Darwin Initiative Main & Extra Annual Report

Darwin Initiative Project Information

Scheme (Main or Extra)	Extra
Project reference	DAREX012
Project title	Scaling conservation of Himalayan plants and fungi through sustainable trade
Country/ies	Nepal
Lead Organisation	TRAFFIC
Project partner(s)	**Grant recipients:** ANSAB (Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources); FECOFUN (Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal); WWF India (Worldwide Fund for Nature India); University of Copenhagen (UCPH); University of Oxford; Tribhuvan University; FairWild Foundation (FWF). **Other partners:** Ministry of Forests and Environment, Nepal (MoFE), Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Association (NEHHPA), China Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine (CATCM), China Standard Conformity Assessment Co. Ltd. (CSCA), Terra Himalaya Pvt. Ltd. Bhutan.
Darwin Initiative grant value	£4,903,805
Start/end dates of project	1 April 2024 – 31 March 2029
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2024 – Mar 2025) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2024 – March 2025 Annual Report 1
Project Leader name	Anastasiya Timoshyna
Project website/blog/social media	Scaling conservation of Himalayan plants and fungi through sustainable trade
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1. Project summary

Nepal's alpine Himalayan forests and rangelands are exceptional global biodiversity hotspots, home to keystone species, including medicinal plants and fungi. Over 40 key non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are harvested and traded internationally, providing critical contributions to the incomes of the rural poor.

Despite the positive impacts of Nepal's pioneering community forestry approach[i, ii], alpine NTFPs and associated landscapes face multiple threats of overharvesting, fire and uncontrolled grazing[iii, iv]. Overharvesting is driven by increasing and diversifying international trade: to India for Ayurvedic products, cosmetics, food, and religious uses; China for traditional Chinese medicine; and elsewhere.

Challenges include inadequate information on sustainable harvest volumes and simple procedures for resource management, and an inadequate centralised approach to resource monitoring and trade regulation. Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) lack clear and transparent guidelines for decentralised alpine NTFP management. The lack of viable livelihood options and socio-economic constraints create a strong reliance on local biodiversity, particularly wild NTFPs from common-property forests and meadows. This is the only accessible source of livelihoods for the most disadvantaged, including poor, Dalit and indigenous households, and is key for economic development.

The resource management challenge particularly impacts high-value NTFPs with established trade-driven conservation concerns including CITES Appendix-II/IUCN CR[v] Jatamansi/Spikenard (*Nardostachys*

jatamansi), Himalayan Fritillary (*Fritillaria cirrhosa*)[vi], and Kutki (*Neopicrorhiza scrophulariiflora*)[vii]. These species are among top six most vulnerable commercial medicinal species traded in/from Nepal[iv]; whenever market demands increase, risks of premature/over-harvesting grow. Local income potential is held back by low rates of value-addition and lack of direct access to international markets. It is also undercut by large-scale illegal exports of lower-quality products to India and increasing trade with China. This regional trade connecting Nepal, Bhutan, India and China presents the major threat to natural resources and habitats. Obstacles to legal and sustainable trade include inadequate regional trade agreements, and non-tariff barriers (e.g. import restrictions due to the lack of quarantine records, consistent stock assessments).

The project's goal to enable sustainable management of Himalayan wild plants and fungi holds significant relevance to rural harvesters who can benefit from the increased income from sale of high value NTFPs. Likewise, regulatory agencies and management bodies such as District Forest Offices (DFOs), National Parks, Conservation Area Offices, and CFUGs can integrate the findings from the resource inventory into their respective management plans—contributing to long-term sustainability of NTFPs. Additionally, the total stock and annual allowable harvest figures generated through resource inventory will support Nepal in preparing its Non-Detriment Findings (NDF), particularly for Jatamansi. The Pest Risk Analysis of selected herbs will facilitate exports by helping meet phytosanitary requirements. Business meetings organized through the project will strengthen the Nepali herbal market, while support to enterprises will enhance the domestic trade and export of medicinal plants.

The project seeks to scale up existing approaches; including those that have been developed under previous Darwin Initiative projects. Scaling-up builds on Nepal's well-established community forest management system, supported by project partners ANSAB and FECOFUN. This demonstrates that CFUGs can manage timber[i] and NTFPs[viii] without over-exploitation, using CFUG operational plans as an effective resource management framework.

Through previous Darwin Initiative projects (25-018 and 28-026), the partnership piloted implementation of the FairWild Standard and certification system as a market-based framework for sustainable harvest and trade of wild NTFPs, and scaled initial successes to achieve positive impacts on biodiversity and livelihoods. Project 28-026 generated modelling scenarios[ix] for landscape-level conservation and resource management; these propose a combination of policy and regenerative harvesting to stabilise populations of commercially important and threatened NTFPs, while improving monitoring of associated plants and fungi. Project approaches to national and regional coordination, traceability, and value-chain actions build on evidence from those projects and wider operating environment (e.g. Market Access workshop[x], China-Nepal Border Trade and Cooperation & Coordination Mechanism[xi].

The project scales up:

- In a *landscape context* – by applying the approach tested in five districts of Western Nepal to all mountainous areas with major commercial harvesting of priority NTFPs, from West to East of Nepal (10 districts in total), with stock assessment and follow-up management responses for the flagship Jatamansi at a national/landscape level;
- Through a *systems-change approach* – targeting trade and policy barriers to sustainability within Nepal, regionally and internationally; and enabling traceability systems and partnerships that will enable sustainable trade in the long-term;
- Through *mobilization of a network* of Local Resource Persons (LRPs) – as they are the means and drivers to reach to at a broader scale;
- By increasing *capacities and capabilities* – of organisations, national and regional coordination bodies (multistakeholder forums); and
- Attracting *additional finance* – private and public funding.

The project is structured around five outcome areas, combining capacity-building, livelihoods-focussed, land and species management, regulatory and market-based approaches.

The project targets ten districts (population 1.17 million[xii]) across Sudurpaschim (Darchula, Bajhang, Bajura), Karnali (Humla, Mugu, Jumla, Dolpa), Lumbini (Rukum-East), Gandaki (Gorkha) and Koshi (Gorkha) provinces— that stretch from North-West to North-East Nepal in the remote mountains (Figure 1), and are the most significant commercial producing areas for wild-harvested NTFPs. For most communities in these districts, NTFPs are the primary source of cash income without engaging in seasonal out-migration[xiii]. Securing the resource base and increasing income from managed, sustainable access to NTFPs will reduce poverty. Despite improvements in Nepal's national multi-dimensional poverty index score[xiv], over half the population of Karnali and one third of Sudurpaschim live below the poverty line; and despite the efforts of government and development agencies, poverty is not declining as expected. These provinces rank lowest for development indices on per-capita income, life expectancy, and basic infrastructure[xv], [xvi].

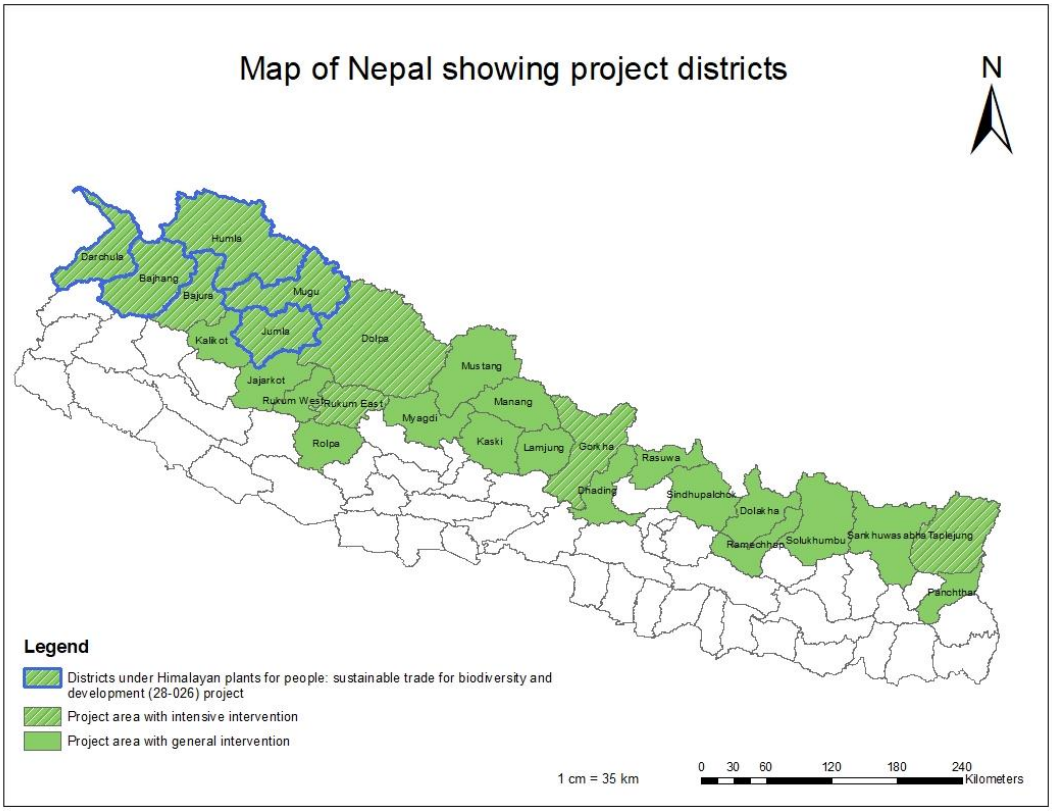

Figure 1: Map of Nepal showing the project districts.

In the targeted 10 districts, the project currently focuses on 36 municipalities, 294 Forest User Groups-FUGs[1] (253 CFUGs, 41 Conservation Community Forest User Groups- CCFUGs/ Buffer Zone Community Forest User Groups-BZCFUGs), with 90,708 hectare of forests and meadows, and 42,372 households (Table 1). The municipalities and FUGs were selected based on guidelines considering key factors (SDY1_1.1.6). The project anticipates reaching 350 FUGs; thus additional FUGs will be added in Year 2. Apart from the 10 targeted districts, the resource inventory of high value NTFPs will be conducted across 1.5 million ha forest/meadow area in all 27 Himalayan districts (highlighted with green in Figure 1).

Table 1: Selected districts, municipalities, forest user groups, total area of FUGs, and households engaged. Further details are provided in SDY1_1.1.7.

District	Municipalities	Number of FUGs	Area (ha)	Number of households
Darchula	Api Himal, Marma, Naugad, Byas	27	6,122	2,360
Bajhang	Jaya Prithvi, Surma, Bungal, Saipal	30	7,985	6,819
Bajura	Himali, Budinanda, Gaumul	26	3,547	4,320
Humla	Simkot, Sarkegad, Kharpunath, Chankheli	27	9,041	3,185
Mugu	Mugum Karmarong, Chhayanath Rara, Soru, Khatyad	32	7,321	3,879
Jumla	Patrasi, Guthichaur, Tatopani	30	23,903	4,400
Dolpa	Kaike, Thulibheri, Tripurasundari, Jagdulla	28	12,026	4,092
Rukum-East	Putha Uttarganga, Sisne	33	4,511	3,734
Gorkha	Dharche, Barpak Sulikot, Ajirkot, Chumnubri	32	9,809	7,292
Taplejung	Mikwakhola, Phaktanglung, Sirijunga, Sidingba	29	6,443	2,291
	n= 36	**294**	**90,708**	**42,372**

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

Engagement between formal partners:

Following contracting with NIRAS, the formal partnership was established through signing of contracts between TRAFFIC and the other implementing partners. The partners were convened through a hybrid project planning meeting (SDY1_1.1.1) and national inception workshop (SDY1_1.1.2), held in July-August 2024 in Kathmandu.

[1] The acronym CFUG is used in later sections of this report (e.g. description of progress on training delivery) as a shorthand for all types of FUG listed here; CFUG being the term more commonly in use, and the main target group.

Following inception, the formal partnership has been managed through regular monthly project calls (SDY1_0.1). Topics covered include progress reviews and information exchange, activity planning, monitoring and evaluation, and resolving of bottlenecks. Regular monthly calls are also held on communications (SDY1_0.2), and on finance and administration. A series of calls were also held on M&E, working to refine the M&E plan, define indicators and assign responsibilities for data collection. A series of calls on research topics has also been held, covering general introductions to research planned under the project, and exploration of some specific topics e.g., the research agenda related to China (SDY1_0.3).

Due to delays to the contracting process, the formal involvement of WWF India has been delayed until Year 2, with the associated budget having been moved to Year 2 through a change request approved by Defra (CR24-098 approval received 26 Jan 2025). Nevertheless, WWF India were represented at the hybrid work planning meeting in July/August 2024 and have participated in calls during Year 1.

An in-person project meeting was held in Frankfurt, Germany (14 Feb 2025, SDY1_0.4), taking advantage of ANSAB travel to Europe. The meeting was attended by staff from TRAFFIC, ANSAB and UoC, and focused on Y1 activity completion (policy assessment and value chain mapping), and in-depth work on the baseline assessment and M&E framework. *Ad hoc* meetings on particular topics were also held, for example a meeting between TRAFFIC, ANSAB and FairWild at the BioFach trade fair. Through these meetings and regular communication over email, partners engage in a coordinated manner with the project.

Outside of the formal partnership for delivery of the grant-funded activities, the project has also engaged other key stakeholders and developed new partnerships. Key engagement events were the national-level inception workshop held in Kathmandu, three provincial sharing meetings and 10 district level inception workshops (details in section 3.1), which were held with the approach of not only sharing information on the project, but also understanding the interest and priorities of the local stakeholders (incorporating feedback into plans), and getting their endorsement and consent to implement the project.

Nepal's Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) and its departments (Forest Research and Training Centre (FRTC) and Department of Plant Resources (DPR)) has been a key collaborator – especially to prepare resource inventory guidelines and conduct the resource assessment of Himalayan NTFPs. Likewise, Provincial Forest Ministries and Division Forest Officers are key collaborators in conducting the resource inventory and incorporating the inventory data in the management plans of respective (District) Forest Offices. Other collaborators have also been engaged, e.g., advice on CITES NDF processes and cultivation of medicinal plant species with Terra Himalaya (Bhutan); and strategic collaboration with CATCM (also contracted as service provider for market research in China). Oxford University have formed a new partnership with Greenhood Nepal, a local Nepal-based conservation NGO who specialises in research with people involved in the trade and use of wild species. Their role involves interacting with plant trade actors in Nepal to gather information to build and test the Bayesian Belief Network model.

The project approaches include working with all the partner organisations to share information through their networks, collaborating on awareness campaigns, and sharing resources. We create public awareness materials like flyers and brochures in Nepali and English with clear language and visuals to explain the project's goals and the biodiversity-poverty connection. These are distributed at in-person workshops and meetings and used alongside printed materials such as posters and banners, as well as presentations, videos, and website and social media content. Information about the project and the link between biodiversity and poverty has also been shared with stakeholders through other events, from public presentations to smaller working meetings. For example, presentations were given at industry events (IFEAT), conservation forums (Conservation Optimism) and research events (ISDRS), and international policy events (CBD CoP 16 side event). ANSAB also presented project information, including a 10-minute video "Plants, People and Prosperity" which captures experience under the previous projects (25-018 and 28-026) and gives an introduction to DAREX012, during a two-day workshop organised by NIRAS/DEFRA with the support of FCDO in Kathmandu. A list of workshops and presentations can be found in SDY1_0.7.

