

Darwin Initiative Main: Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note":

(<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>)

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes)

Submission Deadline: 30th April 2024

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line

Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	29-028	
Project title	Linking science to management: restoring community forests in Nepal	
Country/ies	Nepal	
Lead Partner	ForestAction Nepal	
Project partner(s)	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) UK, Kathmandu Forestry College (KAFCOL), Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal (FECOFUN)	
Darwin Initiative grant value	£ 340,867	
Start/end dates of project	July 2022/March 2025	
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2023 – Mar 2024) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2023-March 2024/ Annual Report NO 2	
Project Leader name	Dr. Naya Sharma [REDACTED]	
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.facebook.com/JalthalBiodiversity/ https://twitter.com/BiodiversityNep	
Report author(s) and date	Lila Nath [REDACTED], Muna [REDACTED], Rabindra [REDACTED], Naya [REDACTED] and Bhaskar [REDACTED]	

1. Project summary

The project builds on results of earlier Darwin project (26-022) and has primarily been implemented in Jalthal forest of Jhapa district in south-eastern Nepal (Figure 1). Earlier work demonstrated that the moist tropical forest island Jalthal is rich in biodiversity with notable richness of tree flora. The forest with only 0.1% of Nepal's forest area harbors more than a quarter of the total tree species (≈ 600) growing in Nepal. The forest is also an important habitat of threatened and protected fauna like Asiatic elephant (EN), Chinese pangolin (CR) and Elongated tortoise (CR), and threatened trees like *Prunus ceylanica* (EN). The forest is an important livelihood resource for around 80,000 people living around the forest. However, the biodiversity rich forest is not adequately managed, and consequently the biodiversity is under threat, and the forest has been degrading day by day. The main threats to the forest biodiversity are: encroachment by invasive alien plant species, lack of awareness on biodiversity, high pressure of biomass extraction, and improper development work (Sharma et al 2021). The past DI project (26-022) prepared a scientific foundation and identified threats to the biodiversity to prepare

concrete action plans. The importance of biodiversity and threats bearing upon it, both were identified by participatory approaches using local people and leaders of forest users.

The project aims to restore degraded forest and conserve biodiversity through evidence-based forest management and capacity enhancement of stakeholders engaged in forest management. Project primarily works with local communities who are users and custodians of forest biodiversity. Project activities are designed to benefit both local people and the forest. Project interventions include direct actions on forest management and livelihoods improvement, capacity building, evidence generation and policy engagement. Among others, invasive species management and conservation of rare and threatened trees of Jalthal are priority actions of the project. Project supports livelihood improvement of forest dependent poor people through agroforestry interventions, compost production and goat farming. Local people, mainly women and indigenous people are the projects direct beneficiaries from livelihood interventions. Youths, school students and teachers, and natural resource managers are benefited through capacity building and knowledge sharing activities.

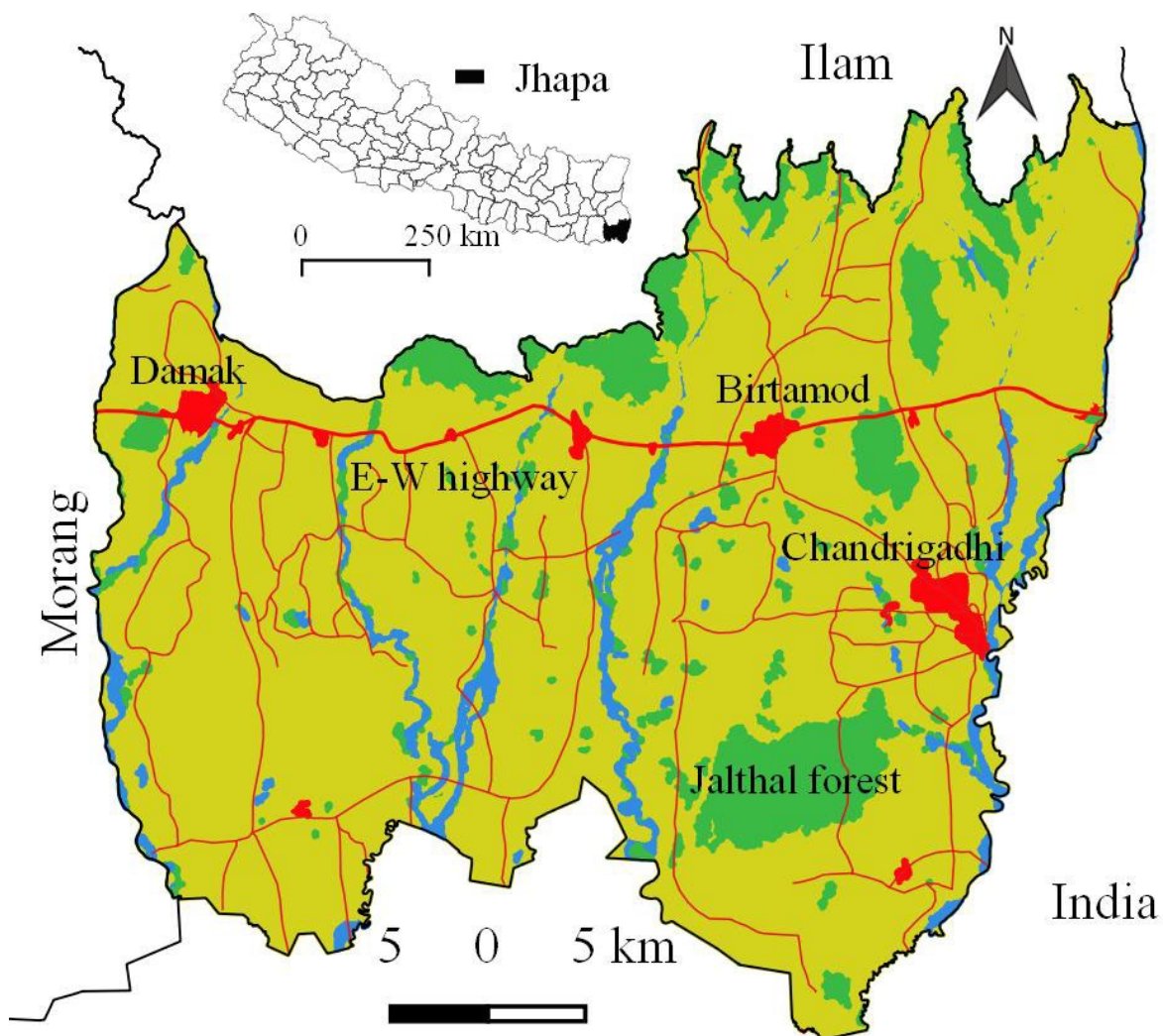


Figure 1: Location map of project district and site (Jalthal forest)

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

This is ForestAction Nepal (FAN)- a non-profit organisation established by Nepali professional in 2002, led project. Kathmandu Forestry College (KAFCOL), Federation of Community Forest User Groups Nepal (FECOFUN) and Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) are project partners. The project partnership was developed from earlier joint works including Darwin Project. ForestAction Nepal and FECOFUN are working on various issues of forest management and

governance for over a decade. Similarly, FAN has been collaborating with RBGE since 2016. Partners' role in this project has been allocated based on the expertise and capacities. Project planning and implementation is collaborative among partners. There have been meetings and regular communications among project partners and activities are organised jointly wherever possible. Dr Bhaskar Adhikari of RBGE and Dr Ambika Gautam of KAFCOL joined project reporting.

Project has been collaborating with other stakeholders, mainly the local governments and Division Forest Office (DFO) and Ministry of Forest of Koshi Province government (Doc 01). Project team visited Koshi province ministry of forest and briefed project activities (Doc 28). Mayor and members of elected governments regularly visit projects meetings and activities (Doc 01). Project approaches and activities have been shared among these stakeholders. Project regularly sought support from Invasive species expert, Prof Bharat Babu Shrestha of Tribhuvan University. Project is also working with relevant experts outside the project, for example, nursery trainers, compost trainers and subject experts/panellist in youth training were all from outside the project team. Project has worked with diverse stakeholders, from farmers and subject specialist depending on the nature of the activity (Doc 01).

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Project has completed its second year of implementation. During the reporting period, several activities were organised across all four outputs. Activities against each output has been presented below and number (Bold face) in the parenthesis indicates activity number in the project's logical framework which is followed by supporting documents. Only activities related/planned to this year are reported.

