

Project Summary

PROJECT IDENTIFIERS	
1. Project name: Natural Resources Management and Environmental Protection Project	2. GEF Implementing Agency: Asian Development Bank
3. Country or countries in which the project is being implemented: Afghanistan	4. Country eligibility: CBD on 19 September 2002 and meets all other requirements
5. GEF focal area(s): Biodiversity	6. Operational program: OP. 1, 2, 3, 4
7. Project linkage to national priorities, action plans, and programs: The project is based on the priority given by the government of Afghanistan to protect biodiversity as well as its commitment to promote environmental protection. The project intervention sites are accorded national priority by the government of Afghanistan.	
8. GEF national operational focal point and date of country endorsement: Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Environment (endorsed 15 June 2003)	
PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES	
9. Project rationale and objectives: Goal: (1) To conserve globally significant biodiversity in Afghanistan. (2) Adopting a participatory approach involving government, communities and NGOs: a) Advance conservation of ecosystems and wildlife resources in key protected areas; b) Promote human resource development through capacity building and institutional strengthening; c) Promote environmental management and awareness d) Reduce poverty among communities residing in PA buffer zones by introduction of renewable energy technologies.	Indicators: Goal: Scope and scale of re-instated protected areas. (1) Participatory cooperation to safeguard natural resources in PAs secured; (2) Number of training programs & numbers of staff completing training sessions, with corresponding improvements in performance; (3) Enactment of environmental policies and programs; (4) Number of community development and livelihood proposals implemented or ongoing associated with renewable energy.
10. Project outcomes: (1) Development of bio-physical resource monitoring program with recommendations for management development and NBSAP; (2) Replicable capacity and institution strengthening programs for MoA and communities; (3) Ongoing replicable community development and livelihood programs associated with renewable energy.	Indicators: (1) Numbers, scale and extent of management recommendations and ongoing monitoring in key nature reserves; (2) Knowledge and attitude assessment by trainees and independent and instructors' assessment of program/s; (3) Scope and scale of programs and communities' satisfaction with results measured by questionnaires and assessed by facilitators.
11. Project activities to achieve outcomes (including cost in US\$ or local currency of each activity): (1) Scientific assessments of biophysical resources in six key PAs (US\$425,000); (2) Training programs for MoA, communities and NGOs and development of a PIU (US\$550,000); (3) Environmental training for MoA and introduction of renewable energy development (\$750,000)	Indicators: (1) Numbers, scale and extent of coverage of key protected areas; (2) Numbers and extent of trainings completed; (3) Numbers and extent of training completed in environmental training and awareness raising, and renewable energy technologies introduced.
12. Estimated budget (in US\$ or local currency): GEF: 975,000 Co-financing: 750,000 (ADB) TOTAL: 1,725,000	
INFORMATION ON INSTITUTION SUBMITTING PROJECT BRIEF	
13. Information on project proposer: Asian Development Bank	
14. Information on proposed executing agency (if different from above): Ministry of Agriculture and Husbandry (MoA)	
15. Date of initial submission of project concept: November 19, 2002	
INFORMATION TO BE COMPLETED BY IMPLEMENTING AGENCY:	
16. Project identification number:	
17. Implementing Agency contact person: Ali M. Azimi; Nessim J. Ahmad (ADB)	
18. Project linkage to Implementing Agency program(s): The proposed project is consistent with the Asian Development Bank Country Strategy and Program, which has one of its main pillars promoting social stability and environmentally sustainable development.	

Project Description

A Project Rationale and Objectives

1. Rationale

1. Over two decades of devastating war have had a severe impact on the biodiversity of Afghanistan. Endangered species of plants and animals, found in all representative ecosystems, ranging from the arid deserts of the southwest to the alpine valleys of the Hindu Kush, are now under severe threat. Afghanistan's first National Park at Bande Amir and five other wildlife reserves and sanctuaries established in the 1970s after years of efforts have been abandoned over the years along with other protected area proposals intended to cover the country's needs for biodiversity conservation (see Annex 1).

2. The war has averted the attention of government agencies away from environmental conservation. As a result soil runoff, flooding, loss of rangelands, forests and wildlife are on the rise. All these changes have had an adverse impact on the environment and its functioning ecosystems. Traditional conservation knowledge is on the decline and there is the possibility that in the post-war euphoria of rehabilitation such knowledge may be lost altogether. Institutional development has stood at a standstill during the last two decades; experienced staff trained to maintain a system of protected areas is non-existent, and wildlife resources have not received any attention during the last two decades.

