global South-South exchange digital library. GEF SGP in Uzbekistan website – http://www.sgp.uz is also an open source of all available information amassed by SGP over the course of its activities in Uzbekistan.

3.3.5. Communications Strategy

The Communication Strategy fully bases its effectiveness on demonstration of successful examples of how environment can be conserved with simultaneous benefiting communities. The demonstrations and clearly articulated benefits description from each technology for economy and environment will serve as a key instrument to communicate the results of the SGP work and engage key stakeholders into further dissemination, replication and upscaling. Incentives to have similar results will serve as a basis for building further partnership with CSOs and governmental entities. The results of the SGP demonstrations will also be communicated with UNDP for possible policy dialogue initiation with Governmental partners.

4. Expected results framework

4.1. The table 4 below shows the expected results of the Country Programme Strategy for Uzbekistan and the Programme will be monitored against the depicted indicators.

Table 4. Consistency with SGP OP6 global programme components

1 **OP6 project components**	2 **CPS targets**	3 **Activities**	4 **Indicators**	5 **Means of verification**
SGP OP6 Component 1: *Community Landscape and Seascape Conservation*: 1.1 SGP country programmes improve conservation and sustainable use, and management of important terrestrial and coastal/marine ecosystems through implementation of community based landscape/seascape approaches in approximately 50 countries	*SGP Uzbekistan improves conservation and sustainable use, and management of agricultural ecosystem/landscape through implementation of community based sustainable land management practices/technologies*	*At least 6 community or civil-society based projects supported to improve conservation and sustainable use, and management of agricultural ecosystem*	*Indicator: Improved management of agricultural landscape* *Baseline: 2400 ha under improved agricultural practices with support of GFE GSP by the beginning of OP-6* *Target:* *Plus at least 1000 ha of agricultural landscape under improved management*	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Baseline assessment comparison variables (use of conceptual models and partner data as appropriate) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) Country Programme Strategy Review (NSC inputs)
SGP OP6 Component 2: *Climate Smart Innovative Agro-ecology:* 2.1 Agro-ecology practices incorporating measures to reduce CO_2 emissions and enhancing resilience to climate change tried and tested in protected area buffer zones and forest corridors and disseminated widely in at least 30 priority countries	*SGP Uzbekistan pilots agro-ecology practices, incorporating measures to reduce CO_2 emissions and enhancing resilience to climate change in forest, agroforest and agricultural landscapes*[18]	*At least 2 community or civil-society based projects*	*Indicator: # of ha under agro-ecology practices, , incorporating measures to reduce CO_2 emissions and enhancing resilience to climate change in forest, agroforest and agricultural landscapes* *Baseline: 2400 ha* *At least plus 100 ha in OP-6*	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Socio-ecological resilience indicators for production landscapes (SEPLs) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) Country Programme Strategy Review (NSC inputs)

[18] Subject to fund-rising and funds available from other sources then CORE funds allocated for SGP implementation. This also refers to target of projects and number of hectares. Exception – projects within 40% of the CORE funds.

1 OP6 project components	2 CPS targets	3 Activities	4 Indicators	5 Means of verification
<u>GP OP6 Component 3</u>: *Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits*: 3.1 Low carbon community energy access solutions successfully deployed in 50 countries with alignment and integration of these approaches within larger frameworks such as SE4ALL initiated in at least 12 countries	*At least one innovative typology*[19] *of locally adapted solutions demonstrated and documented*[20]	*At least 2 community or civil-society based projects*	*Indicator: # of typologies demonstrated* *Baseline: 5 typologies demonstrated with support of GEF SGP by the beginning of OP-6 (wind generator for water pumping; Photo-voltaic for water pumping; biogas for livestock and greenhouse energy supply; micro-hydro station for electricity generation for small business; gravity irrigation with channel insulation)* *Target: At least plus one innovative typology of community-oriented, locally adapted energy access solutions with successful demonstrations for scaling up and replication*	AMR, country reports AMR, global database, country reports Special country studies[21] Country Programme Strategy Review (NSC inputs)
<u>SGP OP6 Component 5</u>: *CSO-Government Policy and*	*SGP supports establishment of at least one CSO-Government Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms*	*At least 1 CSO-government meeting convened to facilitate*	*Indicator: # of platforms for CSO and Government dialogue*	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams

[19] Typology here means the practice/technology utilized such as solar, minihydro, wind, biogas, clean efficient stoves, etc. for energy access and co-benefits and organic farming. silvipasture, agroforestry, etc. for climate smart innovative agroecology.
[20] Subject to fund-rising and funds available from other sources then CORE funds allocated for SGP implementation. This also refers to target of projects and number of hectares. Exception – projects within 30% of CORE funding allocated to other focal areas.
[21] Only applies to lead countries in this strategic initiative

