

SGP COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY FOR UTILIZATION OF OP6 GRANT FUNDS

Country:	ARMENIA
OP6 resources (estimated US\$)	1,227,400
a. Core funds:	400,000
b. OP5 remaining balance:	427,400 (STAR LD)
c. STAR funds:	400,000 (CC)

Country Programme Strategy (CPS) document serves as a framework for the country programme operations and provides a programmatic guidance for development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) in Armenia. The strategy sets basic project eligibility criteria and specifies types of projects to be funded through the programme. This document is designed to align SGP's operational phase strategies to that of the GEF and be in accord with the national environmental priorities of Armenia responding to the requirements of global environmental conventions (UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD, POPs), as well as documents related to national development and poverty reduction. Finally, the CPS identifies the strategic results to be addressed by the country programme during the sixth GEF Operational Phase (January 2015 - June 2018). The target audience addressed in this document is the project proponents (NGOs, CBOs and community groups), central, regional and local government bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors, private sector, National Steering Committee and the SGP country programme team.

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List of Acronyms

ACR	Annual Country Report
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CPMT	Central Programme Management Team
CPS	Country Programme Strategy
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IPEN	International POPs Elimination Network
LFM	Logical Framework Matrix
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NC	National Coordinator
NBSAP	CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIP	National Implementation Plan
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP	Operational Phase
PA	Protected Areas
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
RoA	Republic of Armenia
SAPs	Strategic Action Programmes
SES	Social and Environmental Standards
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SGP	Small Grants Programme
STAR	System of Transparent Allocation of Resources
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office of Project Services
WB	World Bank
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1. Introduction to the GEF and SGP

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a global partnership among 183 countries, international institutions, NGOs, and the private sector that aims to address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives.

The GEF was established in 1991 and serves as an independent financial mechanism to assist countries in fulfilling their obligations under the following Conventions they have signed and ratified: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The GEF's mission is the protection of the global environment with a particular purpose: achievement of global environmental benefits through funding programs and projects in the following six areas of work: biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, chemicals and waste, and sustainable management of forests (REDD+).

The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) was launched in 1992 following the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The programme is funded by the GEF as a corporate programme and implemented by the UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership, and is executed by the UNOPS. SGP supports activities of NGOs and community-based organizations in developing countries towards conservation of biodiversity, climate change abatement, protection of international waters, prevention of land degradation and reducing the prevalence of harmful chemicals and waste through community-based approaches while generating sustainable livelihoods¹. It is based on the understanding that global and regional environmental problems can best be addressed if local people are involved and direct community benefits and ownership are generated. SGP provides a series of demonstration projects for further scaling up, replication and mainstreaming. At the global level, the SGP programme goal in OP6 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.”

The GEF SGP is highly decentralized and implemented in democratic, transparent and country-driven manner facilitated by the National Coordinator (NC). The GEF SGP grants are awarded based on decisions made by the voluntary National Steering Committee (NSC) guided by the Country Programme Strategy paper developed on the basis of national environment and development priorities. The NSC is composed of national government representatives, UNDP Country Office, donor partners and civil society members representing NGOs, academia and science, with a majority of them coming from non-governmental sector.

Currently, there are over 125 participating countries in the GEF SGP in five world regions: Africa, Asia/Pacific, Arab States, Europe/CIS and Latin America/Caribbean.

2. SGP country programme - summary background

Armenia became the SGP participating country in 2007. The SGP country programme was officially launched with the appointment of the National Coordinator in November 2008.

During 2009 the National Steering Committee was established, and the Country Programme Strategy for the remaining period of the GEF-4 Operational Phase (OP) was developed and approved. Becoming operational, US\$350,000 was allocated to SGP Armenia, as a new country programme, for the second and third years of the

¹ Action at the local level by civil society 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).

GEF OP4. The allocated funds were committed in ten grant projects addressing all five GEF SGP thematic areas with geographic coverage of eight regions of Armenia.

In general, during OP4 the country programme ensured a very good start-up of the SGP in Armenia by registering specific achievements in the GEF priority areas and demonstrating good management models and innovative solutions to environmental and social problems that empower local people and improve their wellbeing. Some of the SGP start-up initiatives in OP4, such as the small-scale (decentralized) wastewater treatment eco-technology demonstrated in Parakar, attracted non-GEF funding for scaling-up.

The 5th Operational Phase (2011-2014) was marked by significant expansion of the SGP country programme’s portfolio of projects, which included 45 grant projects with a total budget of US\$1,654,550. Addressing different thematic areas of the GEF, the OP5-funded projects spread out over the all ten provinces (marzes) of Armenia and the capital Yerevan. The figure below summarizes OP5 portfolio thematically, showing significant focus on Land Degradation focal area (32%), followed by Climate Change (27%), Biodiversity (18%), Capacity Building (14%), Chemicals (7%) and International Waters (2%).

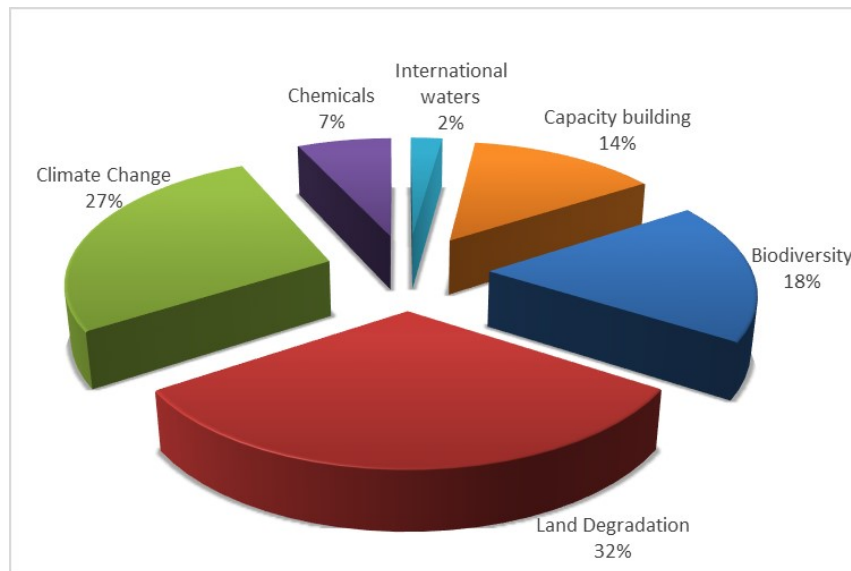


Fig. 1 Distribution of OP5 Projects by Focal Areas

By reaching out to the significant number of poor and vulnerable groups in marginalized communities, SGP Armenia proved to be a fast, effective and friendly delivery mechanism for GEF resources that are efficiently used to safeguard the environment, alleviate poverty, promote social inclusion and empowerment. Thus, 25 of 44 grantees represented provincial non-governmental or community-based organizations, and 14 were women or women-led NGOs. The project beneficiaries included children with mental disabilities in Gyumri, patients of Syunik neuropsychiatric dispensary in Kapan, people with disabilities and their families in Spitak, as well as kindergarten children, women and other socially vulnerable groups in a number of rural areas.

In OP5, the SGP country programme also diversified its funding sources by serving as a delivery mechanism for non-GEF donors. Thus, apart from traditional GEF Core (US\$900,000) and STAR (US\$544,600) resources, the SGP country programme in Armenia utilized US\$200,000 for implementation of the EU-funded initiative: *Strengthening environmental governance by building the capacity of NGOs in Armenia*. On top of serving a delivery mechanism, SGP Armenia, through a range of strategic partnerships, succeeded in mobilizing huge resources from partner organizations and businesses to replicate and scale-up its successful initiatives. Consequently, the project-level co-financing comprised US\$1,568,987 in cash and US\$783,636 in-kind, leveraged through parallel funding from diverse sources, including UNDP Global Compact, DRR and BCPR

projects, UNICEF, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, KfW/WWF, OSCE, USAID/Save the Children, DFID, World Bank, World Vision-Armenia, UMCOR-Armenia, Global Green Grants Fund, Fund for Armenian Relief, VEKST Foundation, Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst, Armenia Inter-Church Charitable Round Table Foundation, Shen France, Rhône-Alpes Region of France, as well as beneficiary communities and the Government of Armenia. Besides, SGP Armenia received annual UNDP TRAC allocation of US\$50,000 for the country programme administration and SGP projects co-financing.

Contributing to fulfilment of the GEF's mandate, the SGP Armenia projects in OP5 resulted in specific achievements generating the global environmental benefits, such as:

- Protection of 18 IUCN and 6 National Red Book species;
- Protection, rehabilitation or sustainable management of 5 PAs (including 2 newly established community-based PAs), 6,481 ha of pastures and 561 ha of farmlands; and
- Reduction of 106 tons of CO₂ annually by installation of 200 m² of solar panels and implementation of energy efficient measures in 12 communities.

The SGP country programme contributed to policy formulation and/or implementation both at national and local levels. During the OP5 time-period, SGP interventions influenced a government decision on allocation of land for the SGP project in “Sevan” National Park, supported development and adoption of Local Environmental Action Plans for Akhtala and Ijevan communities, as well as a number of decisions on ecotourism, biodiversity conservation, sustainable land and plastic waste management in 11 urban and village communities. Besides, two innovative solar energy use demonstrations and a community-managed decentralized wastewater treatment technology were replicated and scaled-up by businesses, individuals and other donors.

Within the frame of an SGP-funded project, supporting “*Making cities resilient*” global campaign, Stepanavan community received a *Role model certificate* at the 3rd World Conference on DRR in Japan (2015). Another project of SGP, supporting reforms in the SHPP sector, jointly implemented with the Ministry of Nature Protection, was evaluated in the Ombudsman's annual report as one of three key achievements of the Ministry of Nature Protection in 2014.

In OP6, SGP Armenia is entitled for US\$400,000 from the GEF Core funds for grant-making across GEF focal areas, which is subject to review annually by CPMT on the basis of the country programme performance, demonstrated commitment and delivery rates. Besides, the country programme has US\$400,000 endorsed from OP6 STAR resources for climate change mitigation thematic area and US\$427,400 remaining from OP5 STAR land degradation focal area. The latter will be utilized in line with the GEF-SGP OP6 strategic approach outlined in this Strategy paper.

Experience, knowledge and partnerships of past operational phases will serve as a foundation for effective use of limited resources of SGP in OP6. Given that partnerships are critical for SGP implementation both in technical and financial terms, the country programme will further strive to maintain and expand existing partnership relations with bilateral and multilateral donors, UN agencies, Armenian Diaspora as well as private sector and government for complementarity and cost-sharing opportunities addressing the linkages between environment and poverty in OP6.

3. SGP country programme niche

3.1. Relevant environmental conventions and treaties

Until now, the Republic of Armenia (RoA) has ratified and signed numerous international multilateral environmental agreements (Conventions and Protocols) and most of them are tied to the GEF strategic priorities. The list of relevant Rio Conventions ratified by Armenia and national planning frameworks is illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1. 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)	31.03.1993
CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (2 nd)	December 2015
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)	Not ratified
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	29.03.1993
UNFCCC National Communications (1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd)	04.11.1998, 07.09.2010, 15.05.2015
UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)	29.01.2010
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	23.06.1997
UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP) (1 st , 2 nd)	28.03.2002, 27.05.2015
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	22.10.2003
SC National Implementation Plan (NIP)	13.01.2005
GEF National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA)	31.10.2004
Strategic Action Programmes (SAPs) for shared international water-bodies	A regional SAP was developed and signed by Azerbaijan and Georgia. Armenia is considering signing the SAP.
Minamata Convention on Mercury	Not ratified (signed on 10.10.2013)
GEF-6 National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE)	09.10.2015
Republic of Armenia 2014-2025 Strategic Program of Prospective Development	27.03.2014
National Security Strategy of Armenia	26.01.2007

It's worth noting that according to the RoA legislation, international agreements have supreme legal force and become constituent of the country's legal system. The norms stipulated in the international agreements are subject to immediate execution and need to be specified in the national legislation of Armenia.

3.2. OP5 programming context

SGP Armenia will use OP6 resources to support implementation of national priorities in relation to GEF-6 strategic directions and help the country achieve the objectives of the global conventions. The programme will promote the meaningful involvement of CSOs and community-level partners in processes related to implementation of the convention guidelines in conformity with SGP OP6 project document and the CPS. Moreover, as part of *Grantmaker+* support services, the country programme will continue assisting CSOs (particularly CBOs) in project development and formulation, and facilitate their access to resources of SGP and its partners.

UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) are comprehensively considered in the CPS in order to reduce environmental and social risks of SGP interventions. Those SES include three cross-cutting principles² and seven standards³, to be used by the country programme while selecting SGP projects in OP6. To ensure individual projects are in compliance with safeguards requirements, the SGP country team will use project SES checklist during the projects screening, as detailed in Annex 1. The checklist questions are also included in the SGP's application assessment form used by the NSC during the project review and assessment process. The

² The three cross-cutting principles that apply across all UNDP programmes and projects are the following: Human rights; Gender equality and women empowerment; Environmental sustainability.

³ The standards, which are applied at the project level are the following: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management; Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation; Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions; Cultural Heritage; Displacement and Resettlement; Indigenous Peoples; Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency.

SES criteria will be duly communicated to the stakeholders during the SGP team workshops and consultation meetings.

In consideration of the abovementioned, the SGP country programme niche in OP6 is to support the community-based environmental and social initiatives within the SGP strategic interventions through creative problem-solving and community innovations that generate global environmental benefits and improve people's wellbeing. SGP Armenia will concentrate on providing viable alternatives to the existing economic and cultural practices of communities that lead to overexploitation of natural resources and contribute to climate change. While these activities are expected to have economic effect and address poverty and unemployment, priority will be given to the socially excluded and vulnerable groups⁴ to involve them in projects funded by SGP and its partners. Therefore, through support of these projects, SGP Armenia will synergize efforts of CSOs and community-level partners to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, as described in Annex 2.