Output 1: *Forest ecosystem restored and biodiversity conserved in Jalthal community forests:* Project has organised several meetings and field observations with key stakeholders-Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs), DFO and government agencies to plan and brief the projects activities. Project organised planning meetings with CFUGs before implementing field interventions (**1.1**, Doc 01, 02). Participatory mapping for restoration was conducted in Pathibhara Kalika CF (**1.2**, Doc 04), and a restoration plan has been prepared (**1.2**, Doc 11). Several forest transect walks and meetings with CFUGs, forest patrol teams and local people have been organised which involved over 100 local people (**1.3**, Doc 02, 01). Two events engaging local forest leaders including DFO were organised to familiarise with key biodiversity of forest which was attended by 54 participants (**1.4**, Doc 12). Eco clubs were formed in six schools around Jalthal by December 2023 and were made functional (**1.6**, Doc 20, 21). Bamboo and elephant apples have been planted in Bishal CF in July-August 2023 (**1.7**, Doc 01, 06). Wetlands restoration has been initiated in Bishal, Purwa Deurali and Shanti CFs (**1.8**, Doc 01). Key features of core area, important and sensitive habitats and rare trees were introduced to stakeholders and CF leaders (**1.9**, Doc 01, 12, 19). A community nursery has been established and propagation of rare and threatened plant species has being carried out in two CFUGs: Pathivara Kalika and Kamaldhap Rampokhari (**1.4**, Doc 06, 07). Three tree species *Cycas pectinata*, *Dillenia indica*, and *Ougeinia oojeinensis* inside Jalthal forest has been protected as part of in-situ conservation (**1.3**, Doc 01, 06).

Output 2: *CFUGs, local governments and stakeholders take strong policy and operational measures to control existing and newly reported invasive alien species:* CFUGs have organised Mikania removal activities with clearing of over 70 hectares of invaded forest (**2.1**, Doc 03). *Mimosa diplotricha* (a newly introduced Invasive species) removal activities were organised. A workshop on managing IAPS was organised in two municipalities: Gauradaha municipality in February 2024 and Mechinagar Municipality in December 2023 (**2.2**, Doc 15, 22). Similarly, in a wider public participation, we have organised an awareness campaign on *Mimosa diplotricha* in two municipalities (Mechinagar and Haldibari) and around Jalthal forest (**2.3**, Doc 15). The user awareness programs were organized in six CFUGs in Jalthal on which over 200 forest users participated (**2.3**, Doc 19). A report has been prepared comparing different methods for IAPS management (**2.5**, Doc 17).

Output 3: Income and employment of forest-dependent people increased through better management of land and bioresources: Over 20 meetings were organised with CFUGs and local people to initiate forest-based enterprise that support in forest restoration (3.1, Doc 01, 02). Agroforestry has been initiated in four community forests (3.2, Doc 01). Monitoring of sapling growth has been done in bush cleaning areas (3.3, Doc 03). Production of compost manure has been continued in five CFUGs where already over 60 tons of compost have been produced.(3.4, Doc 01). Fodder trees have been identified through users' workshop (3.5, Doc 11, 01). Goat keeping women groups have been supported in three CFs which will benefit 67 poor women (3.6, Doc 18). The community participatory experiment on compost decomposition was carried in Diyalo CFUG (3.8, Doc 08).

Output 4: Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation mainstreamed in national and sub-national policy framework through active stakeholder engagement and evidence informed policy making: Rare and threatened trees of Jalthal have been identified (4.1, Doc 07) and population survey of two selected species have been completed (4.1, Doc 01). Nursery assessment has been initiated by KAFCOL and this output has been delayed (4.2). A communication material has been developed about propagation management of rare and threatened trees, it will form a basis of book/manual on propagation management, in addition selected species have been experimented in nursery (4.3, Doc 07,06). An article on iconic and threatened trees has been published in popular online national daily (4.4, Doc 27). A week-long leadership training was organised in March 2024 and eco club has been formed in six schools and they are undertaking and organising several activities (4.5, Doc 10, 20, 21). Jalthal biodiversity resource center related formal activities have yet to start, however background work has been done through meetings and interactions (4.6, Doc 01, 02). Manual on propagation of rare and threatened trees is in progress (4.8, Doc 07, 06, 26) and a policy brief has been drafted (4.8, Doc 25) and two journal articles are in progress (4.8, Doc 17, 34). Background data has been collected and a guidebook of tropical trees preparation is in progress (4.10, Doc 33, 36, 07).

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Upon completion of two years, the project has achieved some results which demonstrates that projects outputs are achievable. In general, most of the indicators are achievable which ensure projects output. In the paragraph below, figures in the parenthesis, project indicators are followed by evidence.

Output 1: Forest ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation: CFs were supported in making restoration plans (1.1, Doc 11, 34) and now many CFs have included restoration activities in their annual and periodic plans. CFs restoration activities often involved plantation of exotic species (Doc 23), but now CFs are prioritising native regeneration protection (1.2, Doc 03). Project has established nursery and has plans of transferring those seedlings to the forest so as to increase the density of rare and threatened plants. The regular forest transect walk and monitoring found the last one remaining seedling of *Ougeinia oojeinensis* (Sandan) tree in Sandan Danda of Hariyali CFUG which has been protected (1.3, Doc 01). In addition, CFs are organising activities to enhance natural regeneration (1.3 Doc 06, 07, 03). Our plantation of native fodder species in over 4-hectare forest along with wetland restoration has contributed in improving wildlife habitats (1.5, Doc 01, 03). On site interaction with key stakeholders and draft strategy has sensitised stakeholders which contributes towards better management of biodiversity rich parts of the forest (1.6, Doc 12, 13). We do not have hunting data to show measurable change but our awareness actions (targeted to local people, schools' children to officials) have positive impacts on reducing illegal wildlife hunting (1.7, Doc 14, 19, 21). Plantation of fodder trees, restoration of wetlands, conservation and propagation of rare trees and awareness among diverse stakeholders has supported in achieving forest restoration and biodiversity conservation related outputs.

Output 2: Invasive species management/control: In this year over 70 hectare of invaded forest area was cleared and brought under management for restoration (2.1, Doc 03, 01). Local actions and awareness programs were organised on recently reported invasive species (*Mimosa diplotricha*) in three municipalities in eastern Nepal (2.2, Doc 15, 19, 22). Communication material on natural regeneration protection for invasive species control has been prepared in Nepali

language to sensitise local actors (2.3, Doc 16). A draft report has been prepared which compares several methods of IAPS management and it provides advancement needed on management of those weeds (2.5, Doc 17). Field actions and awareness raising activities will support towards output 2.

Output 3: Income and employment: Project activity involved over 5000-man days' work which benefited local poor people. Similarly, people started getting benefit from agroforestry practice and goat keeping which has contributed to household income of over 300 people (3.1, Doc 01, 18). Sixty-one metric tons of compost of worth 0.6 million NPR was produced using invasive species biomass (3.2, Doc 01). We have distributed annual and perennial fodder to over 300 farmers through CFs (3.3, Doc 01). Fodder trees have been planted in over four hectares of degraded forest, however seedling survival was hardly hit by monsoon drought of 2023 June. We continue our effort this year as well (3.4, Doc 01). Sixty-seven women benefited through goat keeping and other 120 people benefited through agroforestry (3.5, Doc 18, 01).

Output 4: Mainstreaming forest restoration: Population of three rare and locally threatened species (*Cycas pectinata*, *Prunus ceylanica* and *Artocarpus chama* was undertaken) using different sampling methods (4.1, Doc 01, 05). Conservation of rare and threatened plant species has been briefly assessed and more nuanced analysis will be conducted (4.2, Doc 07, 25). We have compiled information on rare tree species and conducted some experiments in nursery to prepare propagation manual of rare trees of Nepal's lowland (4.3, Doc 06, 07). Four articles three in Nepali and two in English have been published by project team (4.4, Doc 27). 50 youths have been trained on environmental leadership (4.5, Doc 10). We have organised background activities (meetings, interactions) towards the loose network, however, no tangible results have been achieved (4.6, Doc 01). A policy brief has been drafted and it is slightly delayed (4.7, Doc 25). Data and photographs for pictorial guidebook has been prepared, authors have been identified and we are working on the MS and a prototype has been prepared (4.8, Doc 33, 36). A manuscript on management of IAPS, manuscript on population status of *Cycas* and another manuscript on germination of *Cycas* in nursery are in progress and will be finalised within Q1 of year 3 (4.9, Doc 17, 26).

