

Inception Report on ‘Developing a resource mobilization strategy for implementing the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of Uttarakhand and demonstration of select financial solutions for conservation of snow leopard landscape, Gangotri-Govind and Darma Byans Valley in Uttarakhand, under the GOI-UNDP project on SECURE Himalaya’

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Introduction

Background and rationale for the project

The new GEF funded project SECURE Himalaya seeks to promote the sustainable use of land and forests at landscape level that secures both sustainable livelihoods and ensures conservation of globally significant biodiversity and threatened species in the high altitude trans-Himalayan region. A Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan has been prepared for Uttarakhand but there is a need to develop resource mobilisation strategies for implementing the strategy and to demonstrate select financial solutions for conservation of the snow leopard landscape of Gangotri-Govind and Darma Byans Valley in Uttarakhand. Such financial solutions for conservation can serve as a model for other areas and landscapes and pave the way for the application of innovative solutions for biodiversity rich regions of the country.

TERI carried out an updation of the Uttarakhand Biodiversity and Action Plan in consultation with UNDP and the State Biodiversity Board through a consultative process that included numerous stakeholders including all relevant sectors and departments. There is a need now, however, to ensure that sectoral policies reflect biodiversity concerns and importantly, that sufficient funds are mobilised to implement the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans. Moreover, site-specific strategies are required with the prioritisation of actions. To do this, innovative sources of funding must be identified which will further ensure that biodiversity is mainstreamed and internalised in relevant sectors, as well as amongst government, business and a range of diverse stakeholders. This requires strategies such as enhancing budgetary allocations in important areas of conservation, and enhanced convergence in programmes and schemes that impinge on biodiversity conservation for example in agriculture, animal husbandry, natural resource driven industry, watershed management. Moreover, biodiversity needs must be dovetailed with the Sustainable Development Goals and with relevant conventions and programmes focussed on combating land degradation, protecting biodiversity and mitigating climate change. It is time that India implements programmes through Corporate Social Responsibility, Crowd funding/Crowd sourcing, payment for ecosystem services (e.g. carbon sequestered or important watershed services provided by mountain forests to downstream areas) or by implementing the Biodiversity Act in terms of Access and Benefit Sharing Mechanisms. The two landscapes identified in Uttarakhand under the SECURE Himalaya project, for example could potentially benefit from ecotourism promotion or REDD plus initiatives. Natural resource dependent industries for example pharmaceuticals or nutraceuticals in particular need to contribute to the conservation of the resource that sustains their industries.

The particular project that TERI will undertake is to develop a resource mobilisation strategy for implementing the Uttarakhand State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan as well as to demonstrate two financial solutions for conservation in Gangotri–Govind (Uttarkashi) and Darma Byans Valley (Pithoragarh district) landscape of Uttarakhand.



The State Biodiversity Strategy prepared by TERI for UNDP and the State Biodiversity Board

Introduction to the landscapes

Gangotri–Govind (Uttarkashi), Uttarakhand

The Gangotri-Govind Landscape falls within biogeographic province 2B in the Greater Himalaya. It is located in Uttarkashi District in Uttarakhand, spanning over an area of approximately 8,000 km². The elevation of the landscape ranges from 3,000m to 7,000m. Few high peaks present are Bandarpunch (6720m), Gangotri (6613m), Bhagirathi (6607m) and Swargrohini (6562m). There are very sharp undulations owing to high mountains, narrow valleys and deep gorges. The northern and eastern parts are covered with snow throughout the year (CGWB 2009). The Gangotri National Park is located in the upper catchment of Bhagirathi river. The north-eastern park boundary is located along the international boundary with China.

The Gangotri region of the Uttarakhand Himalayas has one of the largest glacier systems in the world. Due to concerns over global warming, these glaciers have become the focus of much international attention. Hundreds of millions of Indians depend on this perennial source of Ganga, and thus the need for precautionary measures to ensure the glaciers' long-term survival. The area is also suffering localized ecological degradation due to the growing tourist and religious pilgrimages undertaken. The energy demands of this now permanent and growing influx are denuding the alpine highlands, while polluting the area with all the detritus of mass consumer culture.