To add value to its grant-making work, SGP will invest in building and sustaining capacities of grantee-NGOs and other CSO partners for their effective engagement in formulation, implementation and monitoring of existing national strategies, policies and plans in relation to Rio Conventions and post-2015 development process. Moreover, the programme will promote innovative technologies and good management models piloted by SGP for eventual mainstreaming, replication and scaling-up. It is believed that lessons learned from these innovative efforts would contribute towards improving policy and decision-making at national and local levels.

In view of the aforementioned, the Objective of SGP country programme in Armenia is to:

Enhance local capacity for addressing global environmental issues through community-based approaches and actions that complement and add value to national and global level strategies.

To achieve the Objective, SGP Armenia will primarily focus its work on *a.* globally recognized critical ecosystems, *b.* setting-up socially responsible funding mechanisms to support innovations as solutions to community challenges and *c.* capacity development of national CSOs for their effective engagement in environmental governance and implementation of the newly launched Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3.3. Complementarity and synergy with other initiatives

SGP Armenia is committed to manage its programme activities, so as to contribute to the outcomes expected from the CPD and UNDAF by 2020. In particular, the country programme will be contributing towards the UNDP Outcome 7 focusing on introduction and application of SD principles and good practices for environmental sustainability resilience building, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and green economy.

Overview of the potential for complementary and synergy of the SGP strategic directions with UNDP/UN System, donor-funded and NGO-led initiatives has identified a set of projects and programs that will be considered for partnership and co-funding opportunities during the OP6. In particular, SGP Armenia will consider its incremental funding in support of *i)* agricultural cooperatives for climate-smart innovative agribusiness practices, conservation agriculture and capacity building jointly with UNDP, FAO and UNIDO within the EU-funded *European Neighbourhood program for agriculture and rural development* project; *ii)* promotion of novel climate resilient agricultural practices and community landscape planning as part of ecosystem-based adaptation within the BCPR-funded initiative on *Mitigation of Climate Change Risks of Rural Communities through Improved Local Development Planning*; and *iii)* complementation of WFPs' *Community Assets Creation Project* activities. Aside from the above-mentioned programs and projects, SGP country programme

⁴ In Armenia, vulnerable groups are mostly located in small, remote, high mountainous, bordering and isolated rural communities. Those are particularly disadvantaged because of a certain consequence, i.e. - resettled and poorest. These also include other groups, such as disabled or those unable to work (physically, mentally or healthy-wise), rural elderly people, unemployed, resettled people due to natural disaster or due to the armed conflict in early 1990s.

has marked out a number of on-going and planned donor and NGO-led/funded interventions in environment and natural resource management, energy and climate resilience, as well as agriculture, tourism and rural development, as detailed in Annex 3.

Given successful experience of using the SGP in Armenia as delivery mechanism for the EU-funded *Strengthening Environmental Governance by Building the Capacity of Non-Governmental Organizations* in OP5, the community-based grant-making scheme of SGP may be utilized for GEF Full Size Projects in OP6. In particular, SGP Armenia may be considered as a small grants delivery option for the GEF-funded *Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Mountain Landscapes of North-eastern Armenia* project.

As part of the strategy for complementarity and synergy, the country programme will also strive to mainstream its activities in environmental and social programmes financed by the government, such as community- and marz-level projects within the framework of the 5-year socio-economic development plans, annual forestation activities implemented by “Hayantar” SNCO of the Ministry of Agriculture, etc. It is believed that SGP incremental funding will scale-up the impact of state-funded initiatives and foster CSO-government partnership.

Table 2. SGP contribution to national priorities / GEF-6 corporate results

SGP OP6 strategic initiatives	GEF-6 corporate results by focal area	SGP Country Programme niche relevant to national priorities/other agencies	Complementation between the SGP Country Programme UNDP CO strategic programming
Community landscape/seascape conservation	<i>Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement of biodiversity-related management system inside and outside SPAs, and enlargement of protected area network; - Improvement of terrestrial and riparian ecosystems and biodiversity protection, restoration of disturbed habitats; - Reduction of direct pressure on biodiversity through promotion of sustainable use by local communities; - Implementation of studies, capacity development and knowledge management activities in biodiversity protection and sustainable use of natural resources; - Promotion of sustainable agro- and eco-tourism to generate sustainable income and preserve the environment; - Preservation of genetic diversity of Armenia and reproduction of endemic and commercial species; - Efficient management, protection and use of surface and groundwater resources, restoration of the Lake Sevan ecological balance and relevant conditions to ensure preservation of natural balance 	Facilitate better management of the PA network by establishing institutional set-up, providing technical and financial support through promoting community participation and co-management modalities to increase local ownership and improve livelihoods
Innovative climate-smart agro-ecology; Community landscape/seascape conservation	<i>Sustainable land management in production systems (agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote integrated natural resource management and sustainable land use practices at ecosystem and farming systems to prevent land degradation; - Improvement of pasture (remote) and hay-field management system; - Introduction and development of innovative water saving measures and technologies in agriculture; 	- Supporting value-chain development through the establishment of cooperatives, market access promotion, and sustainable agricultural practices incorporating

SGP OP6 strategic initiatives	GEF-6 corporate results by focal area	SGP Country Programme niche relevant to national priorities/other agencies	Complementation between the SGP Country Programme UNDP CO strategic programming
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of organic agriculture and other forms of sustainable farming production that improve functioning of agro-ecosystems; - Reduction of risks and vulnerability of agriculture related to natural disasters and climate-change; - Promotion of on-farm preservation of genetic resources; - Improve marketing opportunities for farmers and competitiveness of agro products; - Restoration of degraded forests and afforestation to maintain/enhance carbon sink in forest lands; - Implementation of activities contributing to sustainable forest management in line with the international agreements; - Raising the public awareness about desertification and other environmental issues, and promotion of public participation in land policy formulation 	<p>disaster preparedness jointly with FAO, UNIDO and EU and build capacity to address diverse farming and rural development needs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considering SGP Armenia as a potential grant delivery mechanism for a newly launched GEF FSP project “<i>Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Mountain Landscapes of North-eastern Armenia</i>”
Community landscape/seascape conservation	<i>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</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement of public awareness and public participation in the water sector decision-making process; - Supporting the improvement of surface and groundwater quantity and quality and innovative approaches to rational use of water resources 	Addressing integrated water resource management in the Kura river basin through local management plans
Energy access co-benefits	<i>Support to transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting energy saving and renewable energy generation, including development of incentive mechanisms; - Supporting increased use of solar heating systems and improvement of energy efficiency in buildings; - Ensuring environmentally sound energy supply in compliance with the commitments under the global environmental conventions; - Supporting new ventures to promote development of the energy efficient and renewable energy technologies; - Providing large-scale information and awareness raising campaigns among all stakeholders on use of renewable energy sources and energy conservation, as well as related environmental and social benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting use of innovative renewables and implementation of energy efficiency measures and promoting application of SE4ALL principles; - Assist the Government in addressing climate change and energy conservation through formulation of mitigation and adaptation policies; improvement of legislation to promote development of low carbon technologies
Local to global chemicals coalitions	<i>Increase in phase-out, disposal and reduction of releases of POPs, ODS, mercury and other chemicals of global concern</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising public awareness and knowledge on issues and risks related to POPs and harmful chemicals; - Reducing/eliminating the releases of POPs and other hazardous chemicals into the environment and impact on human health; - Promoting application of modern and safe methods for solid waste management 	Reducing the risk to human health and environment through sound management of hazardous chemicals and contaminated sites

SGP OP6 strategic initiatives	GEF-6 corporate results by focal area	SGP Country Programme niche relevant to national priorities/other agencies	Complementation between the SGP Country Programme UNDP CO strategic programming
CSO-Government dialogue platforms	<i>Enhance capacity of civil society to contribute to implementation of MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and national and sub-national policy, planning and legal frameworks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deepening the possibilities for CSO-Government partnerships to promote transparent participation of NGOs and CSO networks in national policy formulation as well as implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategic programs; - Involving national NGOs in the implementation of activities under convention guidelines and reporting 	Supporting frameworks and dialogue processes to ensure meaningful involvement of civil society and citizens in national and local development and policy formulation
Social inclusion (gender, youth, indigenous peoples)	<i>GEF Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Gender Equality Action Plan and GEF Principles for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring implementation of principal recommendations of the <i>UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</i> and of the <i>Beijing Conference</i> and fulfilment of the obligations assumed by Armenia under other ratified international documents on gender equality; - Ensuring equal participation of men and women in all aspects of social life to foster the socio-economic, political, cultural development of the country; - Promote participation of youth in the political, economic and cultural life 	Targeting socially excluded and vulnerable groups including: people living below the national poverty line; women in rural areas, including women-led households; persons with disabilities; youth, particularly unemployed youth; and border communities
Contribution to global knowledge management platforms	<i>Contribute to GEF KM efforts</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting science, technologies and innovation-based knowledge development and targeted application of gained knowledge in education and different spheres of economy; - Expanding international cooperation in the field of science and technologies; - Developing and implementing competitive and efficient science and education policies, with a special focus on developing innovative technologies 	Providing financial assistance, experience, knowledge and development of analytical products for evidence-based decision-making, innovation and unconventional solutions

4. OP6 strategies

In OP6, SGP in Armenia will target certain geographic landscapes of significant importance, where greater strategic impacts can be achieved with limited resources. Unlike the previous operational phases, in GEF-6, the programme will focus its grant-making from six focal areas and 11 immediate objectives to four priority themes that are multi-focal in character, as listed below:

- (a) Community Landscape and Seascape Conservation,
- (b) Climate Smart Innovative Agro-ecology,
- (c) Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits, and
- (d) Local to Global Chemical Management Coalitions.

These strategic initiatives are designed to foster synergies among the GEF focal areas and deliver integrated solutions through utilization of about 70% of OP6 grant-making resources. Up to 30% of remaining OP6 funds (Core and STAR) may be directed to support cross-cutting projects at national level outside the selected

landscape area. These projects support capacity development; knowledge management; policy and planning; CSO-government dialogues platforms as well as other important initiatives that will enhance reputation and strategic positioning of the SGP country programme.

4.1. OP6 strategic initiatives

Community Landscape Conservation

The landscape approach is an integrated way of working at scale, creating linkages between biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, food sovereignty and resilience. Within the selected landscape area the SGP country programme will support: *i)* demonstration of sustainable livelihood practices based on conservation and sustainable use of biological resources, including agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry, and tourism; *ii)* introduction of working models of community conservation practices that create benefits for local people; and *iii)* demonstration of community-level practices for reducing nutrient flows and land-based pollution to transboundary water bodies and empowering communities through IWRM practices.

The planned activities should result in better functioning of ecosystems, regulating air quality, climate, water cycle, erosion and natural hazards, pollination etc., as well as providing non-timber products, fuelwood and other benefits to local communities. Through direct involvement in SGP activities, the local population will increase awareness and appreciation of benefits of multiple ecosystem services, and gain knowledge and practical experience of biodiversity-friendly income-generating activities. It is believed, that community participation will also increase project efficiency and sustainability of results. The planned activities will intersect with other strategic initiatives of the SGP in OP6, thus ensuring synergism and coherence between the SGP-funded initiatives in the target area.

Climate Smart Innovative Agro-ecology

Application of the climate-smart innovative agro-ecology in the target area will help guide actions to transform and reorient agricultural systems to effectively and sustainably support development and food security under a changing climate. In the context of food security and development goals in the target area, the following 3 main objectives shall be addressed: *i)* sustainably increasing food security by increasing agricultural productivity and incomes; *ii)* building resilience and adapting to climate change; and *iii)* developing opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions compared to expected trends. Therefore, the country programme under this theme will provide practical support to innovative agro-ecology practices that integrate land, water, livestock and biodiversity for improvement of ecosystem-based services and sustenance of local livelihoods. In the long run, these activities are expected to mitigate land degradation, increase productivity, strengthen farmers resilience, reduce agricultural emissions and increase carbon storage.

Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits

Under this strategic initiative, the SGP country programme will support demonstration of locally adapted innovative low-carbon technologies providing sustainable energy services and enhancing energy security. These interventions are aimed to reduce GHG emissions and deforestation, improve carbon sequestration and climate resilience (reduced vulnerability to landslides, droughts etc.), as well as generate health benefits. It is envisioned that through the SGP seed funding successful projects will be replicated and scaled up, and be commercialized by the private sector. Facilitating the shift towards access to low carbon energy will help alleviate poverty in rural areas, where high energy prices directly affect the vulnerable groups. In addition, the country programme will invest in local capacity building to develop and implement innovative low-GHG technologies and energy efficient appliances. Knowledge sharing to highlight best practices and lessons from SGP demonstrations will be also supported.

Local to global chemical management coalitions

In this priority area, SGP will focused its activities on *i)* pesticide management in agriculture and organic farming; *ii)* reduction of chemicals usage and contamination; *iii)* avoidance of open burning of solid waste; and *iv)* capacity development, awareness raising and knowledge sharing. In particular, the SGP country programme will support practical solutions of safe disposal and management of harmful chemicals and waste through joint

efforts with national and international actors. The programme will invest in the development of local capacities for environmentally sound management of harmful chemicals through demonstration of models at the community level. Given the common nature of chemicals and waste management issues for many countries, SGP will foster knowledge exchange and collaboration among local and global partnerships and initiatives (e.g. IPEN, IPEP etc.) and promote involvement of national stakeholders through awareness raising, educational campaigns and global knowledge networks.