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Outcome statement: *Forests restored and biodiversity conserved with substantive livelihood benefits through concrete initiatives in Jalthal forest*

The project has adopted participatory, practical and data driven approaches to forest restoration, and conservation of rare and threatened species. Project's approaches are not only scientific but also cost-effective and locally adaptive. Field interventions are interlinked so that one activity reinforces other activity (Doc 03, 09). Project is working to address biodiversity loss (Doc 7), manage invasive species (Doc 03) and restore degraded forest (Doc 04, 11, 13). These activities are now have been realised by CFUGs as their regular job. Project has combined both field level actions and policy level engagement to assure sustainability of project activities. Top bureaucrats and elected representatives of local governments have committed towards addressing biodiversity challenges, which helps making project interventions sustainable and impactful (Doc 01). In addition, project has been working with top level political leaders from the regions to ensure sustained restoration and conservation (Doc 01).

Projects activity of forest restoration and invasive species control are linked with income of CF and forest dependent local people. Linking forest management with income generation will help in sustaining these actions towards projects anticipated outcomes.

Project is designed to address the pertinent biodiversity challenges, restore degraded forest and improve livelihood of forest-dependent poor people through capacity building and stakeholder engagement. Projects activities are grounded and informed by fine scale data. These all things together will contribute to the delivery of results that, in the long run, will have a wider impact on reducing ecological and social vulnerabilities.

Based on the activities in progress and coming years effort, we firmly believe that we meet the project outcomes. Indicators in general are largely valid and achievable.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Projects output and outcome level assumption still hold true. Some of the assumptions were related to time frame, for example election, while others were continuous for project life.

Assumption 1: Nepal's planned election for federal, provincial and local government will be conducted in peaceful manner and in time.

Comments: Planned election took place in all three level of government. It was peaceful and as planned. It did not have major impacts on project activities.

Assumption 2: Current legal framework of forest management and tenure arrangement of Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) will remain the same.

Comments: Yes, there has not been any major shift in the tenure arrangement. Any change would impact project outcomes.

Assumptions 3: Human-elephant conflict will remain at present level and will not exacerbate further.

Comments: Human wildlife conflicts increased compared to the project development period. We are updated with the field situation. We are trying to keep our staff and field workers safe. This changed situation has some impacts on our activities and timing. We need to see how it develops in the future.

Assumption 4: Local government and federal government support organic farming and current targets of increasing soil organic matter to 4%.

Comments: Although government has policy of increasing soil organic matter but there lack solid programs towards it. Recently, local governments have made some support in organic manure production and turmeric cultivation in Jalthal area (Doc 01).

Assumption 5: Local government understand the threat and severity of invasive species.

Comment: Through series of interactions and meetings, project has developed an awareness about invasive species among local governments of project sites (Doc 01)

Assumption 6: Federal government works towards commitment of controlling invasive species as envisioned by Nepal biodiversity strategy and action plan.

Comments: There is policy of supporting invasive species control but lacks a concrete action by the governments. Recently, policy level officials at the Ministry of Forest have committed towards specific programs for invasive species management.

Assumption 7: Community forest secure extra resources through local governments (especially Prime Minister employment programme) for invasive species control program.

Comments: Local governments have assured us about supporting invasive species control. Hopefully, it will be incorporated in coming fiscal year arrangements.

Assumption 8: Community forest user groups invest portion of their income in poverty reduction as provisioned by the Forest Act 2019.

Comment: There is mixed response. Some CFs are seriously working while others need to invest more. In addition, the regulating body (DFO) also needs to monitor CFs investment in forest management (Doc 01, 02).



Photograph: On site discussion about forest restoration in Pathibhara Kalika CF

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction

Impact statements: *Resilience of forest increased, socio-ecological vulnerabilities reduced with restored forest, enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem services through better land management*

Project's approach of participatory restoration planning and implementation, and data-informed forest management is expected to have long term and wider impact. Diverse field interventions are interlinked so that one activity reinforces other activity (Doc 16). Project is working to address biodiversity loss (Doc 11, 13), manage invasive species (Doc 09, 03) and restore degraded forest (Doc 15, 16). Project introduced/supported activities are now part of CF management plans (Doc 34, 13)

Project has clearly demonstrated that the wicked problem of invasive species can be solved by using ecological approaches and also sensitised stakeholders to safeguard the dwindling biodiversity. These two activities will have lasting impacts in biodiversity conservation and forest restoration.

Project is designed to address the pertinent biodiversity challenges, restore degraded forest and improve livelihood of forest-dependent poor people through capacity building and stakeholder engagement. Projects activities are grounded and informed by fine scale data. These all things together will contribute to the delivery of results that, in the long run, will have a wider impact on reducing ecological and social vulnerabilities.

Forest restoration, biodiversity conservation and improved management of forest altogether will contribute towards enhancing the social and ecological resilience.

4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

Projects activities and results directly or indirectly contribute to multiple national policies and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Some of the outputs contribute to more than one policy.

First of all, the project has been working to restore the degraded Jalthal forest and to conserve its biodiversity, directly contributing to the UN Decade of Restoration (2021-2030), a major international initiative of this decade. Similarly, project activities on restoration of degraded forest and managing land for conservation are very well aligned with Target 1 and 2 of Global Target for 2030, Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and Goal A and B of Kunming-Montreal Global Goals for 2050.

Projects' output includes substantial control in Invasive Alien Species (IAS) infestation, promotion of the growth of native species (and discouraging exotics), ecosystem restoration and increased supply of ecosystem services, enhanced livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, adoption of/scaling up successful models, and increased stakeholder capacity (Doc 01, 03, 06, 07). These activities/outputs will collectively contribute to the CBD Goals (A-D) and Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) (Mainly targets-2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 20). Management of invasive species (prevention, Control and eradication, Doc 03, 22) will specifically contribute towards CBD Article 8(h) and Post 2020 Biodiversity framework, target 6.

Jalthal forest is managed natural biodiversity rich forest (Sharma et al 2021), which represents CBD's Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) and conservation in OECMs is an important goal of GBF.

Project activities include local-level planning and capacity building for forest restoration, which is also a priority action envisioned by the Nepal Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 2014-2020). Our activity of managing invasive species will contribute towards NBSAP strategy of Nepal.

Enhancing carbon stock and its sequestration by reducing forest degradation is an important policy goal of Nepal's REDD+ strategy 2018, which is also clearly mentioned in Nepal's second NDC report 2021. Controlling of IAS, promotion of native species (Doc 01, 03), and enhancing livelihoods through promotion of agroforestry are also the high priority actions suggested by the National REDD+ Strategy 2018. Similarly enhancing carbon sequestration through sustainable forest management and mitigation of IAS is a strategy of the National Climate Change Policy 2019. Furthermore, our activities will contribute to the ambitions set by UN decade on Ecosystem

restoration and will follow the 10 golden rules of forest restoration recently proposed by Sacco et al. 2021.

Similarly, restoration of wetlands for enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem services (Doc 01, 06) directly serve to achieve strategic goals, particularly Goal 3 target 12 and 13 of the fourth Ramsar strategic plans of 2016-2024.

5. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

The project works to restore degraded forest, conserve biodiversity and enhance livelihood of forest dependent poor people through invasive species management, local capacity development and sustainable management of forest. The project’s beneficiary are primarily forest dependent local people mainly from indigenous communities. Women, poor people and indigenous communities have higher dependency on forest resources. Forest degradation affects all of them. Project activities on forest restoration using ecological approaches enhances the availability of environmental services from the forest. This will have benefit to local people. Project is contributing directly to increase the income of local people.

1. Project engages local people in its restoration related activities. Project directly engaged over 5000-man days' work to over 300 poor households. This provided short term income opportunity for needy economically poor households.
2. Project has promoted agroforestry as a viable strategy of forest restoration. Current model of agroforestry engaging local poor people provides income opportunities for over 100 households who are currently benefiting from agroforestry (Doc 9). Agroforestry not only benefits people but also biodiversity especially on the management of invasive species.
3. Project has supported women in Goat keeping which is a source of cash income for poor families (Doc 18).
4. Compost production using invasive species has already started showing the positive impacts on agriculture and reducing the dependency on chemical fertilizer (Doc 01).
5. Project has promoted multipurpose forest management. Multipurpose management minimizes the elite capture of resources and benefits poor, indigenous people and women.