Key materials introducing the project and explaining the biodiversity-poverty links include the above mentioned video developed by ANSAB, available in English and Nepali (SDY1_4.11.1a,b); a new 2-minute video developed by TRAFFIC entitled Scaling conservation of Himalayan plants and fungi through sustainable trade (SDY1_4.11.2); a brochure outlining the project objectives in both English and Nepali (SDY1_4.11.3a,b); and a flyer developed for use at trade fairs (SDY1_4.11.5). Partner websites and social media share project information and highlight biodiversity-poverty issues to a wider audience, and we share case studies and success stories about communities benefiting from sustainable practices to show the link between conservation and livelihoods. To see if these messages are understood, we track media coverage and how people interact with our content on social media. Details are in SDY1_0.8 and SDY1_0.9.

Overall, the project partnership is functioning well, and good progress has been made in Year 1. Some improvements have been identified for Year 2, for example exploring additional structures and mechanisms to plan and coordinate implementation, and to increase the pool of strategic advise available to the project. Priorities are also to convene the project partnership in India and to begin activity implementation and stakeholder engagement there.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Output 1: Capacities and capabilities of stakeholders - in particular women and excluded groups- are improved to enable improved conservation, resource management and sustainable trade

Project inception activities (**Activity 1.1**) included a planning meeting conducted from July 29 – August 2, 2024 in Kathmandu, 33 participants (26 in-person, 7 online) attended (SDY1_1.1.1). The meeting agenda included project overview, partner roles and coordination; Project management approaches and tools; Y1 planning; Administrative and financial requirements; Project M&E and reporting; Project influence plan and communications; Safeguarding, risk assessment and mitigation; and various technical topics.

A national level inception workshop was held at Hotel Himalaya, Lalitpur on August 7, 2024 (SDY1_1.1.2). Jointly organized by ANSAB and TRAFFIC, the event had 67 participants (21 female, 46 male), including representatives from the MoFE and its departments, FECOFUN, Tribhuvan University, UNDP Nepal, USAID, and I/NGOs and the private sector. Presentations were delivered drawing upon lessons learnt and highlighting the opportunities present with the new project (SDY1_1.1.3). The major highlight of the inception workshop was the commitment of Government of Nepal, expressed through the Secretary of MoFE who said "*We are committed to protect that support to sustainably manage high value plants and fungi of conservation priority in the Himalayas. As a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES, Nepal complies with these international agreements by enforcing and implementing appropriate national policies. I believe that this project, focusing on plants and fungi, will help address challenges in biodiversity conservation and livelihood improvement of the forest-dependent people of the Himalayan region*." Similar commitments were expressed by Director Generals of DPR and FRTC.

Three provincial-level meetings were held in Sudurpaschim, Karnali, and Lumbini provinces on January 21, 23, and 24, respectively, with 9, 25, and 14 participants including the Secretaries of the provincial forest ministries of three provinces, Director of the provincial forest directorate, forest officers, and provincial FRTC representatives (SDY1_1.1.4). All three Secretaries expressed their commitment to support the project to achieve the outcomes. Director General of FRTC also attended provincial sharing meeting at Karnali highlighting the importance of the project in achieving the conservation and economic outcomes. The provincial sharing meetings helped the government stakeholders to understand about the project. Following the meetings, Provincial Forest Ministries informed the DFOs to support the project.

All 10 district level inceptions were completed in Year 1 (SDY1_1.1.5). A total of 308 participants—including 251 men and 57 women—took part in the district inception meetings. These participants represented a wide range of institutions, informed stakeholders about the project's goals, objectives, activities and implementation modalities, fostering rapport and creating a conducive environment for future project interventions. Moreover, the workshops encouraged the stakeholder's ownership of the project through increased involvement in identifying and validating project locations (rural and urban municipalities), FUGs, and the target species. The workshops also helped identifying potential cooperation/collaboration, resource leveraging and long-term impact. The workshops helped in understanding the interests and priorities (e.g., inclusion of additional potential highland NTFPs) of the local stakeholders and getting their endorsement and consent to implement the project. Another output of the inception is the validation of selected municipalities, CFUGs and the target species (see next paragraph).

All the inception workshops have now been accomplished. Other inception activities included the development of municipality and FUG selection guidelines (SDY1_1.1.6), and the final selection of FUGs to be targeted by the project (SDY1_1.1.7). ANSAB and FECOFUN also recruited and mobilised their network of field staff, including 7 Forest Officers employed by ANSAB, and 3 Forest Technicians and 7 Social Mobilizers employed by FECOFUN. The district offices were set up at seven districts – Darchula, Humla, Jumla, Dolpa, Rukum-East, Gorkha and Taplejung. In addition to the district-level offices, ANSAB established an office in Surkhet to facilitate the movement of the Field Program Coordinator and Sustainable Forest Management Expert for the coordination, implementation and monitoring of district-level activities. Both ANSAB and FECOFUN successfully registered their project with the Social Welfare Council (SWC) of Nepal, a regulatory organization of NGOs, which gave permission to formally begin implementation of activities (SDY1_0.5, SDY1_0.6). For field activities, in addition to informing the Provincial Forest Ministries (as referenced above), formal permissions are being established at all levels of government. All 36 working municipalities are well informed on the project; of them, 16 have already provided formal letters to ANSAB (SDY1_1.1.8). ANSAB also received a letter from Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) where they directed the national parks, conservation area and hunting reserve offices to coordinate and support the project activities (SDY1_1.1.9).

Following the establishment of field presence, and in parallel with the roll-out of inception meetings, capacity needs assessments (**Activity 1.2**) were conducted in 9 districts at different levels – including harvesters, municipalities, district level government agencies, selected FUGs, FECOFUN district chapter

committee members, traders and processors (SDY1_1.2.1). The assessments aimed to i) Evaluate the existing capacities in medicinal plant initiatives; ii) Identify areas where additional capacity building initiatives are required for the improved conservation, resource management, and sustainable trade; and iii) Propose strategies for capacity building and improved stakeholder coordination. The resulting findings from key informant interviews (n = 324), focus group discussions (n =37) and field observations (n = 27) will be incorporated in Y2 plans. For example, it identified the need to address harvesters' 'low knowledge' of SFM and sustainable harvesting. The capacity needs assessment will also be completed in Dolpa in Year 2, where the activity was delayed due to a staff change.

Project activities in the field (e.g. training of harvesters and other stakeholders) will be delivered with the support of a network of local resource persons (LRPs) in 10 project districts. **Activity 1.3** Training of trainers (ToT) began with an internal training of project staff. ANSAB, with support from FairWild Foundation, organised a training programme for the project staff (n=18) in November 2024 (SDY1_1.3.1, SDY1_1.3.2). The training covered various topics on sustainable forest management, species identification and sustainable harvesting, and incorporated in-depth training sessions on FairWild Standard, certification, social responsibility and ethical trade. Following the training, ANSAB with support from FairWild Foundation finalised the curriculum and training materials (SDY1_1.3.3) for delivery of the ToT to the LRPs. Based on the ToT module, ANSAB accomplished the ToT targeting potential LRPs, district FECOFUN and DFO staff on target species identification, sustainable harvesting of target species, organic production, FairWild Standard and post-harvest processing and handling. A total of 218 potential LRPs (132 male, 86 female) were selected according to a guideline (SDY1_1.3.4) and trained during the ToT trainings, each receiving the 4-day training course. In addition, 19 staff from local government agencies (12 male, 7 female) participated in the course. The trainings were delivered in all 10 districts during February – March 2025 (SDY1_1.3.5). Pre- and post-test surveys of participants were conducted with results showing an increase in average score (max=10) from 3.3 pre-test to 7.6 post-test, depicting an increase in understanding of topics covered.

Activity 1.5 was rolled-out across all 10 districts through delivery of a dedicated 4-day training programme on GESI, Governance, Bookkeeping and Audit Management. The target participants of the training were District and Local FECOFUN members and LRPs. The primary objectives of the training were: To enhance the understanding of GESI principles and their application in community forest management; To build capacity in financial and audit management; To improve legal literacy and compliance among community forestry stakeholders; To empower LRPs to facilitate similar training at the local level. A total of 202 participants (106 male and 96 female) participated, spread evenly across the ten districts (15 – 21 participants per district) (SDY1_1.5.1, SDY1_1.5.2). In total, 79 participants were in common with the list of potential LRPs trained by ANSAB.

Activity 1.8 began through capacity building of ANSAB and FECOFUN staff to enable them to support implementation of FairWild certification in Nepal (training in November 2024, see Activity 1.3). A list of certification bodies active in Nepal was prepared by FairWild for prioritisation and engagement under the project (SDY1_1.8.1). Subsequently, a round of outreach to CBs took place to introduce the project and the FairWild Standard, and interest them in joining an auditor training event, held in February 2025. Four auditors from IMO Control India (who will cover FairWild audits in Nepal) were trained, and successfully received FairWild auditor certificates (SDY1_1.8.2). Top-up training was also delivered to two auditors from CERES who had previously conducted FairWild audits in Nepal and are available to cover the region.

Output 2: Over 10,000 harvesters benefit from improved livelihoods from long-term, sustainable, equitable trade in NTFPs

The ToR to conduct a baseline survey of community harvesting practices and livelihood strategies, and overall socio-economic context was prepared (SDY1_2.1.1) and advertised in November 2024 (**Activity 2.1**). Following a competitive selection process, a consulting firm was appointed. The baseline assessment methodology (SDY1_2.1.2) was refined following project partners' reviews. The assessment started in February 2025 and data collection in the field was completed in March 2025. Three core team members from the consulting firm were engaged in conducting the focus group discussion and key informant interviews, while most of the quantitative data were collected using KoBo Collect through the trained enumerators (n=10), one for each district. Analysis of the baseline assessment data is underway and the final report will be generated in the first quarter of Year 2.

TRAFFIC, FairWild Foundation and ANSAB staff are engaged in the concept development for "wild harvest improvement projects" (WHIPs) for wild plants, which will be utilised in the delivery of **Activity 2.7** in Year2 onwards. TRAFFIC and FairWild are collaborating on the development and piloting of a framework for WHIPs through the project DARNV013, which can in future be applied in Nepal. Project staff participated in a round-table convened at the BioFach trade fair in February 2025 to discuss experience with piloting a liquorice WHIP in Uzbekistan, and many similarities were drawn with the situation in Nepal (SDY1_4.9.3).

ANSAB is in regular communication with Himalayan Bio Trade Pvt. Ltd. (HBTL) and Annapurna Aroma Co. Pvt. Ltd. to support FairWild certification of value chains for wild NTFPs (**Activity 2.8**). The project is providing partial financial support in Year 1 to conduct certification and provide preparatory support in the field, such as assisting operators to develop management plans (SDY1_1.8.1). Part funding was provided to HBTL for their FairWild audit, which was carried out in January 2025 and is in evaluation by the control body, CERES. Annapurna Aroma are also being supported to develop their management plan and application documents. Meetings were convened between project partners TRAFFIC, ANSAB and FairWild to discuss the possibility of group certification approaches under the FairWild certification system, to increase efficiency and lower costs by relying more on internal control mechanisms across CFUGs. A first concept has been developed, for refinement in Year 2 (SDY1_1.8.2).

Output 3. Over 100.000 ha of high-altitude Himalayas are sustainably managed through participatory land and species management and monitoring approaches

The NTFPs inventory guidelines published earlier by the government and other organizations viz: Participatory Inventory of Non-Timber Forest Products (ANSAB 2010)[xvii], and the NTFPs Resource Inventory Guideline (GoN 2011)[xviii] focuses on conducting inventories at the community forestry level or up to the district level. As this project envisions to conduct a national level resource inventory of prioritized 11 high Himalayan NTFPs in 1.5 million hectare forests, a separate guideline is needed.

Between July and September 2024, meetings were held with key stakeholders, including Secretary of MoFE, Chief of the Planning, Monitoring, and Coordination Division of MoFE, Director General of DPR, and Director General of the FRTC, as well as individual experts. These discussions aimed to form a project advisory committee and technical working group to develop an NTFP inventory guideline and coordinate the inventory process. A preparatory meeting with government stakeholders (MoFE, DPR, FRTC, DNPWC, DoFSC) took place in the first week of October 2024. As a result, the FRTC took the coordinating role to prepare and publish the inventory guidelines for Himalayan NTFPs (**Activity 3.1**); with ANSAB taking a leadership role with regards to technical content.

A half day meeting was held at ANSAB with FRTC, University of Copenhagen (UCPH) and Institute of Forestry, Tribhuvan University (IoF-TU) to discuss the inventory guidelines (5 Feb 2025, attended by 11 participants). An outline for the inventory guideline was proposed by Prof. Carsten Smith-Hall from UCPH, and based on the outline, FRTC, ANSAB and IoF-TU team started drafting the guideline during a writeshop at Dhulikhel on 15 – 16 March 2025. FRTC along with ANSAB further worked on the guideline and the first draft is expected to be prepared by first quarter of year 2. The guideline integrates science with the harvesters' knowledge to prepare a cost effective and replicable methodology —applicable not only to Nepal's high hill regions but across the Himalayan range. Habitat suitability maps for individual species will be prepared using selected variables and are then overlaid with maps generated by harvesters based on their local knowledge. The GPS points for survey are identified and surveyors visit the identified locations for survey, following the guideline. The current version of the document is included as SDY1_3.1.1. It is pending finalisation by FRTC; after which, the project will solicit comments from international experts.

Based on the guideline, resource inventory will be conducted throughout the 27 districts (**Activity 3.2**). During the district level inceptions and ToT, participants suggested to add NTFPs of high conservation and economic value such as pakhanved (*Bergenia purpurascens*) from Taplejung, nirmasi (*Delphinium denudatum*) from Gorkha. These species will be considered during the resource inventory.

TRAFFIC coordinated engagement with the German CITES Scientific Authority, UK CITES Scientific Authority, CITES SA of the Republic of Ireland, and CITES team of the European Commission DG Environment, to present the project, and update on plans for the Non-Detriment Findings (NDF) update for Jatamansi (**Activity 3.11**). Resource inventory information will feed into the NDF process for this species.

Output 4. Sustainable Himalayan wild NTFP value chains enabled from harvest to consumers based on traceable, certifiable production systems

A communications group has been established by TRAFFIC's comms lead for the project bringing together representatives from each partner organisation. Work has been undertaken on the influence plan **(Activity 4.1)** including stakeholder mapping in different sectors (local communities, government bodies at different levels, value chain actors, policy actors). The plan is slightly delayed and will be finalised in early Year 2.

Activities have commenced focused on trade analysis, value chain mapping and researching consumer demand (**Activity 4.2**). Recruitment of the PhD student at IoF-TU, was undertaken through an open and transparent process in accordance with the rules and guidelines of IoF-TU (SDY1_4.2.1). Bikash Adhikari was selected, and has now developed his PhD proposal exploring sustainable management practices and trade dynamics of NTFPs in the Nepal Himalayas, focused on trade to India (SDY1_4.2.2, SDY1_4.2.3). Recruitment and supervision of a co-financed PhD student (Christian Baldassari) also took place at IFRO, UCPH. The UCPH PhD student has developed his project proposal analysing trade and consumer demand in China for Nepalese medicinal plants (SDY1_4.2.4, SDY1_4.2.5). Meanwhile, the principle investigator at UCPH (Prof. Carsten Smith-Hall) advanced his own research in this area, including data checking and

data cleaning in preparation of work on a manuscript to quantify and value the economic importance of medicinal plant traded in and from Nepal. TRAFFIC also reviewed the existing data reported on trade of CITES-listed species from Nepal as part of the project baseline establishment (SDY1_4.2.6).