4.2. Landscape-based OP6 grant-making strategies

The process of the focus area selection was initiated with consultation and scoping exercise to communicate and build capacities about the SGP and its strategic initiatives in OP6, identify the priority directions in line with the national development agenda and discuss the potential for synergy with UNDP and other partner agencies. The consultations aimed to achieve broader consensus on the country programme approach in OP6 to achieve greater strategic impact through clustering of projects and achievement of synergies. The major stakeholders included National Focal Points of the Rio Conventions, government officials, UNDP country team, sectoral experts, NGOs and community-based organizations, academia and other partners. The comments and suggestions presented during the meetings were mainly in line with the major national strategic documents, such as Sustainable Development Program of the RA, Perspective Development Strategic Program of RA for 2014-2025, National Forest Policy and Strategy of RA, National Forest Program of RA, National Water Program of RA, Second National Environmental Action Program of RA, Strategy on Specially Protected Nature Areas, State Program on their Conservation and Use, National Strategy and Action Program to Combat Desertification in RA, Strategy of RA on Sustainable Agricultural Development for 2010-2020, Strategy and State Actions Program of RA on Biological Diversity Conservation, Use and Reproduction for 2016-2020.

Selection of the landscape area of focus for SGP in OP6 was carried out taking into consideration the available funding for grant-making, niche, opportunities, challenges and potential for synergies, as well as based on the public consultation meetings and discussions with national authorities and local stakeholders. Five (5) public consultation and capacity building meetings were organized in Syunik, Vayots Dzor, Gegharkunik, Shirak and Lori marzes of Armenia and the capital Yerevan, where the need to focus SGP on landscape areas was presented, as well as experience of SGP successful projects and community innovations from previous OPs was shared. Over 80 participants from the representatives of NGOs, community-based organizations, self-governance authorities, regional administration, educational institutions and other local stakeholders discussed the proposed 7 target landscape options and other possible focus areas during consultations. Multi-stakeholder consultations also included communication through questionnaires, which were sent to 164 stakeholders from different communities of Armenia. The questionnaires were aimed to identify the priorities in GEF SGP OP strategic initiatives, priority target landscapes taking into consideration the need to have better cumulative impact, as well as priority environmental problems and social and economic issues linked to that. The respondents were also given opportunity to provide additional comments or remarks, to help to streamline the CPS.

The results of the overall consultation process presented to the SGP NSC, led to a new option, which is **the steppe and forest landscapes of the middle mountainous zone (at the altitudes of 1,400-2,400 m., covering approx. 60% of the territory of Armenia)**. This zone was approved by the NSC as a priority focus area for OP6 SGP grant-making in Armenia (see Figure 2). Such decision was made considering the need to have more cumulative and targeted impact in a small country with a great range of altitudinal variation (375-4,095 m) and a variety of climatic zones, resulting in diverse landscapes and ecological communities. The NSC decision was also based on the fact that this zone includes more vulnerable to climate change ecosystems, where the highest biomass production is concentrated.

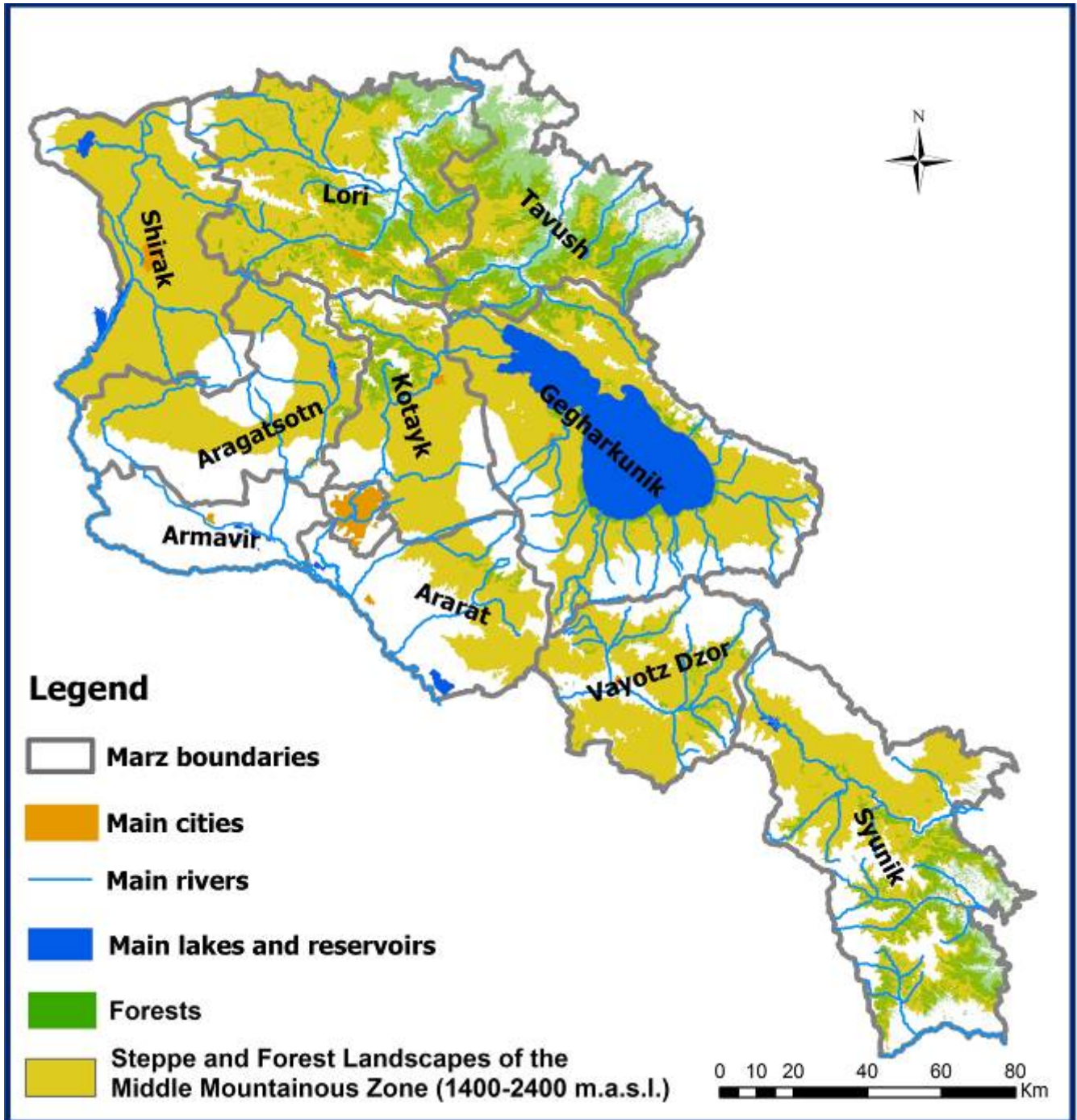


Fig. 2. Map of the selected landscape

The target area is mainly represented with steppe and forest landscapes. This zone is a typical steppe at lower elevations, and a meadow-steppe type at higher elevations. Currently, the steppes in the target area lose several ecosystem functions, such as water resource protection and regulation of evaporation, soil protection, reduction of pasture digression risk, prevention of water and wind erosion, pollution prevention and mitigation, and protection of habitats of rare species. In the target zone forests compose 64.6% of the total forest area of Armenia, which mostly have mild climate, dense hydrological network and segregated topography. Long-term forest logging in the target area has significantly disrupted agro- and forest ecosystem services that are critical for maintaining sustainable livelihoods.

Given that over 80% of population of the target area is involved in agricultural activities, the great share of income comes from crop production, livestock breeding, as well as paid agricultural works. Due to underdeveloped infrastructure, pastures and grasslands are not sustainably used. Lands close to settlements are overused and degraded, while remote pastures remain underutilized and often become abandoned. Besides, loss of sub-alpine and alpine pastures is anticipated as a result of climate change.

The target area includes territories of all 6 river basin districts of the country, 5 of which are transboundary, except the Lake Sevan basin. Changes in rivers flow regime and reduction in water availability are expected due to existing and projected massive hydraulic infrastructure by Turkey in the Araks basin. In the target area, environmental problems associated with hydropower generation are obvious, as construction and operation of small HPPs often take place with evident violation of environmental norms. The latter negatively impacts water ecosystems, causing forest and biodiversity degradation, reduction of livelihood and income of local population, as well as increased risks of natural disasters.

In rural communities of the target area, improper use and management of household and agro-chemicals create enormous problems leading to surface and ground water contamination, loss of biodiversity, land degradation, residue accumulation in the food chain and, ultimately, to serious health problems. Currently, there are practically no sanitary landfills that meet international standards, and the existing landfills are rather burial sites or dumps, where open-air low temperature burning may take place with known implications. In addition, there are no disposal facilities for industrial and hazardous wastes.

The rationale for selection of the target landscape for the SGP in Armenia is detailed in the participatory Baseline Assessment Report (Annex 4).

4.3. Cross-cutting OP6 grant-making strategies

The OP6 CPS consultation and scoping exercise included identification of criteria for funding cross-cutting projects at national level outside the selected landscape zone. Thus, during the consultation meetings with the national- and local-level stakeholders prioritisation of cross-cutting initiatives and a typology of projects were discussed to ensure that a minor portion of the 30% of OP6 funds is utilized strategically. Based on the comments received, the following programming directions were identified for the cross-cutting grant-making support in OP6:

- Promoting innovative technological solutions and management approaches in line with the concepts of green economy;
- Supporting CSO-government dialogue platforms that promote civil society engagement with government in the context of multilateral environmental agreements;
- Building capacities of NGOs for better participation in environmental policy analysis and formulation, as well as development of strategic and legislative documents relevant to environmental governance and sustainable development;
- Provision of new opportunities for partnerships, knowledge generation/dissemination for replication and translation of the SGP lessons into policy;
- Supporting ecological education and awareness raising on global environmental issues and relevant Rio Conventions.

The following criteria will be applied while selecting SGP 6th phase projects under the mentioned directions:

- Being consistent with SGP OP6 strategic initiatives and national environmental and development strategic and policy approaches;
- Promoting increase of population well-being in local communities;
- Being consistent with the concept of ecosystem approach;
- Ensuring social inclusion, particularly women and youth.

4.4. Grantmaker+ strategies

Apart from regular grant-making, non-grant support services will be also provided by the SGP during the 6th Operational Phase, such as institutional building, knowledge networking, and policy advocacy. The new “Grantmaker+” support mechanism will be introduced based on the SGP experience, knowledge and assets accumulated over the years and create value beyond grant-making. SGP Armenia, therefore, will assume the role of a “Grantmaker+” to organize the additional support services and added value through the following approaches:

- i) assisting communities, local NGOs and other stakeholders as “Barefoot Consultants” to develop relevant proposals for accessing non-GEF sources of funding;
- ii) setting up a “Grassroots Reach” communication channel to be used by the government, GEF, other donors, and responsible businesses; and
- iii) supporting the establishment of a “CSO-Government Policy and Planning Dialogue Platform”.

The OP6 Grantmaker+ strategies and related activities may either be outside of the selected landscape zone, or promote partnership building, networking and policy development within the target areas.

4.4.1. Capacity building of stakeholders

In parallel to the capacity development component included in each grant project, the SGP country team will further implement a series of targeted skills building activities to address the lack of proficiency among the programme proponents. In particular, through stakeholder meetings, knowledge sharing events, proposal development workshops and individual consultations, the SGP team, jointly with the NSC members and invited experts, will assist CSOs (particularly local NGOs and CBOs) in project ideation, design and development. It is believed, that immediate engagement of stakeholders in SGP programming through capacity building interactions, will improve their understanding on SGP OP6 strategic directions called to effectively tackle environmental and linked socio-economic issues addressed by GEF. Moreover, it will create a strong local ownership for the stakeholders, thus strengthening the project results and sustainability beyond the SGP grant funding.

4.4.2. CSO-Government dialogue platform

The SGP country programme will support establishment of CSO-government dialogue platforms aimed at promotion of the role of CSOs, uptake of good practices, influence policies and enhance communications. Above all, SGP Armenia will help CSOs enhance their capacities to engage in national policy analysis and dialogue processes related to environment and sustainable development policies in an informed and skilled manner. Using the trust built with both CSOs and Government, SGP will act as a “bridge” and facilitate collaborative discussions on identified issues, where the interests of citizens and communities will be duly represented. It is believed that creation of functional dialogue platforms at the national and sub-national levels will bring CSO needs and ideas to the Government, allow sharing knowledge, best practices and lessons learned from CSO projects that government can scale-up and integrate into national policy and planning.

During OP6, SGP Armenia will build on experience and lessons learned from GEF-5 projects, especially the CSO-Government collaborative models supported through the EU-NGO project funding, to further inform and influence policy at the local, regional and national levels.

4.4.3. Policy influence

SGP's long-term and active presence makes the programme in a favourable position to influence national policy formulation processes. SGP Armenia will continue using experiences and lessons learned from its projects to influence changes in municipal and provincial regulations, national law and contribute local level insights to national consultative dialogues related to international environmental processes. Policy advocacy and change means may include direct advocacy campaigns, knowledge production and policy influence by SGP-

empowered CSO networks. Furthermore, SGP will strive to make best use of its strong partnership relations with key governmental and non-governmental players and policy makers, as well as influential donors to ensure a strong support in mainstreaming SGP's best practices and approaches into the national policies.

4.4.4. Promoting social inclusion

Although a law on equal rights and opportunities was adopted in 2013, the concept of 'gender equality' is widely misunderstood in Armenia. Women are particularly affected by poor economic development due to several factors. The main most important source of non-farm income is remittances, coming from the seasonal labor migration of male workers to other CIS countries. In one third of households in Armenia as a result of male migration, women have to led households: a rising trend especially in rural parts of the country. As a rule, households led by women are likely to be the poorest.

The GEF Small Grants Programme has a long history of investing in local actions that foster social inclusion, while achieving global environmental and development objectives. In OP5, women, youth and other vulnerable groups, remained the largest category of SGP beneficiaries in Armenia. Given that women empowerment and youth engagement have been two important initiatives of SGP, NSC has designated a focal point for gender and youth, respectively to track grant-making towards women and youth focused projects.

SGP Armenia is committed to further address gender mainstreaming during the GEF-6 by aligning with the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, inclusion of specific gender targets in the OP6 CPS document and using gender-sensitive indicators, expansion of partnerships with women organizations and provision of trainings to SGP national staff, NSC members and grantees. Besides, the country programme will collect, record and report sex-disaggregated data by including gender disaggregated data in the project proposal template as well as progress and final reports, which will be reposted in the SGP database.

