

Applicant: **Depeyre, Vanessa**
Organisation: **Tree Aid**
Funding Sought: **£469,858.00**

DIR30S2\1074

Sustainable Shea: Supporting communities, ecosystems restoration, and livelihoods in Gambella

Shea trees produce nutritious and profitable fruits, which could provide a source of sustainable income for rural communities in Gambella, Ethiopia. However, unsustainable practices and the effects of the climate crisis are threatening local forest ecosystems and the livelihoods of the communities who rely on them. This project will empower 4 communities to implement sustainable forest management for 16,700 ha, restore 3,000ha, and develop sustainable livelihood opportunities to reduce local poverty by strengthening the shea value chain.

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

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Sustainable Shea: Supporting communities, ecosystems restoration, and livelihoods in Gambella

Section 1 - Contact Details

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

Title	Miss
Name	Vanessa
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Organisation	Tree Aid
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GMS ORGANISATION

Type	Charity/ trusts
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Website (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]
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Section 2 - Title, Ecosystems, Approaches & Summary


Q3. Title:


Sustainable Shea: Supporting communities, ecosystems restoration, and livelihoods in Gambella

Please upload a cover letter as a PDF document.

 [Tree Aid Cover letter](#)

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What was your Stage 1 reference number? e.g. DIR29S1\1123

DIR30S1\1333

Q4. Key Ecosystems, Approaches and Threats

Select up to 3 biomes that are of focus, up to 3 conservation actions that characterise your approach, and up to 3 threats to biodiversity you intend to address, from dropdown lists.

Biome 1

Shrublands & shrubby woodlands

Biome 2

No Response

Biome 3

No Response

Conservation Action 1

Land / Water Management

Conservation Action 2

Livelihood, Economic & Moral Incentives

Conservation Action 3

Legal & Policy Frameworks

Threat 1

Agriculture & aquaculture (incl. plantations)

Threat 2

Biological resource use (hunting, gathering, logging, fishing)

Threat 3

Climate change & severe weather

Q5. Summary of project

Please provide a brief non-technical summary of your project: the problem/need it is trying to address, its aims, and the key activities you plan on undertaking.

Shea trees produce nutritious and profitable fruits, which could provide a source of sustainable income for rural communities in Gambella, Ethiopia. However, unsustainable practices and the effects of the climate crisis are threatening local forest ecosystems and the livelihoods of the communities who rely on them. This project will empower 4 communities to implement sustainable forest management for 16,700 ha, restore 3,000ha, and develop sustainable livelihood opportunities to reduce local poverty by strengthening the shea value chain.

Section 3 - Title, Dates & Budget Summary

Q6. Country(ies)

Which eligible host country(ies) will your project be working in?

Country 1	Ethiopia	Country 2	No Response
Country 3	No Response	Country 4	No Response

Do you require more fields?

No

Q7. Project dates

Start date:	End date:	Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months):
01 April 2024	31 March 2027	3 years

Q8. Budget summary

Year:	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
Amount:	£178,325.00	£139,824.00	£151,709.00	£ 469,858.00

Q9. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

Yes

Please ensure you clearly outline your matched funding arrangement in the budget.

Q10. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you will deliver the project if you don't manage to secure this?

We are proposing a match funding component of [REDACTED] for the project, equating to 15% of the total project cost. This will be raised from Tree Aid's portfolio of trust, foundation, and corporate supporters. We are confident that we can meet this match funding need due to the commitment of our donors, many of whom donate to the organisation annually. If we are unable to raise this match funding need, Tree Aid will support the project using our organisational reserves.

Q11. Have you received, applied for or plan to apply for any other UK Government funding for the proposed project or similar?

No

Section 4 - Problem statement

Q12. Problem the project is trying to address

Please describe the problem your project is trying to address in terms of biodiversity and its relationship with multi-dimensional poverty.

Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest countries, ranking 175th on the Human Development Index and with 30% living in extreme poverty. The country's forests provide significant ecosystem services, protecting soil and water resources, preserving biodiversity, functioning as a carbon sink, and improving land fertility. They also offer a source of sustainable income for the country's numerous rural families, around 77% of the population, by providing non-timber forest products (NTFPs) such as nuts and seeds when other agricultural crops fail under the pressures of the climate crisis.

Forests in the Gambella Regional State are home to a high number of shea trees (*Vitellaria paradoxa*) classified as a vulnerable species by the IUCN red list. Shea nuts are nutritious and have the potential to support dietary diversity, as well as great economic potential due to the demand for shea butter and oil. However, shea forests are threatened by invasive land-use change. Rapidly declining tree density in shea landscapes increases biodiversity loss, soil erosion, and reduces water infiltration. Alongside erratic or reduced rainfall due to climate change, this has a detrimental impact on agricultural productivity and risks plunging rural communities further into poverty. Projections indicate that 9 million ha of forest land could be lost to deforestation before 2030. The Tree Aid Ethiopia team conducted a visit to the project area in October 2023 in collaboration with an environmental and forest specialist consultant, to deepen understanding of community need and to evaluate the local value chain. This included studying the existing regeneration of shea in the region and focus group discussions. Results noted a good population status of shea in the region and an interest in the tree and produce by the local communities. However, the potential of the product is not currently being reached. Challenges raised by communities included needing to travel long distances for shea nut collection, and the labour-intensive traditional processing which is a burden for local women. Discussions revealed a lack of access to commercial markets in which to trade shea, meaning that the produce is currently only used at the household level. There is also an absence of strong institutional support and guidance for communities from local governments or NGOs. These findings highlight the need for urgent intervention to support communities and local authorities in the Gambella region to decrease deforestation and biodiversity loss. Communities must also be informed and empowered to maximize sustainable livelihood opportunities to build climate-resilience and increase incomes. There is also lack of recent research into the potential for a shea value chain in Ethiopia. This project will gather much-needed evidence for the potential for a strong and sustainable shea value chain in the Gambella region. This project will support 4 communities in Itang, Abobo and Gambella Zuria districts in Gambella to protect biodiversity and alleviate poverty. Communities will implement sustainable forest management plans for 16,700 ha of forest, restore highly degraded 3,000 ha of this area by growing and regenerating

Section 5 - Darwin Objectives and Conventions

Q13. Biodiversity Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Q13a. Your project must support the commitments of one or more of the agreements listed below. Please indicate which agreement(s) will be supported.