TRAFFIC China has worked with a consultant team from CATCM to conduct a comprehensive literature review and desktop study (SDY1_4.2.7) on 11 target species. Species profiles were subsequently developed to support further research on markets, consumer trends, and value chains within China (SDY1_4.2.8), in line with the value chain research plan SDY1_4.2.9). From February 2025, the China team initiated field surveys in Chengdu (Sichuan Province) and Bozhou (Anhui Province) to assess the status of medicinal material trade for the target species. The collected data are now being analysed and preliminary survey reports are being compiled. A review workshop is scheduled for early Year 2, after which feedback and recommendations will be incorporated into subsequent surveys across China.

Work has also progressed to identify the barriers and opportunities to sustainable and equitable trade **(Activity 4.3).** Under the coordination of CATCM, the China team conducted interviews with key stakeholders in the TCM industry and trade sector across China (SDY1_4.3.1, SDY1_4.3.2). Findings indicate that Sino-Nepalese trade has intensified in the post-pandemic era, with an increasing number of Nepalese merchants learning Mandarin to capitalize on emerging opportunities in the Chinese market. However, Nepal's underdeveloped infrastructure—including limited airport capacity and inefficient transportation networks in the high Himalayas—poses significant barriers to trade. Preliminary findings suggest that certain Nepalese medicinal plant materials have already entered the Chinese market, though further assessments are required to determine trade volumes, production yields, and pricing dynamics. A more systematic analysis of trade flows would help promote legal and sustainable Sino-Nepalese TCM trade. Additionally, products must comply with the standards outlined in the Chinese Pharmacopoeia. Price competitiveness and product quality remain key determinants of market success, and China's market capacity remains strong for products that meet demand and regulatory requirements. Moving forward, the next phase of research will focus on: Evaluating market demand for the 11 target species, assessing trade feasibility, and ensuring compliance with Chinese regulations.

In early Year 1, an Oxford MSc student (Jamal Rowe-Habbari, now also employed by FairWild Foundation as project staff), collaborating with the project leads for Oxford University and Greenhood Nepal, led a research project focussed on barriers and opportunities for voluntary certification for medicinal plants in Nepal, and the receptiveness of Indian consumers to certified products. A journal article based on this study was written and is now in review at the journal *Oryx* (SDY1_4.3.3). The research findings will feed into further review of barriers and opportunities in Year 2.

With regards to international trade barriers and opportunities, TRAFFIC gave input to a consultation held by Soil Association (UK organic certifier) on their policy on Critically Endangered species, including Jatamansi. TRAFFIC also considered the challenges of restricted imports into the EU of Jatamansi, discussing this in meetings in the European Parliament. Information on such barriers and opportunities will continue to be reviewed and compiled in Year 2.

Oxford University and Greenhood Nepal have begun to map out an extended Bayesian Belief Model for trade and demand factors affecting sustainability of trade (**Activity 4.4)**, using literature and own knowledge. In early 2025 research fellow Reshu Bashyal visited stakeholders such as national traders (n=5) based in Kathmandu and collectors and local traders (n=5) in Gorkha to gather feedback on the expanded model and continue mapping out the structure (SDY1_4.4.1). The research team also engaged with species-focused local traders and harvesters (n=3) in Lalitpur targeting *Taxus* species.

Activities also got underway to develop and roll-out wholesale market price collection (in Nepal, India and China), with the intention to share this information with harvesters and other stakeholders in Nepal and Bhutan **(Activity 4.8).** In Nepal, meetings were conducted with Jadibuti Association of Nepal (JABAN) - a Nepalgunj based association of crude medicinal plants traders - and Herbal Entrepreneurs Association of Nepal (HEAN) - a Kathmandu based association of crude medicinal plants traders. Both associations agreed to mutually share the monthly price of medicinal plants. ANSAB has also developed a list of species on which price information in China would need to be collected (SDY1_4.8.1) and provided this to TRAFFIC China. During the reporting period, TRAFFIC China engaged with two leading Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) market price platforms— [redacted] o refine circulation data and explore automated traceability systems for sustainable TCM trade. Finally, ANSAB is also currently in communication with a representative from FED-MAPs (India) regarding exchange of medicinal plants related market information between Nepal and India.

Activity 4.9 began with a presentation of the project by FairWild Foundation to industry actors at the International Federation of Essential Oils and Aroma Trades (IFEAT) 2024 conference in Bangkok in November 2024 (SDY1_4.9.1). Meetings were held with 4 buyer companies and 1 Nepali essential oils producer company (SDY1_4.9.2). The project partners also engaged industry stakeholders at the BioFach trade fair in February 2025, building on industry engagement that had taken place under the previous

Darwin projects. Meetings were held with 15 buyer companies and the essential oil producer also engaged at IFEAT (SDY1_4.9.3). FairWild Foundation undertook research into the US market for 10 species, results being compiled in a report (SDY1_4.9.4). Using this information, FairWild is currently conducting a round of outreach to engage the most promising candidates in the project (SDY1_4.9.5, SDY1_4.9.6).

TRAFFIC China has also engaged relevant industry actors, [redacted] who have committed to join the project as a key collaborator. The company utilizes four of the 11 target species in its operations. In February 2025, TRAFFIC China and CATCM co-organized an industry seminar in Chengdu. The event brought together key stakeholders involved in the importation, research, and processing of Nepal's target medicinal species. Discussions were structured around each of the 11 target species, enabling focused dialogue on supply chains, sustainability challenges, and market opportunities.

For **Activity 4.10**, emphasis has been placed on identifying new operators who might become FairWild-certified in the future. The list of Nepali companies engaged in previous projects was reviewed and is being updated. [redacted] continued facilitating communication with [redacted] who are interested in buying FairWild-certified ingredients from Nepali producers, and also secured interest from [redacted] to purchase FairWild-certified Jatamansi oil, subject to quality requirements and CITES permits being met. FairWild, alongside ANSAB and TRAFFIC, organised a breakfast walk-in session at the FairWild stand at Biofach 2025, Nuremberg (SDY1_4.10.1). The partners spoke with representatives from companies that attended, and prioritised follow-up engagement with them as well as other industry contacts met during the fair. Overall, a pool of around 25 companies (international buyers) were actively engaged in the matchmaking efforts in Year 1. Ingredient-focused newsletter campaigns have also been trialled to support market connections (SDY1_4.10.2, SDY1_4.10.3), and successful approaches will be expanded in Year 2.

As reported in section 2, a variety of communications approaches and tools have been developed to reach different audiences (**Activity 4.11)**. Key materials introducing the project include the two project videos (SDY1_4.11.1a,b; SDY1_4.11.2) along with a brochure outlining the new project objectives (SDY1_4.11.3a,b). TRAFFIC's project webpage was launched following the press-release about the inception meeting in Kathmandu in August 2024 (SDY1_4.11.4), featuring quotes of senior members of the UK Government and Government of Nepal. Partner organisations have also featured the project on their websites (SDY1_0.8 and supplementary material). Other communication tools include an industry-focused flyer for use at trade fairs (SDY1_4.11.5) and a report being developed by FairWild to help engage industry into the project (SDY1_4.11.6). The project has also been promoted in various presentations (SDY1_0.7 and supplementary material), and through digital newsletters and social media posts (SDY1_0.9 and supplementary material).

Output 5. Nepal's, regional, and key importing countries' policies, trade agreements, and legal frameworks include provisions for sustainable, traceable trade in wild plant and fungi ingredients, in line with CBD and CITES commitments

Implementation of the policy framework assessment (**Activity 5.1**) has begun with reviewing work carried out by partners on policy analysis to date, and reviewing some particular topics known to be potential obstacles to trade. One such topic is the trade in CITES-listed Jatamansi to Europe, which is currently subject to a case-by-case referral to the EU Scientific Review Group. The role of the EU SRG has been reviewed (SDY1_5.1.1), with the intention of developing explanatory material for industry actors on how the process works, and what they can expect if they would like to import Jatamansi to the EU.

Another achievement contributing to the policy framework review was the publication in *Conservation Biology* (SDY1_5.1.2) of a roadmap for five priority strategies to achieve the sustainable management of trade in wild plants from Nepal. This publication built on the Jadibuti Declaration, which was the outcome from a multi-stakeholder workshop held in Kathmandu in 2023 under the previous project[xix], and provides the basis for national and regional levels cooperation and prioritisation of interventions.

The project has been presented to the European Commission through meetings with DG INTPA and DG Environment in September 2024; at a CITES Celebration event on 1 October 2024; to the German development bank KfW (September 2024 and February 2025); and participants of the WWF European Business and Biodiversity Forum (SDY1_5.1.3). In March 2025, TRAFFIC co-organised a European Parliament event 'Environmental Crime: Five Years for the EU to turn the tide', which brought together more than 100 Members of European Parliament, representatives of government agencies, NGOs and media. TRAFFIC drew examples from the project during the event, emphasizing the importance of whole trade chain approach, and community-based interventions as necessary components to addressing illicit wild species trade practices. These events and meetings enabled understanding of the European policy context and identification of relevant stakeholders for future engagement.

Activity 5.2 has commenced through steps to form a project advisory committee in Nepal. ANSAB submitted a request letter to MoFE to form an advisory committee, which will constitute members from MoFE, Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Agricultural Development, and provide the institutional

arrangement for the involvement of government counterparts in different project activities such as the pest risk analysis, review of trade agreements, publishing of resource inventory guidelines and conducting the inventory. A variety of interactions, discussions and a workshop have been undertaken in order to establish this committee, which will serve the purpose of inter-ministerial coordination relevant to the project.

Options for the regional multi-stakeholder cross-agency policy Forum (**Activity 5.3**) are also being scoped, with the involvement of project partners and TRAFFIC's policy team. In the first instance, through the discussions on the margins of CITES Standing Committee in February 2025, an opportunity to convene stakeholders has arisen through a regional workshop on sustainable management of Himalayan CITES listed medicinal plant species, which is proposed by China's CITES Scientific Authority (SA). The meeting will aid information and experience exchange on approaches to management of CITES-listed species, including introduction of China's newly developed *Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs) Guideline on Endangered Plant Species Collection*, a document being developed by China's CITES SA and Chongqing University with support from TRAFFIC. This regional cross-agency forum is currently scheduled to be held at Chongqing University in August 2025 (SDY1_5.3.1).

The project has supported the Government of Nepal (GoN) with preparation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), contributing to drafting the indicators, activities and action plans for two Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets linking to the project implementation: Targets 5 and 9. Technical support was also provided to the GoN delegation to CBD CoP16 (**Activity 5.11**), briefing the delegates on the project's outcomes and activities, and their connection to KM-GBF targets 5 and 9, and financial support was provided to enable the attendance of one delegate in person, the Director General of DNPWC. The delegates actively participated in side events and in showcasing the project during the CBD CoP 16 in Cali, Colombia, held from October 24 to November 5, 2024 (SDY1_5.11.1). The Director General of DNPWC delivered a plenary presentation highlighting Nepal's efforts and accomplishments in biodiversity conservation, informing conference attendees about GoN's initiatives in conserving wild NTFPs and their significance for the livelihoods of Himalayan communities.

The project is also supporting Nepal's interests in international and regional CITES meetings. The project leader attended the CITES Standing Committee (SC) meeting in February 2025, contributing to discussions on Trade in Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, linking to preparations for the CITES CoP20.

Overall summary of activity progress, and problems and delays:

Overall, the project has been progressing well, and activities are largely on track. As reported above, any international donor funded projects in Nepal should obtain approval from the Social Welfare Council (SWC). ANSAB and FECOFUN submitted a request in June 2024 with final approval granted at the end of October 2024. This was significantly longer than expected, and resulted in a minor delay in forming the technical advisory committee and forest inventory task group, as the MoFE needed the SWC approval letter to formalize the project in Nepal. It also affected the ability of Nepal partners to receive funds. This delay meant that the forest inventory work could not be conducted in Year 1 – as it cannot be done in winter months – and the activity had to be postponed to Year 2. As noted previously, activities were also delayed in India, and the decision was made to start activities in India from Year 2 as a result.

There have been changes to the project management team, with Dipesh Pyakurel taking on the responsibility for ANSAB's activity coordination in Nepal, and TRAFFIC revising project coordination arrangements. As the result of the latter, Bryony Morgan was appointed as *Senior Programme Manager – Himalayan NTFPs* and manages day-to-day project delivery on behalf of TRAFFIC.

Two change requests were submitted to NIRAS as a result of these management needs. Confirmation of the first change request (changes to personnel) was received 10/10/2024, and confirmation of the second financial change request (moving budget to Year 2 was received 26/01/2025 (CR24-098).

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Indicator	Baseline	Change recorded till March 2025	Source of evidence
Output 1. Capacities and capabilities of stakeholders - in particular women and excluded groups - are improved to enable improved conservation, resource management and sustainable trade			
1.1	65 LPRs trained in resource inventory in project 28-026	Sustainable resource management training was provided to 218 potential LRPs (132 male, 86 female). In-depth training on GESI/business skills was provided to 79 of these (40 female, 39 male).	SDY1_1.3.5 SDY1_1.5.1
1.2	5,520 harvesters had initial capacity building in project 28-026	In addition to the LRPs training reported above, 19 local government staff participated in the SRM training (ToT), and 123 local FECOFUN members received the GESI/business skills training. 18 project staff from CSOs (ANSAB, FECOFUN) received SFM and FairWild training. 294 CFUGs	SDY1_1.3.5 SDY1_1.5.1 SDY1_1.3.2 SDY1_1.1.7

		covering 42,372 harvester households have been identified, for the roll out of training in Year 2.	
1.3	Baseline is being established.	Baseline capacity assessment consultations included 123 harvesters; 71 staff from government agencies (DFOs, Sub-DFOs, National Parks, Conservation Areas, and Hunting Reserves); 59 local government representatives; 39 traders; 11 processors; and 21 representatives from CFUGs, FECOFUN, and CSOs. Knowledge and skills were assessed across 10 parameters and the capacity gaps were documented for each stakeholder group.	SDY1_1.2.1
1.4	Number of records relating to Nepal / wild plants to be confirmed	No progress towards this indicator yet.	N/A
Output 2. Over 10,000 harvesters benefit from improved livelihoods from long-term, sustainable, equitable trade in NTFPs			
2.1	Existing five-year forestry plans being reviewed for relevance	No progress towards this indicator yet	N/A
2.2	3,212 harvesters were registered under project 28-026	42,372 harvester households are identified, building the grounds for the harvester registration system.	SDY1_1.1.7
2.3	No pilot WHIPs in Nepal	No progress towards this indicator yet	N/A
2.4	No local level enterprises known	No progress towards this indicator yet	N/A
2.5	Baseline is being established	Data collection for the baseline was completed by March 2025; analysis will be completed in Year 2.	SDY1_2.1.2
Output 3. Over 110,000 ha of high-altitude Himalayas are sustainably managed through participatory land and species management and monitoring approaches			
3.1	No officially endorsed toolkit for Himalayan NTFPs	FRTC has taken the responsibility to prepare and publish the toolkit. ANSAB is providing technical support. A draft has been developed.	SDY1_3.1.1
3.2	No national stock assessment; district-level assessments are inconsistent and use approximated figures	The list of 294 working CFs have been identified (90,708 ha. area), with the remainder to be added in Year 2. The area of intervention has hence been preliminarily estimated.	SDY1_1.1.7
3.3	Limited research	No progress towards this indicator yet	N/A
3.4	Status of CFUG operational plans is being reviewed for the baseline	Basis for engagement of CFUGs established through the creation of network of LRPs and engagement with local FECOFUN chapters. Information on the current status of the operational plans of the target 294 CFUGs is being compiled.	SDY1_1.1.7
3.5	Baseline is being established	Unsustainable practices currently undertaken are being established through the baseline survey	SDY1_2.1.2
Output 4. Sustainable Himalayan wild NTFP value chains enabled from harvest to consumers based on traceable, certifiable production systems			
4.1	No influence plan	Stakeholders are being identified for the influence plan as described in various activities. Completion of the document is delayed to early Year 2.	See section 3.1
4.2	Patchy information on supply chains and demand drivers	Research priorities have been reviewed and capacity established through academic partnerships. Dialogues have begun to collect market price information from India and China.	See section 3.1
4.3	Patchy information on barriers and opportunities	No progress towards this indicator yet; however research has begun.	See section 3.1
4.4	Basic traceability provided via FairWild certification of one company	No progress towards this indicator yet; however research has begun through information collected at the BioFach trade fair on traceability options.	SDY1_4.9.3

