Darwin Initiative Main & Extra 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 2025

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

Darwin Initiative Project Information

Scheme (Main or Extra)	Main
Project reference	29-028
Project title	**Linking science to management: restoring community forests in Nepal**
Country/ies	Nepal
Lead Organisation	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/September 2025
Reporting period	April 2023-March 2024/ Annual Report NO 3
Project Leader name	Dr. Naya Sharma Paudel
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.facebook.com/JalthalBiodiversity/ https://twitter.com/BiodiversityNep
Report author(s) and date	Lila Nath Sharma, Muna Bhattarai, Rabindra Pun Magar, Naya Sharma Paudel and Bhaskar Adhikari

1. Project summary

This is a Darwin Main project started in July 2022 and ends in September 2025. This 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 Jalthal, the moist tropical forest island, 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) reported in Nepal (Sharma et al. 2024). 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), *Archidendron bigeminum* (VU) and *Cycas pectinata* (VU). 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; 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 works (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. Both the importance of biodiversity and

threats bearing upon it 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 diverse stakeholders where local communities are key stakeholders. Local communities indeed are both 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 livelihood improvement, capacity building, evidence generation and policy engagement. Among others, invasive species management and conservation of rare and threatened tree species 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. Policy-level stakeholders and epistemic communities also benefited from project's piloting and scientific outputs.

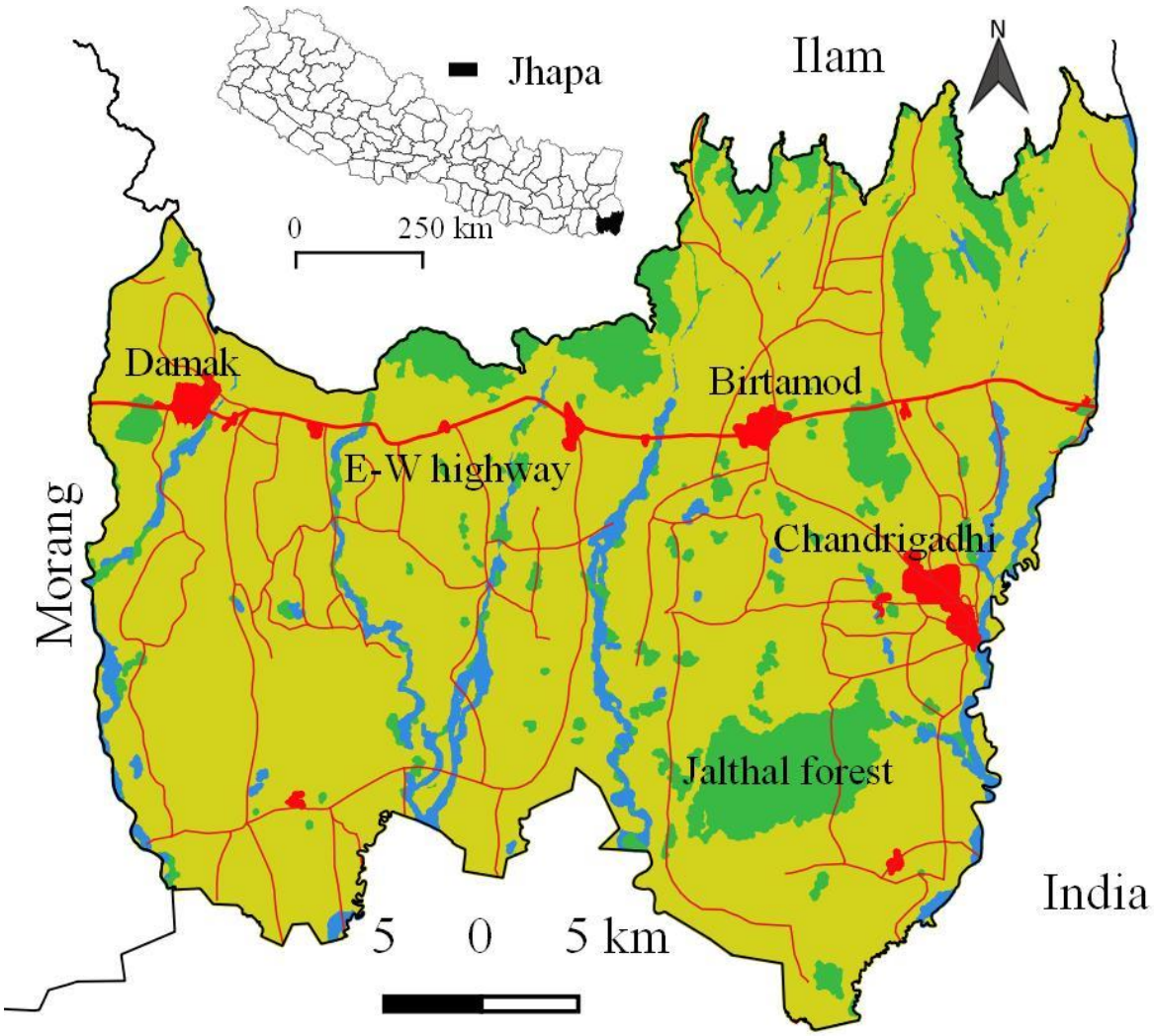

Figure 1: Location map of project district and site (Jalthal forest).