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Q13b. National and International Policy Alignment

Using evidence where available, please detail how your project will contribute to national policy (including NBSAPs, NDCs, NAP etc.) and in turn international biodiversity and development conventions, treaties and agreements that the country is a signatory of.

This project will contribute to Ethiopia's National Forest Law (2007, revised in 2018) which aims to restore 22 million ha of degraded land and forests by 2030. Specifically, it will contribute to this goal through land restoration activities on 3,000ha of land. The project will also complement the aims of the Ethiopian Government's Ten-Year Perspective Plan (TYPP) from 2013-2023, in which protecting and rehabilitating forests for economic and ecosystem benefits is considered one of the major implementing strategies towards the envisaged Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE). This project highlights and promotes the beneficial relationship between protected ecosystems and livelihood diversity for rural communities and will therefore contribute to the success of the CRGE.

This project will also contribute to international biodiversity and development conventions, namely the Kunming - Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Targets and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Establishing community-led producer cooperatives and providing training for communities will address GBF target 3 to ensure that land is conserved and managed sustainably. The inclusion of women in these systems will support the aims of GBF target 22 to ensure gender-responsive participation in resource management and biodiversity protection. The project will restore 3,000 hectares of highly degraded land, contributing to carbon storage and so to the pledges of the UNFCCC. This will contribute to increased carbon sequestration in the area, and in turn the mitigation of climate change, as well as increasing resilience of communities and ecosystems to climate extremes which all support SGD 13. Increasing local ecosystem biodiversity by growing and planting-out 129,000 tree seedlings into the forest, with an additional 87,000 trees regenerated through ANR. will contribute to SDG 15, the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), and GBF target 2. Through increasing incomes for rural communities by developing sustainable livelihood opportunities, the project will contribute to SDGs 1 and 8. Promoting NTFPs as a source of sustainable income will incentivize local communities to protect local forests for both economic and environmental benefits, contributing to GBF target 9. The project will support SDG 5 by creating more equitable governance systems for the use of natural resources through including women in producer cooperative groups, and by improving women's livelihood opportunities through their inclusion in community-based enterprise groups, known as village tree enterprises (VTEs).

Section 6 - Method, Change Expected, Gender & Exit Strategy

Q14. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and contribute towards your Impact. Provide information on:

- how you have reflected on and incorporated **evidence and lessons learnt** from past and present similar activities and projects in the design of this project.
- the specific approach you are using, supported by **evidence** that it will be effective, and **justifying why you expect it will be successful** in this context.
- how you will undertake the work (activities, materials and methods)
- what will be the **main activities** and where will these take place.
- how you will **manage the work** (governance, roles and responsibilities, project management tools, risks etc.).

Tree Aid has been working in Ethiopia since 1991 and is currently implementing a project to improve the management of 25,388ha of degraded woodland ecosystem in Metema district.

This project in Gambella will build on the success of previous projects across the Sahel, and learnings from past projects have informed project design particularly around our approach to livelihood development. A recent three-year project in Mali resulted in an increase in household income from NTFPs by an average of [REDACTED] (1,673%) using the VTE approach, with 905 households lifting themselves above the poverty line. 28 groups worked on processing shea. We will apply this same approach to our work with communities in Gambella to improve livelihood opportunities. The same project in Mali produced impressive results around access to forest resources, with 77% of participants reporting fair and equal access to resources at project-end through the development of equitable forest management plans like those that will be developed in this project.

Tree Aid staff in Ethiopia carried out site visits in the proposed project area in June and October 2023 to consult with communities, local authorities, and other stakeholders. This was an opportunity to understand their needs, interests, and to discuss potential areas of interventions for a project in the area. The capacity of 4 communities local to the target forest areas of Tierkdui, Perbongo, Abol and Elia will be strengthened to implement the long-term sustainable management of forest resources. The local 4 Participatory Forest Management Cooperatives (PFMCs) will be strengthened with around 80 members in each. The cooperatives will be supported to develop participatory management plans for 16,700ha of forest land which will establish rules for access rights to and responsibilities for the management of local natural resources. Plans will be informed by the delimitation and marking of the forest, and an inventory of shea trees in the area. Groups will have their capacity strengthened through training on natural resource management. Community awareness training on biodiversity conservation and gender equality will take place for 1020 people.

The project will restore 3,000ha of targeted degraded forest land through tree planting and regeneration. 40,000 shea (*Vitellaria paradoxa*) and 100,000 other locally appropriate, climate-resilient trees decided in consultation with communities will be planted to help restore vegetation, improve biodiversity, and increase the availability of forest resources. An additional 87,000 shea seedlings will be regenerated through Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) practices, specifically creating enclosure areas where seedlings will be protected. The project will establish 2 community nurseries to germinate the seedlings to be planted out, which will be managed and maintained by local communities.

