

**SGP** The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme

**30**  
YEARS



# BIODIVERSITY AT THE HEART OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

30 years of promoting conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity globally

# INTRODUCTION

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is the largest and longest-standing corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), dedicated to supporting civil society and community-based initiatives. Since 1992, SGP has been implemented by the United Nations Development Programme, which is committed to significantly expanding the size and scope of its support to local actors.

For the past 30 years, SGP has been a trusted partner to civil society and community-based organizations, providing financial and technical support to innovative initiatives that address global environmental issues such as biodiversity loss, climate change mitigation and adaptation, land degradation, international waters, and chemicals and waste management, while improving community livelihoods and well-being. SGP has constantly evolved and grown into a unique global delivery mechanism to scale up local actions that can develop and deliver solutions to these multiple challenges.

SGP plays a unique role in meeting the objectives of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements and contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since its inception in 1992, SGP has implemented 27,348 projects in 136 countries, providing grants totalling US\$752.9 million, and is currently active in 127 countries.

Biodiversity provides a range of ecosystem services, food, fuel, medicine, shelter, and a cultural and spiritual connection to nature. Each year, approximately 10.5 million hectares of globally significant biodiversity areas are protected or sustainably managed by SGP-funded projects and grass-roots initiatives by civil society and community-based groups, including Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and persons with disabilities.


During Operational Phase 7 (2020-2024), SGP is prioritizing initiatives focused on community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species in priority landscapes and seascapes through an integrated approach. Initiatives are focusing on both biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. This includes the management of protected areas, integrated river-basins, and large marine ecosystems, such as territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (also termed Indigenous Peoples' and community conserved areas, or ICCAs) and private protected areas. It also includes the mainstreaming of biodiversity in key production sectors, for example agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and infrastructure. Specifically, SGP is supporting appropriate community-based measures that enhance implementation of protected area as well as socio-ecological landscape and seascape management plans. In addition, projects are also focusing on nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based adaptation, improving ecosystem services and the development of biodiversity products and value chains.



30 YEARS OF PROMOTING CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY GLOBALLY



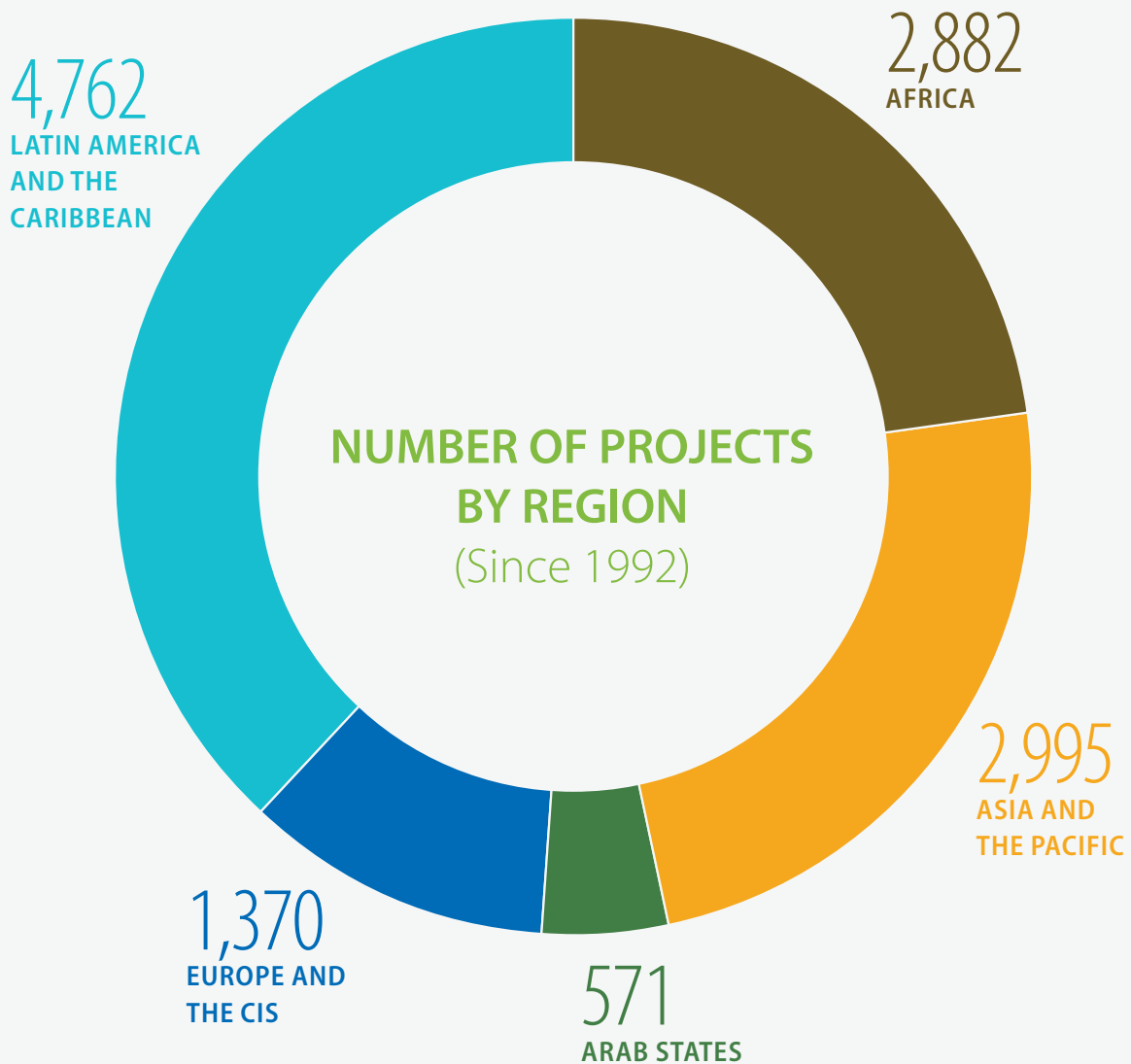
# BIODIVERSITY SNAPSHOT (SINCE 1992)