6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board ¹ .	We have four full time staff in the project, two are Female. Our Field team has been led by female since the beginning.
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women ² .	One of our partner FECOFUN has 50% women are in the leadership. ForestAction and KAFCOI yet to achieve this.

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
Not yet sensitive	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
Sensitive	The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their	

¹ A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

² Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

	design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	
Empowering	The project has all the characteristics of a 'sensitive' approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups	X
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

Project has been working at several level to empower and support women, indigenous and economically poor people to enhance their stake in natural resource access and management.

Project has promoted women participation in various stages of project management. Projects field team is led by female candidate and our social mobiliser is also female from local indigenous community. We have also appointed nursery assistant which is also a local from indigenous community. Our forest technician is also from indigenous community. Having worked in the project means capacity enhancement of these staff in their early stage of career.

The project has supported in exposure and learning of the project staff. A blog about project intervention is led by field officer Ms Muna Bhattarai and a journal article is led by Rabindra Pun Magar (Doc 26).

Women's power is limited due to lack or low access to financial resources. Realising this project supported women from poor households in income generating activities (Doc 01, 18).

Project has been supporting in multipurpose management of community forest. Conventional management focusses on high value timber species which undermines diverse need of local people. With multiple ecosystem services, local poor and indigenous people will have enhanced access to forest environmental services.

We have also supported women participation in project activities by organising relatively short events. Generally, our programs are not longer than 4-5 hours this helps women to attend the programs.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

ForestAction Nepal as the project lead has responsibility of monitoring and evaluation. The project does not have separate team for the monitoring rather this is embedded in the projects current structure. Monitoring of the project against the set targets is the responsibility of the lead organization i.e., ForestAction. Project monitoring and evaluation is a continuous process throughout the project life. Project M&E is an adaptive process. Project indicators will be closely monitored, and strategies will be prepared for maximum possible achievement. Monitoring will be done by the project leader, CoPI from KAFCOL Dr. Ambika P. Gautam and RBGE researcher Dr. Bhaskar Adhikari. Project manager will report to PI and CoPI and he will be responsible to implement the day-to-day activities.

- Baseline data and photographs have been taken at the start of the project which will be used to demonstrate changes caused by project interventions. Permanent plot for carbon measurement has been established. Data of compost production has been maintained. These data will be analyzed to measure the impact towards the end of the project.
- Project activities are shared and discussed in board and staff meetings at ForestAction Nepal at regular intervals for feedback and to discuss the achievements and also the strategies to overcome the problems.

- To monitor the field activities, ForestAction Nepal has formed a project management committee, which regularly monitors project activities. In every six-month, project team needs to update the project's progress at internal meetings of FA. We also need to update progress to Social Welfare Council (SWC) and local government. For accounting and administrative purpose in ForestAction, we need to present brief report about achievement after each fieldwork. We conduct activities according to our project timeline. In the beginning of year 3, a reflection on year 2 was done and planning for year 3 was done by involving all project partners and stakeholders at local level. These arrangements help us monitoring project activities and outputs.
- We have day to day communication with local people and we have shared our targets and activities to locals. This keeps us a kind of sense of accountability to our local stakeholders.
- Similarly, DFO and local governments invite us to share our plans and activities this also helps us in self-monitoring and evaluation.
- Our activities are under scrutiny of government authorities this helps in improving self-monitoring.
- Field staff meet regularly in project site office to discuss the plans and achievement to report the project manager. This is also a way to monitor the project activities.

We evaluate our activities and output indicators against outputs and outcomes. So far, we think that our indicators are valid to deliver the outputs.

We have made some adjustment on work arrangement to better deliver but remain the same with existing self-organized and internal M & E process. We will prioritise consolidating results through narrative writing and more dialogue with stakeholders.

8. Lessons learnt

The project has made several achievements and made an exemplary progress and raised the profile among other donor funded projects in Nepal. However, we have learned the following lessons in the past two years:

- a. Balancing scattered diverse and intense fine actions: We started with the ambitious plans with many activities in all community forests. However, we now think that diverse activities at many sites preventing us from focusing on intensive and in-depth interventions on the specific sites. Given our staffing and expertise, we realized that the better results can be achieved on the focused action on the specific sites. For example, we initiated producing compost in six CFs but now running successfully in only 3 sites, it would have been better to work only on 2-3 CFs at the start.
- b. Climatic uncertainty in short term projects: Although our plan for fodder development and restoration was robust, the climatic uncertainties impacted us to achieve the target. For example, in 2023, early monsoon drought affected the growth of seedlings, and it was difficult to protect the plantation and new regeneration.
- c. Balancing political interest: We had a plan to form a network of 22 CFUGs and this is a complicated and a political process. Several meetings have been organized with stakeholders. Some members of the community leaders were skeptical on its formation. They think that such network undermines their own network, and they think that their stake will be weaker with such extra structures. More dialogue is necessary, and we are still hopeful to form a network.
- d. Strong evidence is required for policy response: Agroforestry policy and practice in forest land was very conventional and favored mainly medicinal plants (jadibuti). This approach was guided by economic motivation. Growing crops was not a common practice. We introduced turmeric in the agroforest. In the beginning forestry officials were reluctant on turmeric. With our piloting we demonstrated that turmeric is a viable and practical crop for intercropping. Now forest officials agreed that agroforestry needs to be context specific and should consider ecological aspects too.
- e. Linking good practice to policy process: We have demonstrated practical models of invasive species control and agroforestry. Despite of these local scale good practices, policy uptake is slow. We have to work on several fronts to enhance policy level

acceptance. Consolidating results on the ground, more engagement with policy level actors, and production of powerful narratives are required, and we will be investing our full energy in those areas.

- f. Currently we do not have plan for change request, we may approach to DI after completion of our internal review of the project activities in June-July.

9. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

In the year 1 report we got a very constructive comments from the reviewers. Reviewers have some suggestions. Project partners received the reviewers report very positively. We like to respond reviewers concerns here.

- a) Project exit strategy: we have prepared project strategy document, and it has been attached separately (Doc. 30).
- b) Projects monitoring and evaluation plan: Many donors funded projects have separate unit and resources for M&E. We do not have separate team for M& E rather we run project by small team and want to have more resources in field action. We, therefore, embedded M&E in projects current structure. At this stage, we are not certain if we can make a separate plan and provision for this. We think having self-organised M& E and public accountability will be more helpful than organising separate M & E. However, we thank reviewer and consider projects making projects monitoring more organised and frequent. We have addressed this issue in section 7 as well.
- c) Revolving fund: Before starting the project, we discussed about how to manage income from CFUGs. We supported what they wanted. Some wanted to lease out land for poor households through a contract while some others opted to run agroforestry CFUGs themselves. After reviewers comments we discussed about the fund with CFUGs, they were not interested in this, and they committed for continuing agroforestry regularly on their own.
- d) Photos: This is good suggestions to include photos in the text. We have inserted few photos in the text, however, due to page limit we could not accommodate many photos in the main report. We have included representative photos in the supporting reports.
- e) M and E reports: This relates to point b above. We will strengthen our self-organised M & E. We have clearly stated whenever we failed to meet the targets and our areas of relative strength. Given the emphasis of review on M &E, we revisited our self-organised monitoring to support the projects outputs.

10. Risk Management

We have maintained risk register and update the cases accordingly. Project coordinator maintains the risk register. Human-elephant conflict has remained the same as last year. We have rescheduled activities in the forest interior to reduce possible encounter with elephant. Forest fire was main risk to secure forest plantation and restoration success. This year we have worked to prevent forest fire by reducing the fuel load (leaf litter) in the forest.

11. Sustainability and legacy

Building on a local and national recognition of previous Darwin project, this project has several advantages. Since the beginning, this project has a good profile and got a warm reception. We first believe that project will have legacy on its own and we have additional activities to ensure lasting legacy of the project.

- Project's low cost, effective and localised approaches in forest restoration (Doc 9) and biodiversity conservation (Doc 7) will be adapted by stakeholders even after the project completion. Project is working to form a network of 22 CFUGs. We will train and support the network; The network will be coordinating future development in the project site. In addition, project is working with the key and local stakeholders of forest management, i. e. CFUGs (Doc 01, 02). As our activities are carried out by CFUGs, we believe, project activities, will be continued by them. Project has prepared scientific foundations to tackle

the biodiversity challenges and invested in local capacity building, which will also be the basis for the continuation of project's legacy.