The project will establish 10 Village Tree Enterprise (VTE) groups to develop sustainable livelihoods using NTFPs. 8 groups will work on shea, and 2 groups will be responsible for the management of the project's tree nursery sites. Each group will have approximately 30 members each, 75% of whom will be women. All 300 enterprise group and tree nursery group members, alongside 20 stakeholders and local government experts, will be trained on market analysis and development and be supported to establish links and contracts with buyers to help increase household incomes. Groups working with shea will be arranged into 2 larger cooperative groups, which will be part of the PFMC structures at the community level. At the cooperative level, groups will receive improved equipment and training on how to process and market shea efficiently for sale, as well as training on group dynamics. The project will construct 2 processing and storage unit, one for each cooperative. The shea producing groups will gain linkages to national shea markets, specifically through an identified producer based in Addis Ababa called Ecopia and will also be facilitated to take part in local fairs where they can sell and market their produce. A kiosk will be constructed where VTes can sell NTFP produce and support the local market for shea.

This project will contribute towards evidence gathering and a deeper understanding of the potential of the shea value chain in Gambella by commissioning a consultant to produce a shea value chain assessment. To

strengthen regional attitudes towards shea conservation and sustainable forest management, the project will organise 2 regional policy forums to be attended by local government representatives and other relevant stakeholders. A technical guidance document on shea butter production best-practices will be prepared and shared with the VTE groups. Information material highlighting experiences on good practices and lessons learned will be shared from other Tree Aid programme countries which support shea value chains.

Q15. Capability and Capacity

How will the project support the strengthening of capability and capacity of identified local and national partners, and stakeholders during its lifetime at organisational or individual levels? Please provide details of what form this will take, who will benefit (noting GESI considerations), and the post-project value to the country.

The project will enable 4 communities living around the Tierkdui, Perbongo, Abol and Elia forests to implement individualized forest management plans covering a total of 16,700ha of vital forest land. 4 PFMCs will undergo training, equipping members with skills to protect and restore the forest. Post-training, communities will comprehend their roles in long-term land protection and effectively implement management plans. Biodiversity awareness campaigns will encourage sustainable decision-making within the wider community.

Awareness raising on biodiversity will inspire change within the wider community to make sustainable decisions that benefit themselves and the environment in the long-term. Training for PFMC and nursery members on shea and non-shea seedling raising and regeneration will be beneficial for the continued restoration and protection of local forest land.

The project has been designed to ensure that women and youth are engaged in capacity building activities, particularly around enterprise development. The 10 VTEs each comprising 30 members (75% women), will receive technical and business training and equipment for sustainable enterprises focused on shea and tree nurseries. The groups will be supported to become fully operational and profitable by the project end, but training received will also mean that they can continue to thrive in the future.

The capacity and technical knowledge of both local and national stakeholders will be built to be able to replicate similar activities and further develop the shea value chain in the future. Tree Aid will adopt the ToT approach to build the capacity of 20 local stakeholders so that knowledge is shared at a regional level and can be shared across other communities in the future. Technical guidance documents and the shea value chain assessment report produced will also be able to inform stakeholders and 300 VTE members of best practices and opportunities for future growth.

Q16. Gender equality and social inclusion

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics. Explain your understanding of how individuals may be excluded from equal participation within the context of your project, and how you seek to address this. You should consider how your project will proactively contribute to ensuring individuals achieve equitable outcomes and how you will engage participants in a meaningful way.

The project is built on the principal of 'do no harm' and the project design is based on a thorough understanding of the broader context in the intervention area to mitigate potential negative consequences from activities. Ethiopia has some of the lowest gender equality performance indicators in sub-Saharan Africa and women are strongly disadvantaged in many areas. Women in rural communities are often excluded from income generating activities or leadership roles within the community due to traditional gender roles. This project will actively target women to engage with project activities to address this inequality. The project will challenge inequality by ensuring women are more present and have a role to play within the cooperative groups and aims for women to hold 15% of management positions in the 4 PFMCs by project-end. The project will also include

women in income generating activities. Women, who will form 75% of VTE all members, will have their capacity built through training. Women's engagement in management positions of PFMCS and VTE groups will improve their confidence and help to give them more decision-making power at community and household level. The project will place a special emphasis on enhancing women and youth to further their aspirations, skills and leadership capacities and opportunities in business and in their communities. The project will support market systems for NTFPs in which women currently engage and that will be well-suited for expanding women's participation. To encourage participation by women in project activities, we will strive for meetings to take place at times which are accessible and sensitive of women's other responsibilities. As part of the training for 1020 community members, awareness will be raised on the importance of gender equality in sustainable forest governance structures and access to forest resources.

Q17. Change expected

Detail the expected changes to both biodiversity and multi-dimensional poverty reduction, and links between them, that this work will deliver. You should identify what will change and who exactly will benefit a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project) and b) in the long-term (after the project has ended).

When talking about how people will benefit, please remember to give details of who will benefit, differences in benefits by gender or other layers of diversity within stakeholders, and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail - number of households should be the largest unit used.

In the short-term, PFMCS will have their capacity built through training to sustainably manage local shea resources. 320 PFMCS members will receive training on sustainable natural resource management, the management of cooperatives and conflict management which will build capacity in the short-term and ensure the groups are well managed after project-end. 1020 people will have their understanding strengthened on the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, which will contribute towards leveraging short-term and longer-term behavioural change. Communities and stakeholders will gain increased awareness and understanding of the importance of sustainable exploitation of natural resources as well as of their rights and responsibilities towards the forests. Restoring 3,000ha by planting shea and other native trees alongside seedling regeneration will set in motion the restoration of local biodiversity, which will continue. Shea trees planted near target communities will make harvesting easier for women. Protected enclosure areas for seedling regeneration will promote growth for other species and help to strengthen biodiversity. By project-end, 16,700 ha of forestlands will benefit from protection and sustainable management.