In OP6, the country programme will further promote and strengthen involvement of children and youth in design and implementation of the SGP-funded initiatives, as well as their leading role in addressing global environmental benefits. Acknowledging the integral role of youth participation in any debate on the future development of Armenia, SGP Armenia will work closely with youth and youth-support organizations to ensure that youth are informed, engaged and empowered to contribute to sustainable human development and resilience of their communities.

Another focus group for OP6 inclusive strategy of SGP Armenia will be vulnerable and marginalized people mainly settled in small, remote, high mountainous, and isolated and bordering communities. Those are particularly disadvantaged because of a certain consequence, including disabled or unable to work (physically, mentally or health-wise), rural elderly people, unemployed, resettled people due to natural disasters or due to the armed conflict in early 1990s. Besides, as part of efforts on promotion of social inclusion, women-led households will be considered among the high priority focus groups.

4.4.5. Knowledge management

Knowledge management strategy implies the collection and dissemination of information concerning the experience gained from each individual project and the entire project portfolio across the GEF thematic areas. The objective of the knowledge management efforts is to facilitate the flow of knowledge and experience, leverage lessons learned from both successful and unsuccessful projects, and to replicate and scale-up good practices and community innovations. At the country level, best SGP practices will be used as an influence mechanism for development and formulation of national policy for implementation of environmental conventions and development agendas. At the global level, examples of tested technologies, comparative advantage and experience of the country programme from OP6, as well as previous phases, will be shared and disseminated through SGP Digital Library of Community Innovations and South-South Community Innovation Exchange Platform.

Knowledge management will be one of the key activities of the SGP Armenia. Knowledge and experience gained through SGP projects will be collected and consolidated in handbooks, factsheets, case studies, films and video materials. This information will then be widely disseminated among practitioners to determine the best practices and strategies and to compare and share experience. Experience will also be shared at seminars, meetings, public presentations, knowledge fairs and through different electronic networks and media. Training programmes, workshops and visits to demonstration sites conducted within the SGP projects are of special importance in the knowledge management aspect.

SGP Armenia will encourage continuous knowledge sharing among the present and past grantees to share best practices and lessons learned; document best practices distributed; create a "directory of expertise" among SGP grantees to call upon each other for advice; develop websites and e-groups for regional groupings.

SGP Armenia will ask applicants to include a component for demonstration and knowledge dissemination in proposed projects. Regular short "press releases" will be prepared and disseminated in electronic and/or printed form by the grantees for updating the public on the past (successes, awards, recognitions, etc.), present and future activities. The grantees will be required to ensure continuous and open exchange of knowledge and lessons learned with other applicants. The accessibility of information will be a requirement to all SGP participants.

4.4.6. Communications Strategy

SGP communication strategy focuses on communication and participation with a view to strengthening collaboration and creating partnerships. It is closely linked to SGP knowledge management system and aims to ensure engagement of key stakeholders and CSOs in the country programme activities, build relationships and foster partnerships; as well as to articulate the contribution of the SGP to the national priorities, GEF mandate, and UNDP country programme document and communications strategy.

The target groups (or "audiences") of the SGP country programme Communication Strategy include: *i*) CSOs and communities within and outside of the selected landscape zone; *ii*) government counterparts; *iii*) private sector; *iv*) UN Agencies; *v*) donor community; *vi*) Armenian diaspora organizations; *vii*) mass media; *viii*) direct beneficiaries and public at large.

To facilitate the uptake of good practices and enhance communications, the above-listed target audiences will be provided with tailor-made, easy to read, up-to-date and eye-catching information on best practices, community innovations and lessons learned that may contribute towards improving policy and decision-making at national and local levels.

5. Expected results framework

Table 3 below shows the OP6 global project components and global targets (in number of countries) as described in the GEF CEO Endorsement document. Using the logical framework approach, it presents a set of country level results that address the OP6 focus area situation analysis detailed in the Baseline Assessment Report (Annex 4). In particular, the logical framework matrix shows the overall Objective of SGP in Armenia; details expected results at grant project (Output) and country programme (Outcome) levels; specifies approximate number and typology of projects; as well as features activities planned under respective target Outcome. In fact, these are the key elements used for planning, approving, evaluating and monitoring the SGP projects.

Table 3. Consistency with SGP OP6 global programme components (Results Framework)

1 CPS Outcomes	2 Typology of projects (Approx # of projects)	3 Project-level activities necessary to achieve the results/Outputs	4 CPS Outcome/Impact Indicators	5 Means of verification
OP6 CPS OBJECTIVE: Enhance local capacity for addressing global environmental issues through community-based approaches and actions that complement and add value to national and global level strategies				
OUTLINE OF THE TARGET LANDSCAPE AREA: Steep and Forest Landscapes of the Middle Mountainous Zone (1400-2400 m.a.s.l.) <i>(Approximately 70% of OP6 grant-making resources)</i>				
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				
CPS Outcome 1: Improved conservation, sustainable use and management of important terrestrial and riparian ecosystems through community- based actions	1.1 Incorporating nature-friendly practices into community livelihoods for sustainable use of biological resources and management of ecosystems (Approx # of projects: 1-3)	1.1.1 Supporting domestic activities that depend on bio-resources, including agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry, and eco-tourism to sustain local livelihoods; 1.1.2 Raising awareness on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and increasing knowledge on bio-resources management for sustenance of ecosystems and livelihoods	1.1.1 At least 500 ha of landscape are positively influenced through demonstration of domestic livelihood practices on conservation and sustainable use of biological resources in target communities; 1.1.2 At least 150 community members have increased understanding on benefits of ecosystem services and knowledge on biodiversity-friendly livelihood practices including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and ecotourism	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Baseline assessment comparison variables (use of conceptual models and partner data as appropriate) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) CPS Review (NSC inputs)
	1.2 Promoting effective community-oriented forms of conservation in support of critical protected areas, biodiversity hotspots and ecological corridors (Approx # of projects: 1-3)	1.2.1 Introducing working models of community conservation practices and community co-management of state PAs to maximize biodiversity conservation and associated benefits for local people; 1.2.2 Raising awareness on conservation of sensitive areas and habitat, and increasing understanding about the importance and value of biodiversity as well as economic activities contributing to its protection at community level	1.2.1 At least 5000 ha of state PA and/or community conservation territory benefited from financially viable models of wildlife management and conservation; 1.2.2 At least 100 community-level stakeholders have increased awareness on value of biodiversity critical ecosystems, as well as understanding on biodiversity-friendly livelihood practices in and around conservation areas	

1 CPS Outcomes	2 Typology of projects (Approx # of projects)	3 Project-level activities necessary to achieve the results/Outputs	4 CPS Outcome/Impact Indicators	5 Means of verification
	1.3 Promoting community-based approaches for sustenance of transboundary riparian ecosystems (Approx # of projects: 1-2)	1.3.1 Promoting integrated water resources management at river basin level and demonstrating community-level practices for reducing nutrient flows and land-based pollution to transboundary water bodies; 1.3.2 Supporting knowledge sharing and capacity development of stakeholders in integrated transboundary watershed management	1.3.1 At least 3 tons of pollutants to transboundary river systems are avoided by demonstration of innovative community-based actions and approaches; 1.3.2 At least in 5 communities authorities and stakeholders (CBOs, NGOs) increased their knowledge about transboundary water issues and capacities to develop and implement local plans for sustaining and enhancing watershed functions	
SGP OP6 COMPONENT 2: CLIMATE SMART INNOVATIVE AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES				
2.1 Agro-ecology practices incorporating measures to reduce CO2 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				
CPS Outcome 2: Climate smart agro-ecological practices are introduced to mitigate land degradation, increase sustainable productivity, strengthen farmers' resilience, reduce agricultural emissions and increase carbon sequestration	2.1 Developing and promoting agro-ecological innovations to reduce agricultural emissions, increase carbon storage on farmland and enhance resilience of people, farms and ecosystems to climate change (Approx # of projects: 7-9)	2.1.1 Promoting innovative climate smart agro-ecological practices, aiming at restoration and conservation of land, agrobiodiversity and associated agro-ecosystem services from pastures, haylands and other productive landscapes; 2.1.2 Enhancing local capacity for climate-smart agro-ecological innovations that integrate land, water, livestock, biodiversity, and environmental management to improve ecosystem health and sustain local livelihoods; 2.1.3 Promoting knowledge sharing on agro-ecological innovations that reduce agricultural emissions and enhance carbon stocks in biomass and soil	2.1.1 At least 3 proven techniques and practical approaches in crop and livestock production are demonstrated (e.g.-mulching, intercropping, conservation agriculture, organic farming, crop rotation, resilient food crops, integrated crop-livestock management, agroforestry, improved grazing and water management); 2.1.2 At least in 10 communities authorities and farmers have adequate capacities to implement integrated natural resource management practices for enhancement of multiple agro-ecosystem services; 2.1.3 At least 2 knowledge products on various practical mechanisms for increasing carbon sinks and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in agricultural systems are generated and shared	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Socio-ecological resilience indicators for production landscapes (SEPLs) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) CPS Review (NSC inputs)

1 CPS Outcomes	2 Typology of projects (Approx # of projects)	3 Project-level activities necessary to achieve the results/Outputs	4 CPS Outcome/Impact Indicators	5 Means of verification
SGP OP6 COMPONENT 3: 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				
CPS Outcome 3: Locally adapted low-carbon technologies are demonstrated, diffused and commercialized	3.1 Enhancing capacity of local communities to apply low-carbon technologies (Approx # of projects: 8-10)	3.1.1 Supporting demonstration, replication, scale-up and knowledge sharing of innovative low-GHG technologies that proved to be feasible and cost-effective; 3.1.2 Enhancing capacities of CSOs and community-level stakeholders in developing and implementing innovative and locally applicable low-carbon technologies; 3.1.3 Raising public awareness on climate change mitigation measures and related environmental and social benefits	3.1.1 At least 1 innovative locally adapted application on low-carbon technology (micro-solar, micro-hydro, biogas and methane energy generation, and fuel-efficient stoves) developed, tested and documented; 3.1.2 At least 30 NGOs/CBOs, local authorities and/or community-level stakeholders demonstrated locally feasible low-GHG technologies; 3.1.3 Local population in at least 10 project communities has increased awareness on low-carbon energy co-benefits (resilience, ecosystem effects, income and health)	AMR, country reports AMR, global database, country reports Special country studies (applies to lead countries) CPS Review (NSC inputs)
SGP OP6 COMPONENT 4: LOCAL TO GLOBAL CHEMICAL MANAGEMENT COALITIONS				
4.1 Innovative community-based tools and approaches demonstrated, deployed and transferred, with support from newly organized or existing coalitions in at least 20 countries for managing harmful chemicals and waste in a sound manner				
CPS Outcome 4: Innovative and practical solutions to chemicals and waste management are introduced by fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration among local and global partnerships	4.1 Promoting innovative community-based tools and approaches for safe management of harmful chemicals and waste (Approx # of projects: 1-3)	4.1.1 Supporting practical models of safe disposal and management of harmful chemicals (including POPs) and waste through joint efforts with leading national and international actors; 4.1.2 Advocating for safe management of chemicals and promoting involvement of national stakeholders through awareness raising and educational campaigns and global knowledge networks	4.1.1 At least 1 innovative and practical solution to safe management of chemicals and waste (pesticide, plastics, e-waste, medical waste, heavy metals) is piloted / tested, documented and disseminated with support from local and global chemicals coalitions and/or networks; 4.1.2 At least 200 community members and local-level stakeholders have increased awareness and knowledge on chemical safety and waste management related issues	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Strategic partnership with IPEN country partners Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) CPS Review

1 CPS Outcomes	2 Typology of projects (Approx # of projects)	3 Project-level activities necessary to achieve the results/Outputs	4 CPS Outcome/Impact Indicators	5 Means of verification
SGP OP6 COMPONENT 5: CSO-GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PLANNING DIALOGUE PLATFORMS (<i>Grantmakers+</i>)				
5.1 SGP supports establishment of “CSO-Government Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms”, leveraging existing and potential partnerships, in at least 50 countries				
CPS Outcome 5: Enhanced capacities of CSOs and community-level stakeholders for meaningful engagement in national policy analysis and dialogue processes related to environment and sustainable development	5.1 Promoting CSO-Government collaborative models and approaches to inform and influence policy at the local, regional and national levels (Approx # of projects: 2-4)	5.1.1 Supporting establishment of CSO-Government dialogue platforms to promote the role of CSOs, uptake good practices, influence policies and enhance communications; 5.1.2 Using experiences and lessons learned from the CSO-led projects to influence changes in regulations and national laws, and incorporate local level insights to national consultative dialogues related to international environmental and sustainable development processes; 5.1.3 Implementing targeted capacity building to address lack of corresponding professional knowledge and skills among the SGP proponents and other stakeholders	5.1.1 At least 2 CSO-government policy planning dialogue related to environment and sustainable development is supported; 5.1.2 At least 1 SGP experience or best practice is provided to the government for influencing central and/or local policy development and formulation; 5.1.3 At least 1 proposal development workshop or other capacity building activity is conducted by the SGP team and/or NSC members in each administrative region	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams SGP Global Database Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) CPS Review
SGP OP6 COMPONENT 6: PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION (<i>Grantmakers+</i>)				
6.1 Gender mainstreaming considerations applied by all SGP country programmes; Gender training utilized by SGP staff, grantees, NSC members, partners				
6.2 Involvement of youth and disabled is further supported in SGP projects and guidelines and best practices are widely shared with countries				
CPS Outcome 6: Gender mainstreaming considerations applied by the SGP country programme in Armenia		6.1.1 Mainstreaming gender issues through the SGP programme and incorporating within the SGP project cycle	6.1.1 100% of SGP projects funded in OP6 addressed gender equity issues as a mandatory cross-cutting requirement; 6.1.2 A designated gender focal point on the NSC provided expertise on gender issues and facilitated review of any gender components of projects	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams SGP Global Database
CPS Outcome 7: Youth and differently abled people are involved in SGP projects		7.1.1 Promoting active involvement of youth and disabled in SGP projects	7.1.1 At least 1 project funded in OP6 engaged the youth or differently abled people; 7.1.2 A designated youth and children focal point on the NSC promoted youth participation and leadership in projects	Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) CPS Review

1 CPS Outcomes	2 Typology of projects (Approx # of projects)	3 Project-level activities necessary to achieve the results/Outputs	4 CPS Outcome/Impact Indicators	5 Means of verification
SGP OP6 COMPONENT 7: GLOBAL REACH FOR CITIZEN PRACTICE-BASED KNOWLEDGE PROGRAM (<i>Grantmakers+</i>)				
7.1 Digital library of community innovations is established and provides access to information to communities in at least 50 countries				
CPS Outcome 8: Digital library of community innovations is actively used by SGP stakeholders and partners		8.1.1 Collecting and archiving SGP best practices for sharing the knowledge generated by civil society and community-based organizations	8.1.1 At least 15 knowledge materials or documents are uploaded for online sharing	SGP Global Database Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) CPS Review

6. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)⁵ is an essential component of SGP and intends to measure progress and achievements both at project and country programme levels. It is conducted on a regular basis in the course of implementation of different stages (planning, execution and completion) to identify problems and assess whether the targets set are being achieved. M&E activities are represented through different types of reports that help the country programme and its projects to maintain accountability, achieve sustainability, allow for replicability, as well as extract and communicate lessons learned. The findings and lessons learned from M&E will be used to improve the programme and projects design and implementation, and will enable SGP grantees to carry on project activities after the grant period is over.