- Projects major activities such as forest restoration, invasive species management and agroforestry are now part of CFUGs regular plan (Doc 11, 34). This is a basis for project's legacy beyond project life.
- Project has organised interactions with local governments and province governments (Doc 01) where governments have shown interest in project activities and are willing to support some interventions. Previously there were not any programs of local government to support CFUGs but now they are planning to support.
- Project has created interest in other organizations as well. Projects legacy and sustainability can be seen from the visitor coming to see Jalthal forest and our activities. Until two years ago, there were no external visitors to the sites. Now there is growing interest in different institutions about our project and our sites (Doc 32)

12. Darwin Initiative identity

Forestation Nepal has always acknowledged DI UK as a funding agency of the project. DI UK has been acknowledged through diverse means and in all activities.

1. This is a standalone project funded by Darwin Initiative, UK and the project has clear aim and objectives. This information has been maintained throughout all our activities. Researchers especially botanists, ecologists and wildlife biologist, stakeholders related to forest and invasive species, CFUG leaders and local governments are aware of the project and its source of funding. Local journalists are also aware of the project and DI.

2. We have prepared detail account of the project in Nepali language to inform local people about the project (Doc 29). We have clearly mentioned that this project is funded by DI, UK. This document is circulated in project area and to relevant stakeholders in different parts of the country. Similarly, we have prepared the project approach for conserving rare and threatened plant species (Doc 7). We have used Darwin Initiative logo in all the public documents and awareness raising materials (Doc 31).

3. We are proud to mention that among the numerous projects funded by donors in Nepal, our project has a notable profile both at project site and at National level. The project has been known to most of the professional and government agencies working in biodiversity conservation and restoration. In one program member of the federal parliament mention that this project stands tall among projects operating in Nepal. Local governments highlight project achievement in giving a distinct identity to Jalthal forest among wider audiences.

4. We have mentioned DI in all formal communications, for example, invitation letters to the participants, guests, etc. In all the program banners, we have used the Darwin logo. We have informed authorities (federal government and local governments) about the funding source i.e., Darwin Initiative. In a presentation in Kathmandu, we had opportunity to explain DI's funding areas while responding a government officers' questions about the nature of funding of DI.

5. In all the presentations made by project staffs DI logo has been used in the cover (front) page of presentation. We have presented about various aspects of the project with federal, provincial and local governments. We have also indicated the project even in the main text of publication (Doc-07).

6. Projects Facebook account is popular (2.5 K followers) in project locality; we have mentioned about DI in the page. Projects twitter account now has been linked with Darwin Initiatives twitter handle. We mention DI in each tweet.



Photograph: Participants of one week long environmental leadership training March 2024



In situ discussion about core area management and key biodiversity features of Jalthal forest

13. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	Yes
Have any concerns been reported in the past 12 months	Yes/No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	Yes/No [Rahul [REDACTED], Executive coordinator]
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	NO
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	Past: 10 % [3] Planned:10 % [3]
Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses. NA	
Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify. Yes, we are planning to organize a safeguard training to our staffs at ForestAction Nepal.	
Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the past 12 months; include topics covered and number of participants. We have organised wildlife poaching interaction, invasive species sensitisation programs. Which were attended by 90 people.	
Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your project over the past year? If yes, please outline how this was resolved. Yes, there were concerns of staff safety. Safety from wildlife and forest fire. No casualties have been reported so far.	

14. Project expenditure

Please expand and complete Table 1. If all receipts have not yet been received, please provide indicative figures and clearly mark them as Draft. The Actual claim form will be taken as the final accounting for funds.

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Consultancy costs	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Overhead Costs	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Travel and subsistence	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Operating Costs	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Capital items (see below)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Others (see below)				
TOTAL				

Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			RBGE experts time contribution in the project
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)	NA		

11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

NA

12. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes.

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

File Type (Image /Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption including description, country and credit	Social media accounts and websites to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
				Yes / No
				Yes / No



Forest walk and discussion with school teachers and students of Eco-clubs



Forest users awareness program at Durgabhitia CF

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2023-2024

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2023 - March 2024	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Impact</p> <p><i>Resilience of forest increased, socio-ecological vulnerabilities reduced with restored forest, enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem services through better land management</i></p>	<p>Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation has been initiated through integrated management of degraded forest, local scale planning and capacity enhancement (Doc 11). Similarly, conservation action for rare and threatened trees initiated (Doc 6). Forest restoration has been linked with income of forest dependent people (Doc 09). Conserved biodiversity, restored forest and local ownership on forests resources will eventually enhance resilience of both ecological and social systems</p>	
<p>Outcome <i>Forests restored and biodiversity conserved with substantive livelihood benefits through concrete initiatives in Jalthal forest</i></p>		
<p>0.1 Over 5000 people of 22 CFUGs from Jalthal directly benefited by end of the project from capacity building trainings, agroforestry, fodder orchards, goat farming, compost production and temporary job opportunities created by the project</p> <p>0.2 Plans for restoration of degraded forest patches prepared and implemented in five CFUGs by end of year 2.</p> <p>0.3. IAS fully controlled in 500 hectare forest with 25,000 saplings of native species protected</p> <p>0.4. Forest carbon stock doubled (as of baseline of previous project) in selected degraded patches (ca. 100ha), by end of the project.</p> <p>0.5. Population of saplings of threatened and rare trees doubled in Jalthal forest by end of year 3</p> <p>0.6. Compost production method (decomposition time) improved with 100 metric tons of compost produced using invasive species biomass by end of year 3.</p> <p>0.7. A sustainable model of agroforestry approach of forest restoration and invasive species management developed and scaled out by end of year 2</p> <p>0.8. A new generation of conservation leaders (n=300) developed through capacity building packages by end of year 2.</p> <p>0.9. A Jalthal Biodiversity Resource Centre established and functional which also provides a platform for networking of 22 CFUGs of the area</p> <p>0.10. Forest regulations and Guidelines becomes more clear and concrete on forest restoration and biodiversity conservation in CF</p>	<p>0.1. Over 5000 people have already directly connected with project in bush removal, restoration plans, trainings and goat keeping (Doc 01, 02, 03)</p> <p>0.2. Restoration plans have been prepared in three CFs through series of meetings and planning workshop (Doc 04, 11)</p> <p>0.3. Invasive species control has been started and continued; so far over 70 hectares has been cleared in this year (Doc 03)</p> <p>0.4. This is covered in year 1 report and will be analysed in year 3.</p> <p>0.5. Population assessment of <i>Prunus ceylanica</i> (EN), <i>Cycas pectinata</i> (VU) and <i>Artocarpus Chama</i> (Locally threatened) conducted and conservation measures have adopted for other rare plants (Doc 5, 6, 7)</p> <p>0.6. Compost experiment to demonstrate locals has started and so far over 60 metric tons of compost produced (Doc 01, 8)</p> <p>0.7. We have initiated integrated site management with strong agroforestry component and local people already started benefiting from the practice (Doc 09).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Invasive species cleaning as a campaign will be continued</i> ➤ <i>More focus on Natural regeneration protection</i> ➤ <i>Implementation of restoration plans</i> ➤ <i>Agroforestry support</i> ➤ <i>Compost production continued</i> ➤ <i>Capacity development of youths and CFUG leaders</i> ➤ <i>Rare tree propagation and dissemination</i> ➤ <i>Wetlands and forest habitats improvement</i> ➤ <i>Projects results will be consolidated and published</i>