12,580   
NUMBER OF PROJECTS

US\$ 334.5   
TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT (IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$ 236   
TOTAL CASH CO-FINANCING (IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$ 189.5   
TOTAL IN-KIND CO-FINANCING (IN \$ MILLIONS)



# BIODIVERSITY PORTFOLIO PRIORITIES INCLUDE:

- Improved sustainability of protected areas
- Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors, including concentrated efforts on ICCAs
- Respect for and preservation of traditional knowledge
- Sustainable management of ecosystem services
- Maintenance and improvement of the conservation status of species
- Equitable access and benefit sharing derived from the use of biological resources
- Sustainable production and use of agro-ecology and agro-biodiversity products
- Engagement and empowerment of women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and local communities

## SPOTLIGHT ON BIODIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENTS (2016 - 2022)



4,448

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES CONSERVED



2,327

BIODIVERSITY PROJECTS COMPLETED



1,004

PROTECTED AREAS (PAs)  
POSITIVELY INFLUENCED



87 MILLION

HECTARES OF PAs SUPPORTED



870

ICCAs POSITIVELY INFLUENCED



1.9 MILLION

HECTARES OF ICCAs POSITIVELY INFLUENCED



2,758

BIODIVERSITY-BASED PRODUCTS  
SUSTAINABLY PRODUCED



64.5 MILLION

HECTARES OF TARGET LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES  
UNDER IMPROVED COMMUNITY CONSERVATION  
AND SUSTAINABLE USE



1,060

TARGET LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES  
UNDER IMPROVED COMMUNITY  
CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE

# STORIES FROM THE FIELD

## Coral restoration in Barbados

The Coral Reef Restoration Alliance project took a “ridge to reef” approach and built the capacity of 1,500 people in the community in coral restoration through a combination of physical restoration and the Adopt-a-Coral programme launched in January 2020. This included building and populating nursery structures with rescued coral fragments (mostly staghorn coral, *Acropora cervicornis*) at three sites on the west coast of Barbados. The project also engaged community members in monitoring the restoration sites. Outreach programmes were conducted and emphasized the connection between human land-based activities and coral reef health.

## Tiger conservation in Bhutan

Dangchu is a tiger rich area in Bhutan, located near a biological corridor outside the Protected Area system of Bhutan. There have been reports of retaliatory tiger killings due to high incidences of human-wildlife conflict and cattle predation by tigers. To address this, a community-based integrated tiger conservation project was implemented with technical support from the District Forest Division and the Bhutan Ecological Society. The project installed 88 low-cost greenhouses, and 148 households planted 1,500 walnut seedlings and other plants, to provide villagers with a source of food to address livestock losses due to human-wildlife conflict. The project installed 18 camera traps and community members were trained and involved in wildlife monitoring. Education and awareness sessions were also carried out to improve understanding and reduce the occurrence of retaliatory killings.