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

Figure 2: Discussion about forest biodiversity conservation in situ.

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. Partners have complementary expertise and experience towards project delivery. ForestAction Nepal and FECOFUN are working on various issues of forest management and governance for over two decades in Nepal. 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 the Ministry of Forest of Koshi Province government (Doc 01). Project organised awareness and invasive alien plant species control programs with local governments (Doc 08). Project coordinator has communicated and visited Koshi province ministry of forest and briefed project activities (Doc 01). Mayor and members of elected governments regularly visit projects meetings and activities (Doc 01, 03). Project approaches and activities have been shared among these stakeholders. Project has collaborated with schools around the Jalthal forest through Eco-club activities. Project has also worked with diverse stakeholders, from farmers to subject specialists, depending on the nature of the activity (Doc 01, 03, 09).

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Project is running in year 3 and will be completed by the end of September. Most of the activities planned for year three have now been completed. Progress against activities have been presented according to outputs. Only activities relevant for the reporting period have been reported as some of the activities are already completed. 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.

Output 1: Project has organised several meetings to plan activities and share results with diverse stakeholders (**1.1**, Doc 01, 03). Forest transect walks and meetings were organised with CFUG members and leaders on rare and threatened species and their protection (**1.3**,**1.4**, Doc 03, 04, 11). Awareness program on wildlife hunting was organised with school students and forest user group leaders and general public. Emphasis has given in maintaining the coexistence between elephant and human (**1.5**, Doc 03). Eco-clubs were established and they are active and project has organised awareness programs with school students through eco-clubs (**1.6**, Doc 06).

Output 2: Community forests spontaneously or with support from project have removed various invasive alien plant species (IAPS) from the forest. Project has directly supported in eight CFs (**2.1**, Doc 07). CFUGs were provided with practical skills and training required to manage IAPS for long term outputs (**2.3**, Doc 07, 08). *Mimosa diplotricha* removal has been organised with local municipalities and so far it has been removed from over 100 spots (**2.4**, Doc 08). Awareness and interaction programs on control of *Mimosa diplotricha* were organised with several CFUGs and three municipalities in Jhapa district (**2.6, 2.7**, Doc 08). Two seminars were organised with local governments and civil societies to share project research and discuss conservation of biodiversity in forests (**2.8**, Doc 09, 10, 03).

Output 3: Six meetings were organised in four CFUGs to organise and monitor agroforestry activities (**3.1**, Doc 01, 03). Poor households were supported through CFUGs to practice agroforestry in three CFs (**3.2**, Doc 01, 03). Sapling growth was monitored with farmers and

CFUG leaders in agroforestry as well as invasive-cleared areas. Sapling of tree species were counted regularly and protection measures were discussed (**3.3**, Doc 03). Compost production (technical, financial and exposure, marketing) was supported in two CFs, Bishal and Diyalo (**3.4**, Doc 03, 01). Fodder trees have been identified and propagated and distributed in community forests (3.5, Doc 03). Mother goats were purchased and distributed to 27 poor and disadvantaged women in Mayalu CF in the witness of Mayor of Bhadrapur Municipality (**3.6**, Doc 03). Trials were conducted in participation of local people to analyse the decomposition time of compost (**3.8**, Doc 03).

Output 4: Population survey of five different tree species has been conducted and a preliminary result of the survey of one species has been shared and a manuscript has been prepared to be submitted in a peer-reviewed Journal (**4.1**, Doc 12, 13). A booklet based on propagation of seven rare and threatened tree species has been published and shared (**4.3**, Doc 05). An opinion piece has been published that discusses how biodiversity loss continues despite progress in forest cover (**4.4**, Doc 14). We have initiated discussion with stakeholders on this and it will be completed towards the end of the project (**4.6**). An article has been published on forest biodiversity and its significance based on project data (**4.8**, Doc 15)

3.2 Progress towards project outputs

Project has already completed three years with most of the outputs achieved during the last three years. Outputs indicators are measured either by project team or reported by project beneficiaries. Some of the outputs are jointly measured with key local institutions like CFUGs. In general, most of the indicators are achievable which ensure project outputs. All the results reported here are solely due the project's support and engagement. In the text below, in the parenthesis output indicators are followed by supporting documents. Indicators relevant for reporting period are reported.