<p>011. Scientific assessments and other data are analysed, synthesised, published and communicated to academic and policy actors (books-2, policy brief-1, journal articles-2) by end of year 3.</p>	<p>0.8. Over 150 people were trained in the reporting year. This includes 27 youths who got one week long residential training (Doc 01, 10).</p> <p>0.9. There have been interaction and informal discussion and political lobbying for the structure. Our engagement and dialogue have opened discussion on how to manage the forest to integrate conservation and sustainable livelihood (Doc 02)</p> <p>0.10. Forest management plans have incorporated forest restoration and biodiversity conservation (Doc 34)</p> <p>0.11. Policy briefs and journal articles have been drafted (Doc 25, 26, 33)</p>	
<p>Output 1 Forest ecosystem restored and biodiversity conserved in Jalthal community forests</p>		
<p>Output indicator 1.1 Forest restoration plans developed and integrated in the regular CFOPs, and implemented in five most degraded community forests by end of year 2</p>	<p>Five most degraded forest have been identified and so far three plans have been prepared (Doc 11).</p>	<p>Planning and implementation continues</p>
<p>1.2 Natural regeneration promoted against plantation of exotic species (the approach piloted by previous project), more than 25,000 saplings rescued and protected in degraded patches by end of year 3</p>	<p>Natural regeneration protection has been prioritised. So far over 80,000 seedlings of sixty species have been protected in 12 CFs (Doc 03)</p>	<p>Natural regeneration protection continues</p>
<p>1.3 Density of threatened and prioritised (for conservation by previous project) species increased at sapling layers by 50% across Jalthal forest by end of the project (as of baseline of previous project).</p>	<p>Rare and threatened trees have been protected in natural habitat and dispersed and reintroduced through nursery practice. Over 1800 seedlings of rare and locally threatened species have been propagated in nursery established by the project (Doc 03, 06, 07).</p>	<p>Propagated seedlings will be transferred to the appropriate places</p>
<p>1.4 Forest carbon stock doubled in selected degraded patches (ca.100ha) by end of year 3.</p>	<p>Base line data has been collected making permanent plots and rest will be done towards the end of the project (Year 1 report).</p>	<p>Final data collection</p>
<p>1.5 Wildlife habitat improved through forest fringe plantation (5 ha) and waterholes (n=5) restored by end of year 3</p>	<p>Over 7,000 seedlings have been planted in year 2 in 4.5-hectare land but seedling survival is low due to monsoon season drought in 2023 (Doc 01)</p>	<p>Wildlife friendly plantation and wetland restoration will be continued.</p>
<p>1.6 Conservation Strategy for core areas and biodiversity hotspots prepared and adopted by end of year 2.</p>	<p>Through series of interactions and forest transect walks a draft core area strategy has been prepared and shared among stakeholders (Doc 12, 13).</p>	<p>This strategy will be finalised</p>
<p>1.7 Hunting of critically endangered species minimized in Jalthal forest</p>	<p>Hunting control and awareness related activities were organised and hunting is reported to decrease, but we do not</p>	<p>More program on awareness raising</p>

	have credible data to show the reduction though (Doc 14 a, b).	
Output 2. CFUGs, local governments and stakeholders take strong policy and operational measures to control existing and newly reported invasive alien species		
2.1 500ha of forest cleared from <i>Mikania micrantha</i> through expansion of previous piloting.	Over 70 hectare of invasive species invaded area has been cleared in 12 community forests in this year (Doc 03, 01).	More area will be cleared
2.2 Recently reported IAS (<i>Mimosa diplotricha</i>) monitored and eliminated in newly constructed roads and sand heaps (over 500 locations around Jalthal and its potential risks communicated widely by end of year 1	<i>Mimosa diplotricha</i> removal has been organised in Haldibari RM and Mechinagar Municipality and removed in several points (Doc 15). Similarly, a communication material about the species has been published (Doc 35)	
2.3 'Natural regeneration rescue' method will be published and widely disseminated as a new technological innovation to control invasive species by year 1	Natural regeneration protection broacher has been updated and shared with diverse audiences (Doc 16).	
2.4 A report on comparative analysis of different methods of IAS management piloted in Jalthal prepared and disseminated by end of year 1.	2.4. Draft report on IAS management has been prepared (Doc 17) which will be submitted to journal soon.	Will be finalised the draft with more data and cases
Output 3. Income and employment of forest dependent people increased through better management of land and bio resources		
3.1 Income of poor households (n=300) increased by 20% (as per the baseline of project start) by the end of the project.	Sixty seven women have generated a total of Nrs 350K from goat (Doc 18) and 120 people from agroforestry in year 2 (Doc 01). This contributes towards nearly a fifth of household income.	Monitoring and promotion of women groups.
3.2 A total of 100 metric tons of compost produced in four community forests with an income of 1.5 million rupees by end of year 3.	A total of 61 metric ton equivalent of 0.6 million NRs was produced by five CFs (Doc 01, 07, 08)	More production of compost
3.3. Fodder orchard developed in 5ha through plantation of native species (n=5000) by end of year 2.	Fodder plantation (n=7000) was done in 4.5 hectare in Diyalo, Bishal and Kamaldhap CFs (Doc 01) .	Protection of existing will be prioritised
3.4 Fodder orchards developed in 500 farms through plantation of native species (n=10,000) by end of year 3.	Seasonal and perennial fodder species were distributed to farmers (Doc 01)	More fodder plantation in private lands.
3.5 200 poor women benefited from goat keeping schemes by end of year 3, and 100 more women will be benefited from agroforestry.	A total of 67 women benefited from goat keeping and 100 people (mainly women) benefited from turmeric cultivation in invasive species covered area (Doc 18, 01)	Monitoring of last year's activities
Output 4: Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation mainstreamed in national and sub-national policy framework through active stakeholder engagement and evidence informed policy making		

4.1 Comprehensive assessment of population structure of 5 rare and globally threatened tree species conducted using two stage adaptive cluster sampling (species identified as so by previous project) by end of year 1	Population of three species namely <i>Cycas pectinata</i> , <i>Prunus ceylanica</i> and <i>Artocarpus chama</i> has been conducted (Doc 05) and data will be analysed in Q1 of year 3.	More survey for other two species
4.2 Gap analysis of government policies and programs on conservation of rare and endangered species (including nurseries, training curriculum) conducted and communicated to stakeholders by end of year 1.	This has partly been done and the progress is slow.	Review and the report preparation will continue.
4.3 A bilingual manual for propagation management for Nepal's rare and threatened tree species (n=20) prepared and distributed by end of year 3.	Background information through prior publication and experiment has been collected and the MS will be drafted before the plan (Doc 6, 7).	Work on the Manuscript
4.4 Five newspaper articles on biodiversity conservation (including rare and threatened plant species) published by end of year 2	Five Newspaper articles have been published and link has been provided (Doc 27)	One more article will be published
4.5 75 local youths (in three batches) from eastern Nepal selected and provided with conservation leadership training by end of year 2	50 Youths have already gained well designed environmental leadership training (Doc 10)	Follow-up for past trainee and new cohort admission
4.6 An institutional arrangement to coordinate among 22 CFUGs in Jalthal forest established by end of year 2	Background work is being done through meetings and interactions (Doc 01, 02)	More meetings and dialogues will be organised
4.7 A policy brief highlighting gaps in policies and barriers in actions for forest restoration published by end of year 2	Draft policy brief has been prepared and will be finalised before June 2024 (Doc 25).	Finalising the draft
4.8 A pictorial guidebook on conservation status of 150 tree species of Nepal prepared and published by end of year 2	We have background information and will be working in the MS from June 2024 (Doc 33, for sample page and 36 for checklist)	Work on the MS
4.9 Two journal articles on IAS management and status of threatened species published	One journal article about propagation of IUCN red listed species <i>Cycas pectinata</i> has been prepared and ready to submit (Doc 26)	Preparation of MS and submission

Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project Summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: Resilience of forest increased, socio-ecological vulnerabilities reduced with restored forest, enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem services through better land management (Max 30 words)			
Outcome: (Max 30 words) Forests restored and biodiversity conserved with substantive livelihood benefits through concrete initiatives in Jalthal forest	0.1 Over 5000 people of 22 CFUGs from Jalthal directly benefited by end of the project from capacity building trainings, agroforestry, fodder orchards, goat farming, compost production and temporary job opportunities created by the project 0.2 Plans for restoration of degraded forest patches prepared and implemented in five CFUGs by end of year 2. 03. IAS fully controlled in 500 hectare forest with 25,000 saplings of native species protected 04. Forest carbon stock doubled (as of baseline of previous project) in selected degraded patches (ca. 100ha), by end of the project. 05. Population of saplings of threatened and rare trees doubled in Jalthal forest by end of year 3 06. Compost production method (decomposition time) improved with 100 metric tons of compost produced using invasive species biomass by end of year 3. 07. A sustainable model of agroforestry approach of forest restoration and invasive species management developed and scaled out by end of year 2 08. A new generation of conservation leaders (n=300) developed through capacity building packages by end of year 2. 09. A Jalthal Biodiversity Resource Centre established and functional which also provides a platform for networking of 22 CFUGs of the area 010. Forest regulations and Guidelines becomes more clear and concrete on forest restoration and biodiversity conservation in CF 011. Scientific assessments and other data are analysed, synthesised, published and communicated to academic and policy actors	0.1 Social media posts, news cover, community forest user groups, record book 0.2 Printed and e copies of plans, CFUG minutes 0.3 Peer reviewed publications and newspaper article 0.4 Users record book, baseline and end line survey 0.5 Activity report, news cover, activity report, Log book of seedling distribution 0.6. Survey report 0.7. Project report, CFUG minutes, news articles 0.8. Project reports, CFUGs report. 0.9 Training manual, participants project work, program hands out 0.10. News article, project report, social media posts 0.11 Printed and e-copy of published documents	1.1 Nepal's planned election for federal, provincial and local government will be conducted in peaceful manner and in time 1.2 Current legal framework of forest management and tenure arrangement of Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) will remain the same. 1.3 Human-elephant conflict will remain at present level and will not exacerbate further. 1.4 Local government and federal government support organic farming and current targets of increasing soil organic matter to 4%.