3. All these factors necessitate an urgent need to revive the nature reserves and sanctuaries that were established nearly a quarter of a century ago. The overall goal of this project is to conserve and sustainably use globally significant biodiversity. The long-term effects of habitat degradation and its impact on the flora and fauna of the country needs to be studied and measures taken to implement management schemes to revitalize the state of the environment and its biological diversity.

4. In addition, the project will (i) strengthen the environmental administration capacity of the central and provincial government and communities in the buffer zone of the Protected Areas (PA) by training their human resources in collective methodologies in environmental diagnosis, environmental planning, monitoring and evaluation; (ii) introducing renewable energy in the buffer zones of the PA will assist in stemming deforestation in the PAs and reduce pressure of wildlife by developing alternative means of livelihood and concomitantly reduce poverty.

2. Objectives

5. The project offers a means to revitalizing Afghanistan's protected areas program by adopting a participatory approach involving government, communities and NGOs to: (i) advance the conservation of natural ecosystems and wildlife resources in selected key protected areas; (ii) promote human resource development through capacity building and institutional strengthening for natural resources and protected areas management; and (iii) reduce the extensive poverty prevalent among some of the remotest communities in the country residing in and adjacent to key nature conservation sites and protected areas through incentive programs to promote socioeconomic stability among the rural poor.

6. The project will help prevent further deterioration of the country's natural resource base (soil, water, forest, rangeland, and biodiversity) and improve the development profiles of local communities within nature reserves and their buffer zones, and the ability of families and

individuals to secure sustainable incomes through self-identified livelihood programs. It would also provide for environmental management capacity and reduce poverty by developing rural energy.

7. The Project Objectives conform to GEF Operational Programs 1-Arid and Semi Arid Zone Ecosystems; 2-Freshwater Ecosystems; 3-Forest Ecosystems; and 4-Mountain Ecosystems; and in particular fit with the GEF Strategic Priority #1-Sustaining Protected Areas.

B. Current Situation

8. Afghanistan's position within the region where the Palaearctic and Oriental faunal realms intermingle highlights its zoogeographic and international importance not only in terms of biodiversity and endemism but also for the occurrence of flagship endangered species such as Markhor (*Capra falconeri*), Marco Polo Sheep (*Ovis ammon poli*), Musk Deer (*Moschus moschiferus*), Snow Leopard (*Uncia uncia*), and Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*). There are some 458 bird species in the country that include numerous species of migratory waterfowl and waders which seasonally use Afghanistan's wetlands of the Hamun-i-Puzak and Hamun-i-Helmand on the Iranian border and Ab-i-Estada and Dashte Nawar for feeding breeding and rearing their young. Dashte Nawar at 3210 m elevation is in fact the highest breeding area of the Greater Flamingo in the world. Among Afghanistan's 119 mammal species there are also many exotic forms which include Caracal Cat (*Felis caracal*), Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), Lynx (*Lynx lynx*), Goitered Gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*), Siberian Ibex (*Capra ibex sibericus*), Urial sheep (*Ovis orientalis*), and Wild Goat (*Capra aegagrus*), to mention but a few. A number of the ungulates, in particular Marco Polo Sheep, Markhor, and Urial, are transboundary species which have seasonal movements to and from Afghanistan and neighboring countries. Their rational utilization and conservation in this country is vital in terms of maintaining global biodiversity and a healthy state of the regional environment.

9. The situation in Afghanistan's protected areas can be summarized as follows and is reason for real concern:

- (i) Pamir-i-Buzurg - Although in better condition because of its inaccessibility and remoteness, the Big Pamir Reserve is now being used for grazing large numbers of domestic stock, an activity that was formerly restricted when the local people benefited from participation in the tourist hunting program and management of the reserve; Marco Polo Sheep and Ibex were observed during a recent reconnaissance trip to the area (Fitzherbert and Mishra, Oct. 2002, pers. comm.)
- (ii) Bande Amir – in recent years, two of the six lakes, Bande Qumbar and Bande Pudina have experienced temporary dry periods; illegal hunting and fishing sometimes with explosives have persisted during intervening years; activities such as placing a flour mill and some dwellings around the lake threaten the beauty and integrity of the national park; the area is heavily mined and in need of people management.
- (iii) Ajar Valley – lands formerly devoid of human habitation in the reserve are now occupied by some 300 families and the population is increasing with re-patriated families returning from Iran and Pakistan; most of the former verdant flora in the valley has been depleted by overgrazing of domestic stock and most woody plants have been cut for fuel and building supplies¹; although the extent is not known, many hectares of reserve lands have been converted to dryland agriculture which

¹ SEA estimates that some 32,500 kg of juniper and other woody plants were being cut on a daily basis during their expedition in 2001.

is rapidly taking on prevalence in the valley; cutting of reed beds has resulted in the disappearance of wild boar; introduced Bactrian deer from Darqad have been hunted out and have not been seen in recent years; the feral yak herd which had expanded to some 70 animals from the original introduction of 10 animals was killed off by past government authorities and the meat was distributed among the people; snow leopard preying on domestic livestock have been killed by local residents.