## Capacity building and watershed rehabilitation in Colombia

SGP supported the community-based organization, Junta de Accion Comunal de la Vereda San Carlos del Corregimiento de Cuatro Esquinas, to implement a capacity building project aimed at reducing deforestation and strengthening conservation of the forest reserves in San Carlos Cuatro Esquinas Túquerres. The organisation works with surrounding communities to protect the watersheds and manage their rural water systems using community governance systems. The project initially proposed to restore 2.5 hectares by planting 15,000 seedlings of native forest species to support water capture and recharge in upper watershed areas. The organization established a forest nursery in collaboration with the local community of farmers who also actively participated in nature conservation training events. The community’s commitment and collaboration led to the expansion of the restored area to 5.5 hectares, a little more than twice the original goal.

## Enhancing agro-biodiversity in Georgia

The SGP project helped protect agro-biodiversity by increasing awareness and production of an endemic species of Georgian wheat. The project promoted the grain’s use and cultivation to farmers in selected regions and at the national level. As a result, the Government of Georgia prioritized the conservation of the endemic wheat species and other local grain varieties in its Strategic Plan. In doing so the local demand for products made from these local varieties also increased. Furthermore, the endemic wheat varieties have been submitted for nomination for the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage status, recognising its unique cultural heritage and value to the community.





SGP Georgia



SGP Guyana



SGP Nigeria

### Protecting the Giant Anteater in Guyana

The SGP project focused on researching and protecting giant anteaters in three Indigenous communities in South Rupununi. The project built the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to collect, monitor, and analyse data on giant anteater activities and threats to their survival. As a result of the project, one of the communities established a giant anteater conservation zone managed by Indigenous People. The project also promoted developing and enforcing community rules for giant anteater protection, led and implemented by Indigenous Peoples.

### Community forest management in Nigeria

The SGP project in the Agbado-Ekiti Community raised awareness, empowered the community to protect their biodiversity hotspot, and helped improve their livelihoods. The project identified plants and animals and documented their traditional use in folk medicines, ethnic food, and cultural specialties. More than 20,000 seedlings of various native plant species were grown and distributed for planting. In addition, many green enterprises using native products such as ginger, nutmeg and turmeric opened to encourage ownership and project sustainability. As a result, the project helped restore close to 50 hectares of the forest to nearly natural status. A total of 7,800 Indigenous People were involved, including 3,000 youth and 16 people with disabilities.

## PARTNERSHIPS

In amplifying the impacts of biodiversity conservation, SGP relies on multi-stakeholder cooperation and partnerships at every level. Below are a few examples of the current global partnerships:



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR THE SATOYAMA INITIATIVE (COMDEKS)** – In partnership with the Satoyama Initiative, funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund, this project supports innovations and knowledge sharing of community-based solutions in biodiversity conservation, promotion of ecosystem services, agro-ecosystem management, development of alternative livelihoods, and strengthening of governance systems at the landscape level in 20 countries.



**COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS CONSERVATION (COMPACT) PROGRAMME** – Launched in 2000 as a partnership of SGP with the United Nations Foundation-UNF and UNESCO World Heritage Convention, the programme aims to replicate the success of SGP at the national scale for protected landscapes including natural UNESCO World Heritage Sites and overlapping Biosphere Reserves recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value.

Supported by:



based on a decision of the German Bundestag

**GLOBAL SUPPORT INITIATIVE TO TERRITORIES AND AREAS CONSERVED BY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES (ICCA-GSI)** – Under the partnership funded by the Government of Germany under its Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), SGP supports communities to further scale up their efforts in several ICCAs to promote increased advocacy, legal and policy reforms and exchange of knowledge in 26 countries in Phase 1, and 45 countries as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Phase 2.

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Established in 1992, SGP is currently active in 127 countries and promotes community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment through sustainable development projects of local civil society organizations with special consideration for Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth. SGP has supported over 27,000 community-based projects on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable land management, conservation of international waters, and chemicals and waste management, while generating sustainable livelihoods.



The Global Environment Facility was established on the eve of the Rio Earth Summit to tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems. Since then, it has provided more than \$21.7 billion in grants and mobilized an additional \$119 billion in co-financing for more than 5,000 projects and programs. The GEF is the largest multilateral trust fund focused on enabling developing countries to invest in nature, and supports the implementation of major international environmental conventions including on biodiversity, climate change, chemicals, and desertification. It brings together 184 member governments in addition to civil society, international organizations, and private sector partners. Through its Small Grants Programme, the GEF has provided support to more than 27,000 civil society and community initiatives in 135 countries.



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#### COVER PHOTO

SGP Barbados

#### DESIGN

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