300 VTE members will receive training on market analysis and development, group dynamics, conflict management, shea processing, and marketing. They will have access to equipment to improve quality and quantity of production and increase their incomes from NTFPs by 100%, in turn increasing household incomes by 50% at project-end. Shea VTE groups will benefit from access to market for their produce through the project's partnership with Ecopia. Women and youth will benefit from more equitable engagement in enterprise groups and the PFMCS structures. Through the development of VTEs, market access, and the shea value chain assessment report, the project will begin to structure and strengthen the local value chain and establish a base from which it can continue to grow in the future. The project will help to assess and strengthen the local shea value chain which is currently highly underdeveloped in the region.

In the long-term, 16,700ha of forest will remain under sustainable management through the PFMCS. 140,000 trees planted and 87,000 trees regenerated through ANR will continue to contribute to improved local biodiversity, soil fertility, and the local availability of NTFPs. Increased income generated by the 10 VTEs will contribute to household incomes and help pay for essentials such as food, healthcare and education for families. VTEs can also use the skills developed during training to expand their businesses to grow and process other NTFPs in the future. As the shea population and value chain grow side-by-side, it will incentivise local communities to continue to protect the forest. Technical documents produced, and forums organised with local stakeholders will also help to embed behaviour change on a wider scale and ensure the continued sustainable

management of the forest. Women's continued involvement in PFMCS and VTEs, particularly in management roles, will contribute towards a longer-term change towards increased women's empowerment and independence. The project has been designed with sustainability in mind and aims to enforce changes in attitudes and practices for targeted communities towards local natural resources.

Q18. Pathway to change

Please outline your project's expected pathway to change. This should be an overview of the overall project logic and outline why and how you expect your Outputs to contribute towards your overall Outcome and, in the longer term, your expected Impact.

Through expert-led training and the development of forest management plans, we will strengthen the capacity of 4 local communities to sustainably manage 16,700ha of the Tierkdui, Perbongo, Abol and Elia forestlands for the long-term (output 1).

Tree planting and regeneration will improve ecosystem biodiversity and help to restore 3,000ha of highly degraded forest land within the managed area (output 2).

Developing livelihood opportunities for 10 VTE groups will incentivise the sustainable exploitation of natural resources and provide an alternative source of income. Incomes increased through the sale of NTFPs can pay for household essentials and help to reduce poverty (output 3).

Organising 2 regional forums and sharing a shea value chain assessment will engage key local stakeholders to strengthen effective governance systems and support the development of the shea value chain in the area. (output 4).

Promoting livelihood opportunities based on forest resources will incentivise local communities to protect the Elia and Abol Forest and ensure its sustainable management and equitable access for the future (outcome).

The sustainable management and restoration of the Elia and Abol Forest will provide livelihood opportunities for communities in the Gambella Regional State, contributing to the reduction of local poverty and biodiversity loss (impact).

Q19. Sustainable benefits and scaling potential

Q19a. How will the project reach a point where benefits can be sustained post-funding? How will the required knowledge and skills remain available to sustain the benefits? How will you ensure your data and evidence will be accessible to others?

The project has many capacity building elements to ensure long-term sustainability. Using the ToT approach means that local stakeholders as well as project participants have knowledge on sustainable resource management and MA&D that can be useful long after project-end. This would support replication of the project's approach to other communities in the future.

The 8 VTEs that will form the 2 shea cooperatives will continue to have access and ownership over the storage facility and processing equipment after project-end. The technical guidelines produced on shea management and production will be shared with the 2 shea cooperatives. Tree nursery groups will also be able to use the nurseries to grow crops and other NTFP producing trees after project-end that they can sell or consume.


The value chain assessment report will be shared with local stakeholders and the technical guidance on shea management and production will also be shared with VTE groups.


Q19b. If your approach works, what potential is there for scaling the approach further? Refer to Scalable Approaches (Landscape, Replication, System Change, Capacitation) in the guidance. What might prevent scaling, and how could this be addressed?


This project builds on Tree Aid's successful shea value chain interventions across West Africa and aims to replicate this success in Gambella. This is the first time Tree Aid is scaling this approach and working with shea in Ethiopia.


If the project is successful, we hope that the same approach could be replicated to reach more communities in the Gambella region and in other regions of Ethiopia where shea grows. Communities could use the techniques learnt to move towards domesticating shea in the region by scaling up tree nurseries. There is high international demand for shea and its associated products. Project success could allow VTEs to scale their market reach to international markets in the future. By providing capacity building for local stakeholders, the project provides the ground-work for stakeholders to build on the work and replicate the model.

If necessary, please provide supporting documentation e.g. maps, diagrams, references etc., as a PDF using the File Upload below:

 [Tree Aid Supporting Documents](#)

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Section 7 - Risk Management

Q20. Risk Management

Please outline the 6 key risks to achievement of your Project Outcome and how these risks will be managed and mitigated, referring to the Risk Guidance. This should include at least one Fiduciary, one Safeguarding, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Gross Risk	Mitigation Header	Residual Risk
<p>Fiduciary</p> <p>Possibility of fraud during project implementation. The loss of money could mean less money is available to deliver activities, and could damage Tree Aid's reputation with donors, stakeholders, and local communities.</p>	Major	Rare	Moderate	Robust policies and procedures put in place especially on procurement and effective financial management procedures implemented. Tree Aid UK will review Tree Aid in-country expenditure and supporting documentation.	Minor
<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>The project will work with women and young people and will use household surveys which can lead to safeguarding risks. A safeguarding incident could lead to reputational damage, as well as a loss of trusts from local communities. This could threaten the ability to deliver projects in the area.</p>	Major	Unlikely	Major	Tree Aid has a strict safeguarding policy, in line with UK guidance/laws. Tree Aid, partner staff, and enumerators receive training to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding. If an incident occurs, a formal procedure will be followed to ensure the risk to beneficiaries is removed and dealt with appropriately.	Moderate