It is one of the programme principles that the SGP grantees deeply involve local communities and other stakeholders in a participatory self-monitoring and assessment/evaluation process at project level. It is believed that the involvement of project beneficiaries in M&E process will promote mutual understanding about the project’s approach, contribute to community “ownership”, as well as enable capacity building and apply lessons learned from project and programme experience.

At country level, the M&E process mainly involves: development and implementation of the programme M&E plan, which is based on the indicators and targets set in Table 3 of the CPS (Logical Framework); compilation and communication of lessons learned, and annual reporting to the Central Programme Management Team and NSC. Table 4 below provides the key M&E tools and templates at the country program level.

Table 4. 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 stakeholder, 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 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

⁵ **Monitoring** focuses at tracking the progress of project activities and achievement of planned outputs. It allows project participants to keep track of project activities, to determine whether project objectives are being met, and to make the necessary changes to improve the project’s performance.

Evaluation refers to a periodic activity aimed at assessing the relevance, performance, effects and impact of a project within the framework of the stated objectives. The evaluation includes an explicit appraisal on whether the project has met its stated objectives in terms of the GEF focal area and operational programmes and if not, it reveals and analyses the reasons.

Annual Country Report (ACR)	Enable efficient reporting to NSC	NC presenting to NSC	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once per year in June
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 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
Strategic Country Portfolio Review	Learning; adaptive management for strategic development of Country Programme	NSC	Covered under country programme operating costs	Once per operational phase

As seen from Table 4, the CPS is a living document, which is a subject for revision by the NSC on a periodic basis, in consultation with the national stakeholders. The country programme, therefore, will assess progress towards the CPS outcomes to identify appropriate adaptive management measures or review of the Strategy, as necessary. Annual country reports will enable aggregation of country inputs by CPMT for global reporting.

Table 3 describes the logical framework approach of the CPS both at programme and project levels, which provides the basis for M&E. It indicates expected results at the programme level (CPS targets and indicators), their consistency with SGP OP6 global programme component and means of verification. It also specifies approximate number and typology of projects and features activities planned under respective target Outcome. In effect, these are the key elements of the M&E framework to track programme implementation progress and assess the performance within the set time (OP6).

The Baseline Assessment Report (Annex 4) identifies the “starting point” from which change can be measured at different results levels - before implementing project or programme activities. By means of indicators, programme/project progress and accomplishments can then be compared with the baseline, and hence evaluated. An indicator should be logically connected with the baseline and easily measurable.

Indicators to measure the expected results at country programme level (Outcomes) are agreed with the NSC upon the approval of the CPS, while for the project level results (Outputs) indicators are determined by the NC and grantees. Thus, at project level M&E process implies planning, coordination, systematic reporting, and agreement upon these and other issues by all project participants before projects are undertaken.

Project-level M&E and reporting

The NC will undertake at least two monitoring visits per project realization, preferably at intermediate and final reporting. Upon necessity and as possible, respective members of the NSC will also participate in site visits. The site visits will give the NC/NSC the opportunity to observe the actual implementation of the project and confirm the information contained in the interim and final reports of grantees. During site visits, the NC will collect materials and information, make photos, etc., in order to document lessons learned and to demonstrate the environmental and sustainable livelihood impacts of the SGP activities. After each site visit the NC/NSC member(s) will prepare a monitoring record indicating observations, recommendations and respective measure to be taken. This report will be provided to the grantee and the NSC if requested.

Apart from the interim progress reports, the grantee will prepare a final report upon completion of the project. The final report must cover the life of the project, the objective achieved, expected and actual results, lessons learned, perspectives or replication and other interesting aspects of the project. The report

should also include the project sustainability aspects. If necessary, the NC will ask for additional information or clarification.

7. Resource mobilization and sustainability

Resource mobilization is a key part of the SGP country programme strategy and therefore, a priority task for the SGP team, the NSC and Technical Advisory Group. It is a commitment on the part of SGP to the GEF Council to ensure minimum 1:1 co-funding ratio at global level, in a way that co-funding part is evenly allocated between cash and in-kind. Co-financing is also important for increasing the number, size and impacts of SGP funded projects. Mobilized partnerships and resources are vital for strengthening income-generating and other livelihood components of the projects that would foster community “ownership” of projects and thus ensure sustainability.

In OP6, projects funded by SGP Armenia are expected to ensure 1:1 co-funding ratio (50% in cash and 50% in-kind). However, once adequate level of financial resources is mobilized at the country programme level, cash co-financing component can be reduced or not applied for projects of great significance or value in poor and vulnerable communities.

SGP Armenia will consider partnership and co-funding opportunities from both traditional and non-traditional sources. Resource mobilization activities will be carried out through the following directions:

- Assessment of interests and priorities of international donor and development agencies and identification of opportunities for partnership and co-financing;
- Attraction of private sector in SGP projects co-financing, also as a part of corporate social responsibility;
- Involvement of Armenian Diaspora in SGP projects co-financing;
- Mainstreaming SGP projects with UN agencies and GEF-funded larger projects;
- Mainstreaming SGP projects with SDGs implementation and poverty reduction programmes for expanded co-financing;
- Exploring opportunities for complementarity and cost sharing with state-funded projects and initiatives at local level.

SGP Armenia will target all possible sources to provide in-kind and cash co-financing for SGP both at programme and project levels. To this effect, the Programme aims to establish and maintain strong partnership relations with bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, UN agencies, Armenian Diaspora, as well as private sector and government.

According to the SGP principles, all country Programmes shall move to external non-GEF funding after a given period of time. SGP Armenia sustainability strategy will focus on sustaining the country programme results, both at project and programme levels, beyond the GEF funding. In particular, the country programme will focus on achievement of the following results:

- Mobilizing additional programme level co-financing and act as a delivery mechanism for GEF and other donors, including UNDP TRAC, recovering a share of the SGP non-grant costs;
- Strengthening income-generating components and thus, community “ownership” of the projects;
- Securing co-financing resources from traditional and non-traditional sources;
- Ensuring broad advertisement and replication of the successfully implemented SGP projects and initiatives;
- Ensuring that the CPS is updated to incorporate national environmental and sustainable development priorities;

- Ensuring the most-efficient contribution of the government representative in the NSC aimed at enhanced involvement of SGP Armenia in the national strategies and action plans;
- Ensuring SGP’s visibility through continuous communication, outreach and networking;
- Serving as a platform for cooperation and dialogue among NGOs/CBOs, local authorities, government agencies, academic and research institutes, private sector, media, and other stakeholders.

8. Risk Management Plan

Major risks identified for implementation of the country programme during OP6 are listed in Table 5 below. It illustrates an estimation of the degree and probability of risk, as well as relevant mitigation measures.

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
Since Armenia is ranked as a lower middle-income country, many bilateral donors have downscaled their assistance, which creates a challenge in mobilizing resources.	Low	Low	This calls for a broader, more creative approach to partnerships, including new and emerging bilateral partners, development banks, government, directly with citizens, the private sector and the diaspora.
Insufficient awareness on SGP OP6 among executive agencies (corresponding Ministries, regional and local self-governance authorities) and business entities.	Medium	Medium	Continued discussion, consultation and information dissemination on SGP OP6 principles and approaches in Yerevan and marzes.
Insufficient understanding and lack of interest among SGP project proponents (NGOs, CBOs, etc.) on environmental issues and SGP OP6 strategic directions.	Medium	Medium	Implementation of a series of consultation meetings, capacity development, sharing the case studies of successful SGP OP5 projects to promote active participation in the SGP process.
Community-level stakeholders do not acknowledge benefits of sustainable use of natural resources and thus, lack motivation to participate in project activities.	Medium	Medium	Building capacity of community-level stakeholders on rational use of natural resources and supporting their practical involvement in eco-friendly activities as a sustainable source of income.
Degradation of production landscapes caused by climate change crossed the line when the consequences could still be addressed by adaptation measures.	Low	Low	During the lifetime of a grant project, the effects of climate change on pastures, forests and other landscapes are unlikely to be serious. In the long run, this risk will be addressed by integration of climate smart agro ecological approaches into ongoing rural development programs.
Lack of corresponding professional knowledge and skills among the stakeholder NGOs and CBOs on formulation of grant applications, and development of project proposals.	Low	Medium	Intensify support services within <i>Grantmaker+</i> initiative, the country programme will continue assisting CSOs (particularly CBOs) in project development and formulation, and facilitate their access to resources of SGP and its partners.

Inadequate technical and human resources at local level to implement projects within SGP OP6.	Low	Medium	Based on the SGP experience, knowledge and assets accumulated over the years ensure targeted capacity building and training on efficient implementation of projects, including proper use of technology, finances and human resources.
Low confidence on ensuring the sustainability of the results of the projects implemented within SGP OP6.	Medium	Medium	To achieve sustainability of the projects implemented, and allow for replicability, lessons learned will be extracted and correspondingly communicated as part of M&E activities, among other things.
National policy does not quickly adopt/uptake the best practices and lessons learned from the SGP projects.	Medium	High	The project will use all possible mechanisms to ensure lessons learned are transferred to national level. Where necessary, the project will complement existing mechanisms by developing its own bottom-up transfer mechanisms - e.g. local working groups, seminars, or lobbying on specific issues.

The mentioned risks relating to social and environmental, climate, financial, legal and policy aspects will be tracked during the programme implementation and revised through CPS review. Then, the degree of risk, or probability of risk may be adjusted. If necessary, initially identified risks may be also removed and new ones added with appropriate mitigation measures.

9. National Steering Committee Endorsement

NSC members involved in OP6 CPS development, review and endorsement	Signatures
Armen Martirosyan	
Armen Gevorgyan	
Artashes Tadevosyan	
Alvina Avagyan	
Evelina Ghukasyan	
Gohar Grigoryan	
Grisha Hovhannisyan	
Margarit Piliposyan	
Siranush Galstyan	
Tamara Babayan	
Zara Allakhverdyan	

ANNEX 1: PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SCREENING CHECKLIST

Name of Project			
Name of Organisation			
	Yes	No	Comments
Overall Project Quality			
Clear statement of the objectives of the project in alignment with OP6 strategic initiatives			
Realistic planning of activities and deliverables			
Realistic definition of project budget in agreement with project objectives and activities			
Sensible assessment of risks and challenges associated with the project and design of appropriate solutions			
Potential adverse impacts to people and the environment have been avoided, managed and mitigated in line with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards”?			
Management Capacity			
Efficient use of management and organizational tools for effective implementation of the project			
Clear definition of responsibilities/tasks/activities			
Sensible design of a M&E plan including clear indicators to track progress			
Sensible design of a Knowledge & Management Plan for knowledge sharing			
Sensible design of a communication plan for dissemination and policy advocacy			
Sustainability			
Identification of possible co-funding sources			
Sustainability through rendering funds cooperative, micro-credits, others			
Recognition of project importance and relevance to the community			
Inclusiveness			
Active involvement of women in decision-making and overall activities			
Active involvement of indigenous people in decision-making and overall activities			
Active involvement of youth in decision-making and overall activities			
Gender Mainstreaming			
Men and women had an active participation in the project design and it responds to the needs of both			
The impact of the project on women and men has been analyzed (please look at division of labor, work load and access to resources and services)			
The project explained what the outcomes are for men and women and aims to benefit both men and women			
The project provides gender disaggregated data on active participants and beneficiaries			
Men and women are part of the project management structure in an balanced manner (i.e. the project management team should be composed by both men and women and if possible in equal representation to ensure they have a say in decision making)			