4.5	Around 20 buyer companies engaged under project 28-026	Buyer meetings were held with 19 companies (15 at BioFach, 4 at IFEAT). Market research and outreach to buyers in the US has started. Overall, around 25 international buyers engaged in Year 1.	SDY1_4.9.2 SDY1_4.9.3 SDY1_4.9.5
4.6	Materials developed under project 28-026	A variety of comms materials profiling benefits and opportunities of sustainable trade developed and presented at trade fairs, conferences, etc.	See section 3.1
4.7	One company FairWild certified under project 28-026	Support is being given to two Nepali companies to connect with international buyers, through trade partnerships focused around FairWild certification.	See section 3.1
Output 5. Policies, trade agreements, and legal frameworks along the trade chains from Nepal to consumer countries include provisions for sustainable, traceable trade in wild plant and fungi ingredients, in line with CBD and CITES commitments			
5.1	Policy framework researched in Nepal but gaps in knowledge	Publication in *Conservation Biology* of a roadmap for sustainable trade in wild plants from Nepal, consolidating work from the previous project. The policy framework assessment research has begun.	SDY1_5.1.2
5.2	No briefs published	No progress towards this indicator yet; however research has begun e.g. into role of the EU SRG in managing trade of CITES-listed Jatamansi.	SDY1_5.1.1
5.3	No regional policy forum focused on wild plants trade	The project is supporting preparation of a regional workshop on CITES NDFs for Himalayan NTFPs which can help to build momentum for a forum.	SDY1_5.3.1
5.4	Materials developed under project 28-026	Information is being contributed to Nepal's DPR to assist with CITES NDF updates for Jatamansi.	See section 3.1

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Indicator	Baseline	Change recorded by March 2025	Evidence
Floral and fungal diversity in 10 mountainous Himalayan districts is conserved through sustainable, traceable and equitable trade, based on empowered and resilient communities, strengthened policies and responsible value chains			
0.1	Baseline on capabilities is being established	A preliminary list of 218 potential LRPs has been prepared who will reach to the target individuals and organisations. Training of harvesters from the selected CFUGs (n=294) will begin in Year 2, and they are expected to report the application of new capabilities by the end of project period.	SDY1_1.1.7
0.2	Baseline on income is being established	Baseline data is being collected to be able to assess this change. FairWild certification of two companies is being supported, which should lead to income improvements for harvesters.	SDY1_2.1.2 See section 3.1
0.3	No national-level stock assessment	Selected CFUGs (n=294) from the 10 target districts have been identified and are the target areas to adopt sustainable forest management practices. The national level resource inventory will be conducted using a new resource inventory guideline, which has been prepared in draft.	SDY1_3.1.1
0.4	700 kg of FW-certified Kutki and 18 kg Jatamansi oil traded in project 28-026	The project is supporting Nepal's DPR on NDF processes for CITES-listed Jatamansi. The project has provided support to the uptake of FairWild certification, working with 2 producers to expand or become certified, and engaging around 25 buyers	See section 3.1
0.5	Baseline situation is being assessed	Policy framework assessment is underway to establish priorities for policy engagement.	See section 3.1

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

The project team regularly review the logframe, including important assumptions. At the outcome level these still hold true. The global trade in wild-harvested plant and fungi ingredients continues at a significant scale, and demand appears to be further increasing, fuelled by diversifying industry applications of ingredients and interest in natural products. Initial research into value chains and markets for Himalayan species in China confirmed that new markets and demand for these species are continuing to develop (see section 3.1). North-Eastern Nepal (and the whole Himalayan region) continues to experience depopulation

related to rural-urban outmigration (Population Census 2022); yet the region remains critically important for conservation interventions and the livelihoods of these communities under stress. Bilateral (India-Nepal; China-Nepal) and regional commitment (e.g. SAWEN) to sustainable wildlife trade practices translates in the trade in wild plants and fungi have not yet been tested during the project period. Despite pressure on consumer finances from high inflation rates and other factors in many major economies, consumer demand for sustainable products continues to grow[xx]. We also see continued policy pressure to demonstrate sustainability and transparency in international supply chains as evidenced in national and regional efforts to legislate such as the European Union due diligence directive.

At the output level, partners in Nepal continue to find the "Training of trainer" effective at transmitting and retaining learning to remote communities. The network of LRPs are recruited from the villages, and once trained and capacitated, these key personnel will disseminate their skills and knowledge to the harvesting communities. In the experience of the partners, it remains the long-term sustainability of plant and fungi resources in target areas depends on participatory resource management, fully engaging CFUGs. Yet the involvement of government stakeholders is also of critical importance. At project design stage, it was assumed that effective collaboration could take place between relevant government agencies and departments, in terms of agreeing on resource inventory methodology, and appropriate use of resulting data to inform policy interventions. So far, this is also being borne out in practice, as shown by the progress made in establishing the cross-agency technical committee and task group for the inventory guidelines. The project also assumed that a focus on the 10 target districts selected would lead to long-term conservation at the landscape level, as these are most commercially important for sourcing and trade in Jatamansi and other species. Another assumption is that a focus on key selected species (Jatamansi and other species in high demand) for some project activities would translate to broader conservation impact. This is still felt to remain true, but the district level inception meetings and ToT feedback highlighted a few other potential NTFPs of high economic and conservation value which may also be included in the stock assessment for greater impact.

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

The project is designed to contribute to achieving the following impact: *Sustainable management of Himalayan wild plants and fungi, with value chains that incentivise equitable trade, increase value-addition, reduce poverty, and conserve species and ecologically-fragile landscapes.*

The first year focused on essential preparatory activities such as staff recruitment, establishment of site offices, conducting inception workshops at different levels, municipality and CFUGs selection, training of potential LRPs, industry engagement and outreach, and trade and policy framework assessments. These steps have created a strong foundation for implementing project activities in the coming years. As such, it is still too early to report on the project's higher-level impacts. Nevertheless, we are confident that the partnerships formed and activities initiated will contribute meaningfully to the overarching goals of conserving ecologically fragile landscapes and species, promoting equitable trade, and supporting livelihoods by the end of the project period.

The project is designed to contribute to a variety of biodiversity and poverty impacts, as measured through the Darwin Initiative Standard Indicators (September 2024). Progress is already being made towards increasing the capability and capacity of individuals through structured and relevant training, and the capacity needs assessment has laid the basis for increasing capability and capacity across a range of local and national organizations.

In terms of progress towards biodiversity and sustainable land management, the project has identified target locations (10 districts, 36 municipalities, and 294 FUGs) covering over 90,000 hectares of forest land with over 42,000 harvesting households. The rigorous selection process of the project locations, with high conservation value and presence of globally threatened species, guided by clear criteria (SDY1_1.1.6), has ensured that the project intervention is progressing in the right direction and effectively addressing the project's goals and objectives.

The project's baseline study will establish the current socio-economic status of the target communities, including the livelihoods, income, and wellbeing of the NTFP harvesters. A comprehensive methodology for this assessment has been developed through a rigorous process involving multiple meetings, discussions, iterative inputs and feedback from project partners and stakeholders. Combined with the data from mid-term and endline evaluations, the study will enable accurate tracking of the project performance towards livelihoods, income and wellbeing of the beneficiaries.

4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

Nepal is updating its NDF for Jatamansi in 2025 for which DPR invited ANSAB as an expert to provide the input during two meetings held on 17 Nov 2024 and 4 Mar 2025. In both meetings, ANSAB shared its experience on resource availability of Jatamansi, and gave information about harvesting practices.

Likewise, ANSAB's staff supported the Government of Nepal in preparing Nepal National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2025-30. ANSAB provided their support in drafting indicators and milestones for Targets 5 and 9. Please see additional updates of relevance under activities progress in Output 5 (Section 3, above).

5. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

The ten districts targeted through the project (Darchula, Bajhang, Bajura, Humla, Mugu, Jumla, Dolpa, Rukum-East, Gandaki Gorkha, and Koshi Gorkha) are located within provinces that rank the lowest for development indices on per-capita income, life expectancy, and basic infrastructure in Nepal. The lack of viable livelihood options and socio-economic constraints create a strong reliance on local biodiversity, particularly wild NTFPs from common-property forests and meadows. This is the only accessible sources of livelihoods for the most disadvantaged, including poor, Dalit and indigenous households, and is key for economic development. For many households in these districts, NTFPs are the main source of cash income without engaging in seasonal out-migration. Securing the resource base and increasing income from managed, sustainable access to NTFPs via this project will reduce poverty across the ten districts.

All national, provincial and district-level inception workshops were completed in Year 1. The 10 district-level workshops, reaching a total of 308 participants, helped in understanding the interests and priorities of local stakeholders and getting their endorsement and consent to implement the project. Capacity needs assessments were also conducted in 9 districts at different levels – including harvesters, municipalities, district level government agencies, selected CFUGs, FECOFUN district chapter committee members, and NTFP traders and processors. The capacity needs assessment in the remaining district, Dolpa, will be completed in Year 2.

Data has been collected against both indicators that measure direct poverty impacts (Outcome Indicators 0.2 and 2.5) through the baseline assessment, with data analysis planned for Q1 of Year 2.

Indirectly, most of the activities conducted through this project (and their associated indicators) will create the necessary conditions and environment to enable harvester communities to take part in sustainable NTFP trade in a manner that is financially beneficial. The development of sustainable livelihood management plans for harvesting communities; sustainable livelihood enterprises established at a local level; participation in WHIPs, updated or newly developed operational management plans for CFUGs; trading agreements, and newly developed policy influence pathways; will ensure the project contributes to poverty reduction in the long-term.

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.	X
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	
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

At this stage, the project is meeting the GESI 'Sensitive' standard by ensuring meaningful participation, understanding the GESI context, and ensuring to 'do no harm'. The project aims to meet the 'Empowering' standard by implementing activities that increase equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalized groups.

The project is designed to have direct and indirect impacts on inequality between persons of different gender, income-level and ethnicity in high-mountain communities, targeting 20,000 harvesters who will be trained by and benefit from the project. NTFPs are a valuable resource for these remote communities, and in the Himalayan region, they contribute up to 40-60% of their annual household cash income. Outcome indicator 0.2 targets that at least 30% of the 10,000 harvester improving their income (by at least 5%) from sustainable trade in NTFPs will be women.

The project has considered the GESI context in the project design phase. Building on previous work, the project will improve women's position within the value chain, with emphasis on participation in capacity building for sustainable management, and improved quality and processing. The expansion across wider areas and additional species of conservation and commercial importance, will extend the benefits to more

women. They will participate in decision-making in CFUG/cluster-level enterprises, and certification schemes that directly increase sales prices and stabilise income-generation. The project also aims to boost social inclusion, in particular of groups known to be at particular risk of discrimination in Nepal (e.g. people with disabilities) and people from certain castes, (e.g. Dalits[2]). The project is using the principles of the FairWild Standard as the framework to guide project interventions, including principles of fair treatment for vulnerable groups, and non-discrimination.

The project will track its contribution to gender equality through a gender assessment as part of the baseline assessment and final evaluation (further clarifying gender roles in the NTFP value chains and assessing the relative change the project generates for men and women). It will collect and monitor disaggregated data to improve appropriate measures to empower and enable women. Systems are also being put in place to collect and monitor disaggregated data to track progress on the inclusion and empowerment of socially excluded groups prioritised by the project.

The GESI core principles are being considered in adaptive management and implementation of the project, as outlined in SDY1_0.10a. The project team have begun working on a GESI analysis using the BCF "How-to" guide (SDY1_0.10b), including consideration of these principles.

In terms of implementation experience, Year 1 activities relevant to the project's aims on GESI have included delivery of a 4-day training course on GESI and other topics for FECOFUN members and LRPs in each district. The training program aims to empower forest dependent communities of CFUGs – including indigenous people, local communities, women, and marginalized groups – by promoting diverse and inclusive participation. The training shares information about rights and opportunities of women and marginalized groups – such as the requirement for 50% participation of women in CFUG executive committees – and encourages them into leadership positions. It also explores how traditional knowledge and customary practices of all groups may be incorporated into the development and revision of CFUG Operational Plans. The training course uses tools and techniques like role play, storytelling methods, and open and informational discussions to ensure engagement and meaningful participation of women and all ethnic groups (SDY1_1.5.2).

GESI considerations have also been incorporated into the curriculum of the ToT training that was delivered by ANSAB for LRPs (SDY1_1.3.3). This curriculum has incorporated materials on the FairWild Standard, including principles of ethical treatment and the protection of vulnerable groups (e.g. pregnant women, people with disabilities). Through the structure of the Training of Trainers, this information on fair practice has been communicated to LRPs and will in turn be incorporated into training and capacity building delivered to CFUGs and harvesters. In this way, it is aimed to shift expectations of collectors regarding fair treatment, and provide practical support to implementing fair and equitable wild collection in practice via CFUGs and community-level enterprises.

The projects' M&E system is tracking the participation of women in project activities. Through proactive identification and selection of women as potential LRPs, good progress has been made towards the goal of recruiting 50% women LRPs. The pool of potential LRPs trained in Year 1 has strong participation of women (86 of 218 trainees, 39%), and gender balance will be considered in making final selections of LRPs in Year 2, along with other considerations such as capacity and skills. FECOFUN also achieved a good gender balance among participants of the GESI training itself, with women making up 50% of the 79 potential LRPs (trainees who also received the ToT training) and 46% of the other participants (FECOFUN members, some of whom may yet be recruited as potential LRPs in future). FECOFUN have identified that early engagement of men in GESI dialogues is important to reduce resistance, and hence the targeting of both men and women for the GESI training is very important.

Gender balance has been harder to achieve in events where the project team have less direct control over participation – for example, the inception workshops, where many participants (especially those from government agencies) were invited on the basis of their position. Gender balance was relatively good at the national inception workshop (31% female, participants n=67), but much more skewed towards the participation of men at the provincial sharing meetings (8% female across 3 events, participants n=48), and district inception meetings (19% female across 10 events, participants n=308). This reflects the predominance of men in influential positions within government, business and civil society in Nepal, particularly in rural regions where education levels and opportunities for women are more restricted. The project team has noted the challenge and will work to improve gender parity in events and trainings wherever possible.

The project team have also started to track data on caste/ethnicity of training participants, and the M&E system will continue to be developed in this regard, in parallel with refining the GESI priorities of the project.