	(books-2, policy brief-1, journal articles-2) by end of year 3.		
Outputs 1 Forest ecosystem restored and biodiversity conserved in Jalthal community forests	<p>1.1 Forest restoration plans developed and integrated in the regular CFOPs, and implemented in five most degraded community forests by end of year 2</p> <p>1.2 Natural regeneration promoted against plantation of exotic species (the approach piloted by previous project), more than 25,000 saplings rescued and protected in degraded patches by end of year 3</p> <p>1.3 Density of threatened and prioritised (for conservation by previous project) species increased at sapling layers by 50% across Jalthal forest by end of the project (as of baseline of previous project).</p> <p>1.4 Forest carbon stock doubled in selected degraded patches (ca.100ha) by end of year 3.</p> <p>1.5 Wildlife habitat improved through forest fringe plantation (5 ha) and waterholes (n=5) restored by end of year 3</p> <p>1.6 Conservation Strategy for core areas and biodiversity hotspots prepared and adopted by end of year 2.</p> <p>1.7 Hunting of critically endangered species minimized in Jalthal forest</p>	<p>1.1. Field record, Users (community forest users group) record book, social media updates</p> <p>1.2 Copies of plans, project reports, photographs</p> <p>1.3 Project report, journal article</p> <p>1.4 Users record book, project report, news cover by media</p> <p>1.5 Users record book, Activity report</p> <p>1.6. Social media updates, field photographs and published documents</p> <p>1.7 News report, workshop reports</p>	<p>1.1 Community forests and DFO follow the provision of forest act 2019 pertaining to forest management</p> <p>1.2 Human wildlife conflict does not increase</p>
Output 2 CFUGs, local governments and stakeholders take strong policy and operational measures to control existing and newly reported invasive alien species	<p>2.2 500ha of forest cleared from <i>Mikania micrantha</i> through expansion of previous piloting.</p> <p>2.3 Recently reported IAS (<i>Mimosa diplotricha</i>) monitored and eliminated in newly constructed roads and sand heaps (over 500 locations around Jalthal and its potential risks communicated widely by end of year 1</p> <p>2.4 'Natural regeneration rescue' method will be published and widely disseminated as a new</p>	<p>2.1 CFUG report, GPS mapping, CFUG minutes</p> <p>2.1 Maps and activity reports</p> <p>2.3 Published leaflets, briefers</p> <p>2.4 Assessment report, Journal article</p> <p>2.5. Leaflets and posters</p>	<p>2.1 Local government understand the threat and severity of invasive species</p> <p>2.2 Federal government works towards commitment of controlling invasive species as envisioned by Nepal biodiversity strategy and action plan</p> <p>2.3 Community forest secure extra resources through local governments (specially Prime minister employment programme) for invasive species control program</p>

	<p>technological innovation to control invasive species by year 1</p> <p>2.5 A report on comparative analysis of different methods of IAS management piloted in Jalthal prepared and disseminated by end of year 1.</p>		
<p>Output 3 Income and employment of forest dependent people increased through better management of land and bio resources</p>	<p>3.1 Income of poor households (n=300) increased by 20% (as per the baseline of project start) by the end of the project.</p> <p>3.2 A total of 100 metric tons of compost produced in four community forests with an income of 1.5 million rupees by end of year 3.</p> <p>3.3. Fodder orchard developed in 5ha through plantation of native species (n=5000) by end of year 2.</p> <p>3.4 Fodder orchards developed in 500 farms through plantation of native species (n=10,000) by end of year 3.</p> <p>3.5 200 poor women benefited from goat keeping schemes by end of year 3, and 100 more women will be benefited from agroforestry.</p>	<p>3.1 Baseline and end line survey of target groups/beneficiaries</p> <p>3.2 CFUG reports, project reports, photographs</p> <p>3.3 Plantation report, meeting minutes, social media posts</p> <p>3.4 Participants survey report</p> <p>3.4. Event report, news coverage in local news papers</p> <p>3.5 Activity report, social media posts, plantation report, CFUG minutes</p>	<p>3.1 Local government are willing to link their poverty reduction activities with community forest user groups</p> <p>3.2 Community forest user group invest portion of their income in poverty reduction as provisioned by forest act 2019</p>
<p>Output 4 Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation mainstreamed in national and sub-national policy framework through active stakeholder engagement and evidence informed policy making</p>	<p>4.2 Comprehensive assessment of population structure of 5 rare and globally threatened tree species conducted using two stage adaptive cluster sampling (species identified as so by previous project) by end of year 1</p> <p>4.3 Gap analysis of government policies and programs on conservation of rare and endangered species (including nurseries, training curriculum) conducted and communicated to stakeholders by end of year 1.</p> <p>4.4 A bilingual manual for propagation management for Nepal's rare and threatened tree species (n=20) prepared and distributed by end of year 3.</p>	<p>4.1. Assessment report, peer reviewed publication</p> <p>4.2. Assessment report, articles on local journals,</p> <p>4.3. Printed copies and PDFs of Manuals</p> <p>4.4 Published articles</p> <p>4.5 Training report, training materials (hands out slides, participants project work)</p> <p>4.6. Meeting report, decision of the network</p>	<p>4.1. Market of compost does not fall and the locals increase compost use</p> <p>4.2. Training participants develop strong leadership after completion of the project</p> <p>4.3. Local governments take stake in the research highlights presented by the project</p> <p>4.4. Regulatory mechanisms in forest-based enterprises do not change in near term</p>

	<p>4.5 Five newspaper articles on biodiversity conservation (including rare and threatened plant species) published by end of year 2</p> <p>4.6 75 local youths (in three batches) from eastern Nepal selected and provided with conservation leadership training by end of year 2</p> <p>4.7 An institutional arrangement to coordinate among 22 CFUGs in Jalthal forest established by end of year 2</p> <p>4.8 A policy brief highlighting gaps in policies and barriers in actions for forest restoration published by end of year 2</p> <p>4.9 A pictorial guidebook on conservation status of 150 tree species of Nepal prepared and published by end of year 2</p> <p>4.10 Two journal articles on IAS management and status of threatened species published</p>	<p>4.7. Printed and e copies of the policy brief</p> <p>4.8. Published guide book printed and e-copies,</p> <p>4.9 Published articles</p>	
<p>Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>Output 1: Forest ecosystem restored and biodiversity conserved in Jalthal community forests</p> <p>1.1 Organize project inception (n=1), annual review (n=3), planning (n=10) and exit/sharing (n=1) meetings/workshops engaging relevant stakeholders</p> <p>1.2 Conduct participatory mapping to identify most degraded forest patches, prepare restoration plans for these sites and their core zones with respective CFUGs.</p> <p>1.3 Train CFUG leaders and forest patrolling team to rescue, protect and nurture natural regeneration of trees</p> <p>1.4 Support CFUGs and train forest patrolling team to propagate, plant, protect and monitor rare and threatened plant species</p> <p>1.5 Organise workshops on challenges of wildlife hunting and strategies to minimize it, with local and indigenous community leaders and stakeholders</p> <p>1.6 Support secondary schools around Jalthal in establishing eco-clubs and provide awareness training and materials</p> <p>1.7 Plant bamboo culms and elephant apples in forest fringes (total 5 hectare)</p> <p>1.8 Support and sensitise to improve habitats and wetland management in community forests</p> <p>1.9 Train CFUG leaders in Jalthal to protect key structural features of Jalthal biodiversity</p> <p>Output 2: CFUGs, local governments and stakeholders take strong policy and operational measures to control existing and newly reported invasive alien species</p> <p>2.1 Support CFUGs to remove Mikania in invaded area, monitor the changes and protect natural regeneration</p>			