ANNEX 2: CONTRIBUTION OF THE SGP ARMENIA TO SDG TARGETS

SDGs	Expected Contribution
SDG 1: NO POVERTY End poverty in all its forms and everywhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diversification of income-generating opportunities; ✓ Increase of capacity for viable economic practices; ✓ Creating new employment opportunities
SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improved livelihoods by reduced cost or increased income; ✓ Promoting sustainable agriculture to ensure food safety, healthy agricultural products and good health; ✓ Enhanced resilience of people and ecosystems to the effects of climate change
SDG 4: QUALITY EDUCATION Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Contribution to the ecological component of primary school curricula with SGP-initiated educational materials; ✓ Formation of public environmental awareness
SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Promotion of equal involvement of men and women in SGP funded project activities
SDG 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supporting decentralized, demand-driven, innovative, low-cost, and community-based water resource management and water supply and sanitation projects in rural areas; ✓ Restoring water-related ecosystems and strengthening the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management
SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supporting demonstration, replication and scaling-up of locally feasible low-carbon technologies; ✓ Promoting knowledge sharing and capacity building for development and implementation of innovative low-GHG technologies
SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enhancing the capacity of local communities to adapt to climate change and improve their resilience
SDG 12: RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Promoting sustainable use of natural resources aimed at improving ecosystem health; ✓ Introducing innovative and practical solutions to chemicals and waste management
SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reduction of GHG emissions through provision of access to clean energy, sustainable transport, improving energy efficiency and land use practices; ✓ Promoting agro-ecological innovations that reduce agricultural emissions and enhance carbon stocks in biomass and soil; ✓ Empowering local communities to become more resilient to severe climate events and variability
SDG 15: LIFE ON LAND Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Incorporating biodiversity-friendly practices into community livelihoods for sustainable use of biological resources in production landscapes and management of ecosystems; ✓ Promoting effective community-oriented forms of conservation in support of critical protected areas, biodiversity hotspots and ecological corridors; ✓ Enhancing local capacity for addressing environmental degradation
SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Synergizing efforts of CSOs and community-level partners to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs nationally and globally; ✓ Promoting development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of SGP best practices to bring the knowledge generated by civil society and community-based organizations to wider audience, aiming to influence global environmental governance and goals

ANNEX 3: ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL FOR COMPLEMENTARY AND SYNERGY OF OP6 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES WITH UNDP/UN SYSTEM, DONOR AND NGO-FUNDED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

Name of the agency / organization		Project (donor)	Partnership opportunities for complementarity and synergy within the landscape area	Geographic focus (marzes)
UNDP projects and UN Agencies:				
1	UNDP, UNIDO and UN FAO	European neighborhood program for agriculture and rural development (EU)	1. Support to agricultural coops in climate-smart innovative agri-business practices (UNDP and UNIDO components); 2. Support to conservation agriculture (FAO component)	Shirak, Lori, Gegharkunik, Aragatsotn, Kotayk, Vayots Dzor, Syunik
2	UNDP	Mitigation of Climate Change Risks of Rural Communities through Improved Local Development Planning Project (BCPR)	1. Support to innovative climate resilient agricultural practices as part of ecosystem-based adaptation 2. Support to community landscape planning for improved ecosystem services and climate risk reduction	Vayots Dzor
3	UNDP	Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Mountain Landscapes of North-eastern Armenia (GEF and REDD+)	Supporting alternative livelihood opportunities in forest-adjacent communities through SGP grant delivery mechanism	Tavush and Lori
4	UN WFP	WFP's Assets creation project	Complementing SGP initiatives through WFPs' community Assets Creation Project implementation	All regions
Donor agencies, International projects and NGOs:				
1	WWF-Armenia	Promotion of Eco-corridors Programme in the Southern Caucasus (BMZ through KfW)	Support to ecologically sustainable land use practices in selected eco-corridors	Syunik, Ararat Vayots Dzor
2	Armenia Renewable Resources and Energy Efficiency Fund	Energy efficiency project (WB-GEF grant and R2E2 Revolving Fund)	SGP incremental funding to potential projects financed by R2E2 in social facilities	All regions
3	Altair asesores led consortium	Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Support Programme (EU and German Gov.)	Projects on low-carbon transport, eco-tourism, sustainable natural resource use and solid waste management	Lori, Tavush, Shirak
4	USAID	Partnerships for rural prosperity; and Advanced Rural Development initiative	Small scale community infrastructure development	Lori; Vayots Dzor Syunik
5	World Bank (loan)	Local economy and infrastructure development project	Community tourism infrastructure development	Ararat Vayots Dzor, Syunik, Kotayk, Lori
6	GITEC Consult GmbH led consortium (KfW)	Support Programme for Protected Areas-Armenia	Supporting socio-economic development of communities adjacent to protected areas in the Southern Syunik	Syunik Region

7	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	Civic Action for Security and Environment (CASE) Small Grants Program	Projects addressing local issues in the area of environment and security	All regions
8	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	SDC small grants	SDC small grants on sustainable rural development	All regions
9	UMCOR-Armenia	Agricultural development project	Promoting agro-ecotourism and <i>in-situ</i> conservation of genetic resources in area with ecosystems of global significance; Sustainable land use/management practices in arid ecosystems of global significance	Vayots Dzor
10	World Vision-Armenia	Youth Empowerment Program	Projects on youth driving innovation for the good of their communities and peers	Aragatsotn, Shirak, Lori, Syunik, Tavush and Gegharkunik
11	Fund for Armenian Relief	Breaking the Cycle of Poverty Program	Support to innovative agri-business practices	Tavush
12	TELOA and Bauges National Park (France)	Development of geological and archeological heritage tourism (Rhône Alpes Region of France)	Poverty reduction through engagement of local people in tourism related income generation activities	Tavush, Lori, Gegharkunik and Vayots Dzor

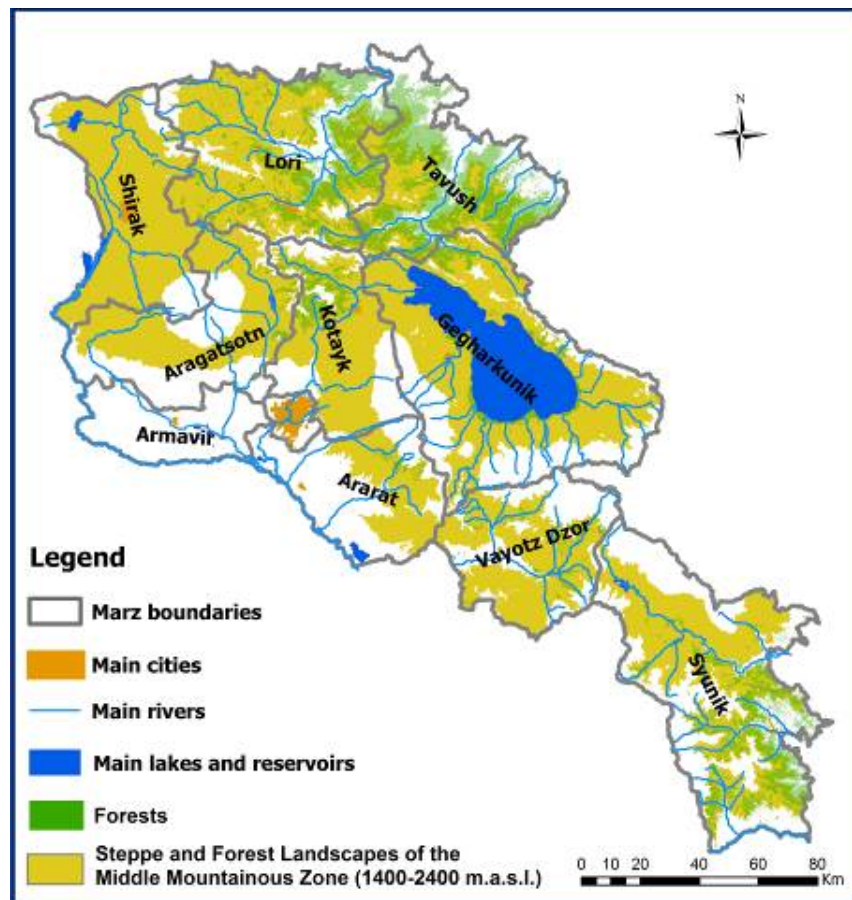
ANNEX 4: PARTICIPATORY OP6 LANDSCAPE BASELINE ASSESSMENT REPORT

**BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF THE SELECTED TARGET AREA WITHIN THE
GEF SGP OP6 COUNTRY PROGRAMME IN ARMENIA**

STEPPE AND FOREST LANDSCAPES OF THE MIDDLE MOUNTAINOUS ZONE

1. Introduction

Selection of the target area of focus for the SGP in OP6 was carried out taking into consideration the SGP’s available funding for grant-making, niche, opportunities, challenges and potential for synergies, as well as based on the public consultation meetings and discussions with national authorities and local stakeholders. This included capacity building and consultation meetings with the local stakeholders in 6 marzes, formal meetings with the National Focal Points of the “Rio” conventions (Convention on Biological Diversity; United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change; UN Convention to Combat Desertification; and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants), and meeting of the SGP National Steering Committee. In total, 7 options for target area were discussed. As a result of discussions, a broad consensus was achieved to select the steppe and forest landscapes of the middle mountainous zone (at the altitudes of 1,400-2,400 m., covering approx. 60% of the territory of Armenia) as the focus area for the GEF SGP in OP6. This zone was selected also taking into account the need to have a more cumulative and targeted impact, and considering the fact that this zone includes more vulnerable ecosystems from the point of view of climate change, where the highest biomass production is concentrated.



2. Baseline Analysis

2.1. General description of the target area

The total area of the selected target zone composes 17,702 km² or 59.5% of the entire territory of Armenia. Table below provides summary statistics on the focus area.

Settlement	total	575
of which	cities	21
	villages	554
Population number	total	895,600
of which	urban	397,800
	Rural	497,800
Large cities in the target area and their population number	Gyumri	122,000
	Abovyan	43,500
	Hrazdan	41,800
	Gavar	20,800
	Charentzavan	20,400

Industry: In the target area the industry is well-developed in Lori and Syunik marzes, whereas in Tavush, Vayots Dzor and Gegharkunik marzes (provinces), the volume of industry is minor. The main branches of industry are mining, operation of open mines and processing industry. In the target area main industrial enterprises are concentrated in Alaverdi and Akhtala cities in Lori marz, and Kapan, Kajaran and Agarak cities in Syunik marz. Although the Government of Armenia has declared mining as a priority branch of economy, it is being developed mainly without a long-term program for sustainable use of resources, proper taxation, appropriate legislation for protection of environment and integrated assessment of environmental and social impacts. As a result, mining continues to have disastrous impact, including physical disturbance of land cover, expansion of tailing dams, mining waste build-up, pollution of water resources, fragmentation and destruction of flora and fauna populations and habitats, and other.

Agriculture: About 36% of the total population of Armenia lives in sparsely populated and mountainous rural settlements, where agriculture is an important source of income. The great share of income in the rural settlements of the target area comes from crop production, livestock breeding, as well as from paid agricultural works. In these rural communities about 80% of population is involved in agricultural activities, where the share of crop production constitutes 63% and livestock breeding - 37%.

Land is considered as the main source of agricultural production, and it is evident that conservation of soil, rational and efficient use of land resources is important not only from agricultural, but also environmental perspective. Land degradation has direct impact on the rate of agricultural growth, including crop productivity, grasslands, and pastures. In the target area the negative impact of agriculture is observed through land degradation, including soil erosion, destruction of vegetation cover in pastures, extinction of numerous flora species, spreading of insects and diseases, as well as pollution of soil, water and atmosphere due to application of inappropriate farming practices, and use of industrial and household wastewater for irrigation. Each year, erosion from water, wind and improper irrigation causes considerable damage to agriculture. The yield of the eroded lands compared to non-eroded lands is 3-4 times less.

Due to underdeveloped infrastructure in the target area, remote pastures and grasslands are not commonly used. This leads to overuse and degradation of pastures close to settlements, while grazing lands, that are farther away, remain underutilized and often become abandoned. As a result, about 150,000 ha are not subject to use any more.

Forestry: From the economic perspective forest is the most important natural ecosystem in Armenia. It is primarily used as firewood and construction material, whereas the forest by-products (wild fruits, nuts, mushrooms, berries and other food products, medicinal herbs) are being collected by the local population for household use and trade. Subsidiary forest use consists of recreation, haying, cattle grazing and apiculture. In the target area forests compose 2,154 km² or 64.6% of the total forest area of Armenia. Majority of forests (1,281 km² or 59.5% of the forest area in target area) is distributed in the north-eastern part, 22.3% (482 km²) in the south-eastern part, whereas in the wide central part, including Lake Sevan basin and Shirak plateau, forests occupy about 18.2% (391 km²) of the forest area in the target zone. Forest territories mostly have mild climate, dense hydrological network and segregated topography.

Although according to the official statistics illegal logging of forests in Armenia has decreased twice, the negative ecological changes due to forest logging are a long-term process in the target area, resulting in expansion of degraded forest and non-forest lands, formation of gorges, landslides and erosion-mudflow processes, drying out of springs, dust clouds and other impacts. These effects significantly disrupt agro- and forest ecosystem services that are critical for maintaining sustainable livelihoods.

Due to various socio-economic problems and high demand of wood, logging still exceeds the natural regeneration capacity of forests. This is explained by growing reliance of rural households in the target area on fuel wood as the primary source of energy for heating and cooking. It is very likely that such dependence on fuel wood for energy consumption will continue as long as the prices for gas and electricity continue to increase. According to the study conducted by “State Forest Monitoring” SNCO, the fuel wood consumed by population is 20 times more than the officially sold fuel wood. As a result, changes in composition of forest occur, substituting the high value oak and beech with relatively low-value hornbeam. Naturally, forest attenuation also occurs causing upward shift of the lower forest zone.

Energy: Armenia has no proven reserves of oil or natural gas and currently imports nearly 80% of it from Russia and a relatively small amount of natural gas from Iran. Despite the high cost of energy carriers in the country, there is a great potential for utilization of renewable energy sources and reducing energy consumption in buildings.

Currently, hydro resources are mainly used in Armenia’s renewable energy sector, whereas potential of other sources is not adequately utilized. As of 2015, there are 63 small HPPs operating in the target area, and 6 are in the process of construction. While development of small HPPs is considered as an important alternative source of energy, their construction and operation very often take place with evident violation of environmental norms, having a negative impact on water ecosystems. In many cases small HPPs are constructed in the territories of vulnerable ecosystems (such as forests adjacent to rivers), which cause forest and biodiversity degradation, reduction of livelihood and income of local population, as well as increased risks of natural disasters. Due to exceed of water abstraction permit, HPPs violate the environmental flow requirements and create significant ecological, social and economic tension. Thus, alternative sources of renewable energy, including solar, biomass, and other, should be also sought and promoted. A comprehensive review of SGP’s experience from previous phases ranks projects on solar¹ heating applications and energy efficiency improvement in buildings as most viable with tangible economic and environmental benefits.