Delivery Chain	Poor tree seedling survival rates for shea trees (which can be difficult to grow) planted during the project could mean that targets around land restoration and biodiversity cannot be met.	Moderate	Possible	Major	Training for 60 nursery VTE members on growing and caring for shea seedlings will take place. The project will use learnings from previous Tree Aid shea-related projects, and technical guidance documents on shea growth and management will be produced. The project aims for a 70% survival rate for planted seedlings.	Minor
Risk 4	Women may require approval of men to participate project activities. This could lead to a lack of women participating and the project might be unable to reach its objectives and targets around female participation. Enterprise groups and tree nurseries may not be able to function as planned.	Moderate	Unlikely	Moderate	Tree Aid will apply its experience working in Ethiopia and with women from rural and traditional communities more broadly. We will engage the men in the community to discuss the benefits they and their household will have if they enable women to participate in the project through community sensitisation exercises.	Low
Risk 5	The foreign exchange rate could change drastically during the project lifetime. This could reduce the budget available in local currency for the project. As a result, the project might not achieve all its objectives and targets.	Major	Possible	Major	Detailed budgets are prepared in the local currencies and take into account in-country inflation as forecast by IMF. Tree Aid monitors exchange rates and aims for final budgets using realistic rates based on market information.	Major
Risk 6	Insecurity relating to the political situation in Ethiopia could escalate into violence in the region. This could lead to limited access to some target areas or difficulties in monitoring programme activities.	Moderate	Unlikely	Moderate	A Security and Response Plan involving the different project stakeholders will be developed. Tree Aid teams will be trained on security issues. Specific risks will be analysed regularly by INSO and any necessary amendments made to delivery to ensure the safety of staff and participants.	Moderate

Q21. Project sensitivities


Please indicate whether there are sensitivities associated with this project that need to be considered if details are published (detailed species location data that would increase threats, political sensitivities, prosecutions for illegal activities, security of staff etc.).

No


Section 8 - Workplan


Q22. Workplan


Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities.

 [Tree Aid BCF-Workplan-Template-2023-24-FINAL](#)

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Section 9 - Monitoring and Evaluation

Q23. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Describe how the progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project's M&E.

Darwin Initiative projects are expected to be adaptive and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an 'add' on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E.

Tree Aid employs a comprehensive M&E system facilitated by a technical support team, comprising a technical officer and MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning) advisor. This team assists in M&E planning, delivery, and analysis, following an organizational M&E manual with an indicator guide applicable across all projects. Data collection occurs through tablets using generic survey templates on the ODK platform, which is then "localized" for specific projects. Data is amalgamated and visualised through our on-line Information Management System (IMS) called AKUKO.

A start-up workshop at the beginning of the project will review the log frame and M&E plan. Project staff will be trained and supported to use tools effectively in line with organisational standards. The project will conduct beneficiary group discussions and stakeholder review workshops to capture opinions and context on key issues. Tree Aid has developed standardised methodology and templates for Focus Group Discussions (FGD).

Outcome indicators

Tree Aid uses the FCDO-funded Rural Household Multi Indicator Survey (RHoMIS), a digital survey and analytical engine for monitoring rural household practices, to measure socio-economic change. RHoMIS will capture information on any increase in income at a household level as a result of project activities (Indicator 0.3). RHoMIS also collects additional data on food security, livelihood strategies and women's decision-making power. This will deepen understanding of the wider impacts of the project on poverty and the wellbeing of project participants.

A forest inventory survey will collect data on tree species abundance and diversity (Indicator 0.2), as well as

forest conditions and land characteristics. Methodology and analysis used is in line with global standards and generates data on species diversity, density and dominance.

The Project Coordinator, with support from the UK technical team, oversees outcome indicators.

Output indicators

Project records (Indicator 1.1 and 1.3) will monitor the progress of the 4 PFMC groups towards improved sustainable land management along with an Organisational Capacity Assessment (Indicator 1.1 and 1.2). This tracks membership, inclusion, governance, and financial and management capacities. Access to forest and control over forest resources will be measured using a Forest Governance survey (Indicator 1.4) which access to and control over forest resources as reported by project households.

Tree planting and shea tree regeneration will be monitored using a Land Restoration Survey (Indicator 2.2 and 2.3). The Land Restoration Survey along with project records will also monitor the 3,000ha of total land of degraded land under restoration activities (Indicator 2.1). Tree survival will be measured using PCQs.

The establishment and disaggregation by gender of the 10 VTE groups will be monitored through project records and the Organisational Capacity Assessment (Indicator 3.1). RHoMIS will assess household income sourced from NTFPs for VTE members (Indicator 3.3).

The project adopts an adaptive management approach. The initial forest inventory and ecological survey will guide restoration activities. Regular monitoring enables the early detection of potential problems, and adjustments are made based on lessons learned. Continuous feedback from donors, stakeholders, and project participants informs appropriate modifications, ensuring the project remains responsive and effective throughout its duration.

Total project budget for M&E (£)



(this may include Staff and Travel and Subsistence Costs)

Total project budget for M&E (%)

(this may include Staff and Travel and Subsistence Costs)

Number of days planned for M&E


108


Section 10 - Logical Framework


Q24. Logical Framework (logframe)

Darwin Initiative projects will be required to monitor and report against their progress towards their Outputs and Outcome. This section sets out the expected Outputs and Outcome of your project, how you will measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

 [Tree Aid STAGE 2 TEMPLATE BCF-St2-and-Single-Stage-Logical-Framework-Template-Apr23-1](#)

 27/11/2023

 14:13:11

 pdf 159.7 KB

Impact:

Contribute to ecosystem restoration and improved living conditions for rural households in 4 communities through effective natural resource management, land restoration, and sustainable livelihood opportunities in Gambella Regional State, Ethiopia.