- 2.2 Carryout spatial mapping and monitoring of the newly reported IAS (*Mimosa diplotricha*) in Nepal and assess its expansion and impacts, especially livestock loss
- 2.3 Train CFUGs and stakeholders on the management of *Mimosa*, and develop the reporting mechanism of any further new introductions
- 2.4 Eliminate *Mimosa diplotricha* in newly constructed roads and sand heaps (over 500 locations around Jalthal) and assess potential risks and communicate widely
- 2.5 Conduct comparative analysis of different methods of IAS management piloted in Jalthal
- 2.6 Prepare, publish and disseminate communication materials on evidence based best practices on invasive species management at local levels in Nepali and English language
- 2.7 Organise two meetings in Province 1 and five local government level seminars to share lessons from Jalthal seeking their support to incorporate invasive species management in their budgets and programmes

Output 3: Income and employment of forest dependent people increased through better management of land and bio resources

- 3.1 Organise meetings among CFUGs, and between CFUGs and target beneficiaries on potential agroforestry options and sites and facilitate negotiation between CFUGs and interested groups on the terms and conditions of land allocation.
- 3.2 Support targeted households to undertake agroforestry activities (e.g. Turmeric and Ginger)
- 3.3 Conduct participatory monitoring to ensure sapling protection and growth in agroforestry sites
- 3.4 Support CFUGs in establishing compost production facilities, and explore its multi-purpose use (domestic and commercial)
- 3.5 Support CFUGs and its member farmers in identifying preferred fodder trees, plantation, protection and use in Mikania cleaned areas of CF and private lands
- 3.6 Provide financial support and technical inputs to identified poor women in goat keeping, linking it with fodder development activity
- 3.7 Conduct assessment of both ecological and economic outcomes of project's livelihood interventions

Output 4: Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation mainstreamed in national and sub-national policy framework through active stakeholder engagement and evidence informed policy making

- 4.1 Conduct and publish the population analysis of globally threatened species in Jalthal and nearby habitats and share results with stakeholders
- 4.2 Review government policies/ programmes on nursery management from the perspective of native, rare and threatened species of trees
- 4.3 Prepare, publish and disseminate a book on propagation/nursery management of Nepal's rare and threatened species.
- 4.4 Publish five media articles on biodiversity in general, and status of rare and threatened species of Nepal, in national dailies
- 4.5 Train youths on biodiversity conservation and environmental issues: develop module, identify candidates, negotiate on terms/conditions, organise training, provide them on-the-field exposure, support in their networking (each cohort consists of mix of youths)
- 4.6 Establish 'Jalthal Biodiversity Resource Centre' and mobilise it as a common platform for learning, sharing and networking of 22 CFUGs in Jalthal
- 4.7 Organise two national seminars on forest restoration, status of rare and threatened flora and biodiversity conservation outside protected areas
- 4.8 Develop and publish Manual -1, policy brief-1, journal articles-2
- 4.9 Conduct and publish IUCN Red List assessment (national and global) for 150 tree species of Nepal
- 4.10 Prepare, publish and distribute a pictorial guidebook for 150 tropical and subtropical native trees species of Nepal

Annex 3: Standard Indicators

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator using original wording	Name of Indicator after adjusting wording to align with DI Standard Indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-A01	People attending rare threatened species conservation	Number of people attending Rare tree conservation training	People	Gender	20	10		30	50
E.g. DI-C17	E.g. Articles published by members of the project team	E.g. Number of unique papers published in peer reviewed journals	Number	None	1	1		2	4
DI B01	Number of New Management plans	Forest Restoration plans	Number	None	2	1		3	5
DI-B02	Species Action Plan	Species action plan	Number	None	0	1		1	3
DI B11	Area identified as important for biodiversity	Biodiversity core area	Number	None	1	1		2	3
Di-B12	Plantation policy	Plantation policy	Number	None	0				1
DI-C12	Social media presence/Facebook page followers	Social media presence	Number	None	1.9K	0.4		2.3K	3.0K
DI-C14	Number of Decision makers attending sharing events	Number of decision makers attending project activities	NUmber	None	15	25		35	50
DI-C18	Peer reviewed articles published	Journal articles published	Number	None	0	0		0	2
DI-C	Other publications	Communication materials	Number	Language	2	2		4	5
DI-C14	Decision makers attending meeting	Decision makers attending meetings	Number	None	50	20		70	100
DI-D01	Invasive species control area	Forest under sustainable management	Hectare	None	50	72		120	200
DI-D04	Rare and threatened species propagated	Rare and threatened species population	Number	Species	200	300		500	1000
Di-D12	Forest area restored	Forest area restored	Hectare	NOne	20	50		70	100

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
Combating invasion, restoring forest through turmeric plantation?	Blog	Muna Bhattarai and Lila Nath Sharma, 2023	F	Nepali	ForestAction Nepal	https://forestaction.org/combating-invasion-restoring-forest-through-turmeric-plantation/
Environmental conundrum: urgency of managing invasive alien species*	Journal	Lila Nath Sharma, 2023	M	Nepali	Department of Forest Research and Training	https://www.nepjol.info/index.php/BANKO/article/view/62934
Conservation of Plant Diversity with Emphasis on Rare and Threatened Trees in Jalthal Remnant Forest*	Technical report	Sharma LN, et al	M	Nepali	ForestAction Nepal	https://forestaction.org/publications/conservation-of-plant-diversity-with-emphasis-on-rare-and-threatened-trees-in-jalthal-remnant-forest/
Tracking the introduction of Mimosa diplotricha in Nepal	Technical report	Sharma LN	M	Nepali	ForestAction Nepal	https://forestaction.org/publications/tracking-the-introduction-of-mimosa-diplotricha-in-nepal/

Annex 4: Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

List of supporting Documents

Document number	Document name	Remarks
There may be different effort on editing the reports, reports which will be published as communication materials are more edited than the project report		
Doc 01	Activity report	Project report
Doc 02	Meeting report	Project report
Doc 3	Mikania/Bush removal report	Project report
Doc 4	Restoration planning	Plan for CFUGs (Nepali text)
Doc 5	Rare tree Population survey	Project report
Doc 6	Nursery report	Project report
Doc 7	Rare tree report	Published material
Doc 8a	Compost experiment	Project report
Doc 8b	Compost marketing	Project report
Doc 9	Agroforestry blog	Published material
Doc 10	Youth leadership training report	Project report
Doc 11	Pathibhara Kalika restoration plan	Nepali text, English summary available
Doc 12	Core area meetings and discussions	Project report
Doc 13	Core area strategy	Nepali text, English summary available
Doc 14 a	Wildlife hunting awareness report	Project report
Doc 14 b	Interaction on illegal hunting and poaching	Project report
Doc 15	Mimosa removal campaign	Project report
Doc 16	Natural regeneration rescue updated	Nepali text, to be published
Doc 17	IAPS management report	MS to be submitted to journal
Doc 18	Goat distribution report	Project report
Doc 19	User and student Awareness (Biodiversity day) program	Project report
Doc 20	Eco club formation	Project report
Doc 21	Eco club activities and awareness	Project report
Doc 22	Workshop on IAPS management report	Project report
Doc 23	Poster-plantation and restoration	Published material
Doc 24	Past Plantation report	Technical report
Doc 25	Policy brief on biodiversity and restoration	Technical report to be published
Doc 26	Cycas germination manuscript	MS ready to be submitted
Doc 27	Article publication report (Summary of Nepali)	Project report
Doc 28	Agroforestry workshop-ministry of forest	Project report
Doc 29	Project introductory text nepali	Published material
Doc 30	Project 's exit strategy	Project report
Doc 31	Updated poster on invasive species	Published material
Doc 32	Visitors report	Project report
Doc 33	Sample page of tree guidebook	Prototype of book
Doc 34	Forest restoration and biodiversity in CF plan	Scan copy CF plan approved by DFO
Doc 35	Communication material on Mimosa	Published material
Doc 36	Checklist of trees	Material for the book

Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the correct template (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	x
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the Subject line.	X
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	X
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see Section 16)?	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	X
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	X
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	



Compost production facilities supported by the project in Diyalo community forest. Compost is produced from Invasive species biomass