[2] Dalits occupy the lowest tier in Nepal's traditional caste hierarchy and comprise around 13% of Nepal's population. Dalits have historically been subjected to social exclusion, economic marginalization, and cultural oppression.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

A project M&E plan was developed during the project inception meeting to support monitoring and reporting against project activities and to provide a link between activities and reporting indicators. The plan is a live document and is being refined through monthly project calls and at specific M&E meetings with key partners, coordinated by TRAFFIC. As this is a large project with a number of partners, activities involve more than one organisation. Because of this, the planning, execution, and evaluation of activities has been done in close contact with partner organisations through email, in-person meetings, and video calls.

Areas for improvement in the M&E system are being identified, which the project team will continue to address in Y2. So far, appropriate disaggregation against each of the indicators has been assigned, including GESI metrics, and further clarity has been provided to the means of verification, as well as the definition of each indicator, to ensure consistency in measuring data. This process will continue into Y2 as the project implements further activities from the M&E plan.

Monthly project progress meetings are conducted with partners to keep track of field level activities and to provide opportunities for sharing lessons learned and adaptive management approaches. The meetings have also been used to establish a consensus on specific approaches and interpretations, such as agreeing on a project workable definition of IPLCs. Other aspects of the workplan and M&E plan/logframe are discussed as needed through email.

The project M&E framework also links to the partner organisations' existing structures for reporting. Each partner has its own approach to implementing M&E, for example:

- Weekly project progress meetings are conducted within ANSAB, mainly to track and inform field-level activities in harvesting areas. The Project Coordinator makes monitoring visits to the field teams, and Kathmandu-based staff provide technical backstopping. Tools for M&E are incorporated in ANSAB's Project Operational Manual (SDY1_0.11) Social, economic and environmental impacts are listed in ANSAB's Impact Tracking System (ITS). This project is reviewed by senior staff through TRAFFIC's regular project review system. Projects are reviewed on timeliness on deliverables, effectiveness of external relationships, impact on conservation, expected outcomes, project legacy/sustainability, and budget efficiency.
- FECOFUN has mobilised its District and Local chapters to monitor and evaluate the project activities on a regular basis, with overall supervision from the Federal office. FECOFUN conducted a series of meetings with community members, field staff and FECOFUN members to monitor and track the smooth implementation of project interventions and obtain feedback.
- FairWild tracks metrics related to the harvest and trade of certified ingredients through the certification system and audit reports, as well as data collection on industry engagement efforts.
- University of Oxford and Greenhood Nepal researchers meet weekly to discuss progress and set targets for the week ahead, discuss any problems or emerging risks, and update the workplan.

For project-level activities, ANSAB is taking the lead on coordinating M&E within Nepal including:

(i) Establishing a baseline through the baseline study (harvesters: individual and household levels) and conducting a capacity needs assessment of the stakeholders/beneficiaries to set the benchmark for key performance indicators. The baseline data has been collected (to be analysed in Q1 of Year 2), and the capacity needs assessment has been carried out in 9 of 10 districts.

(ii) Developing event and beneficiary databases, providing a unique ID to each of the beneficiaries to avoid duplication and reduce the risk of double reporting. The database has provision for data disaggregation by Gender, Caste, Ethnicity, IPs, LCs, and stakeholder type.

Both ANSAB and FECOFUN have implemented comprehensive data collection systems for project activities in Nepal, including capturing data on participants at project events and trainings, and evaluating the effects of trainings, workshops and capacity building activities with pre- and post-knowledge and skill tests.

In terms of changes to the M&E plan, TRAFFIC appointed a new Head of MEL who led the project team through a review of the project log-frame. Areas have been identified where indicators could be streamlined, including splitting some indicators assessing multiple topics to sub-indicators to reduce complexity; areas of overlap which could be reduced; and areas where alignment with the Darwin Standard Indicators (published September 2025) could be improved. This process will be finalised using the experience of Year 1 reporting and may result in proposed changes to the project log frame in Year 2.

Areas for improvement in Year 2 include:

- Streamlining data management between ANSAB and FECOFUN to simplify the reporting process, reducing risk of duplication especially for standard indicators reporting.

- Finalising some revisions to the project log frame to simplify the indicators and ensure further alignment to the Darwin Standard Indicators.
- Ensuring project working definitions of M&E terms such as IPLC are fully understood by all partners; are being implemented consistently; and are in line with Darwin definitions.
- Further alignment of the M&E system with the GESI strategy, ensuring that all information necessary to track progress towards the projects' GESI goals is being recorded.

8. Lessons learnt

Overall, project implementation has gone well this year. The partner organisations successfully collaborated on the activities laid out in the project logframe, and the combination of the monthly meeting series and *ad-hoc* meetings between project partners has enabled effective execution.

At the impact level, the project works to manage Himalayan NTFPs, conserve species and ecologically fragile landscapes and reduce poverty. To achieve this overarching impact, collaboration with government is a must. Under the leadership of the Nepalese partners (e.g. ANSAB), the project has established effective collaboration and secured involvement of key stakeholders in activities that require government support (e.g. forming the advisory committee and task group for the resource inventory guidelines). Plans have been prepared to involve government officials in conducting the resource inventory, aiming to foster a sense of ownership among government bodies and increasing the likelihood that inventory data will be incorporated in their management plans.

The project established effective collaboration and secured consent for implementation at different levels of government (national, provincial, district, municipality), in line with Nepal's decentralised system of government. Projects in similar geo-political areas, and that also aim to achieve both biodiversity and social impact, should collaborate with government that are close to the resources – primarily provincial governments, as they offer greater potential for resource leveraging and project ownership.

Based on implementation experience in Year 1, the project has identified some areas for improvement, for example the need to better align M&E systems between local partners ANSAB and FECOFUN to streamline data collection and analysis and ensure consistent data management. Developing working project definitions of some key terms (e.g. IPLC) and building intersectional GESI metrics (e.g. caste + gender) into the project M&E database and systems earlier in the process would have saved time and required less retrospective data-cleaning and classification work. However, the experience of implementing the project's M&E system for a relatively a small group of beneficiaries in Year 1 has greatly benefitted the project, and the team are using this experience to ensure the system is adequate for the rollout of harvester trainings. These begin in Year 2 and will reach 20,000 beneficiaries over the lifetime of the project.

Contingency planning and timelines around key steps in the start-up and inception process should be increased. Resource inventory work in Year 1 was delayed due to the extended time taken by Social Welfare Council for approval, with the result that the field season was missed entirely.

Major changes to the project plans are not anticipated, but as noted above, the logframe and indicators are being reviewed and streamlined to improve clarity and reduce complexity, with a change request possibly to result from this. The GESI analysis will be completed, providing a useful opportunity to consolidate experience and learnings of the project partners, and some changes to the project implementation approach may result as an outcome (e.g. greater utilisation of mandatory quotas for women and marginalized groups to ensure inclusion; earlier involvement of men in GESI dialogues to reduce resistance). The project budget will also be reviewed to ensure that adequate resources are being directed to priority areas for the project.

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

We received the following comments in our funding approval letter:

Please monitor and address the risks that: in the short term incomes to the poor may decrease if more sustainable harvesting practices are introduced (and how this will be managed or mitigated);

This risk has been discussed in calls with project partners. ANSAB's experience (e.g. in Jumla) is that existing NTFP management plans in Nepal usually have a conservative estimate of Allowable Annual Harvest (AAH), and hence when they are revised (e.g. based on resource inventory information), the amounts that may be legally harvested by communities in fact increase. However, this may not always be the case. It is also possible that livelihoods may be affected when new harvesting methods are introduced (e.g. rotation systems), which impact the areas and plant products that may be harvested. The project will encourage CFUG executive committees to build in a review process when Operational Plans are developed or updated, to assess the impact on income opportunities for local communities and any mitigation steps that may be needed. The project will also plan to monitor actual changes in income through the mid-term evaluation, e.g. through focus group interviews with harvesters, potentially with some income data collection through a rapid household survey if negative impacts are being detected.

Poor governance will impede efforts to reduce illegal trade and/or unsustainable harvesting;

As noted in the half-year report, this has been added to the risk register, and a discussion with TRAFFIC's corruption advisory team was undertaken at project inception. Key mitigating actions include: encouraging an open and honest working environment with regular check-ins on government and other actor efforts to address corruption and illegal trade; tracking media reports from Nepal on anti-corruption efforts/perceived corruption risk; applying multi-stakeholder approaches to project implementation to increase transparency and accountability of local government actors. The risk was reviewed as part of Year 1 reporting and the perception of partners is that the governance environment in Nepal has improved in recent years alongside the policy shift to decentralise government. There has been a devolution of power to local community and local government, where officials are more accountable to the communities they serve. Trade in NTFPs is also less valuable than some other sectors (e.g. timber), and the financial returns from corrupt activities are less likely to outweigh the risks. Nevertheless, this issue is taken seriously by the project partners, and anti-corruption measures will be explored in Year 2 with the involvement of TRAFFIC's financial crime team, and links will be strengthened with relevant actors in Nepal e.g. Transparency International Nepal.

Outcome indicator 0.4 requires a time-bound element if this is appropriate and measurable;

This was an oversight and the following change is proposed: 0.4. Increased volume (tonnes) of internationally traded sustainable Himalayan wild NTFP products (flora and fungi) complying with CITES requirements, and/or provisions of FairWild Standard [redacted]

The means of verification under Output 2 requires some clarity - specifically how 2.4/ 2.5 will be measured beyond stating project technical reports. What data will be used as input to the technical reports and how will it be gathered?

Output indicator 2.4 is *70% of 20 sustainable livelihood enterprises established at local level during the project are functioning at project end (at least a year after establishment)*. The indicator will be assessed based on established and verifiable criteria (i.e. valid legal registration and band number; evidence of business activity in the last 12 months based on trading income, transaction records). Enterprises will be assessed in the project end-line survey, with the results included in the survey report.

Output indicator 2.5 is *7,500 households (in an average 2 people [redacted]per HH) report improved income and food security associated with sustainable NTFPs harvest, processing and trade, against the baselines, by March 2029.* Data to assess this indicator will be collected through the project end-line household survey. Baseline data has already been collected, and will be analysed in Q1 Year 2.

10. Risk Management

The project risk register has been continuously updated. Following appointment of the *Senior Programme Manager – Himalayan NTFPs*, the risk register was reviewed and restructured around the 6 risk types, and several additional lines were entered. The majority of these were existing risks (e.g. poor governance environment, safeguarding risks to beneficiaries, fiduciary risks) that were known but had been missed during the initial creation of the register. The main new risk that emerged in the last 12 months was the risk to TRAFFIC at the organisational level that there would be a shift in the development aid landscape due to the changing foreign policy priorities of major economies. This risk materialised and impacted funding availability for TRAFFIC's broader conservation programme, following the Stop Work Order and subsequent Foreign Assistance Review undertaken by the US Government in January – April 2024. This has impacted implementation of TRAFFIC's broader portfolio of conservation projects worldwide, but there are no direct impacts on DAREX012. The issue has required the attention of senior management and had financial implications for the organisation, but TRAFFIC's management and Board are applying adaptive management. No impact on the likelihood of the project reaching its desired outcomes is anticipated.

No significant adaptations have been made to the project design this year to address risk. As noted in the safeguarding section, a safeguarding issue has emerged in another project, and lessons learned will be incorporated to project design in Year 2. The main areas of change are likely to be an increased focus on community sensitisation around safeguarding issues such as SEAH, and an exploration within the project team of how new social structures introduced for wild collection can introduce changes in power dynamics with both positive and negative effects, including in some circumstance increasing opportunities

Discussions as part of the Year 1 report preparation identified that more attention to the role of children in wild collection may need to be given. While children are not thought to participate to any great extent for the majority of NTFPs collected, the role of children in wild harvesting needs to be better understood and more thoroughly reviewed for potential risk areas. In particular, children may participate in the collection of Yarsaguma (Cordyceps), where their good eyesight is valued to locate the resource. The baseline assessment survey data will be reviewed to see the extent to which this issue has been identified, e.g. through focus groups discussions. Considering the sensitive nature of this topic, information may not emerge through household survey data and group interviews. Hence, further exploration will take place in Year 2 of the project to identify the extent to which children do participate in wild collection in the target districts, and any particular risk areas that need to be addressed.

11. Scalability and durability

In our application form, we proposed multiple ways to maximise sustainability and legacy of the project. These included: *Landscape*: the approach is applicable across Hindu-Kush Himalayan region and that the regional coordination mechanism will help identify scaling opportunities; *Replication*: the combination of market-based and regulatory approaches, underpinned by clear data, will be applicable to many geographies and plant/fungi species. WHIPs and pilot group certification will be relevant for multiple-user landscapes around the world; *Systems:* knowledge sharing on identifying and reducing trade and regulatory barriers in the South Asia international context (e.g. via CITES, CBD meetings), will create pathways to integrate sustainable wild plants and fungi use and trade into national and regional policies; *Capacitation:* Nepali organisations will continue operating in-country, and government agencies will have improved engagement and representation of Nepal in negotiations. We also anticipate that project will develop further investment opportunities and attract financial resources e.g. through allocations for GBF implementation (such as through GEF), GCF, and bilateral donors.

Given this is the first annual project report, the sustainability of project achievements is only starting to be solidified, but we are confident our long-term sustainability approaches have been identified correctly.

To illustrate efforts with an example of further investment and financial resources opportunities, in Y1, we developed various complementary/scaling project proposals, including a philanthropic foundation concept note; alignment with the proposal by WWF UK to Darwin Initiative, and the EU-funded project led by ADRA

12. Darwin Initiative identity

Our communication efforts have actively publicised the Darwin Initiative in several ways. The Darwin Initiative logo has been displayed on all project publications, including our English and Nepali brochures, flyers distributed at workshops and trade fairs, and on our project website. We also ensured the logo's visibility in presentations delivered at various stakeholder meetings, including the external project inception workshop and presentations at international events like IFEAT and the CBD CoP side event. While the logo has been consistently used in Year 1, we are planning a stocktaking exercise this year for optimal and prominent placement across all partners' platforms in Year 2.

The UK Government's contribution through the Darwin Initiative is consistently recognised in our communication materials and during public presentations. For instance, the opening remarks at the external project inception workshop specifically acknowledged the UK Government's support. In addition, our project partner's landing pages features a dedicated section outlining the funding provided by the Darwin Initiative, clearly linking it to the UK Government. The Darwin Initiative funding is recognised as a distinct project with a clear identity. While it aligns with broader conservation and livelihood goals, all our communication materials, including the project-specific videos, clearly identify it as a Darwin Initiative-funded project with its own objectives and expected outcomes.

In Nepal, stakeholders who are directly involved in Darwin Initiative projects tend to have a higher level of understanding. Those who are not directly engaged but are connected to the projects in some capacity to support the project's success generally have a moderate level of understanding. The stakeholders most familiar with the Darwin Initiative are representatives from the MoFE and its associated departments, particularly the DoFSC, the DNPWC, the DPR, and the FRTC. MoFE have been involved since project design and continues to be involved through a series of meetings and activities, including the preparation of resource inventory guidelines.

The Provincial Forest Ministries of Sudurpaschim, Karnali, and Lumbini provinces also have a good understanding of the Darwin Initiative. This can be attributed to the implementation of multiple Darwin Initiative-funded projects in Nepal by various I/NGOs, including ANSAB. At the local level, officials from the Division Forest Offices in the 10 project districts are familiar with the project, its partners and donors. Their involvement from the early stages, including the selection of CFUGs and municipalities, participation in inception meetings and attending ToTs (Training of Trainers), has strengthened their knowledge. Similarly, officials from the Sub-Division Forest Offices in these districts also have a moderate understanding, primarily through their participation in inception meetings and ToT sessions.