Outcome:

Support community-led management for 16,700ha of protected forest and restoration of 3,000ha of land within the forest to drive ecosystem restoration, improve biodiversity, and develop sustainable livelihood opportunities using shea.

Project Outputs

Output 1:

Strengthen the capacity of 4 communities to sustainably manage 16,700ha of forest land

Output 2:

Restore 3,000 ha of degraded forest land through tree planting and assisted natural regeneration (ANR)

Output 3:

Develop sustainable income generating activities through the development of the shea value chain

Output 4:

Influence and strengthen the regional, multi-actor platform to ensure the sustainable management of the natural forest to support the development of the shea value chain

Output 5:

No Response

Do you require more Output fields?

No

Activities

Each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 are contributing to Output 1.

Activity 1.1. Identification and mapping of areas of intervention

Activity 1.2. Conduct resource assessment and inventory on 16,700 hectares of forestland and establish monitoring plots

Activity 1.3. ToT for 20 project and government staff on sustainable resource, conflict management and group dynamics

Activity 1.4. Training on sustainable resource, cooperative and conflict managements for 320 PFMCs members

Activity 1.5. Support participatory management plan development of 4 PFMCs

Activity 1.6. Community awareness on biodiversity conservation and gender equality for 1020 people

Activity 2.1. Identification and mapping of 3,000 hectare of highly degraded forest area

Activity 2.2. Assist nursery groups to establish two tree nursery sites

Activity 2.3 Provision of tree seeds, nursery equipment

Activity 2.4 Training on tree nursery management for 60 nursery members

Activity 2.5 Seedlings purchase and transport for plantation of trees

Activity 2.6. Plantation of 140,000 seedlings (40,000 shea and 100,000 other species) by community members
Activity 2.7. Nurture the growth of 87,000 naturally regenerated Shea tree seedlings using FMNR





Activity 3.1. Identify VTE members and organise 10 VTE groups (8 shea and 2 tree seedlings producing groups)
Activity 3.2. ToT on MA&D for 20 project staff and local government experts
Activity 3.3. Training on MA&D, group development, group dynamics and conflict management, and financial management for all 10 VTE groups
Activity 3.4. Support development and implementation of 10 Enterprise Development Plans (1 for each VTE group)
Activity 3.5. Provision of 2 Shea butter producing equipment for 2 shea cooperatives (formed of the 8 VTEs) and assembling
Activity 3.6. Construction of 2 stores for processing and storage for the shea cooperatives
Activity 3.7. Training on warehousing, marketing, aggregation, processing and packing of shea butter for the 2 cooperatives
Activity 3.8. Facilitate market linkage and supply agreements with Ecopia
Activity 3.9. Facilitate participation in fares for VTEs to sell their products
Activity 3.10. Construction of kiosk for NTFP sales

Activity 4.1 Organise 2 regional forums for the implementation of Gambella Integrated Urban and Rural Land use Plan and enforcement on forest law
Activity 4.2 Prepare 1 technical guideline on Shea tree management, butter production, processing and marketing to be provided to the 2 shea cooperatives
Activity 4.3. Produce 1500 copies of IEC materials on restoration and VTEs
Activity 4.4 Conduct in-depth assessment of the value chain of shea nut and the shea butter marketing at local and national level

Section 11 - Budget and Funding

Q25. Budget

Please complete the appropriate Excel spreadsheet, which provides the Budget for this application and ensure the Summary page is fully completed. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet.

 [Tree Aid - Ethiopia Darwin BCF-Budget-over-£10
0k-MASTER-Aug23](#)
 27/11/2023
 20:53:50
 xlsx 95.66 KB

Q26. Alignment with other funding and activities

This question aims to help us understand how familiar you are with other work in the geographic/thematic area, and how this proposed project will build on or align with this to avoid any risks of duplicating or conflicting activities.

Q26a. Is this new work or does it build on existing/past activities (delivered by anyone and funded through any source)?

Development of existing/past activities

Please provide details:

Tree Aid has previously worked with communities to increase incomes from shea across West Africa. For example, Tree Aid is currently implementing a three-year project in Northern Ghana funded by the Global Shea Alliance to plant 200,000 seedlings, perform in-situ grafting on 15,000 shea seedlings, and establish 3 women's shea cooperatives. This project will build on Tree Aid's work in this field, but this is our first shea focused project in Ethiopia.

Q26b. Are you aware of any current or future plans for work in the geographic/thematic area to the proposed project that may duplicate or cut across this proposed project?

No

Q27. Value for Money

Please demonstrate why your project is good value for money in terms of impact and cost-effectiveness of each pound spend (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity). Why is it the best feasible project for the amount of money to be spent?

All Tree Aid projects aim to ensure the best value for money for projects using the 4 "E" methodology: Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity.

Economy: The budget has been drafted by Tree Aid Ethiopia, establishing local costs and determine the best returns on investment. The value for money was then reviewed by Tree Aid UK's finance team. Key assumptions include fluctuation in exchange rates and inflation throughout the project. Tree Aid provides staff with training and a competitive salary, to ensure staff are retained and can deliver results.

Efficiency: Project staff will be based in a new local office, minimising logistical costs. Trees will be grown by project nurseries creating planting cost efficiencies while increasing capacities. Training will be done by project staff, which also ensures the cost efficiency of these activities.

Effectiveness: The project is within our on-going programme in the Sahel, and especially Ethiopia, one of the poorest and most fragile regions in the world. We have proven experience implementing similar projects successfully to achieve desired outcomes. The theory of change and the project activities have been developed based on stakeholder consultations, so are appropriate and effectual to address beneficiary needs. Tree Aid uses adaptive management to adjust activities to local context changes.