1 OP6 project components	2 CPS targets	3 Activities	4 Indicators	5 Means of verification
Planning Dialogue Platforms (Grant-makers+): 5.1 SGP supports establishment of "CSO-Government Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms", leveraging existing and potential partnerships, in at least 50 countries	*for at least one practice*	*the policy and planning development to promote a demonstrated practice/technology*	*Baseline: 0* *Target: At least 1 CSO-Government Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms initiated*	SGP Global Database Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) Country Programme Strategy Review
SGP OP6 Component 6: *Promoting Social Inclusion (Grant-makers+):* 6.1 Gender mainstreaming considerations applied by all SGP country programmes; Gender training utilized by SGP staff, grantees, NSC members, partners 6.2 IP Fellowship programme awards at least 12 fellowships to build capacity of IPs; implementation of projects by IPs is supported in relevant countries 6.3 Involvement of youth and disabled is further supported in SGP projects and guidelines and best practices are widely shared with countries	*Gender and youth mainstreaming considerations applied by all SGP projects*	*At least 5 projects have gender mainstreaming and youth engagement*	*Indicator: # of women and youth benefitted from GEF SGP initiatives* *Baseline: 3 (women) and 1 (young) person in 2015* *Target: At least plus 5 women and 5 young people benefitted from SGP initiatives*	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams SGP Global Database Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) Country Programme Strategy Review
SGP OP6 Component 7: *Global Reach for Citizen Practice-Based Knowledge program (Grant-*	*SGP Uzbekistan and global digital library and SSC Innovation Exchange Platform are connected for mutually beneficial exchange*	*Sharing of SGP innovative initiatives with global community through*	*Indicator: # of knowledge products shared with global community*	SGP Global Database Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

1 OP6 project components	2 CPS targets	3 Activities	4 Indicators	5 Means of verification
makers+): 7.1 Digital library of community innovations is established and provides access to information to communities in at least 50 countries 7.2 South-South Community Innovation Exchange Platform promotes south-south exchanges on global environmental issues in at least 20 countries	*of information*	*global South-South exchange digital library*	*Baseline: 2 (pistachio and laser leveling)* *Target: At least plus 3 knowledge products of country innovations are shared and disseminated at the global level** ** Examples may be drawn from OP6 period, as well as earlier SGP Operational Phases*	Country Programme Strategy Review

5. Monitoring & Evaluation plan

5.1 The Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) plan will be based on the indicators and targets set in Table 3 of the CPS and embrace 2 levels – individual projects implementation and country programme implementation.

5.2 Individual SGP projects' M&E starts when a project makes its result-orientation plan with clear and SMART indicators. The community members who initiate a project are setting out the targets or the project together with the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC) and National Coordinator (NC). The participation of NC is justified to ensure that a project's results complement the global environmental objectives set by the GEF. This mutually developed project framework becomes a basis for M&E of the project and the project is assessed against a set indicators and targets. The targets and indicators of each project are formulated in line with the CPS targets and indicators. The framework of each project becomes a reference source during the project implementation for M&E made by NC or NSC.

5.3 NC conducts project monitoring visits at least once a year. The frequency of the monitoring visits by the NC depends on the complexity of a project and is determined by the NC according to the project results milestones. The NC also conducts a monitoring visit for a randomly selected projects at the end of a project or after its completion to verify that the project's objectives have been achieved.

5.4 Once a year, a mandatory NSC members monitoring visit is organized across selected projects to inform the NSC members with projects' progress and results.

5.5 Indicators at the country level are tracked and reported on through the Annual Country Reports (ACR). The Annual reports are transferred to global Central Programme Management Team (CPMT) in NY for further aggregation. The progress towards the CPS targets is assessed annually by collecting results of the individual projects, and appropriate adaptive management measures may be identified as necessary.

5.6 The detailed M&E plan for individual country Programme level is provided in the Table 5 below.

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 identification of community projects	NC, NSC, country stakeholders, grantee	Covered under preparatory grant	At start of operational phase

Annual Country Programme Strategy Review	Learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, CPMT	Covered under country programme operating costs	Reviews will be conducted on annual basis[22] to ensure CPS is on track in achieving its outcomes and targets, and to take decisions on any revisions or adaptive management needs
NSC Meetings for ongoing review of project results and analysis	Assess effectiveness of projects, portfolios, approaches; learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, UNDP	Covered under country programme operating costs	Minimum twice per year, one dedicated to M&E and adaptive management at end of grant year
Annual Country Report (ACR) [23]	Enable efficient reporting to NSC	NC presenting to NSC	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once per year in June
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) [24] Survey (based on ACR)	Enable efficient reporting to CPMT and GEF; presentation of results to donor	NC submission to CPMT	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once per year in July
Project sites visits	Assess effectiveness of projects, portfolios, approaches; learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, UNDP	Covered under country programme operating costs	Regular NC visits to on-going projects, at least once a year project site visit of the NSC to selected projects.
Strategic Country Portfolio Review	Learning; adaptive management for strategic development of Country Programme	NSC	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once per operational phase