Additionally, local communities engaged in the project activities, as well as other I/NGOs working in sustainable forest management, forest certification, NTFP sector, herbal companies, and relevant federations and associations, have become familiar with the Darwin Initiative. Many of these stakeholders gained awareness by participating in inception workshops, meetings and related project activities.

We have a presence on the partners' social media platforms. Where relevant, we link back to the Darwin Initiative via the BCF's social media channels, our posts regularly highlight the project's activities and achievements, explicitly or implicitly showcasing the impact of the Darwin Initiative funding. We actively work to link and tag the BCF social media accounts to further enhance visibility and recognition, and a detailed list of our social media engagement with relevant metrics is provided in SDY1_0.8. We will be prioritising even greater integration and engagement with their channels in the coming year.

13. Safeguarding

[redacted]

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	[redacted]			
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items				
Others				
TOTAL	**677,961.62**	[redacted]	**-1%**	

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 (£)	[redacted]		Co-funding has been contributed in staff time from ANSAB, UCPH and FairWild.
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)	[redacted]		

15. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

The project team have some feedback and a few points to discuss with NIRAS and Defra. These include:

- Interpretation of the Standard Indicators and methodology to use. Some are open to interpretation in different ways (e.g. Number of decision-makers attending briefing events).
- What's required for in terms of mandatory annual training for the safeguarding focal point?
- The requirement for GESI analysis in the annual report came at quite short notice, and took a lot of the team's time in the reporting period. For this report, we focused on the new requirements for GESI and didn't have enough time to tackle other new questions e.g. sustainability and legacy.

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).

The national-level inception workshop in August 2024 served as a crucial starting point for the project *Scaling conservation of Himalayan plants and fungi through sustainable trade* (DAREX012), bringing together approximately 70 key stakeholders. This included Nepal's Secretary of the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE), Director Generals from the Department of Plant Resources (DPR) and the Forest Research and Training Center (FRTC), alongside representatives from government bodies, civil society, international agencies, the private sector, and academia. The Secretary of the MoFE emphasised the importance of sustainable NTFP use for conservation and highlighted the project's potential contribution. The Director General of DPR stressed the need for NTFP stock quantification, commending the project's support in resource inventories.

Following this, district-level inception workshops were completed in 10 Himalayan districts by December 2024. Led by ANSAB with FECOFUN's support, these engaged divisional forest officers, park wardens, and other local stakeholders. Participants contributed ideas, including requests to add traded NTFPs like Pakhanved (*Bergenia purpurascens*) in Taplejung, Bajura, and Humla, and Nirmasi (*Delphinium denudatum*) in Jumla and Gorkha, to the 2025 resource inventory. Divisional Forest Officers expressed appreciation and anticipated positive outcomes.

Provincial-level sharing meetings took place in January 2025 at the Forestry Ministries in Sudurpaschim, Karnali, and Lumbini provinces. Provincial secretaries and forestry personnel affirmed their commitment to support the project by coordinating with division forest offices.

A high-level field visit to Dolpa district included the Secretary and Joint Secretary of MoFE, the Director General of FRTC, and the Divisional Forest Officer of Dolpa. The Secretary highlighted the importance of the resource inventory of 11 high Himalayan medicinal plants and fungi for setting sustainable harvest quotas in forest management plans.

Alongside these workshops, the project is establishing a network of local resource persons (LRPs) who are undergoing capacity building to work with communities on sustainable harvesting techniques. ANSAB and FECOFUN are also planning training programmes for participating Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) on topics such as governance, book-keeping, and gender equity.

A news article expanding on the text above has also been provided for the Darwin Newsletter (submitted 31 January 2025) (SDY1_0.12).

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 Sustainable management of Himalayan wild plants and fungi, with value chains that incentivise equitable trade, increase value-addition, reduce poverty, and conserve species and ecologically-fragile landscapes	The project mainly carried out initial work such as inception meetings, training of LRPs, selecting target municipalities and community forests; thus it is premature to comment on the contribution to wider impacts. However, the project received excellent government ownership and support, especially in preparing the resource inventory guideline of Himalayan wild plants and fungi, and has created a good basis from which to contribute towards positive impact on biodiversity.	
Outcome Floral and fungal diversity in 10 mountainous Himalayan districts is conserved through sustainable, traceable and equitable trade, based on empowered and resilient communities, strengthened policies and responsible value chains		
Outcome indicator 0.1 15,000 harvesters and 280 CFUGs, 10 district and national FECOFUNs, 10 DFOs, 10 producer enterprises representing community, public and private sector organizations report the application of new capabilities in forest resource management, sustainable and equitable trade by 2029	The municipality (n=36) FUGs (n=294), harvester households (n=42,372) and area (90,708 ha) have been identified. A preliminary list of 218 LRPs has been identified who will deliver the capacity building activities to the target individuals and organisations. Local and district FECOFUN staff have participated in ToT and GESI/business skills training. See section 3.3 for evidence.	The roll-out of trainings for harvesters, CFUGs, DFOs and enterprises will commence.
Outcome indicator 0.2 10,000 harvesters (at least 30% women) improve their income (at least by 5%) and food security through sustainable trade in wild plant and fungi ingredients by 2029	The baseline survey was accomplished during this reporting period, and socio-economic information including gender has been captured. FairWild certification of two companies (HBTL and Annapurna Aroma) is being supported, which should lead to income improvements for harvesters. See section 3.3 for evidence.	Nepali producer company Annapurna Aroma will be supported to undertake their first FairWild audit.
Outcome indicator 0.3 Over 110,000 ha of high-altitude Himalayas are sustainably managed through participatory land and species management and monitoring approaches; and national-level stock assessment (of ~1.5 million ha of forests and meadows) informs landscape-level conservation, by 2029	The preliminary list of CFUGs where the project will work was identified. The first draft of resource inventory guideline to conduct national-level stock assessment has been drafted by ANSAB and Forest Research and Training Centre. See section 3.3 for evidence.	Initiate (i) roll out of trainings for CFUGs on sustainable management, and (ii) resource inventory of targeted species in 27 districts.
Outcome indicator 0.4 Increased volume (tonnes) of internationally traded sustainable Himalayan wild NTFP products (flora and fungi) complying with CITES requirements, and/or provisions of FairWild Standard	The project team met with Nepal's scientific and management authorities for CITES, and shared information on harvest quantity and practices for CITES listed species, to inform revision of NDFs which will ultimately streamline international trade.	Provide resource assessment data to DPR to prepare updated CITES NDF for Jatamansi. Continue industry engagement work to increase commitment to sustainable

	Baseline trade data were reviewed. Trade in CITES-listed plant products from Nepal was nearly all Jatamansi, and exports of this species from Nepal have been consistent between 2020 and 2023, averaging ~370,000 kg / year. The majority of exports were derivatives, plus a much smaller quantity of Jatamansi oil, ~3,000 kg / year. The baseline for trade in FW-certified products was established as 700 kg of FW-certified Kutki and 18 kg Jatamansi oil traded during 2022-2024 (under project 28-026). The project has provided support to the uptake of FairWild certification, working with 2 producers and engaging around 25 buyers. See section 3.1 for evidence.	trade standards and support uptake of certification.
Outcome indicator 0.5 At least three relevant policies and legalframeworks of countries along the valuechains (i.e. from Nepal to importers) amended to reflect on the importance ofsustainable, traceable, equitable trade, by 2029	The policy and legal framework is still being assessed. See section 3.1 for evidence.	Finalise the policy framework assessment and prioritise policy interventions to be supported by the project.
Output 1 Capacities and capabilities of stakeholders - in particular women and excluded groups - are improved to enable improved conservation, resource management and sustainable trade		
Output indicator 1.1 At least 200 community member local resource persons (LRP) trained on sustainable resource management, good business practices, governance, gender and social inclusion (by September 2025), and 50% of them deliver further training by March 2027	Sustainable resource management training was provided to 218 potential LRPs (132 male, 86 female) by March 2025. In-depth training on GESI, governance, and business practices was provided to 79 of these potential LRPs (40 female, 39 male). Evidence provided in section 3.1	ANSAB field staff, FECOFUN forest technicians and the trained LRPs will start delivering the roll-out of trainings to harvesters, CFUG executive committees and other stakeholders during Year 2.
Output indicator 1.2. At least 20,000 harvesters, and 100 people from business, CSO and government stakeholders trained in sustainable harvesting, improved handling and processing practices for value-addition by March 2027	In addition to the LRPs training reported above, 19 local government staff participated in the sustainable resource management training (ToT), and 123 local FECOFUN members received the GESI / governance training. 18 project staff from CSOs (ANSAB and FECOFUN) received SFM and FairWild training. 294 CFUGs covering 42,372 harvester households have been identified, which will be the target group for the roll out of harvester training from Year 2. Evidence provided in section 3.1.	Regional and district team along with LRP will initiate training ANSAB Kathmandu and Surkhet team will train government stakeholders and reach to business houses and CSOs. Identify business houses
Output indicator 1.3. At least 12 government institutions in Nepal have enhanced awareness and understanding of CITES requirements, sustainable trade in wild species and associated poverty and biodiversity conservation issues	The capacity needs assessment included key informant interviews with 71 staff from government agencies such as DFOs, Sub-DFOs, National Parks, Conservation Areas, and Hunting Reserves;	In Year 2 trainings will commence on topics identified through the capacity needs assessments, e.g.

	and 59 representatives from local government, which provides a good basis for progress towards this indicator. Evidence provided in section 3.1	training on CITES and sustainable wild plant trade for DFOs.
Output indicator 1.4. At least 50 records added to Species Use Database managed by IUCN SULi	No progress towards this indicator yet.	Case studies on sustainable use will be documented and records will start to be added.
Output 2. Over 10,000 harvesters benefit from improved livelihoods from long-term, sustainable, equitable trade in NTFPs		
Output indicator 2.1. 10 district-level sustainable livelihood management plan(s), based on socio-economic baseline assessment and identified opportunities, for target harvesting communities developed, by September 2025	No progress towards this indicator yet; however, work in year 1 included reviewing the district forestry five-year plans for all 10 districts. Data collection to establish the socio-economic baseline was completed. Evidence provided in section 3.1	The analysis of baseline data will be completed. The project will consult with DFOs about the status of the five year plans and opportunities to integrate sustainable livelihood strategies.
Output indicator 2.2. Harvester's registration system rolled-out for 12,000 individuals providing a basis for recognised tenure (access and use), transparent trade and cost-calculation, toinclude harvesters' details, harvesting/sale quantities and locations, prices, trainings/ capacity-building, disaggregated by gender, by September 2027	No progress towards this indicator yet; however, the network of LRPs have been made aware of the harvester registration system during the ToT. Evidence provided in section 3.1	Harvester registrations will begin to be implemented in prioritised CFUGs (n=10).
Output indicator 2.3. 3,600 people in CFUGs that participate in wild harvesting improvement projects on the pathway to the voluntary certification,by March 2028	No progress towards this indicator yet; however, the project team engaged in concept development for a wild harvesting improvement project (WHIP) framework. Evidence provided in section 3.1	The project team will aid the finalisation of the WHIP framework (developed under DARNV013) and explore its application in a prioritised project site.
Output indicator 2.4. 70% of 20 sustainable livelihood enterprises established at local level during the project are functioning at project end (at least a year after establishment)	No progress towards this indicator yet.	The list of existing forest-based enterprises will be collected and opportunities for the establishment of new enterprises assessed. Support will be given to local entrepreneurs to develop NTFP business plans, including exposure visits to successful enterprises.
Output indicator 2.5. 7,500 households (in an average 2 people per HH) report improved income and food security associated with sustainable NTFPs harvest, processing and trade, against the baselines, by March 2029	The baseline survey has been completed, and soon the baseline values will be established for income, food security, NTFPs harvesting, processing and trade. Evidence provided in section 3.1	Sustainable harvesting training and capacity building on value addition options for NTFPs will commence in Year 1.
Output 3. Over 110,000 ha of high- altitude Himalayas are sustainably managed throughparticipatory land and speciesmanagement and monitoring approaches		
Output indicator 3.1. Resource inventory toolkit for high altitude species based on participatory methods developed by 2025; applied forthe project stock	The first draft of resource inventory guidelines was prepared by ANSAB and FRTC during this project period. Evidence provided in section 3.1	The guideline will be finalized and published in Year 1, following international peer review.

assessment, endorsedby the government and published in Nepali and English by September 2028		
Output indicator 3.2. Participatory resource inventories results from 10 districts (est. 110,000 ha), and atthe national-level (estimated 1.5 million ha), focusing on Jatamansi and associated flora and fungi species) are published and data collection plans linked to participatory monitoring approaches are confirmed by relevant government agencies and communities, by December 2026	No progress towards this indicator yet; however, CFUGs covering around 90,000 ha have been selected. Evidence provided in section 3.1	The resource inventory activities will commence in Year 2. The remaining 20,000 ha project target area will be identified.
Output indicator 3.3. Results of research into the improved productivity of Jatamansi and other species related to various harvesting cycles, regenerative approaches, published by March 2026	No progress towards this indicator yet.	Experience exchange will be facilitated with project collaborator Terra Himalaya Pvt. Ltd. who have started cultivation trials in Bhutan.
Output indicator 3.4. Operational management plans of 60 CFUGs are updated or developed to include the sustainable management, regenerative practices, community monitories, and approved by DFOs, by September 2027 (select CFUGs don't' have management plans, or not updated to include NTFPs management)	An initial list of 294 FUGs have been selected, and capacity needs assessments conducted. Details such as the number of households, forest area, composition of the CFUG executive committee, and renewal date of the operational plan are being compiled. Evidence provided in section 3.1	Revisions of at least 10 CFUG operational plans will be initiated in Year 2, incorporating resource inventory data.
Output indicator 3.5. 90 CFUGs and harvesting households report a decline in unsustainable practices as a result of project activities, by September 2028	The current harvesting practice is being documented through the baseline survey. This will serve as a benchmark for tracking progress towards sustainable harvesting standards. Evidence provided in section 3.1	A sustainable harvesting user manual will be developed and distributed to an estimated 4,500 harvesters from 180 CFUGs, along with the roll-out of training sessions.
Output 4: Sustainable Himalayan wildNTFP value chains enabled from harvest to consumers based on traceable, certifiableproduction systems		
Output indicator 4.1. Project influence plan co-developed and endorsed by all stakeholders by March 2025	Work has been undertaken on the influence plan including stakeholder mapping in different sectors (local communities, government bodies at different levels, value chain actors, policy actors), but finalisation of the document itself has been delayed.	The project influence plan will be finalised.
Output indicator 4.2. Himalayan NTFP trade analysis and value chains mapping source to consumers in main markets (India, China, Europe, US) published, informing design for interventions, by September 2025	Work has commenced through the development of two PhD research projects focusing on trade from to India, and trade to China. Research by UCPH's principle investigator is ongoing, including work on a manuscript to quantify and value the economic importance of medicinal plant traded in and from Nepal. TRAFFIC reviewed trade of CITES-listed species from Nepal. Evidence provided in section 3.1	Trade analysis and value chain mapping work will continue in China; will commence in India and Europe; and a synthesis of research will identify any remaining gaps. Publications of articles on trade research by UCPH are anticipated.
Output indicator 4.3.	No progress towards this indicator yet; however information on trade barriers has begun to be collected.	Work will begin on a Pest Risk Assessment for at least three priority species.