Equity: Activities are appropriately targeted to individuals, to consider specific needs around gender and age.

Q28. Capital items

If you plan to purchase capital items with Darwin Initiative funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end. If you are requesting more than 10% capital costs, please provide your justification here.

The project will purchase the following capital items:

- 1 x overhead projector
- 2 x laptops
- 1 x printer
- 2 x motorbikes for fieldwork
- 5 x mobile phone for M&E data collection
- Office equipment and furniture for a new project office in Gambella
- 2 x nursery solar pumps
- Materials for nursery fencing
- ANR equipment for 4 communities
- 2 x shea oil/butter extractors

This equates to 7% of the total project budget and is within the limits set by Darwin for capital items. These items will be used exclusively for this project. After the project end, they will continue to be used by Tree Aid for ongoing charitable activities and future projects, or in the case of nursery or VTE equipment will be under the ownership of the target communities for their continued use.

Section 12 - Safeguarding and Ethics

Q29. Safeguarding

All projects funded under the Biodiversity Challenge Funds must ensure proactive action is taken to promote the welfare and protect all individuals involved in the project (staff, implementing partners, the public and beneficiaries) from harm. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have specific procedures and policies in place.

Please upload the following required policies:

- **Safeguarding Policy:** including a statement of commitment to safeguarding and a zero tolerance statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- **Whistleblowing Policy:** which details a clear process for dealing with concerns raised and protects whistle blowers from reprisals.
- **Code of Conduct:** which sets out clear expectations of behaviours – inside and outside the workplace – for all involved in the project and makes clear what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards, including compliance with IASC 6 Principles.

If any of these policies are integrated into a broader policy document or handbook, please upload just the relevant or equivalent sub-sections to the above policies, with (unofficial) English translations where needed.

Please outline how (a) beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff are made aware of your safeguarding commitment and how to confidentially raise a concern, (b) safeguarding issues are investigated, recorded and what disciplinary procedures are in place when allegations and complaints are upheld, (c) you will ensure project partners uphold these policies.

If your approach is currently limited or in the early stages of development, please clearly set out your plans address this.

Tree Aid has a comprehensive safeguarding policy extending to trustees, staff, volunteers, and partners. The policy identifies a designated contact person for safeguarding in each regional office with contact information and details of prevention and reporting procedures. All staff and implementing partners are trained annually on the policy. Raising awareness among beneficiaries is also a priority. Summaries of all organisational policies are available through Tree Aid's website, where complete versions can also be requested.

For anyone wishing to raise a concern, offices display posters, and a hotline is available for reporting.

Safeguarding questions are included in RHoMIS surveys, allowing beneficiaries to raise concerns. Data collected is anonymised and stored on ONA Data. Focal persons are responsible for following up to ensure that concerns raised are properly investigated and appropriate action taken. Staff and associated personnel must cooperate fully with any investigation and maintain records. Confidentiality is maintained to the extent possible although this cannot always be guaranteed depending on actions required.

The CEO has ultimate responsibility for the safeguarding policy, and focal persons report violations promptly and confidentially with quarterly updates. All safeguarding incidents must be reported to head office (UK) to comply with reporting duties to the Charity Commission.

Q30. Ethics

Outline your approach to meeting the key principles of good ethical practice, as outlined in the guidance.

Tree Aid is a value-led organisation, encouraging equal partnerships and ensuring due diligence in all endeavours. Compliance and managing risks are the responsibility of all staff. Upholding all legal and ethical obligations in Ethiopia and the UK is a priority. Staff will engage with local authorities and structures in Ethiopia to ensure the project development aligns with national policy.

Our Code of Conduct describes the expected behaviour from all staff. Principles described are applied in project development to safeguard communities and ensure Tree Aid has a positive impact. The project will protect the rights, privacy, and safety of people impacted by activities. Tree Aid has a zero-tolerance approach to aid diversion and any form of abuse.

Tree Aid uses Prior Informed Consent (PIC) with the project designed around the needs of communities. At project-start, the activities will be thoroughly explained to ensure buy-in and understanding. Communities can provide feedback during baseline surveys, stakeholder consultations, and focus group discussions, enabling their views and local knowledge to be considered and to guide implementation as it progresses.

Tree Aid protects the health and safety of all staff by following procedures to ensure working conditions are as defined in our health and safety policy.

Section 13 - British embassy or high commission engagement

Q31. British embassy or high commission engagement


It is important for UK Government representatives to understand if UK funding might be spent in the project country/ies.


Please indicate if you have contacted the relevant British embassy or high commission to discuss the project.


Yes

Please attach evidence of request or advice if received.

 [UK Embassy Support Letter November 2023](#)

 27/11/2023

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 pdf 125.14 KB

Section 14 - Project Staff

Q32. Project staff

Please identify the core staff (identified in the budget), their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project.

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Fikru Tessema	Project Leader	5	Checked
Cheru Tessema	Country Programme Manager, Ethiopia	20	Checked

Zemenu Woldie	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Ethiopia	20	Checked
Yared Yohannes	Administrative and Financial Assistant, Ethiopia	10	Checked


Do you require more fields?


Yes


Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Pietro Carpena	Head of Programme Quality and Advocacy, UK	2	Checked
Sean McGough	Head of Programmes, UK	2	Checked
Julie Violet	Finance Manager, UK	2	Checked
Ines El Ghadab	Head of Compliance, UK	2	Checked
David Baines	Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, UK	2	Checked
To be recruited	Project Coordinator, Ethiopia	100	Checked
To be recruited	Admin and Finance Assistant	100	Checked
To be recruited	Community Facilitator	100	Checked

Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.