Output 1: Forest ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation

Restoration activities continued and new plan has been initiated in Ratamate CF (**1.1**, Doc 0.3, 07). Natural regeneration protection has been prioritised and continued. Over 22,000 seedlings of 90 species are protected in 11 CFs so far (**1.2**, Doc 03). Over 1500 seedlings of rare and locally threatened species were propagated in nursery established by the project. (**1.3**, Doc 03, 04, 05). Over 7,100 seedlings were planted in year 2 across 4.5-hectare of degraded forest area (**1.5**, Doc 03, 04). Hunting control and awareness related activities (two interactions and eco-club activities) were organised and hunting is reported to have decrease, but credible data to verify the reduction is not yet available (**1.8**, Doc 02, 03, 11, 06).

Output 2. CFUGs, local governments and stakeholders take strong policy and operational measures to control existing and newly reported invasive alien species

Over 50 hectare of invasive species invaded area has been cleared in 10 community forests this year (**2.1**, Doc 03, 07). Interaction on Mimosa diplotricha removal has been organised in Bhadrapur and Birtamod Municipality and the species has been removed at several locations (**2.2**, Doc 08). A draft manuscript on IAPS management has been prepared (2.4, Doc 16) and will be submitted to a journal soon.

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

Twenty-seven women received mother goat this year and cumulative income of NPR. 2.4 million was generated over the years (**3.1**, Doc 3). A total of 31 metric ton of compost product equivalent to NPR. 0.3 million was produced by CFs (**3.2**, Doc 03). Fodder plantation (n = 7100) was carried out in 7.0 hectare area in Diyalo, Bishal and Kamaldhap CFs (**3.3**, Doc 03). A total of 6,000 seedlings of native tree species were distributed to farmers (approx. 150 farmers) and they have planted it in their private lands (**3.4,** Doc 03). A total of 94 women benefited from goat keeping and 100 people (mainly women) benefited from turmeric cultivation in areas covered by invasive alien plant species (**3.5**, Doc 03).

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

Population of four rare species already assessed and communication materials are being published or drafted (**4.1**, Doc 12, 13). A report on nursery management of seven different species has been published (**4.3**, Doc 05). Two opinion article and one blog have been published (**4.4**, Doc 14, 17, 12). Over 100 students got training through eco-clubs, and youth training was completed in year 2 (**4.5**, Doc 06). Several meetings and preparatory work has been done to establish a network (**4.6,** Doc 18, 01, 03). Data has been completed for the tree book and draft is in progress (**4.8**, Doc 19 for sample page, 15). One journal article about propagation of IUCN red-listed species *Cycas pectinata* has been prepared and is ready to submit and another article on IAPS management has been drafted (**4.9**, Doc 21, 16)

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

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

Project's outcome indicators are appropriate and mostly achievable and we have not changed the outcome indicators in the past and do not have any plan to change it in remaining period. Following results achieved so far contribute towards project outcomes.

Project has reached to over 1400 people through awareness programs, trainings and income generating activities (**0.1**, Doc 01, 02, 03, 06, 11). A workshop has been organised at Ratamate CF to prepare a restoration plan and the plan is in progress (**0.2**, Doc 03). Invasive species have been removed from 56 hectare of degraded forest and the area is subjected to improved management for restoration (**0.3**, Doc 03, 07, 08). One of the rarest species of the forest has been assessed and a manuscript has been developed on population assessment (**0.5**, Doc 0.3, 13). Compost experimentation continued and project supported in production of over 30 metric tons of compost using invasive alien plant species (**0.6**, Doc 03). Integrated model of forest restoration has been developed as part of long-term forest restoration (**0.7**, Doc 16). Over 100 people, including school students, got environment conservation related trainings (**0.8**, Doc 06, 03). Government of Nepal has introduced new guidelines for community forest management and a strategy on invasive alien plant species, which are positive for biodiversity conservation (**0.9**, Govt documents). Two journal article and one media article was published and two manuscripts have been drafted (**0.11**, Doc 12, 14, 15, 17).

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. Only relevant assumptions are considered here.

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. Several encounters occurred in the reporting period but our staff are safe. 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 supported 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 03).

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 alien plant species among local governments of project site (Doc 08)

Assumption 6: Federal government works towards commitment of controlling invasive species as envisioned by Nepal biodiversity strategy and action plan. Recently National strategy of IAPS management was endorsed by government of Nepal.
Comments: There is policy of supporting invasive alien plant species control but lacks a concrete action by the government. Recently, policy level officials at the Ministry of Forest have committed towards specific programs for invasive alien plant species management.
Assumption 7: Community forest secure extra resources through local governments (especially Prime Minister employment programme) for invasive alien species control program.
Comments: Local governments have assured us about supporting invasive alien plant 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).

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

Figure 3: Eco-club activity to discuss significance and conservation of forest biodiversity.