Research underpinning sustainable trade barriers (e.g. Pest Risk Assessment, voluntary certification capacity) is complete to enable trade with China, India, UK, EU, US and other consumer countries		
Output indicator 4.4. Pilot traceability system is implemented for one value chain, providing data (from harvest, through processing and transport) on origins, legality, sustainability along the critical points, by June 2027, and roll-out and sustainability plan developed with stakeholders by March 2028	No progress towards this indicator yet; however information on software options and relevant service providers of traceability solutions was gathered during the BioFach trade fair. Evidence provided in section 3.1.	A critical control point value chain analysis for Jatamansi from one of the main producing districts will be conducted. A research brief will be developed profiling the different options for traceability technologies.
Output indicator 4.5. At least 50 companies from markets in China, India, Europe and US attend project events focussing on matchmakingwith CFUGs and fostering the development of trading agreements including price premiums, by September 2027	Buyer meetings were held with 15 companies at the BioFach trade fair and 4 companies at the IFEAT conference. Market research and outreach to buyers in the US has started, and the results are being analysed. Overall, a pool of around 25 companies (international buyers) were actively engaged in the matchmaking efforts. Evidence provided in section 3.1.	A programme of 1-2-1 matchmaking will be established for producers and international buyers, building on the research in Year 1. The opportunity for matchmaking events will be scoped.
Output indicator 4.6. Benefits and opportunities of legal, sustainable, equitable, and traceable trade in Himalayan plant and fungi ingredients documented and presented at trade fairs, 1-on-1 meetings, online and social media platforms (Wild Plants for Wildlife, www.wildcheck.info, relevant national platforms in China, India, Europe/US), by September 2027	A variety of communications materials profiling the benefits and opportunities of sustainable trade in Himalayan NTFPs were developed and presented at trade fairs, conferences, and other venues. Evidence provided in section 3.1	The benefits of sustainable trade in the priority NTFPs will continue to be promoted at trade fairs and industry conferences (e.g. InCosmetics, IFEAT, BioFach). An industry targeted-publication will be finalised to promote the Himalayan ingredients to relevant sectors.
Output indicator 4.7. At least 70% of trading agreements between producer enterprises and buyers at markets in China, India, Europe and US are functioning by the project end (at least a year after establishment)	Support is being given to two Nepali companies to connect with international buyers, through trade partnerships focused around FairWild certification.	Additional producer companies will be recruited into the project and supported to secure trade agreements with international buyers.
Output 5. Policies, trade agreements,and legal frameworks along the trade chains from Nepal to consumer countries include provisions for sustainable, traceable trade in wild plant and fungi ingredients, in linewith CBD and CITES commitments		
Output indicator 5.1. Policy and regulatory frameworks (at national, regional, international levels) affecting trade in plant and fungi reviewed and gaps identified, by June 2025	Work has started on the policy framework assessment, and a range of meetings with key policy actors in Nepal, China and EU have been held to better understand the policy and regulatory context. The publication "*A roadmap to sustainable management of commercial medicinal and aromatic plants, fungi, and lichens in Nepal"* consolidates work done under the previous project to identify policy and other actions needed for sustainable trade 28-026. Evidence provided in section 3.1.	The policy framework assessment will be finalised.

Output indicator 5.2. At least three policy briefs developed for prioritized frameworks and institutions at national, regional and global levels, building on project evidence, by March 2026	The role of the EU SRG in CITES referrals for species such as Jatamansi was reviewed. Evidence provided in section 3.1.	At least one policy brief will be finalised and published.
Output indicator 5.3. At least 30 government officials from at least five countries from 15 ministries/departments, 50 companies from China, India, Europe/US, 100 community resource managers are engaged (including through regional multi-stakeholder Forums) to build regional and cross-government and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms for sustainability data collection and sharing, by September 2026	The project is supporting preparation of the workshop “Medicinal and aromatic plants of Himalayas - sustainable use and management of CITES listed species at higher altitudes”, proposed by China’s CITES SA.	Workshop to be delivered in Chongqin, China, engaging government officials and other stakeholders from approx. 5 countries in a cross-regional experience / information exchange event that is expected to feed into future coordination mechanisms.
Output indicator 5.4. At least 5 sets of insights and case studies contributing to CITES and CBD reporting processes and calls for evidence (such as NDF development (including linked to voluntary certification standards), RST process, CITES & Livelihoods, Sustainable Wildlife Management, GBF progress) setting policy influence pathways beyond the project end	The project team have engaged in three meetings with Nepal’s DPR to provide experience and information to support a revision of the NDF for CITES-listed species Jatamansi. Evidence provided in section 3.1.	Insights and case studies will be shared in connection with CITES CoP 20 in Uzbekistan in Nov-Dec 2025.

Project Summary	SMART Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: **Sustainable management of Himalayan wild plants and fungi, with value chains that incentivise equitable trade, increase value-addition, reduce poverty, and conserve species and ecologically-fragile landscapes**			
Outcome: Floral and fungal diversity in 10 mountainous Himalayan districts is conserved through sustainable, traceable and equitable trade, based on empowered and resilient communities, strengthened policies and responsible value chains	0.1 15,000 harvesters and 280 CFUGs, 10 district and national FECOFUNs, 10 DFOs, 10 producer enterprises representing community, public and private sector organizations report the application of new capabilities in forest resource management, sustainable and equitable trade by 2029 (ongoing project reaching >5,000 harvesters with capacity-building) [**DI-A04]** **0.2** 10,000 harvesters (at least 30% women) improve their income (at least by 5%) and food security through sustainable trade in wild plant and fungi ingredients by 2029 (baselines: NTFPs contribute between 40-60% of annual income in districts surveyed by ongoing project) **[DI-D02]** 0.3 Over 110,000 ha of high-altitude Himalayas are sustainably managed through participatory land and species management and monitoring approaches; and national-level stock assessment (of ~1.5 million ha of forests and meadows) informs landscape-level conservation, by 2029 (baseline: no national-level stock assessment; ongoing project will cover ~33,000ha under sustainable management) **[DI-D01]** 0.4 Increased volume (tonnes) of internationally traded sustainable Himalayan wild NTFP products (flora and fungi) complying with CITES requirements, and/or provisions of FairWild Standard (baselines: one company FairWild certified, products volume TBC; ~360t of Jatamansi legally traded from Nepal in 2021) **[DI-B08]** 0.5 At least three relevant policies and legal frameworks of countries along the value chains (i.e. from Nepal to importers) amended to reflect	0.1 Project reports; disaggregated by gender for people; and types of stakeholder groups for organisations 0.2 Baseline report and final project evaluation report; project reports; disaggregated by gender and types of areas of improvement 0.3 District Forest Offices (DFOs) and CFUG reports; area disaggregated by areas under community forestry and outside 0.4 CITES annual reports; Department of Plant Resources reports; FairWild Foundation reports; disaggregated by standard used, product type and species 0.5 Government and media communications; policy/legislation pieces; disaggregated by type of policy mechanism.	Trade in wild-harvested plant and fungi ingredients continues, and demand further increases, fuelled by diversifying industry applications of ingredients and interest in natural products. The areas of North-Eastern Nepal continue to experience depopulation, related to the rural-urban outmigration, however Western Nepal remains a critical place for conservation interventions. Bilateral (India-Nepal; China-Nepal) and regional commitment (e.g. SAWEN) to sustainable wildlife trade practices translates into the trade in wild plants and fungi. Continued growth in consumer demand and policy pressure to demonstrate sustainability and transparency upstream of supply chains.

	on the importance of sustainable, traceable, equitable trade, by 2029 (policy review will establish baselines; framework agreements in place – not NTFP-specific) **[DI-D03]**		
Outputs: **1. C**apacities and capabilities of stakeholders - in particular women and excluded groups - are improved to enable improved conservation, resource management and sustainable trade	1.1 At least 200 community member local resource persons (LRP) trained on sustainable resource management, good business practices, governance, gender and social inclusion (by September 2025), and 50% of them deliver further training by March 2027 (baseline: 65 trained in resource inventory in ongoing project) **[DI-A05**] 1.2 At least 20,000 harvesters, and 100 people from business, CSO and government stakeholders trained in sustainable harvesting, improved handling and processing practices for value-addition by March 2027 (baseline: 3,268 trained in ongoing project; up to 5,000 by June 2024) [**DI-A01**] 1.3 At least 12 government institutions in Nepal have enhanced awareness and understanding of CITES requirements, sustainable trade in wild species and associated poverty and biodiversity conservation issues (baselines: engagement with DPR (MoFE) on CITES NDF issues) **[DI-A07]** 1.4 At least 50 records added to Species Use Database managed by IUCN SULi **[DI-C16]**	1.1. Project reports; training reports; disaggregated by gender and stakeholder group representation 1.2. Project reports; training reports; disaggregated by gender, stakeholder group, and type of training delivered 1.3. Training evaluation reports; disaggregated by government organisation type (environment, CITES, forestry, commerce, quarantine) 1.4. Sustainable Use Database records available online.	Training of trainer models – with the focus on establishing the local resource persons (LPRs) from the districts/CFUGs - are effective at transmitting and retaining learning to remote communities. Government commitment to participation and readiness for capacity-development cultivated in the current project paves the way for effective representation of Nepal in international/regional negotiations, and informed support for sustainable and legal trade in wild species. This also builds on the existing government knowledge, associated with the successful policy changes that previous and ongoing Darwin project secured.

2. Over 10,000 harvesters benefit from improved livelihoods from long-term, sustainable, equitable trade in NTFPs	2.1 10 district-level sustainable livelihood management plan(s), based on socio-economic baseline assessment and identified opportunities, for target harvesting communities developed, by September 2025 (baseline: zero livelihood management plans) **[DI-B04]** 2.2 Harvester's registration system rolled-out for 12,000 individuals providing a basis for recognised tenure (access and use), transparent trade and cost-calculation, to include harvesters' details, harvesting/sale quantities and locations, prices, trainings/ capacity-building, disaggregated by gender, by September 2027 (baseline: 3,212 harvesters are registered in ongoing project) **[DI-B06]** 2.3 3,600 people in CFUGs that participate in wild harvesting improvement projects on the pathway to the voluntary certification, by March 2028 (baseline: zero; however three CFUGs are involved in FairWild certified value chain) **[DI-B07]** 2.4 70% of 20 sustainable livelihood enterprises established at local level during the project are functioning at project end (at least a year after establishment) (baselines: no known enterprises at CFUG/cluster level) **[DI-A10]** 2.5 7,500 households (in an average 2 people per HH) report improved income and food security associated with sustainable NTFPs harvest, processing and trade, against the baselines, by March 2029 (baseline: to be established for target districts in Y1) **[DI-D16]**	2.1 Socio-economic baseline evaluation report; sustainable livelihoods management (plan); disaggregated by languages 2.2 Harvester's registers at CFUG levels; project reports; DFO reports; disaggregated by gender of harvesters; area under community forestry and tenure type (access/use) 2.3 Project technical reports; disaggregated by gender. 2.4 Project technical reports 2.5 Baseline and final socio-economic assessment reports; disaggregated by metric of livelihoods change	A sustainable livelihood management plan, forming a basis for co-created interventions will be further revised based on the results of Output 3 results, and towards the end of the project, to reflect the long-term monitoring of species and harvesting practices. While income and food security improvement have been identified as important livelihoods betterment needs, the project will be keeping track against the multi-dimensional poverty reduction framework of changes from the project. The metrics will be adjusted to the project context of wild harvesting and trade circumstances, for example we will track whether income from wild harvest meets living wage equivalency.
3. Over 110,000 ha of high-altitude Himalayas are sustainably managed through participatory land and species management and monitoring approaches	3.1 Resource inventory toolkit for high altitude species based on participatory methods developed by 2025; applied for the project stock assessment, endorsed by the government and published in Nepali and English by September 2028 (baseline: no officially endorsed agreed toolkit) [**DI-C01**] 3.2 Participatory resource inventories results from 10 districts (est. 110,000 ha), and at the national-level (estimated 1.5 million ha), focusing on Jatamansi and associated flora and fungi species) are published and data collection plans	3.1 Resource inventory toolkit; published in Nepali and English 3.2 Resource inventories reports at district and national levels; national RDL of Jatamansi. 3.3 Project research reports 3.4 Updated or developed operational management plans; 3.5 Project final report; disaggregated by gender and	There is an effective collaboration between relevant government agencies/departments agreeing on resource inventory methodology, and appropriate use of resulting data to inform policy interventions The long-term sustainability of plant and fungi resources in target areas depends on participatory resource management, fully engaging CFUGs.

	linked to participatory monitoring approaches are confirmed by relevant government agencies and communities, by December 2026 (baseline: no national stock assessment; district-level inconsistent and approximated estimates) **[DI-C02]** 3.3 Results of research into the improved productivity of Jatamansi and other species related to various harvesting cycles, regenerative approaches, published by March 2026 (baseline: limited, speculative information on some species) **[DI-C01]** 3.4 Operational management plans of 60 CFUGs are updated or developed to include the sustainable management, regenerative practices, community monitories, and approved by DFOs, by September 2027 (select CFUGs don't' have management plans, or not updated to include NTFPs management) **[DI-B03]** 3.5 90 CFUGs and harvesting households report a decline in unsustainable practices as a result of project activities [**DI-B09]**, by September 2028 (baseline to be established by the project).	type of activity (e.g. over-harvesting; premature harvesting)	We assume that impacts will be maximized by focusing on the 10 target districts (named in Q19) as these are most commercially important for sourcing and trade in Jatamansi and other species. This focus, alongside the national-level stock assessment for Jatamansi and associated species (covering 28 known mountainous districts, where the populations of Jatamansi have been recorded), will ensure long-term conservation at the landscape level. Over-exploitation will be avoided through community forestry participatory resource management, based on a proven system of CFUG operational plans approved by DFOs. This will be strengthened with additional capacities/capabilities, data from stock assessment and appropriate harvesting techniques, and third-party audits (for certified operations).
4. Sustainable Himalayan wild NTFP value chains enabled from harvest to consumers based on traceable, certifiable production systems	4.1 Project influence plan co-developed and endorsed by all stakeholders by March 2025 **[DI-C01]** 4.2 Himalayan NTFP trade analysis and value chains mapping source to consumers in main markets (India, China, Europe, US) published, informing design for interventions, by September 2025 (baseline: patchy information on supply chains and in particular demand drivers) [**DI-C01]** 4.3 Research underpinning sustainable trade barriers (e.g. Pest Risk Assessment, voluntary certification capacity) is complete to enable trade with China, India, UK, EU, US and other consumer countries (baseline: Pest Risk Assessment of 5 highly traded medicinal and aromatic plants) [**DI-C01]** 4.4 Pilot traceability system is implemented for one value chain, providing data (from harvest, through processing and transport) on origins,	4.1 Project Influence Plan; disaggregated by type of stakeholders and influence 4.2 Project report 4.3 Project research reports 4.4 Project technical reports 4.5 Project technical reports; meeting minutes; disaggregated by nationality and type of companies, gender 4.6 Project case-studies on different communication/media platforms 4.7 Project technical reports; business reports; FairWild reports.	The project Influence Plan will elaborate the evidence to impact pathway around value-chain activities, as well as policy influence (Output 5) Quarantine regulations in China are at present restricting legal and sustainable trade from Nepal, DeFacto making much of current informal trade illicit and creating trade barrier for sustainable, legal practices. Research is necessary to underpin the change in regulations. The new traceability system, record keeping and use of technology will improve verified traceability and transparency of trade, in turn

	legality, sustainability along the critical points, by June 2027 **[DI-C07]**, and roll-out and sustainability plan developed with stakeholders by March 2028 (baseline: FairWild certification, organic – basic traceability is implemented for one supply chain) **[DI-C01]** **4.5** At least 50 companies from markets in China, India, Europe and US attend project events focussing on matchmaking with CFUGs and fostering the development of trading agreements including price premiums, by September 2027 (baseline: active interest from about 20 companies) **[DI-C14, not double-counting with Output 5.3]** **4.6** Benefits and opportunities of legal, sustainable, equitable, and traceable trade in Himalayan plant and fungi ingredients documented and presented at trade fairs, 1-on-1 meetings, online and social media platforms (Wild Plants for Wildlife, www.wildcheck.info, relevant national platforms in China, India, Europe/US), by September 2027 **[DI-C10]** **4.7** At least 70% of trading agreements between producer enterprises and buyers at markets in China, India, Europe and US are functioning by the project end (at least a year after establishment) (baseline: one equitable trade agreement between HBTL and CFUGs; up to five to international companies) **[DI-A10]**		supporting sustainability, governance, and legality.
5. Policies, trade agreements, and legal frameworks along the trade chains from Nepal to consumer countries include provisions for sustainable, traceable trade in wild plant and fungi ingredients, in line with CBD and CITES commitments	5.1 Policy and regulatory frameworks (at national, regional, international levels) affecting trade in plant and fungi reviewed and gaps identified, by June 2025 (baseline: national policies in Nepal reviewed by current project; regional/international barriers not understood clearly) **[DI-C19]** 5.2 At least three policy briefs developed for prioritized frameworks and institutions at national, regional and global levels, building on project evidence, by March 2026 (baseline: zero) **[DI-C07]** 5.3 At least 30 government officials from at least five countries from 15 ministries/departments, 50 companies from China, India, Europe/US, 100 community resource managers are engaged	5.1 Policy review reports 5.2 Policy briefs directed at policy/regulatory improvements; disaggregated by local/national/international levels 5.3 Regional Forum reports; disaggregated by gender and stakeholder group representation of participants 5.4 Project technical reports; information documents to CITES and CBD meetings.	Intra and inter-governmental communication on wild harvested products is limited and trade barriers need to be tackled. Discussions with government agencies suggest that coordination mechanisms can assist with this.