[22] The CPS is a living document, and should be reviewed and updated as deemed necessary by the NSC on a periodic basis as part of the annual strategy review.
[23] The country programme should be reviewed in consultation with the NSC members, national Rio Convention focal points, and the associated reporting requirements. The Annual Country Report should be presented at a dedicated NSC meeting in June each year to review progress and results and take decisions on key adaptive measures and targets for the following year.
[24] The AMR Survey will essentially draw upon information presented by the country in the Annual Country Report (ACR) with few additional questions. It will enable aggregation of country inputs by CPMT for global reporting.

6. Resource mobilization plan

6.1 The amount available for OP6 period does not provide sufficient funds for full-fledged and effective grant-making process. Therefore additional resource mobilization plan must be in place.

6.2 The resource mobilization will be take place on two levels: Programme and Project levels.

6.3 The Programme level resource mobilization plan is comprised of two parts:

i. Preparing and submitting programmatic proposals from SGP to donors who are active in Uzbekistan. The possible proposals will focus on all possible strategic initiatives underlined in the global GEF and GEF SGP frameworks but for which SGP Country Programme does not have sufficient resources. It can well be proposals for a set of interventions on Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits or Conservation of biodiversity in landscapes that are beyond focus of the current CPS.

ii. Preparation and submission of a proposal to foresee participation of the GEF SGP in the call for proposals announced by the National Fund for nature protection managed by the State Committee for nature protection. The GEF SGP plans to act as an applicant to the Fund and develop an umbrella project proposal, where resources of the Fund could be utilized through the GEF SGP projects to tackle problems in various provinces of the country in priority areas, identified by the Government and aligned with GEF SGP global objectives:

- To develop alternative energy sources and energy saving practices (SGP OP6 Component 3 - Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits);
- To develop model intensive aquaculture practices for food security reasons and conservation of fish stock populations in lakes and rivers ecosystems (SGP OP6 Component 1 - Community Landscape and Seascape Conservation);
- To develop different practices and technologies in irrigation and land melioration to combat land degradation and improve soil fertility and productivitiy of ecosystems (SGP OP6 Component 1 - Community Landscape and Seascape Conservation).

The work on partnership with the Fund will be carried out on mutually beneficial basis with development of a special partnership modality.

iii. Opportunity to act as a Delivery Mechanism for existing GEF FSPs – Uzbekistan STAR resources in OP6 have been divided among four FSPs. Two FSPs are being prepared by FAO and the remaining two – by UNDP. All four projects can potentially use the SGP as a delivery mechanism. The possibility of SGP engagement in these projects will be explored on the PPG stage of those FSP Project proposals' development.

6.4 The resource mobilization will also be undertaken on a project level ensuring that sufficient co-financing in cash and in-kind is mobilized for effective project implementation. On the project level, 1:1 co-financing ratio is strictly followed to raise

project implementation. The co-financing is expected to be raised from grantees and the private sector.

6.5 In the environment of insufficient funding from within SGP, the Programme will support local communities and partners at their request and will act as the "Grantmaker+" to help communities and CSOs develop proposals to access other donors and funding facilities. While the funds may not go directly to SGP, this activity can be considered part of resource mobilization as there is increased flow of resources to SGP stakeholders through its support.

6.6 Uzbekistan remains to be a country with relatively low level of donor activity for initiatives in the non-governmental sector. This is why it is extremely difficult to find international donors and partners for implementation of GEF SGP projects and the Programme per se. The UNDP Country Office is the main and most active supporter of the Programme in the country. Some of the developed countries' embassies are also providing significant support of individual project initiatives under the Programme.

7. Risk Management Plan

7.1 As in any strategy and plan, there are potential risks that need to be taken into consideration while preparing for the Strategy implementation. The Programme has identified the following risks:

Table 5. Description of risks identified in OP6

Describe identified risk	Degree of risk (low, medium, high)	Probability of risk (low, medium, high)	Risk mitigation measure foreseen
Lack of financial resources for OP6 projects' implementation	Medium	Medium	Resource mobilization from international and other donors
Control and monitoring	Low	Low	Transparency in implementation of SGP projects
Sustainability and maintaining of ongoing initiatives	Medium	Low	Bridging gaps between beneficiaries and donors and local communities, capacity building of local communities and beneficiaries