Biodiversity, specially protected areas: The target area is mainly represented with steppe and forest landscapes. The steppe zone in the target area starts from the altitude of 1,500-1,600 m, reaching up to 2,000 m in the north and 2,400-2,500 m in the south. The zone is a typical steppe in the lower parts, and a meadow-steppe type in the upper parts. It is distinguished by a diversity of natural habitats and variety of

¹ Armenia’s solar energy potential is significant, with 2,500 sunny hours per year and an average annual solar radiation on horizontal surfaces of about 1,720 kWh/m².

species, including 600 species of high value plants, including 46 endemic ones. Fauna is represented by 96 vertebrate species (4 amphibian, 32 lizard, 19 bird and 41 mammal species) and 992 invertebrate species (81 mollusk, 126 arachnid and 785 insect species). Currently, the steppes in the target area lose several ecosystem functions, such as water resource protection and regulation of evaporation, soil protection, reduction of pasture digression risk, prevention of water and wind erosion, prevention of pollution, including in soil, biota and agricultural products, protection of habitats of rare species, ensuring the quantity of pollinators due to natural vegetation regeneration etc.

Forest diversity is represented by 870 species of high value plants, including 23 endemic species. Forest fauna is represented by about 2,000 species of insects, 90 species of vertebrates, including 6 species of amphibians, 25 species of lizards, 42 species of birds and 17 species of mammals. About 50 fauna types are registered in the Red Book of Armenia. Local population uses forests mainly for fuel wood, and the slopes with low density forests as spring and summer pastures. In addition, local population collects the medicinal and edible plants, including berries, for household use or trade in the internal markets.

In the target zone the protected areas occupy around 356,065 ha territory. This includes 2 reserves (35,351 ha), 4 national parks (236,802 ha) and 19 sanctuaries (83,912 ha). Within these protected areas, the steppe landscapes occupy about 15% of the territory and the forest landscapes occupy about 28%. The table summarizing the Specially Protected Natural Areas in the focus zone is provided in Appendix 1.

Water: On average, Armenia has sufficient water resources. Taking into account all available water resources in the country, annual water availability per capita composes 3,100 m³, which is well above the water stress indicator of 1,700 m³. However, these water resources are not evenly distributed in space and time, and there is significant seasonal and annual variability in river runoff. The target area includes territories all of the 6 river basin districts of the country: Northern, Akhuryan, Sevan, Hrazdan, Ararat and Southern. All of these river basin districts, except Lake Sevan basin, are transboundary, shared with Turkey, Iran, Georgia or Azerbaijan. Shared groundwater resources add another level of complexity in proper management of water resources, which play a key role in the socio-economic development of Armenia. Thus, reduction in water availability due to the construction of 2 large reservoirs on Araks River with an overall storage volume of 1.3 billion m³ by Turkey is a major concern for the Armenian government. Existing and planned hydraulic infrastructure in the Araks basin by Turkey for consumptive (irrigation and water supply) and non-consumptive (hydropower) uses will result in changes in the river flow regime, as well as river dynamics and morphology. Deterioration of water quality in transboundary rivers is also a concern, for example due to non-point source pollution from agriculture and livestock activities in Araks and Akhuryan Rivers. Mining is also problematic as it refers to shared aquifers, such as the Aghstev-Tavush and Pambak-Debed aquifers. In these two transboundary aquifers, potential conflicts over the use of available resources are also expected as water demand in the riparian countries is increasing. Finally, in addition to transboundary rivers and groundwater, there are important transboundary ecosystems shared by Armenia and Turkey in the Araks River valley. According to UNECE, the Araks valley harbors several natural and artificial wetlands that provide important nesting areas for water birds.

Tourism: Armenia has great potential of natural and historical-cultural tourism, and tourism sector is considered as one of the priority directions for the Government. Development of recreational and ecotourism is much preferable from economic and environmental perspectives, for which it is necessary to establish corresponding support structures. The main impact of recreational and ecotourism on the ecosystem is recreational squashing of vegetation cover, as well as pollution with waste at the picnic areas, especially if the latter are not equipped with corresponding bins. The selected target area, particularly Lake Sevan and forest landscapes, is very attractive for leisure and tourism activities. There are also numerous historical-cultural monuments in the target area. Currently, efforts are being made to make Tsaghkadzor a tourism center corresponding to international standards, develop tourism in Jermuk and

Goris cities, as well as establishing “Tatev” tourism center. However, uncontrolled conventional tourism poses potential threats to many natural areas, leading to impacts such as soil erosion, pollution, discharges into watercourses, natural habitat loss and increased pressure on endangered species and heightened vulnerability to forest fires. Of particular concern are the valuable and vulnerable territories of the target area, such as PAs, buffer zones, ecological corridors and natural forests.

Chemicals: The prevailing source of environmental pollution by persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other hazardous chemicals in Armenia is industry, including the chemical sector, agriculture (obsolete POPs pesticides and agrochemicals), energy sector, unintentionally produced POPs (dioxins and furans) and toxic substances during industrial production and waste processing, fossil fuel combustion, etc. Today, the energy sector is one of the main production sectors in Armenia, so that the problem of environmental pollution by used mineral oils (possible sources of PCBs) from electrical equipment is actual. Control and management of chemicals, at different stages of lifetime cycle of these chemicals, are administered by different state organizations and local self-governance structures. Currently, legislative basis in the area of management of chemical substances and chemical waste (including POPs) requires further improvement. There are several laws and normative acts, which regulate use of chemicals, including POPs in Armenia.

Improper use and management of household and agro-chemicals (including chemical fertilizers, banned or obsolete POPs pesticides stockpiles) create enormous problems in rural communities leading to surface and ground water contamination, loss of biodiversity, land degradation, residue accumulation in the food chain and, ultimately, to serious health problems. In communities, there is certain lack of knowledge and practices on proper handling of chemicals, awareness and information on chemical management and safety issues. Still, there is a need to promote innovative community-based tools to encourage safe handling of harmful chemicals, and substitute with environmentally sound sustainable alternatives.

Waste: Currently, there are practically no sanitary landfills in Armenia that meet international standards, and the existing landfills are rather burial sites or dumps, where open-air low temperature burning may take place. In addition, there are no polygons and disposal facilities for industrial and hazardous wastes.

Despite some of the important steps that have been taken in Armenia in the waste sector, certain areas are in need of further action, including: creation of an environmentally sound and ecologically safe waste management system, including the improvement of appropriate legal framework and enforcement procedures; creation of waste registers on waste generation, processing and utilization facilities and disposal sites; ensuring reduction in waste generation, maximum use and promulgation of secondary use of waste; establishment of specialized waste disposal sites and sanitary landfills.

Plastic (PET) bottles and plastic (PE) shopping bags account for up to 30% of all solid household waste. Despite the plastic waste (non- or low degradable) is not very harmful to the environment, it is much more problematic as an everlasting source of littering and air pollution due to the risk of open-air burning in community landfills and dumps (emissions of dioxins and furans, toxic fumes). In order to reduce plastic waste at the community level, innovative practices and incentives must be introduced on waste reduction, reuse (e.g. use of reusable bags as an alternative to disposable plastic bags), separation and recycling. The latter can be achieved through public awareness and education activities, as well as promotion of community-based campaigns to adopt a new approach and plastic-free practices.

Climate change: It is expected that an enormous change in Armenia’s climate will occur over the next century. Temperatures will rise; precipitation, river flow and lake levels will fall; and heat waves, droughts, landslides, mudflows, and floods will become more common. The social impacts of the expected climate change will result in an increased incidence of illnesses from heat waves as temperatures rise; a shortage of water and an increase of electricity tariffs due to reduction of share of hydropower

production in overall electricity generation; food shortages or increased food prices as agricultural productivity declines; and an increased incidence of dangerous and damaging landslides, mudflows and floods as increased evapotranspiration causing soil drying and deforestation coincide with extreme storms. As for economic impacts, climate change will affect business revenues, jobs, household income and consumption. Thus, it is expected that loss of 10-27% of precipitation and 24% of river flow by 2100 will occur if no adaptation measures are implemented. Reduced agricultural production, among other things, will include loss of 19-22% of sub-alpine and alpine pastures and 3% of total pasture land by 2100. In general, losses from diminishing agricultural productivity could exceed 8% of Armenian GDP by 2100. Unless quick action is taken on large-scale adaptation measures, it is unlikely that Armenian families, their livelihoods, or their economy will be unscathed by climate change. Poor population, especially residing in rural areas will be particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. These effects disrupt ecosystem services important for agriculture, which is critical for maintaining sustainable livelihoods at local/community level. Therefore, agro-ecological practices that reduce agricultural emissions, increase carbon storage on farmland and enhance resilience of people, farms and ecosystems to climate change should be promoted.

2.2. Global challenges to the environment and sustainable development in the target area

Global environmental challenges in the mountain ecosystems include natural seismic risks, fires, climate change, changes in vegetation cover, transformation of agricultural lands of natural landscapes, infrastructure development and armed conflicts. These pressures result in degradation in the mountainous environment and impact the wellbeing of people, depending on the ecosystem services of such landscapes. All mountainous regions are characterized by high risk of natural disasters and particularly severe impacts in case of inappropriate application of land use methods and outdated technology. Thus, it is necessary to ensure sustainable management of mountainous regions, in order to avoid ecosystem degradation and further aggravation of poverty.

The table below summarizes the main threats, causes, as well as environmental and socio-economic consequences of such threats.

Threats	Causes	Environmental Consequences	Socio-Economic Consequences
Land degradation	Application of inappropriate methods and technologies in agriculture (crop production, animal husbandry)	Soil erosion and secondary salinization, reproductivity loss, agro-ecosystem degradation, biodiversity fragmentation and loss in natural ecosystems, particularly in steppes; Reduction of vegetation cover in pastures, soil erosion occurrence, desertification, and changes in species composition of biocenosis	Reduction of crop productivity due to the loss of humus layer of the soil, decrease in livestock productivity, reduction of farmers income and poverty aggravation; Health problems due to excessive use of fertilizers to restore the soil production capacity
	Open exploitation of mines	Alienation of agricultural lands, disturbance of land and vegetation cover, disturbance of natural landscapes, pollution of land, air and water basins, disappearance of certain plant species and fauna habitats	Reduction of natural landscapes, reduction of size/area of individual plots, reduction in agricultural productivity and farm incomes

Threats	Causes	Environmental Consequences	Socio-Economic Consequences
	Logging of forests	Erosion/Degradation of forest lands and desertification, reduction of replenishment capacity of springs, activation of natural disasters (mudflows, landslides)	Reduction of agricultural products and forest by-products, increase in the risk of natural disasters, decrease of population income, aggravation of poverty
Degradation of forest ecosystems	Unsustainable use of forests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of forest lands for agriculture • Illegal logging of forests, • Overuse of bio-resources, particularly firewood, • Misapplication of forest management plans, • Inefficient control of forest use, • Unregulated recreation, • Underestimation of the forest ecosystems role 	Quantitative and qualitative changes in forest ecosystem services, change in composition of forest types, anthropogenic succession and degradation, forest land erosion and desertification, increase in occurrences of landslides and mudflows, disturbance of hydrological regime of forests and aggravation of water deficiency, sediments runoff and eutrophication of downstream rivers and reservoirs, disappearance of fauna habitats, reduction of pollinating fauna species	Aggravated health problems due to unfavorable climate change and water deficiency, reduction of agricultural produce and forest by-products, decrease in population income, aggravation of poverty
Environmental pollution	Industrial impact	Accumulation of hazardous substances in soils, pollution of air basin with dust and toxic substances, contamination of rivers and groundwater, build-up of industrial waste, and tailings and landscape destruction, aggravation of preconditions for growth, development and regeneration of species; extinction of valuable, disappearing and rare species in forest and other ecosystems; decrease of productivity of agroecosystem; deterioration of harvest quality	Aggravated health problems among the population and decreased income due to deterioration of the quality of landscape ecosystems services and agrobiodiversity
	Agricultural impact	Pollution of soil and water due to improper use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and other agrochemicals; destruction of soil biodiversity (invertebrates, bacteria); change in composition of vegetation cover; alienation of valuable and rare plant species/populations in steppe ecosystems	Aggravated health problems due to deterioration of the quality of agricultural products, drinking and irrigation water

Threats	Causes	Environmental Consequences	Socio-Economic Consequences
	Transport	Pollution of lands, air and water basins; accumulation of harmful substances in agroecosystems; ecosystems degradation; reduction of species and populations	Deterioration of population health due to disturbance of landscape ecosystem services and reduced quality of agricultural products
Effects of climate change	Increase of anthropogenic impact on environment and nature	Reduction of surface and groundwater reserves; more intensive dry-out of wetland ecosystems; inclusion of new areas in desertification process; increased frequency of natural disasters; decreased sustainability of mountain ecosystems; vertical shift of fauna and flora extension boundaries; change in composition of habitats; increased risk of extinction of endemic species; increased occurrences of forest fires	Drastic environmental changes, resulting in disturbance of hydrological regime and affecting the agrarian and forest sectors; posing real threats to population health, food and water security, reduction of livelihoods and emigration
Water shortage and deteriorated water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrational and uncontrolled use of surface and groundwater resources; • Global climate change; • Pollution from point and non-point sources 	Reduction of surface and groundwater reserves; more intensive dry-out of wetland ecosystems; inclusion of new areas in desertification process; significant damage to ecosystems	Reduced agricultural productivity, loss of food security for the rural poor; Damage to ecosystems and loss of cultural heritage (e.g. Lake Sevan); Serious health impacts due to insufficient quality / quantity of drinking water; Increased incidence of water-borne diseases like malaria and cholera

3. Elaborating SGP Operational Programme 6 Strategic Initiatives within the Selected Target Area

3.1. Community Landscape Conservation

The target area is distinguished by variety of valuable biodiversity of global, regional and national significance, as well as existence of ecosystems providing services essential for well-being of population. It is very important to promote conservation measures and sustainable use practices that ensure ecosystem integrity and sustain provision of ecosystem services. Therefore, the planned activities should result in better functioning of ecosystems, regulating air quality, climate, water cycle, erosion and natural hazards, pollination etc., as well as providing food, fuelwood and other benefits to local people. Through direct involvement in SGP activities, the local population will increase awareness and appreciation of benefits of multiple ecosystem services, and gain knowledge and practical experience of biodiversity-friendly income-generating activities. It is believed that community participation will also increase project efficiency and sustainability of results.