Project activities have brought positive impacts on biodiversity conservation in longer run. Forest biodiversity significance and threat have been identified sensitising stakeholder to take concrete actions (Doc 13, 14, 15). Forest restoration has been initiated with practical models of agroforestry and biomass utilisation (Doc 03, 16) and these actions have scope for scaling out. Forest dependent people have benefited from conservation and restoration related activities

(Doc 03). In addition, conservation of forest biodiversity and restoration has been integrated in local plans (Doc 03) and federal government has introduced supportive policy for invasive alien plant species management and biodiversity conservation. Project's adaptable approaches and interventions, and preliminary results are the basis for projects impacts in future.

4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

Project has implemented activities and conducted research on biodiversity conservation, forest restoration and income for rural poor from biodiversity conservation. Results of these activities support range of national policies, targets and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). Some of the outputs contribute to more than one policy and MEAs.

First of all, the project has been working to restore the degraded Jalthal forest and to conserve its biodiversity (Doc 03, 04, 05, 15). This is directly contributing to the UN Decade on ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), a major international initiative of this decade. Similarly, project activities on restoration of rare and threatened species and degraded forest (Doc 03, 07, 16) 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 (Doc 07, 08), 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 03, 04, 05). Management of invasive alien plant species (prevention, control and eradication (Doc 07, 08, 16) will specifically contribute towards CBD Article 8(h) and Post 2020 Biodiversity framework, target 6.

Jalthal forest is a managed natural biodiversity-rich forest, which represents CBD's other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) and conservation in OECMs is an important goal of GBF (Sharma et al. 2024).

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). Nepal is currently preparing new NBSAP and the preparation team has consulted us for information on invasive alien plant species management.

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 2.0 report 2021. Controlling of IAS, promotion of native species (Doc 03, 04, 05), 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 Established principles of restoration (Gnatt et al. 2019), and 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 03) 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 is being implemented in Nepal, a lower middle-income country, where poverty is high in rural areas. The project aims to restore degraded forest, conserve biodiversity and enhance livelihood of forest-dependent poor people through improved forest management, local capacity development and sustainable management of forest. The project's beneficiary are primarily forest-dependent local people, mainly from indigenous communities in eastern lowland. 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 enhance 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 has contributed in restoration of degraded forest, and restoration of the forest in turn enhances provision of ecosystem services for forest-dependent people.
2. Project engages local people in its restoration related activities. Project directly engaged over 3000-man days' work to over 150 poor households (Doc 03, 07). This provided short-term income opportunity for needy households.
3. Agroforestry has been adopted 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 03). Agroforestry not only benefits people but also the biodiversity, especially on the management of invasive alien plant species.
4. Project has supported women in Goat keeping which is a source of cash income for poor families. Women have reported that they already got over 2.4 million Nepalese rupees (Doc 03, we will submit standalone report in final reporting in September).
5. Communities have been using compost. This has reduced use of chemical fertilizer (Doc 03).
6. Project has promoted multipurpose forest management. Multipurpose management minimizes the elite capture of resources and benefits poor, indigenous people and women (Doc 15).

Figure 4: Rare tree conservation program with community members.

6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

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 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	

ForestAction Nepal has high priority for gender and social inclusion across its activities. 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. Project's field team is led by female candidate and our social mobiliser is also female from local indigenous community. We have also appointed nursery assistant, who 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 staffs in their early stage of career.

The project has supported in exposure and learning of the project staffs. A manuscript has been led by project field staff (Doc 21).

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. This year, 27 women were supported with mother goats (Doc 03) and goat keeping women made a total of NPR. 2.4 million. Over 100 women from poor families were engaged in turmeric cultivation to production (Doc 03).

Project has been supporting and lobbying for multipurpose management of community forests (Doc 14). Conventional management focusses mainly 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 ecosystem services.

We have also supported women participation in project activities by organising relatively short events. Generally, our programs were not longer than 4-5 hours; this helped women to attend the programs. Child care facility was also offered to the mothers to promote their participation in programs.

While working with the communities, we understood that although the women's participation in the community forest user group is appreciable, their role in decision-making needs to be enhanced.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

The project does not have separate team or staff for the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E); rather this is embedded in the project's current structure. Monitoring of the project against the set targets is the responsibility of the lead organization i.e., ForestAction Nepal. Project monitoring and evaluation is a continuous and adaptive process throughout the project life. 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 coordinator (Dr. Lila Nath Sharma) 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 FAN. We also need to update progress to Social Welfare Council (SWC) and local government.
- This year the director 'Ram Raja Bhatatrai, from SWC visited project site and monitored projects activities. He interacted with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries (Doc 01).
- For accounting and administrative purpose in ForestAction Nepal, 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 in 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 achievements 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 appropriate to deliver the outputs.