- (iv) Ab-i-Estada – is a drought effected area and has been completely dry for the last four years; soil salinization is widespread effecting the surrounding natural vegetation; agricultural lands are now widespread around the lake and many households have drilled private tube wells further depriving the rehabilitation of the lake and wetlands; Shank (Oct 2002, pers. comm.) reports no flamingo breeding for four years and Siberian Cranes haven't been seen there since the late 1970s; large numbers of falcon trappers were seen at Ab-i-Estada during an October 2002 reconnaissance trip.
- (v) Dashte Nawar – is a drought affected area, although some small springs dot the largely dry lake bed with pools of water; hunting is reportedly common; nomads occupying the area now presume the lake is their property; construction of mud houses in graveyards in the immediate vicinity of the (usual) shoreline is a serious problem.
- (vi) Kole Hashmat Khan – is a drought affected area, although some of the wetland had been reclaimed in prior years after the cleaning of the Mastan Canal; construction of mud houses during 1992-2000 has considerably reduced the overall area previously occupied by the wetland; the phragmites reeds had been cut by locals and sold to private dealers during the 1990s; much of the wetland vegetation has disappeared and the lake area last had water (0.5 meter) in spring 2002; construction and other disturbances around the lake basin continues.

10. The present government agency charged with the conservation and management of Afghanistan's reserves is the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and in particular the Department of Forests and Range. Personnel capacity, facilities on hand and present government funding are low or non-existent, and without outside assistance the Ministry is presently in no position to undertake the activities required to re-activate and meet responsible conservation management in protected areas.

11. In addition as peace returns to Afghanistan, more and more refugees return to the country from abroad and settle in unoccupied areas which has begun to negatively impact important protected areas sites, in particular the Ajar Valley Wildlife Reserve, and the drought effected wetlands of Ghazni province and lake district along the Iranian border. These alarming conditions have not yet been documented in detail and will require further social assessments, and awareness raising to secure local support for conservation initiatives through carefully developed socioeconomic incentives and inputs.

C. Expected Project Outcomes

1. Management Plans

- (i) Protected Areas (PA) were established on the basis of reconnaissance surveys and none of the PA has any formal management plan or staffing. Stakeholder

consultations have revealed widespread ignorance of the fact that there is a protected area and few of those who are aware know where the boundaries are. Management plans will be updated to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Management plans will reflect on the value of biological resources, likelihood of protection, socio-economic conditions, land-use planning and tourism potential. Initially in each PA, the project will facilitate detailed ecological, socio-economic and land-use surveys. In order to ensure an integrated participatory approach, from the commencement of implementation, the project will establish local communities directed at land-use mapping and planning, boundary delineation, park zonation and the development of management plans for PA will follow.

- (ii) Based on the studies performed, management plans for the PAs will be prepared. These plans will contain the following components: a proposal for conservation areas to protect critical ecosystems and endangered species; applied research programs in ethnobotany and ethnozoology; human settlement management; use and access and control mechanisms for natural resources; environmental management training; impact mitigation and environmental control and monitoring plan. In addition, recommendations for developing protected areas management plans in key conservation sites and mechanisms for monitoring bio-physical resources as initial inputs for the NBSAP.
- (ii) Rapid biodiversity assessments will be conducted to update available data on biodiversity and natural resources in each site.

2. Enhance capacity for management and protection

12. The project will develop training programs and conduct training and capacity building at all levels in conservation, protected area management and environmental management. Training programs including courses and workshops for technical staff in the Department of Forests and Range (DRED), Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment (MIWRE) and MoA in collective environmental diagnosis, management plan design, and monitoring and evaluation methodologies to promote their capacity to conduct appropriate biodiversity assessments for conservation monitoring and ability to develop and implement protected areas management plans including and functional Project Management Unit (PIU), participatory management activities and field training along with community personnel. The development of an improved incentive system will create improved motivation and job performance. In addition, an environmental awareness program will be also undertaken in the buffer zones of the PAs.