 [Tree Aid Darwin Ethiopia - all CVs and JDs](#)

 27/11/2023

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 pdf 1.02 MB

Have you attached all project staff CVs?

Yes

Section 15 - Project Partners

Q33. Project Partners

Please list all the Project Partners (including the Lead Partner who will administer the grant and coordinate delivery of the project), clearly setting out their roles and responsibilities in the project including the extent of their engagement so far.

This section should demonstrate the capability and capacity of the Project Partners to successfully deliver the project. Please provide Letters of Support for all project partners or explain why this has not been included. The order of the letters must be the same as the order they are presented in below.


Lead partner name:	Tree Aid
Website address:	https://www.treeaid.org/
Why is this organisation the Lead Partner, and what value to they bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	<p>Tree Aid has 35 years of experience of delivering high-quality, impactful projects in Ethiopia and across the drylands of Africa. All Tree Aid projects are locally-led and focus on creating sustainable solutions to the intertwined issues of poverty and climate change. Tree Aid has experience of supporting communities to increase incomes through shea and is currently implementing a project in Northern Ghana to establish funded by the Globa Shea Alliance to plant and restore shea trees and establish 3 women’s shea cooperative groups.</p> <p>Tree Aid has designed this project and coordinated the application process. As the lead partner, Tree Aid will have overall responsibility for collaborating with local communities and stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the project. Tree Aid will lead on Monitoring & Evaluation and reporting activities. Additional ongoing financial management, technical support, and monitoring and quality assurance will be carried out by the local project team with support from Tree Aid’s regional office in Ethiopia, and with backstopping support from the Tree Aid UK office.</p>
International/In-country Partner:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> International
Allocated budget (proportion or value):	No Response
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure):	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from the Lead Partner?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes


Do you have partners involved in the Project?


No

Please provide a combined PDF of all letters of support.

 [Tree Aid Lead Partner - Letter of support](#)

 27/11/2023

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 pdf 93.61 KB

Section 16 - Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

Q34. Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

Has your organisation been awarded Biodiversity Challenge Funds (Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus or Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund) funding before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?

Yes

If yes, please provide details of the most recent awards (up to 6 examples).

Reference No	Project Leader	Title
2728-010	Cheru Tessema	Developing Rural Pathways to Community Resilience and Ecosystem Restoration
2728-023	Sean McGough	Promoting Forest Governane for Resilient Ecosystems and Communities in Segou
2425-029	Aboubacar Gadage	Rehabilitation of the ecosystem of the Park W landscape
2324-022	Amadou Tangara	Strengthening Malian Forest Management to Protect Biodiversity and Alleviate Poverty
1920-019	Cheru Tessema	Washa Forest – Sustainable Management for Resilient Livelihoods
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>

Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts?

Yes

Section 17 - Certification

Q.35 Certification

If this section is incomplete the entire application will be rejected.

Please note if you do not upload the relevant materials below your application may be made ineligible.

On behalf of the

Company

of

Tree Aid

I apply for a grant of

£399,379.30

I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)





- I have enclosed CVs for key project personnel, cover letter, letters of support, a budget, logframe, Safeguarding and associated policies, and project workplan.
- Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report (covering three years) are also enclosed.

Checked

Name Tom Skirrow









Position in the organisation CEO

Signature (please upload e-signature)













 [Tom Skirrow signature](#)
 27/11/2023
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 png 13.87 KB

Date 27 November 2023

Please attach the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts.

 2021-22-Tree-Aid-Annual-Report-and-Annual-Accounts-Compressed compressed  27/11/2023  20:33:06  pdf 3.54 MB	 2022-23-Tree Aid-Annual Report (1) compressed  27/11/2023  20:32:20  pdf 3.58 MB
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Please upload the Lead Partner's Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct as a PDF

 Tree Aid Safeguarding Policy - Feb 2023 (1)  27/11/2023  20:30:53  pdf 1.64 MB	 18- Code of Conduct - EN- FINAL- 2023  27/11/2023  20:30:44  pdf 231.97 KB
 18-Employee Handbook - October 2023-FINAL  27/11/2023  19:10:15  pdf 579.62 KB	

Section 18 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

	Check
I have read the Guidance, including the "Darwin Initiative Guidance", "Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance", "Standard Indicator Guidance", "Risk Guidance", and "Finance Guidance".	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for the project.	Checked

I have provided my budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP.	Checked
I have checked that our budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application.	Checked
The application been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have attached the below documents to my application:	
• a cover letter from the Lead Partner, outlining how any feedback received at Stage 1 has been addressed where relevant, as a single PDF.	Checked
• my completed logframe as a PDF using the template provided and using “Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance” and “Standard Indicator Guidance”.	Checked
• my budget (which meets the requirements above) using the template provided.	Checked
• a signed copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts (covering three years) for the Lead Partner, or provided an explanation if not.	Checked
• my completed workplan as a PDF using the template provided.	Checked
• a copy of the Lead Partner’s Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct (Question 29).	Checked
• 1 page CV or job description for all the Project Staff identified at Question 32, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not, combined into a single PDF.	Checked
• a letter of support from the Lead Partner and partner(s) identified at Question 33, or an explanation of why not, as a single PDF.	Checked
I have been in contact with the FCDO in the project country/ies and have included any evidence of this. If not, I have provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
My additional supporting evidence is in line with the requested evidence, amounts to a maximum of 5 sides of A4, and is combined as a single PDF.	Checked
(If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all my responses have been successfully copied into the online application form.	Checked
I have checked the Darwin Initiative website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the Darwin Initiative website.	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Darwin Initiative and our sister grant scheme, the IWT Challenge Fund. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our quarterly project newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Unchecked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in the application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the **Privacy Notice**, available from the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#).

This **Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals** whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead partner, project leader, location, and total grant value).