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

8. Lessons learnt

Project has a distinct and notable profile among the internationally funded projects in Nepal. This profile has been possible with robust and ground data and data-informed management. Project has made notable progress in terms of conservation action, restoration piloting and scientific documentation. Following are lessons learnt during the journey,

1) Being technically sound is important for project output but this is not enough to institutionalise project's legacy. We need regular engagement with diverse stakeholders to enhance political legitimacy and ground level adoption.

2) In order to spend more money in programs, we ran project by small technical teams. This was efficient in delivery but while reporting we realised that having a separate person responsible for research and data management would better organise our work.

3) We will be working to consolidate our results and share project's results with stakeholders. While focussing on outputs of piloting, we are lagging behind in increasing visibility. We will enhance project's visibility.

4) Wildlife is a major challenge in some of our activities. We have planted large number of seedlings for fodder and rare trees. Many of fodder trees we planted were damaged by elephants and angulates.
5. Climatic uncertainty has impact in our project as well. For the last two consecutive years we tried to regenerate Sal trees in degraded forest. Broadcasted seeds germinated but could not be saved due to prolonged drought in early monsoon.

If we need to do it again, we would be more participatory in designing and would increase our engagement with various stakeholders. In addition, we will enhance our effort in visibility. This we will be doing in remaining period of project implementation.

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

We have received a very motivating remarks by reviewers in Y2 reports. There were few suggestions from reviewers on the report. One of the comments was on establishing a revolving fund for agroforestry. This has been widely practiced in livelihood related activities in other projects. We explored possibility of establishing such fund in our project sites. In the formal channel, CFUGs were not interested in making revolving fund mainly due to some practical and administrative issues rather they committed to continue agroforestry using their own fund. In another income generating activity i.e. goat keeping, women provide calf to another poor member of the community. Arrangement has been made so that CFUG monitor this activity.

Another comment was regarding safeguard training. Given the importance of safeguarding of project staffs and beneficiaries, ForestAction Nepal has revisited and updated its safeguard policy (Doc 22). Recently a safeguard training was organised to project leaders and staff at ForestAction Nepal (Doc 01).

Third comment was on documenting anecdotal experience on climate change and related hazards. Yes, we have initiated compiling it. In preliminary notes, locals consistently reported that there has been sharp decline in wild honey bees in forest. We will share this report and we will share results in final report in September.

In addition to reviewer's comments, we are planning to contact FCDO in Kathmandu to discuss about the project's final sharing workshop.

10. Risk Management

We have maintained risk register for this project. ForestAction Nepal management and team and Project team is working to reduce and avoid risks. We do not have new risks in the reporting period, rather we faced some of the risks which were ongoing risks, for example, elephant encounter in the forest. Following are the risks we encountered.

1. Climatic uncertainty: Recently Nepal has experienced longer dry spell during winter. In the early monsoon as well, dry period has been increasing. Our restoration efforts was affected in the last two years.

2. Elephant and herbivores: Seedlings of fodder planted are damaged by elephant and herbivores. This is also a challenge in attaining project targets.

Risk register has been attached with this report.

11. Scalability and durability

Projects activities were tailored to meet local needs on conservation and restoration. In addition, project approach was collaborative and participatory. Following aspects of project will help in ensuring projects legacy even beyond project life.

- Project activities were implemented in collaboration of key stakeholders, DFO, local government and CFUGs. These key stakeholders attended both field level activities and workshops. They are aware about the project activities and their anticipated results (Doc 01, 03, 04). This has established projects interventions at local level.
- Invasive species is a growing environmental burden. We have rightly intervened. There is growing concern on IAPS. Recently (in 2024 March) government has endorsed invasive species management strategy. Our projects intervention on invasive species in national priority which ensures sustainability and this activity has scope of scaling up.
- We have used biomass management as a strategy for invasive plant species management and forest restoration (Doc 03). Biomass management is also crucial for increasing forest fire management. This intervention will be advertised widely so that other areas can also use this strategy to mitigate forest fires and invasion.
- Our approaches are simple and locally adaptable (Bhattarai and Sharma 2024). Our agroforestry model has provided benefits to local, therefore, is adopted by local communities. Agroforestry is gaining popularity in the project site and other parts of the country. Therefore, this intervention will endure in the region.
- Our project has notable identity in invasive plant species management. We have seen that our communication materials are highly demanded and used in other organizations program as well. Invasive species expert, Prof. Bharat Babu Shrestha of Tribhuvan University, has highlighted our activities in his talks.
- Our biodiversity data has sensitized local and national stakeholders on biodiversity beyond protected areas (Sharma et al. 2024, Sharma 2025). This will help in conservation of biodiversity outside protected areas.
- We have extended project for six months (Darwin kindly agreed to our request of no cost extension) and this time will be used to consolidate results and concentrate to enhance projects visibility.
- We have highlighted need for collaboration among 22 CFUGs of Jalthal for conservation and restoration and encouraging locals to form network (Doc 18). Originally, we were planning of forming the structure but now we are putting ourselves in a role of facilitator for sustainability of such network. This network will be formed eventually which will enhance projects legacy.