Darma Byans Valley (Pithoragarh district), Uttarakhand

Askot Wildlife Sanctuary (20°46'45"–30°27'45"N and 81°01'53"–80°16'25"), located in the north of the Pithoragarh district in Kumaon Himalaya, covers an area of approximately 600 km² and a wide altitudinal range (600–6905m). The undulating topography, diversity in climate and soil offer a high diversity of species, habitats and communities. The vegetation of the area mainly comprises subtropical, temperate, subalpine and alpine types. The Darma-Byans valleys of Pithoragarh District represent alpine habitats of tremendous biological wealth that lie in the Kailash trans-boundary landscape and harbors good populations of high altitude fauna including snow leopard.

Proposed Methodology

Approach to tasks listed in the RFP

Objective 1: To validate and finalize the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (SBSAP) of Uttarakhand and ensure alignment with national and global priorities of biodiversity conservation and wildlife protection.

- *Ensure alignment of the SBSAP with state, national and global priorities of biodiversity conservation and wildlife protection and other state sectoral plans such as the wildlife action plan, climate change action plan, disaster plan, agriculture plan, forest working plans, etc.*

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi has prepared the updated State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (SBSAP) of Uttarakhand (2017-2027) under UNDP's BIOFIN project. This SBSAP is based on a detailed National Biodiversity Action Plan (2008) supplemented by an addendum (NBAP Addendum, 2014) and is in tandem with 20 ambitious yet achievable targets collectively known as the Aichi Targets, 12 National Biodiversity Targets and guiding principles in form of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). The 12 National Biodiversity Targets after a consultative process and approval from the State Biodiversity Board of Uttarakhand have been considered to be 12 State Biodiversity Targets.

While preparing the SBSAP, in order to highlight threats and pressures with regards to biodiversity conservation at the local level as well as identify major gaps in fulfilling National Biodiversity Targets (NBTs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), information was collated from state sectoral plans such as the wildlife action plan, climate change action plan, disaster plan, agriculture plan and the forest working plans. However, if there has been any subsequent updation in these state sectoral plans as well as any other relevant material is now available, we will collate these and use them to update and ensure alignment of the SBSAP. Based on this, the SBSAP will be finalised

- *Ensure that the SBSAP is in line with the standard framework and guidelines for developing the SBSAP and time duration should coincide with 2030 SDGs; CBD Vision 2050 etc;*

We will ensure that the standard framework and guidelines for developing the SBSAP and time duration coincides with 2030 SDGs and the CBD Vision 2050. This will be done based on discussions with all stakeholders including UNDP, the State Biodiversity Board and the Forest Department.

- *Developing quantitative targets, action points, SMART indicators and monitoring and reporting framework for SBSAP including responsible agencies for implementation of SBSAP.*

TERI after a consultative process has developed 114 strategies and 380 actions for six themes/ecosystems including forest, grassland, riverine, wetland, agro-diversity and domestic animal diversity along with an indicative list of responsible agencies and probable impacts of achieving the strategies and actions. However SMART indicators and monitoring and reporting framework will be developed in consultation with State Biodiversity Board and UNDP.

- *Validation and finalization of the SBSAP of Uttarakhand - Conduct Stakeholder consultations (public, private and others) and workshops at local and state levels for each priority thematic areas, for validation of results and findings. In this regard the agency is expected to do at least 2 workshops of duration of 1- 1.5 days (2 level validation workshops) with 40-50 participants including representatives from other public line departments and key*

stakeholders including the private sector. The workshop should be held in a cost effective manner with quality assurance. All the expenses pertaining to the workshop (venue – 3-star property, lunch, tea, etc.) should be borne by the agency.

The validation of the SBSAP of Uttarakhand has been carried out by TERI through stakeholder consultations comprising of one-to-one meetings, telephonic interviews as well as questionnaire surveys. The stakeholders comprise of line departments/boards, research/academic institutions, local NGOs/agencies, industries and others such as tourism operators and resort owners have been consulted. The State Biodiversity Board has already circulated the existing SBSAP to all stakeholders in the State and their comments have been received and incorporated. These apart from the Uttarakhand State Forest Department and the Uttarakhand State Biodiversity Board include other key departments which can play a major role in biodiversity conservation in the state include department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Horticulture, Industry, Irrigation and Power, Science, Technology & Environment, besides research and academic institutions like Zoological Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, Anthropological Survey of India, Van Panchayats/ local communities, NGO's, industry and corporate sector, as well as, religious and cultural groups.

The SBSAP will now be finalised through two workshops of duration of 1- 1.5 days (2 level validation workshops) with 40-50 participants, including representatives from other public line departments and key stakeholders including the private sector. This will be organized in consultation with State Biodiversity Board and UNDP.