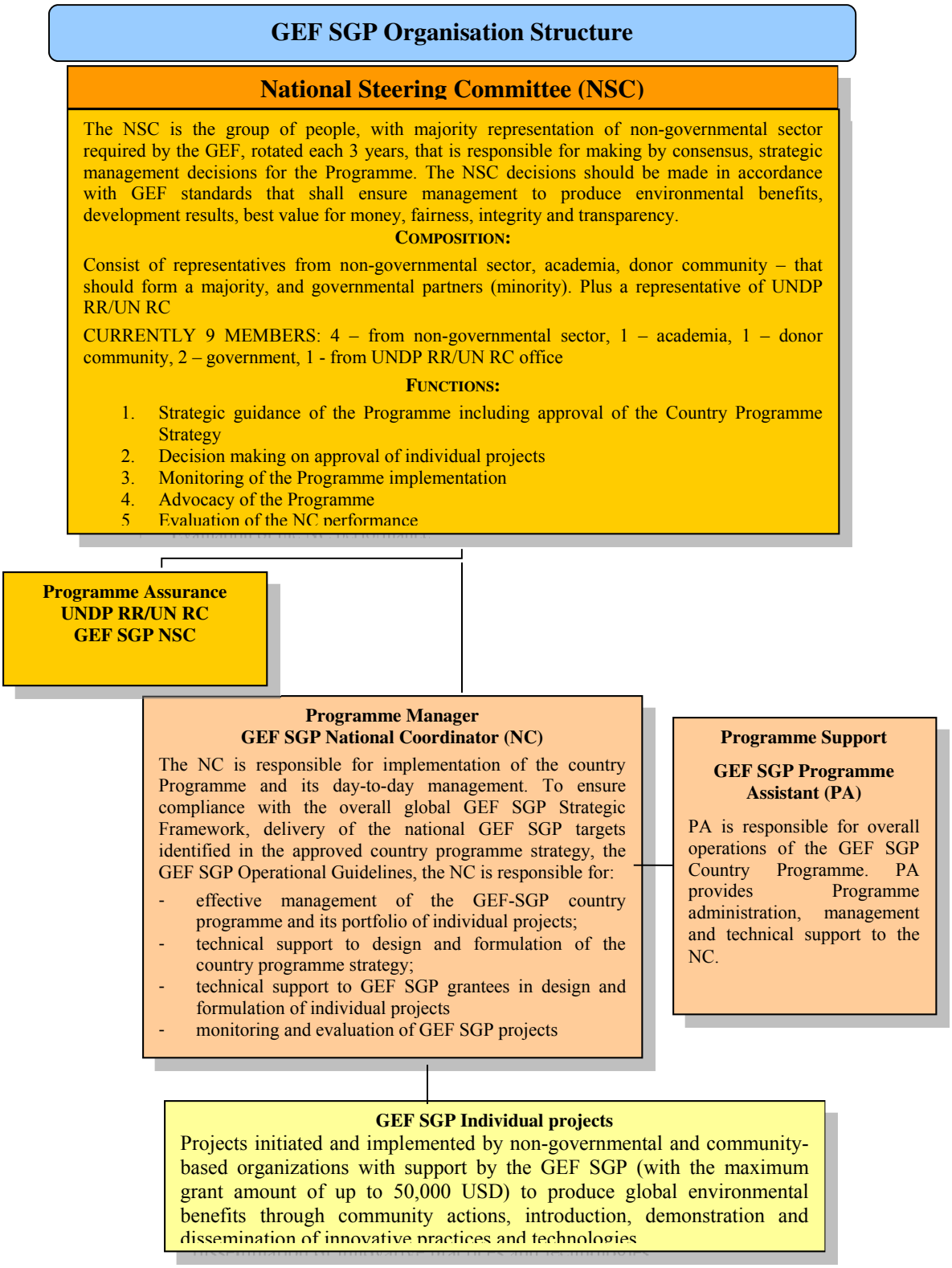
7.2 The risks and their degree will be closely monitored and put under discussion by NSC.

8. National Steering Committee Endorsement

Note: The signature of the endorsement at this point confirms that the complete and final CPS has been duly reviewed by the NSC and approved as the guide for the implementation of OP6 by the SGP Country Programme.

NSC members involved in OP6 CPS Development, Review and endorsement	Signatures
Javlon Tashpulatov, Academy of Science	
Nodirjon Yunusov, Republic of Uzbekistan State Committee for Nature Protection	
Lyudmila Shardakova, Uzhydromet	
Oleg Rizhichenko, Chamber of Commerce and Industry	
Anna Ten, NGO Society for Protection of Uzbekistan's Birds	
Natalya Shulepina, Environmental Journalist	
Nazar Ibragimov, NGO KRASS	
Farkhod Kurbanov, JICA	
Hurshid Rustamov, UN/UNDP representative	

Annex 1: GEF SGP's organizational structure



Annex 2: Process of GEF SGP projects' endorsement