12. Darwin Initiative identity

- This is Darwin Imitative UK (DI UK) supported standalone project with clear aim and objectives and defined activities. 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 (Doc 05, 23).
- 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.
- We have made three peer-reviewed publication in the reporting period. These publications have clearly mentioned Darwin support in the acknowledgement section (Doc 23, 15)
- We have prepared the project approach for conserving rare and threatened plant species (Doc 05).
- We have mentioned DI support even in the content of the published materials (Doc 12)
- 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.

- 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.
- Projects Facebook account is popular (2.7 K followers) in project locality; we have clearly mentioned about DI UK supported project in the page. In this page, we publish only in Nepali language. This shows our accountability to beneficiaries as well. Projects twitter account now has been linked with Darwin Initiatives twitter handle. We mention DI in each tweet.

13. Safeguarding

14. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2024/25 Grant (£)	2024/25 Total Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
TOTAL	**84569.0**			

Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

	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 (£)			

15. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

As we will be submitting final report sometimes in October 2025 and we could not cover all progress in this report. One major activity missed here is our approach of using biodiversity data to educate people. We have synthesising the result of this activity.

16. 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
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

We are working to produce video documentary (one major and several minor) to showcase projects results and activities. We will share these materials with Darwin as they are ready in couple of months. We post our activities in following social media. Materials published there can be used by Darwin.

https://www.facebook.com/JalthalBiodiversity
https://x.com/BiodiversityNep

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2024-2025

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2024 - March 2025	Actions required/planned for next period
Impact *Resilience of forest increased, socio-ecological vulnerabilities reduced with restored forest, enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem services through better land management*	Identified and communicated Biodiversity significance and threat (Doc 12, 15). Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation were initiated through integrated management of degraded forest, local scale planning and capacity enhancement (Doc 03, 16). Similarly, conservation action for rare and threatened trees was initiated (Doc 04, 05). Forest restoration was linked with income of forest dependent people (Doc 03). Conserved biodiversity, restored forest and local ownership on forests resources will eventually enhance resilience of both ecological and social systems.	[redacted]
Outcome *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. 0.3. IAS fully controlled in 500 hectare forest with 25,000 saplings of native species protected 0.4. Forest carbon stock doubled (as of baseline of previous project) in selected degraded patches (ca. 100ha), by end of the project. 0.5. Population of saplings of threatened and rare trees doubled in Jalthal forest by end of year 3 0.6. Compost production method (decomposition time) improved with 100 metric tons of compost produced using invasive species biomass by end of year 3.	0.1. Over 1400 people have been directly engaged so far with project in bush removal, restoration plans, trainings and goat keeping with 200 individuals benefitting directly (Doc 01, 03, 06, 11) 0.2. Several meetings and workshops were organised in Ratamate CF to make restoration plans (Doc 03). 0.3. Invasive species control continued this year, with over 56 hectares cleared so far (Doc 07) 0.4. Will be analysed towards end of the project. 0.5. A Population assessment of Chyunyal (Garcinia xanthochymus) was conducted and conservation measures have been adopted for other rare plants (Doc 03, 04, 05) 0.6. A Compost experiment to demonstrate locals has been started, with over 60 metric tons of compost produced so far (Doc 03)	➢ Rare tree propagation and dissemination ➢ Wetlands and forest habitats improvement ➢ Projects results will be consolidated and published ➢ Tree guidebook will be published ➢ Projects impacts will be evaluated

0.7. A sustainable model of agroforestry approach of forest restoration and invasive species management developed and scaled out by end of year 2 0.8. A new generation of conservation leaders (n=300) developed through capacity building packages by end of year 2. 0.9. A Jalthal Biodiversity Resource Centre established and functional which also provides a platform for networking of 22 CFUFGs of the area 0.10. 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 (books-2, policy brief-1, journal articles-2) by end of year 3.	0.7. Integrated site management with strong agroforestry component was initiated, and local people have already started benefiting from the practice (Doc 03, 16). 0.8. Over 100 people, primarily school students and local people were trained in the reporting year. (Doc 01, 03). 0.9. Interactions, informal discussion and political lobbying were conducted regarding the structure. Our engagement and dialogue facilitated discussion on how to manage the forest to integrate conservation and sustainable livelihood (Doc 01, 03). Recently Nepal government introduced guidelines for community forest, which supports biodiversity conservation in CFs. 0.10. Forest management plans incorporated forest restoration and biodiversity conservation (Doc 03) 0.11. A popular media article and a journal article were published (Doc 14, 15,)	
Output 1 Forest ecosystem restored and biodiversity conserved in Jalthal community forests		
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	Restoration continued at previous sites and new site in Ratamate CF was worked and Restoration plans have been integrated in the forest management plans (Doc 03, 07)	Planning and implementation continues.
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	Natural regeneration protection has been prioritised, with over 22,000 seedlings of 90 species protected in 11 CFs so far (Doc 03)	Natural regeneration protection continues.
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).	Rare and threatened trees have been protected in their natural habitat and dispersed and reintroduced through nursery practices. Over 1500 seedlings of rare and locally threatened species were propagated in nursery established by the project. (Doc 03, 04, 05).	Propagated seedlings will be transferred to the appropriate places.
1.4 Forest carbon stock doubled in selected degraded patches (ca.100ha) by end of year 3.	Base line data was collected making permanent plots and remaining data will be collected towards the end of the project (Year 1 report).	Final data collection will be done in July this year.