- *Based on approved methodology (in consultation with MoEFCC and UNDP) undertake an assessment of biodiversity attributable budget allocation and expenditures through public and private programmes, external aids and other types of fund flow at the state level (in the past 5-7 years) at the state level and project future expenditures in the area of biodiversity conservation & wildlife protection at the state level. The agency should make use of existing data, research and analysis available in this regard.*

An assessment of current budget allocations and expenditures for biodiversity through public and private programmes at the State level has already been carried out by WII as part of the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN). As part of this process, 18 line departments were selected for their schemes/ policies/ programmes relevant for biodiversity conservation and expenditure including Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre, Fisheries, Forest, Geology and geomining unit, Higher Education, Irrigation, Panchayati Raj, Rural development, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, School education, State Horticulture Mission, State Planning Department Tourism, Transport, Uttarakhand Jal Sansthan and Uttarakhand Renewable Energy Development Agency. A review of all the schemes of 67 Departments as per Annual Plan Documents was conducted. Initially 300 Schemes of 36 Departments were identified as relevant for biodiversity conservation. A further shortlisting of 241 Schemes of 19 Departments relevant for biodiversity conservation was done on the basis of objectives, expert opinion and review of their budget documents.

We will utilise the results of this extensive study to understand the potential and gaps in expenditure based on TERI's financial estimates for implementing the existing Strategy and Action Plan. We will utilize existing data, research, methods and analysis available in this regard to carry out this component, in consultation with experts including UNDP, State Departments and MoEFCC. *We would request UNDP to provide TERI with a copy of WII's BIOFIN report, so that this exercise may be conducted at the earliest and that all relevant data is easily accessible.*

- *Formulation of state/ site-specific strategies and activities and synthesizing them into SBSAP (with short, medium and long term action plans)*

As mentioned, TERI developed strategies and activities for various ecosystems as part of the SBSAP process. In addition, in the early 2000s, TERI developed a Strategy and Action Plan for Uttarakhand that included site specific strategies and activities as part of a World Bank sponsored Forestry Project. TERI will review and update these site specific strategies and will help prioritise activities in the short, medium and long term. This will be carried out in consultation with State Biodiversity Board, State Forest Department, UNDP, line departments and other relevant stakeholders.

Objective 2: Developing a resource mobilization strategy and a finance plan for implementing State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan in Uttarakhand. The resource mobilization strategy should outline the financial solutions, tentative amount resources to be mobilized from identified financial solutions, stakeholders and partners for implementing the resource mobilization strategy etc.

To enable the effective implementation of the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of Uttarakhand a financial needs assessment will be conducted and a resource mobilization strategy and a finance plan will be developed. Given that the implementation of state biodiversity action plans requires coordination with multiple public and private stakeholders who have an impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services, the methodology for conducting the financial needs assessment, resource mobilization strategy and work plan will be developed through multi-stakeholder consultations.

Key stakeholders who will be consulted in the process of developing these context specific methodologies include subject matter experts; local, national, and multi-lateral organizations working in this area such as civil society organizations and the United Nations Development Programme; and government agencies at the national, state and local levels such as the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Wildlife Institute of India, Zoological Survey of India, Forest Research Institute, Uttarakhand Environment Protection and Pollution Control Board, Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board, and local Biodiversity Management Committees, if functional, among others.

The objectives of the financial needs assessment, as outlined in the BIOFIN approach, will be to: (i) estimate the financing required to implement the Uttarakhand State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and (ii) assess the financing gap between the financing required and projected expenditures.¹ Financing requirements would be assessed in a manner which includes human resources, capital investments and financial resources.² The financial needs assessment will be done for implementing each thematic areas of the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, namely, forest, grassland, riverine, wetland, agro-diversity and domestic animal diversity. This will be done for the short, medium and long term horizons. Consultations with key local and state level stakeholders, across the public and private sectors will be conducted in order to validate the results of the financial needs assessment.