The following typologies of the *Community Landscape Conservation* projects in the target area are proposed:

- Incorporating nature-friendly practices into community livelihoods for sustainable use of biological resources and management of ecosystems;
- Promoting effective community-oriented forms of conservation in support of critical protected areas, biodiversity hotspots and ecological corridors;
- Promoting community-based approaches for sustenance of transboundary riparian ecosystems.

It should be noted that the projects implemented in one of the above-mentioned typology groups, can intersect with other strategic initiatives of the SGP in OP6, which will ensure synergism and coherence between the SGP-funded initiatives in the target area.

In OP6, the country programme activities will contribute to the SGP global outcome of the Project Component 1 (*Community Landscape and Seascape Conservation*), which is the improvement of conservation, sustainable use, and management of important terrestrial and coastal/marine ecosystems through implementation of community-based landscape/seascape approaches. The expected CPS result under this Strategic Initiative is to improve conservation, sustainable use and management of important terrestrial and riparian ecosystems through community-based actions (see Table 3, CPS Outcome 1).

3.2. Climate smart innovative agro-ecology

Innovation in agro-ecology in the target area shall seek to make best use of biodiversity and other ecological goods and services, while contributing to an equitable development of rural areas and enhancing the resilience of food production systems. Farmers, consumers and other actors, working on agro-ecological solutions and sustainable food systems, shall have a key role in this. Application of the climate-smart innovative agro-ecology in the target area will help guide actions to transform and reorient agricultural systems to effectively and sustainably support development and food security under a changing climate. In the context of food security and development goals in the target area, the following 3 main objectives shall be tackled: sustainably increasing food security by increasing agricultural productivity and incomes; building resilience and adapting to climate change; and developing opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions compared to expected trends. Therefore, the following typology of the *Climate Smart Innovative Agro-ecology* projects in the target area is proposed:

- Developing and promoting agro-ecological innovations to reduce agricultural emissions, increase carbon storage on farmland and enhance resilience of people, farms and ecosystems to climate change

In OP6, the implemented projects should contribute to the global outcome of the SGP Project Component 2 in climate smart innovative agroecology through practical support to such agroecology initiatives in the target zone and knowledge sharing. The expected CPS result under this Strategic Initiative is to introduce climate smart agro-ecological practices to mitigate land degradation, increase sustainably productivity, strengthen farmers' resilience, reduce agricultural emissions and increase carbon sequestration (see Table 3, CPS Outcome 2).

3.3. Low carbon energy access co-benefits

As a UNFCCC Non-Annex I country, Armenia does not have quantitative commitments for GHG emission reduction. However, to support the objective of the Convention and, given that slowing GHG emissions are in line with the country's economic, energy, and environmental objectives, Armenia is implementing and, in its development perspectives, is planning the climate change mitigation measures. In recent years, Armenia has adopted a number of laws and regulations, as well as elaborated and implemented national and sectorial programmes based on sustainable and low-carbon development principles. Although neither of these documents explicitly refers to climate change mitigation measures, the enforcement and implementation of these laws and programmes facilitate reducing GHG emissions, as well as forge a path to develop nationally appropriate mitigation actions. Obstacles to developing the renewable energy potential include insufficient financing mechanisms and the public's poor understanding of the benefits of the low carbon energy. By promoting development of decentralized, low carbon technologies in the OP6 target zone, the SGP country programme will help alleviate poverty in rural areas, where high prices for energy affect the vulnerable groups directly, and promote greater energy security.

Following typology of the projects in *Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits* in the target area is proposed:

- Enhancing capacity of local communities to apply low-carbon technologies.

In OP6, the implemented projects should contribute to the SGP Project Component 3 outcome, which is successful deployment of low carbon community energy access solutions with alignment and integration of these approaches within larger frameworks, such as the initiative on sustainable energy for all². The expected CPS result under this Strategic Initiative is to demonstrate, diffuse and commercialize locally adapted low-carbon technologies (see Table 3, CPS Outcome 3).

3.4. Local to global chemical management coalitions

Community-level stakeholders in Armenia are often unaware of the full extent of potential negative environmental and health effects of POPs, and lack the technical capacity to safely manage and dispose of harmful chemicals and waste. The same is true for the settlements in the SGP target landscape zone. Developing local capacity to implement the Stockholm Convention on POPs will be a key focus area for SGP, including activities to promote the environmentally sound management of other harmful chemicals and waste. Likewise in OP5, in OP6 the country programme will further support demonstration, piloting and testing of community-based approaches to address issues related to harmful chemicals and waste management. Given that chemicals and waste management issues are quite common in many developing countries, SGP will foster knowledge exchange and collaboration among local and global partnerships and initiatives (e.g. IPEN, IPEP etc.). In view of the above, and in line with the principles of the Stockholm Convention, the following typology of the projects on *Local to Global Chemical Management Coalitions* in the target area is proposed:

- Promoting innovative community-based tools and approaches for safe management of harmful chemicals and waste.

In OP6, the implemented projects should contribute to the SGP Project Outcome 4 in local to global chemical management coalitions, which is demonstration, deployment and transfer of innovative community-based tools and approached with support from newly organized or existing coalitions for managing harmful chemicals and waste in a sound manner. The expected CPS result under this Strategic Initiative is to introduce innovative and practical solutions to chemicals and waste management by fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration among local and global partnerships (see Table 3, CPS Outcome 4).

4. CPS indicators, targets and results framework

This section establishes the strategic results that the country programme identified as a part of participatory formulation process within the Baseline Assessment of the selected landscape zone. The CPS results are formulated through the logical framework approach format, which is an essential tool for monitoring and evaluation and facilitates the result-oriented project implementation (Table 3 of the CPS). The logical framework approach provides a snapshot view of all the main components of the SGP Armenia and presents expected results at project (Output) and programme (Outcome) levels, as well as the overall Objective of the country programme. Definitions of different result levels are given below:

² The Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative has rallied the globe around three sustainable energy goals for 2030: universal access to modern energy, a doubling of the historic rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and a doubling of the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

Output is a short-term or immediate end-of-project result, which is the consequence of completed activities achieved. A project may produce an Output or many of them.

Outcome is medium-term or end-of-project result that is usually the consequence of the achievement of a set of Outputs from one or more projects.

Objective is a significant long-term result that is the logical consequence of the achievement of specific Outcomes, and results in measurable impacts to be produced by the programme.

Impact is the positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen change to and effect caused by projects and programmes (GEF glossary of key terms). Impacts take a long time to become visible. As previously mentioned, the country programme is expected to produce global environmental impacts, livelihoods impacts and empowerment impacts.

In essence, the Impacts, Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs are linked by a chain of cause and effect relations and thus, are logically connected statements in the programme results cycle.

The programme-level (Outcome) indicators considered in the logical framework matrix (LFM) (Table 3 of the CPS) correspond to GEF OP6 strategic and national priorities and were determined, based on the consultations with the stakeholders, and agreed with the NSC. The project-level (Output) indicators are to be identified from the list of the GEF SGP project level indicators by applicants in consultation with the NC before the start of the project.

The present baseline analysis identifies the key challenges and global environmental issues within the target landscape area to serve as basis for measuring performance towards the achievement of the results. The proposed project level activities, necessary to achieve the expected results both at project (Output) and country programme (Outcome) levels are detailed in the SGP logical framework, illustrated in the CPS Table 3. The logical framework matrix also includes respective target indicators identified to track progress of the SGP country programme activities and assess efficiency and effectiveness of the expected CSP outcomes.

5. Modalities for Implementation of Projects in the Target Area

Currently, the environmental governance in Armenia is characterized by highly segregated vertical structure with limited autonomy of territorial bodies and communities. Inflexibility of such a structure, as well as lack of technical and financial resources result in disruption of linkage in the management system and disharmonized functions. To address this problem, as a priority step, it is necessary to expand the role of local self-governance authorities and communities and directly involve them in the activities implemented in the target area. The target area communities can play a significant role in SGP OP6 initiatives supporting sustainable use and conservation of land, water and other natural resources and associated ecosystem services. Such projects will succeed only if local population is actively involved in project design, formulation and implementation stages, ensuring strong ownership of the outputs, and resulting in direct socio-economic benefits.

The proposed modalities for project implementation will include the following: linking and connecting projects within the target area for learning and exchange; fostering engagement with local authorities; identifying policy influence and scaling up opportunities; promoting participatory M&E that enables community involvement; and facilitating knowledge management and capture and dissemination of results.

Knowledge management strategy implies the collection and dissemination of information concerning the experience gained from each individual project and the entire project portfolio by various GEF thematic areas. The objective of the knowledge management efforts is to facilitate the flow of knowledge and experiences, leverage lessons learned from both successful and unsuccessful projects, and to replicate and scale-up good practices. Best SGP practices will be used as an influence mechanism for development and formulation of policy for implementation of environmental conventions and development agendas.

Knowledge management will be one of the key activities of the SGP Armenia. Knowledge and experience gained through SGP projects will be collected and consolidated in handbooks, factsheets, case studies, films and video materials. This information will then be widely disseminated among practitioners to determine the good/best practices and strategies and to compare and share experience. Experience will also be shared at seminars, meetings, public presentations, knowledge fairs, knowledge centers and through different electronic information networks and media when applicable. Training programmes and workshops conducted within the SGP projects are of special importance in the knowledge management aspect.

SGP Armenia will ask for continuous knowledge sharing among the present and former grantees to share best practices and lessons learned; document best practices distributed; create a "directory of expertise" among SGP grantees to call upon each other for advice; develop websites and e-groups for regional groupings; and designate local focal persons.

SGP Armenia will encourage applicants to include a component for demonstration and knowledge dissemination in proposed projects. Regular short "press releases" will be prepared and disseminated in electronic and/or printed form by the grantees for updating the public on the past (successes, awards, recognitions, etc.), present and future activities. The grantees will be required to ensure continuous and open exchange of knowledge and lessons learned with other applicants. The accessibility of information will be a requirement to all SGP participants.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY INFORMATION ON THE SPNAS IN THE TARGET LANDSCAPE

Name	Aim of establishment	Area (ha)	Marz
State Reserves			
Khosrov Forest	Conservation of mountainous arid habitats, wild relatives of cultivated plants in Azat and Vedi River basins, arid open forests, animals and plants registered in the Red Data Book of Armenia	23,213.5	Ararat, Kotayk
Shikahogh	Conservation of endemic and relic plant species, moist forests, oriental beech and <i>Taxus baccata</i> L. (yew) groves met only in Southern Armenia, animals and plants registered in the Red Data Book of Armenia	12,137.1	Syunik
National Parks			
Sevan	Conservation of Lake Sevan ecosystem	147,456.0	Gegharkunik
Dilijan	Conservation of oak and beech relic forests, <i>Taxus baccata</i> L. unique grove, natural pine groves, feeding surfaces of natural springs, animals and plants registered in the Red Data Book of Armenia	33,765.0	Tavush
Lake Arpi	Conservation of Lake Arpi ecosystems, nesting sites of rare and migratory bird species, plant species registered in the Red Data Book of Armenia	21,179.3	Shirak
Arevik	Conservation of landscape and biological diversity of Meghri mountain range, natural and historical heritage	34,401.8	Syunik
State Sanctuaries			
Akhnabad yew grove	Conservation of unique relict yew grove species	25.0	Tavush
Hazel-nut	Conservation of relict groves of yew and hazel-nut	40.0	Tavush
Juniper Open Woodlands	Conservation of <i>Juniperus excelsa</i> M.Bieb, <i>Juniperus foetidissima</i> Willd and <i>Juniperus oblonga</i> open forests	3,312.0	Gegharkunik
Gyulagarak	Conservation of relict pine forests	2,576.0	Lori
Open forests of Herher	Conservation of relic juniper open forests	6,139.0	Vayots Dzor
Jermuk forest	Conservation of mountain forests of <i>Quercus macranthera</i> Fisch. et Mey. A their specific fauna	3,865.0	Vayots Dzor
Pine of Banx	Conservation of unique planted stands of pine of Banx	4.0	Kotayk
Caucasian Rose-bay	Conservation of relict Caucasian rose bay species	1,000.0	Lori
Arzakan-Meghradzor	Conservation of forest rare animals (brown bear, roe-deer, black grouse)	13,532.0	Kotayk
Getik	Conservation of mountain forests, rare and valuable animals (roe, brown bear, black grouse)	5,728.0	Tavush
Ijevan	Conservation of forest landscapes and their specific fauna	5,908.0	Tavush
Margahovit	Conservation of moist forests and their specific fauna	3,368.0	Lori
Yeghegnadzor	Conservation of forest landscapes and their specific fauna	4,200.0	Vayots Dzor
Goris	Conservation of forest landscapes and their specific fauna	1,850.0	Syunik
Boghakar	Conservation of endemic plant species (<i>Tulipa sosnovskyi</i> Achv. et Mirzoeva, <i>Schophularia takhtajanii</i> , <i>Quercus araxina</i> , etc.)	2,728.0	Syunik
Hanqavan hydrological	Conservation of feeding basins of mineral springs	5,169.04	Kotayk
Jermuk hydrological	Conservation of feeding basins of mineral hot springs	17,371.0	Vayots Dzor
Zikatar	Conservation of forest ecosystems	150.0	Tavush
Khustup	Conservation of upper part of forest belt, meadow-steppe and steppe natural ecosystems	6,946.74	Syunik