1.5 Wildlife habitat improved through forest fringe plantation (5 ha) and waterholes (n=5) restored by end of year 3	Over 7,100 seedlings were planted in year 2 across 4.5-hectare, but seedling survival was low due to monsoon season drought in 2023 (Doc 03)	Wildlife friendly plantation and wetland restoration will be continued.
1.6 Conservation Strategy for core areas and biodiversity hotspots prepared and adopted by end of year 2.	Reported in year 2	
1.7 Hunting of critically endangered species minimized in Jalthal forest	Hunting control and awareness related activities were organised and hunting is reported to have decrease, but credible data to verify the reduction is not yet available (Doc 03, 11).	More program on awareness raising.
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 *Mikania micrantha* through expansion of previous piloting.	Over 50 hectare of invasive species invaded area has been cleared in 10 community forests this year (Doc 03, 07).	More area will be cleared.
2.2 Recently reported IAS (*Mimosa diplotricha*) 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	*Mimosa diplotricha* removal has been organised in Bhadrapur and Birtamod Municipality and the species has been removed at several locations (Doc 08).	
2.3 'Natural regeneration rescue' method will be published and widely disseminated as a new technological innovation to control invasive species by year 1	Completed in earlier reporting	
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 16) and will be submitted to journal soon.	Draft will be submitted to a journal.
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.	Twenty seven women received mother goat this year and cumulative income of NPR. 2.4 million was generated over the years (Doc 3)	Separate report will be submitted in next reporting.
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 31 metric ton of compost product equivalent to NRs 0.3 million was produced by CFs (Doc 03)	More compost will be produced.
3.3. Fodder orchard developed in 5ha through plantation of native species (n=5000) by end of year 2.	Fodder plantation (n=7100) was carried out in 7.0 hectare in Diyalo, Bishal and Kamaldhap CFs (Doc 03).	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.	A total of 6000 seedling of native species were distributed to farmers (approx. 150 farmers) and they have planted it in their private lands (Doc 03)	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 94 women benefited from goat keeping and 100 people (mainly women) benefited from turmeric cultivation in area covered by invasive species (Doc 03,)	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 four species already collected and a draft based on the data has been prepared (Doc 03, 13).	Finalisation of the draft and submission.
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.	Completed in earlier report	
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.	A booklet on rare species has been prepared and a report on nursery management has been published (Doc 05).	Nepali document will be prepared.
4.4 Five newspaper articles on biodiversity conservation (including rare and threatened plant species) published by end of year 2	Two opinion article and one blog were published (Doc 14, 17, 12)	One more article will be published.
4.5 4.5 75 local youths (in three batches) from eastern Nepal selected and provided with conservation leadership training by end of year 2	over 100 students got training through eco clubs, and youth training was completed in year 2 (Doc 06)	Follow-up for past
4.6 An institutional arrangement to coordinate among 22 CFUGs in Jalthal forest established by end of year 2	Background work was carried through meetings and interactions (Doc 18, 01, 03)	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	completed	completed
4.8 A pictorial guidebook on conservation status of 150 tree species of Nepal prepared and published by end of year 2	Data has been completed and draft is in progress (Doc 19 for sample page, 15)	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 *Cycas pectinata* has been prepared and is ready to submit and another article on IAPS management has been drafted (Doc 21, 16)	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 CFUFGs 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	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%.