¹ UNDP (2016). The 2016 BIOFIN Workbook: Mobilizing resources for biodiversity and sustainable development. The Biodiversity Finance Initiative. United Nations Development Programme: New York

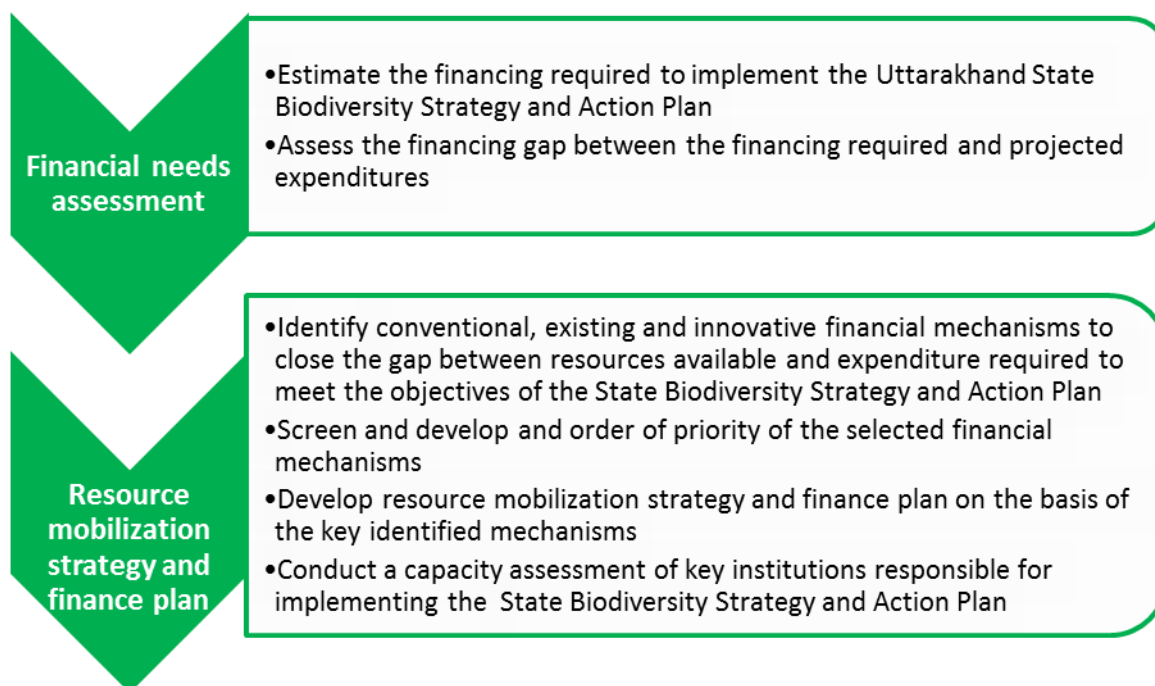
² Ibid. p 177

Further, this assessment would identify the resources required for the effective delivery of the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan which may not be immediately practicable as the aim is to identify the best possible state of financial support for biodiversity efforts. In order to address the gap between current resources, and project expenditures, across the short, medium and long term horizons, a resource mobilization strategy and financial plan will also be developed. Through stakeholder consultation, both conventional, existing and innovative financial mechanisms to close the gap between resources available and expenditure required to meet the objectives of the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan will be identified. These may include mapping public programmes to identify those which can directly or indirectly fund biodiversity conservation actions; accessing private funding, for example through corporate social responsibility; access and benefit sharing mechanisms; mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into existing public programme; ecotourism; payment for ecosystem services, among others.

Once major financial mechanisms to meet the resource gap are identified, an order of priority for further action will be developed through a process of screening in consultation with technical agencies, experts, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, National Biodiversity Authority, and the United Nations Development Programme. The resource mobilization strategy and finance plan will be developed on the basis of this order of prioritization.

A capacity assessment of key institutions, both public and private, responsible for implementing the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan will be carried out, especially given that the financial mechanisms which may be finally selected may include a mix of existing, conventional and innovative mechanisms.

Figure 1: Key processes and outcomes for Objective 2



Objective 3: Demonstrate implementation of 2 replicable and scalable financial solutions (for ex: demonstration of Access and Benefit sharing mechanism, mainstreaming biodiversity in public programmes and schemes of agriculture/tourism/rural development sector, accessing private funding for ex: Corporate Social Responsibility funds for implementing priority actions of SBSAP)

At the stage of preparing the resource mobilization strategy and finance plan, key financial mechanisms which may be operationalized in the selected landscape will be identified. These include mapping public programmes to identify those which can directly or indirectly fund biodiversity conservation actions; accessing private funding, for example through corporate social responsibility; access and benefit sharing mechanisms; mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into existing public programme; ecotourism; payment for ecosystem services, among others.