	(including through regional multi-stakeholder Forums) to build regional and cross-government and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms for sustainability data collection and sharing, by September 2026 (baseline: national Coordination committee in Nepal currently not operational; zero otherwise) [**DI-C14]** 5.4 At least 5 sets of insights and case studies contributing to CITES and CBD reporting processes and calls for evidence (such as NDF development (including linked to voluntary certification standards), RST process, CITES & Livelihoods, Sustainable Wildlife Management, GBF progress) setting policy influence pathways beyond the project end (baseline: CITES & livelihoods case-study; NDF & voluntary certification case-study) [**DI-C05]**		

Activities

Output 1. Capacities and capabilities of stakeholders - in particular women and excluded groups - are improved to enable improved conservation, resource management and sustainable trade

1.1 Organise inception and closing workshops at district and national levels, semi-annual review and planning meetings at national level (ANSAB/FECOFUN/TRAFFIC)

1.2 Assess capacity needs across all stakeholder groups (government agencies, harvesting communities, private sector, CSOs) and develop capacity building plan (ANSAB)

1.3 Training of trainers (ToT) for local resource persons (LRPs) (including FECOFUN and DFO officials) on species identification, sustainable harvesting, organic production, FairWild Standard and post-harvest processing and handling (ANSAB/FECOFUN/FairWild Foundation/)

1.4 Assist in forming CFUG sub-committee for harvesters' welfare and develop and execute harvesters' registration at CFUG level (FECOFUN/ANSAB)

1.5 Build capacity of LRPs including FECOFUN district chapters on GESI and governance, bookkeeping and accounting (FECOFUN/ANSAB)

1.6 Organize roll-out trainings to ~350 CFUGs on standards/sustainable forest management, and more focused trainings to 90 CFUGs to enable meeting certification requirements (FECOFUN/ANSAB)

1.7 Build capacity of CFUG executive committees in all target districts on organizational governance, book-keeping and accounting, gender and social inclusion (FECOFUN)

1.8 Build capacity of local certification body (CBs) to audit for sustainability* in Nepal, and of ANSAB to support implementation of wild harvesting improvement and FairWild Standard guidance (FairWild Foundation) (*FairWild, organic, other)

1.9 Build capacity of local CFUG-level enterprises on business skills and planning, FairWild certification and associated document-management (ANSAB/FECOFUN/FairWild Foundation)

1.10 Deliver new and top-up training to trading/exporting enterprises in Nepal on FairWild Standard, organic certification, market access (FairWild Foundation/NEHHPA/ANSAB)

1.11 Deliver training sessions for government staff on NTFP inventory methodology, CITES (NDFs, and other requirements), and other sustainable trade issues (ANSAB/TRAFFIC)

1.12 Document wild species use and trade case-study to the IUCN SULi Species Use Database (TRAFFIC/UoC/IOF/ANSAB)

Output 2. harvesters benefit from improved livelihoods from long-term, sustainable, equitable trade in NTFPs

2.1 Baseline and endline survey of community harvesting practices and livelihood strategies, and overall socio-economic context (ANSAB/FECOFUN).

2.2 Develop a sustainable livelihood management plan at district level considering all target CFUGs, including female harvesters and workers identifying sustainable NTFPs enterprise opportunities (e.g. improved drying, pressing, distillation, storage). (ANSAB/FECOFUN)
2.3 Enable for a sustainable livelihood management plan being discussed and adopted by respective line agencies (incl. DFOs), municipalities, district FECOFUNs, CFUGs and other CSOs (FECOFUN/ANSAB)
2.4 Facilitate the roll-out of harvesters' registration system by local FECOFUNs, including the expansion of harvesters and their households included in CFUGs (FECOFUN/ANSAB).
2.5 Provide technology upgrade or installation to enable improved post-harvest handling and processing (storage, drying, pressing, distillation) of NTFPs (ANSAB/ FECOFUN)
2.6 Support the roll-out of the equitable trade mechanisms with reference to FairWild social guidance, including on premium fund (ANSAB/FECOFUN/FairWild Foundation)
2.7 Enable record keeping, documentation and accountability procedures at the level of producer enterprises towards certification, and along the wild harvesting improvement guidelines (ANSAB/FECOFUN/FairWild Foundation)
2.8 Establish group/CFUG-level enterprise certification pilot, and fund associated with assistance to certification costs (ANSAB/FairWild Foundation)
2.9 Organize learning visits for enterprises/CFUGs on efficient processing technologies (ANSAB)

Output 3. Over 100.000 ha of high-altitude Himalayas are sustainably managed through participatory land and species management and monitoring approaches
3.1 Complete and publish the resource inventory toolkit standardising and building on participatory approaches (ANSAB/MoFE-DPR/DFOs)
3.2 Undertake stock (resource) assessment of key high-value and conservation importance plants and fungi (Jatamansi and associated species) in 10 districts aswell as at national level (ANSAB/DFO/FECOFUN)
3.3 Publish national-level resource inventory (ANSAB/DPR/MoFE)
3.4 Undertake research on sustainable harvesting practices, regeneration management approaches and domestication potential (ANSAB/MoFE/DPR)
3.5 Develop best practice guides for the management and harvesting of focal species (ANSAB/MoFE)
3.6 Organize dialogues on major issues and solutions for mountain forests at districts and national levels – focusing on CFUGs and NTFPs (FECOFUN/ANSAB)
3.7 Develop guideline document for community forest management in mountainous regions including sustainability standards)(ANSAB/MoFE/FECOFUN)
3.8 Organize meetings/ AGM – as part of CFUG management plan revision (FECOFUN/ANSAB)
3.9 Support 60 CFUGs in forest management plan updating or development including application of district level stock assessment and updating provisions for sustainable harvesting and monitoring of NTFPs (ANSAB/FECOFUN)
3.10 Support CFUG for the implementation of management plan via mobilized LRPs (FECOFUN/ANSAB)
3.11 Develop an updated *Nardostachys grandiflora* NDF based on 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and publish (TRAFFIC/MoFE/DPR/ANSAB)

Output 4. Sustainable Himalayan wild NTFP value chains enabled from harvest to consumers based on traceable, certifiable production systems
4.1 Develop Influence Plan for project (TRAFFIC/all partners)
4.2 Undertake and publish trade analyses for major consumer markets for a selection of NTFPs, including value chain mapping and consumer demand (China, India, other) (TRAFFIC/WWF India/UoC/IOF/UoOx)
4.3 Identify underpinning sustainable and equitable trade barriers and opportunities, with the focus on implementation of voluntary certification standards (e.g. certification audit capacity), fair pricing, and market access, and confirm ways to address those (TRAFFIC/ANSAB)
4.4 Expand the framework for the Bayesian model with the focus on the trader and demand side, publish results and integrate across activities under Output (UoOx/TRAFFIC/ANSAB)
4.5 Undertake critical control point value chain analysis for Jatamansi from one of the main producing districts (ANSAB/TRAFFIC)
4.6 Pilot the traceability system and technology in one district (TRAFFIC /ANSAB)
4.7 Based on the pilot, develop sustainable value-chain/national-level roll-out plan with relevant (government, private sector, community) stakeholders (TRAFFIC/ANSAB).

4.8 Develop and roll-out wholesale market price collection (in Nepal, China and India) and share with harvesters and other stakeholders in Nepal and Bhutan (ANSAB/TRAFFIC).
4.9 Identify and engage with buyers and relevant industry associations in China and India, alongside those in European/US markets selected due to interest and engagement in sector (TRAFFIC/WWF India/ANSAB/NEHHPA/FairWild Foundation).
4.10 Facilitate meetings between prospective buyers and producers in Nepal (at trade fairs, through webinars, 1-2-1 meetings) (ANSAB/FairWild Foundation/TRAFFIC/NEHHPA).
4.11 Develop communication materials, investment cases, knowledge products, and disseminate across relevant social media, peer-review publications, and other appropriate channels (TRAFFIC (GLO, China)/ANSAB/FairWild Foundation)
4.12 Establish and support appropriate match-making and marketing platform for producers, businesses and investors (e.g. linked to Wild Plants 4 Wildlife, www.wildcheck.info, wild harvesting improvement projects, partner websites and social media) (TRAFFIC (GLO and China)/ANSAB/FairWild Foundation)

Output 5. Nepal's, regional, and key importing countries' policies, trade agreements, and legal frameworks include provisions for sustainable, traceable trade in wild plant and fungi ingredients, in line with CBD and CITES commitments
5.1 Undertake a policy framework assessment to identify trade and management barriers and opportunities at national, regional and international levels (TRAFFIC coordination/ TRAFFIC China/WWF India/ANSAB)
5.2 Revive and update the Coordination Committee across sectors in Nepal, focusing on reducing sustainable trade barriers – MoFE, MoALD and MoICS (ANSAB/NEHHPA/FECOFUN)
5.3 Establish a regional cross-agency Forum and support operationalisation (TRAFFIC/WWF India).
5.4 Develop policy briefs based on 5.1 for discussion/ action in the regional Forum (TRAFFIC/ANSAB/WWF India)
5.5 Facilitate a regional multi-stakeholder Himalayan plant/fungi trade sustainability forum (Ayush Ministry India, MoFE, Ministry of Industries, Commerce and Supplies, MoALD, CATCM, NEPPHA, etc) (TRAFFIC)
5.6 Facilitate development of a Pest Risk Assessment for at least three priority species (ANSAB)
5.7 Participate in regular meetings of China-Nepal Border Trade and Cooperation & Coordination Mechanism, share findings of 5.1,5.4, 5.6 (TRAFFIC)
5.8 Organise three multi-stakeholder meetings (SATCM, CITES MA/SA, Customs, Ministry of Commerce) to review, revise and promote official approval of the category with additional species (TRAFFIC)
5.9 Facilitate two multi-stakeholder roundtables in Nepal & China to update import/export lists for wildlife products for legal entry of target species to China (TRAFFIC with Nepali Embassy in China/ANSAB)
5.10 Submit documents and case-studies to CITES and CBD calls for evidence and processes, including in support of RST process, NDF development, CITES & Livelihoods WG (TRAFFIC/ANSAB).
5.11 Support the presentation of Nepal's interest in international CITES, CBD and regional meetings, facilitate side-events (TRAFFIC/MoFE/ANSAB)

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

Please see the Standard Indicator guidance for more information on how to report in this section, including appropriate disaggregation.

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Linked project indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Year 4 Total	Year 5 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-A01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	1.1, 1.2	People	Men (IPLC) Nepal	198					198	12,100
DI-A01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training (Nepal)	1.1, 1.2	People	Men (other) Nepal	29					29	90
DI-A01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training (Nepal)	1.1, 1.2	People	Women (IPLC) Nepal	142					142	8,100
DI-A01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training (Nepal)	1.1, 1.2	People	Women (other) Nepal	9					9	60
DI-A01	Number of training weeks delivered (Nepal) 1 week = at least 30 hours training / week. Below 30 hrs, calculated pro-rata).	1.1, 1.2	Training weeks	Nepal	438					438	No target set
DI-C06	Analytics for funded project-specific social media posts		Number	Average engagement Global	16.36%					16.36%	No target set
DI-C08	Number of Media related activities		Number	Social media posts Global	32					32	No target set
DI-C08	Number of Media related activities		Number	Video Nepal	1					1	No target set
DI-C08	Number of Media related activities		Number	Internet articles	10					10	No target set

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Linked project indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Year 4 Total	Year 5 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
				Nepal							
DI-C08	Number of Media related activities		Number	Internet articles Global	1					1	No target set
DI-C08	Number of Media related activities		Number	Newsletters Global	3					1	No target set
DI-C08	Number of Media related activities		Number	Print Global	1					1	No target set
DI-C10	Number of decision-makers attending briefing events		Number	Men Nepal	64					64	No target set
DI-C10	Number of decision-makers attending briefing events		Number	Women Nepal	11					11	No target set

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, best practice manual, blog post, online videos, podcasts, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
A roadmap to sustainable management of commercial medicinal and aromatic plants, fungi, and lichens in Nepal* SDY1_5.1.2	Scientific article	Smith-Hall, C., Pyakurel, D., Treue, T., Pouliot, M., Ghimire, S., Timoshyna, A. and Meilby, H. 2025.	Male	Danish	Conservation Biology e14442	https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/cobi.14442

See also SDY1_0.9 and supplementary material for a list of media releases and newsletters.

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?	Y
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the Subject line.	Y
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.	Y
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.	Y
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.	Y
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see Section 16)?	Y
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Y
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Y
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	

[i] Libois, F J. Baland, N. Delbart, S. Pattanayak (2021) Community Forestry Management: Mechanisms behind a success story in Nepal. Economic Development and Institutions Policy Brief. Oxford Policy Management Community-Forestry-Management-Mechanisms-behind-a-success-story-in-Nepal.pdf (opml.co.uk)

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[ix] Hinsley, A. Unpublished model. *Bayesian modelling for sustainability in the wild plant harvesting sector for sustainability in the wild plant harvesting sector*

[x] Matchmaking companies with ethical and sustainable wild-harvest producers in Nepal. - Wildlife Trade News from TRAFFIC

[xi] Press release on the First Meeting of Nepal-China Coordination Mechanism on Border Trade and Cooperation – Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nepal MOFA

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[xiii] Atreya, K, Kattel, K (2022) Baseline survey of high value high conservation priority NTFPs harvesters in five key production districts of Nepal. ANSAB.

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