	communicated to academic and policy actors (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	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 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 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). 1.4 Forest carbon stock doubled in selected degraded patches (ca.100ha) by end of year 3. 1.5 Wildlife habitat improved through forest fringe plantation (5 ha) and waterholes (n=5) restored by end of year 3 1.6 Conservation Strategy for core areas and biodiversity hotspots prepared and adopted by end of year 2. 1.7 Hunting of critically endangered species minimized in Jalthal forest	1.1. Field record, Users (community forest users group) record book, social media updates 1.2 Copies of plans, project reports, photographs 1.3 Project report, journal article 1.4 Users record book, project report, news cover by media 1.5 Users record book, Activity report 1.6. Social media updates, field photographs and published documents 1.7 News report, workshop reports	1.1 Community forests and DFO follow the provision of forest act 2019 pertaining to forest management 1.2 Human wildlife conflict does not increase
Output 2 CFUGs, local governments and stakeholders take strong policy and operational measures to control existing and newly reported invasive alien species	2.2 500ha of forest cleared from *Mikania micrantha* through expansion of previous piloting. 2.3 Recently reported IAS (*Mimosa diplotricha*) 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 2.4 'Natural regeneration rescue' method will be published and widely disseminated as a new	2.1 CFUG report, GPS mapping, CFUG minutes 2.1 Maps and activity reports 2.3 Published leaflets, briefers 2.4 Assessment report, Journal article 2.5. Leaflets and posters	2.1 Local government understand the threat and severity of invasive species 2.2 Federal government works towards commitment of controlling invasive species as envisioned by Nepal biodiversity strategy and action plan 2.3 Community forest secure extra resources through local governments (specially Prime

	technological innovation to control invasive species by year 1 2.5 A report on comparative analysis of different methods of IAS management piloted in Jalthal prepared and disseminated by end of year 1.		minister employment programme) for invasive species control program
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. 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. 3.3. Fodder orchard developed in 5ha through plantation of native species (n=5000) by end of year 2. 3.4 Fodder orchards developed in 500 farms through plantation of native species (n=10,000) by end of year 3. 3.5 200 poor women benefited from goat keeping schemes by end of year 3, and 100 more women will be benefited from agroforestry.	3.1 Baseline and end line survey of target groups/beneficiaries 3.2 CFUG reports, project reports, photographs 3.3 Plantation report, meeting minutes, social media posts 3.4 Participants survey report 3.4. Event report, news coverage in local news papers 3.5 Activity report, social media posts, plantation report, CFUG minutes	3.1 Local government are willing to link their poverty reduction activities with community forest user groups 3.2 Community forest user group invest portion of their income in poverty reduction as provisioned by forest act 2019
Output 4 Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation mainstreamed in national and sub-national policy framework through active stakeholder engagement and evidence informed policy making	4.2 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 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. 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. 4.5 Five newspaper articles on biodiversity conservation (including rare and threatened plant species) published by end of year 2 4.6 75 local youths (in three batches) from eastern Nepal selected and provided with	4.1. Assessment report, peer reviewed publication 4.2. Assessment report, articles on local journals, 4.3. Printed copies and PDFs of Manuals 4.4 Published articles 4.5 Training report, training materials (hands out slides, participants project work) 4.6. Meeting report, decision of the network 4.7. Printed and e copies of the policy brief 4.8. Published guide book printed and e-copies, 4.9 Published articles	4.1. Market of compost does not fall and the locals increase compost use 4.2. Training participants develop strong leadership after completion of the project 4.3. Local governments take stake in the research highlights presented by the project 4.4. Regulatory mechanisms in forest-based enterprises do not change in near term

	conservation leadership training by end of year 2 4.7 An institutional arrangement to coordinate among 22 CFUGs in Jalthal forest established by end of year 2 4.8 A policy brief highlighting gaps in policies and barriers in actions for forest restoration published by end of year 2 4.9 A pictorial guidebook on conservation status of 150 tree species of Nepal prepared and published by end of year 2 4.10 Two journal articles on IAS management and status of threatened species published		

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)
Output 1: Forest ecosystem restored and biodiversity conserved in Jalthal community forests

1.1 Organize project inception (n=1), annual review (n=3), planning (n=10) and exit/sharing (n=1) meetings/workshops engaging relevant stakeholders
1.2 Conduct participatory mapping to identify most degraded forest patches, prepare restoration plans for these sites and their core zones with respective CFUGs.
1.3 Train CFUG leaders and forest patrolling team to rescue, protect and nurture natural regeneration of trees
1.4 Support CFUGs and train forest patrolling team to propagate, plant, protect and monitor rare and threatened plant species
1.5 Organise workshops on challenges of wildlife hunting and strategies to minimize it, with local and indigenous community leaders and stakeholders
1.6 Support secondary schools around Jalthal in establishing eco-clubs and provide awareness training and materials
1.7 Plant bamboo culms and elephant apples in forest fringes (total 5 hectare)
1.8 Support and sensitise to improve habitats and wetland management in community forests
1.9 Train CFUG leaders in Jalthal to protect key structural features of Jalthal biodiversity

Output 2: CFUGs, local governments and stakeholders take strong policy and operational measures to control existing and newly reported invasive alien species

2.1 Support CFUGs to remove Mikania in invaded area, monitor the changes and protect natural regeneration
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

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, scheme, 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 consider the best way to submit. One zipped file, or a download option, is recommended. We can work with most online options and will be in touch if we have a problem accessing material. If unsure, 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
Have you provided an updated risk register? If you have an existing risk register you should provide an updated version alongside your report. If your project was funded prior to this being a requirement, you are encouraged to develop a risk register.	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.	