For example, some centrally sponsored schemes which have the potential to fund biodiversity action include the National Mission for a Green India, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems, and National River Conservation Plan. The current funding for these programmes at Rs 962 Crore for all four of these programmes (Budgeted Expenditure 2017-18), is much less than other centrally sponsored schemes.³ For example, while the BE (2017-18) is Rs 3400 Crore for the Integrated Watershed Management Programme, it is Rs 4,500 Crore for the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, and Rs 48,000 for the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme. There is thus potential to close the funding gap, if any, identified in the financial needs assessment through mainstreaming biodiversity in public programmes and schemes.

Similarly, funds through Corporate Social Responsibility obligations of industries such those which sell packaged mineral water, or those which source raw material from these landscapes may be raised to meet any identified funding gaps.

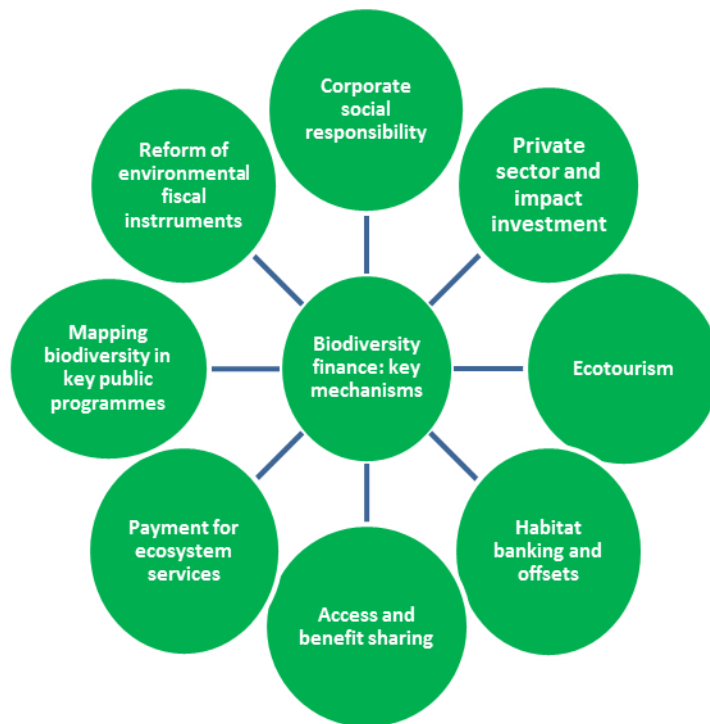
Such financial mechanisms will be detailed and examined in consultation with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the National Biodiversity Authority, and UNDPd, and two financial solutions with a high potential to reducing the funding gap in identified priority areas of the State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and a work plan and strategy for the implementation of these solutions will be developed. Tools, guidelines and training material will be developed for identified key stakeholders, in addition to capacity development tools, to enable to the effective implementation of these financial solutions, on the basis of the mechanisms and solutions which are finally selected.

A communications plan and strategy will be developed for each of the identified solutions and the identified solutions will be implemented on a pilot basis to demonstrate their effectiveness. Key stakeholders will be involved at various stages of the design, implementation, and assessment of the selected financial solutions.

Key stakeholders will be involved at various stages of the design, implementation, and assessment of the selected financial solutions.

³ Government of India, Expenditure Profile 2017-18, Statement 4A, <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget2017-2018/ub2017-18/eb/stat4a.pdf>

Figure 2: An overview of key financial mechanisms to meet funding gaps in biodiversity conservation



Timeline as per Deliverables

Sr. No	Deliverable	Month and Year of submission				
		Dec, 2018	Feb (2019)	July (2019)	May, (2020)	Dec (2020)
1.	Inception Report (15 days)					
2.	Proceedings of round table for review of the draft State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (1 month)					
3.	Submission of validated final State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Uttarakhand along with monitoring and reporting framework of SBSAP. After acceptance and approval by the competent authority (7 months)					
4.	Submission of validated resource mobilization strategy and finance Plan for implementing the SBSAP of Uttarakhand (including innovative/existing financial solution). After acceptance and approval by the competent authority (17 months)					
5.	Submission of process documentation on implementation of 1-2 identified financial solutions in the snow leopard landscapes in the					

	state of Uttarakhand. After acceptance and approval by the competent authority (24 months)						
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