3. Improve infrastructure for management and protection

13. The project will develop a basic park infrastructure comprising ranger stations and sub-stations, and set-up a central project office. Field equipment will be provided for rangers, monitoring and surveying. Trails will be developed to allow patrolling and access for visitors. On the protected area peripheries, the project will undertake marking and explanation of boundaries in the critical area of the reserves. This will include participatory demarcation and enforcement of activities.

4. Promote alternative and conservation compatible livelihoods and enterprises

14. The project will facilitate a participatory process to develop within the contractual framework of conservation stewardship agreements. Village development grants can be given in the form of revolving funds for micro-credits to individual households or as a grant to develop alternative means of livelihood by providing electricity through renewable energy technologies.

15. The project will be carried out over a period of two years and in a phased approach to building capacity in the country to ensure sustainability. However, it is emphasized that the project should also be considered a preliminary step, or “Phase 1” towards developing and implementing a more comprehensive long-term (i.e. five-year) conservation project for the country. The follow-up project would include *inter alia* the development of formal management plans for selected protected areas sites as the conservation cornerstone of a NBSAP for Afghanistan.

D. Activities and Financial Inputs

16. The following activities will be implemented to achieve project objectives:

- Using baseline information gleaned during the 1970s, conduct scientific assessments of biodiversity resources in Protected Areas and establish a monitoring program for bio-physical resources; identify basic elements and components for management plans for the six sites, at a cost of US\$325,000.
- Provide a sound program for capacity strengthening that will also include specific training programs delivered by national institutes, organizations or individual personnel with experience and competence to provide training courses in Afghanistan, at a cost of US\$550,000;
- Community participation in protected areas management including involvement in monitoring, and protection, at a cost of US\$100,000;
- Environmental management and renewable energy development, at a cost of \$750,000.

17. A series of stakeholder workshops involving representatives of international and bilateral donors, concerned national agencies, departments and research institutions, local government units, NGOs and local communities will be held during the initial, mid-term and final stages throughout project implementation to ensure full participation and information sharing

18. The protected areas selected for project attention will tentatively include the six sites listed in Annex 1 as “designated protected areas”.² These will be confirmed on a basis of (i) present status of wildlife and habitat and overall environment of the area; (ii) globally significant biodiversity; (iii) extent of threats and problems; (iv) worsening poverty situation including but not limited to drought, war, returning refugees; (v) existing initiatives and commitment by the local government and communities to promote improved socioeconomic conditions and resource management; and (vi) new initiatives or supplementary existing local management initiatives. In the event one or more of these sites will be eliminated, a substitute/s will be chosen from the first

² These designated protected areas include: Dashte Nawar, Pamir-i-Buzurg, Ab-i-Estada, Ajar Valley, Bande Amir and Kole Hashmat Khan

five sites (Nuristan, Darqad, Imam Sahib, Hamune Puzak, Registan Desert, and Northwest Afghanistan) in Annex 1 listed as ‘proposed protected areas’.

19. The environmental management capacity strengthening, environmental awareness raising and introduction of renewable energy technologies and related poverty alleviation programs will be funded by the ADB.

E. Sustainability Analysis and Risk Assessment

1. Sustainability Analysis

- (i) **Institutional Issues and Capacity.** The project will enhance management capacity through the development of meaningful and comprehensive training programs for relevant personnel responsible for protected areas planning and management, initiate and implement resource assessment techniques conforming to international standards, and provide essential equipment, required for assessing management needs in wetland, mountain and arid protected areas. In addition, it may be assumed that in the future funds generated from exclusive visitor hunting programs in specified sites such as those conducted for Marco Polo Sheep and Siberian ibex in the Pamirs during the 1970s along with other non-exploitative wildlife ecotourism programs will improve the government’s ability to support conservation efforts in Afghanistan.
- (ii) **Monitoring, Protection and Evaluation.** The project will initiate methodologies to implement astute natural resource and wildlife monitoring programs in those PA sites selected for attention which in previous years have been lacking in Afghanistan, and improve the evaluating and protection and enforcement capacity of implementing agencies and staff assigned to protected areas.
- (iii) **Cross Sectoral Cooperation.** The project will initiate and promote close cooperation between institutions responsible for protected areas management with national and local government institutions (particularly the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development), and other agencies and NGOs concerned with community development and poverty alleviation in the buffer zones of protected areas to stabilize protected areas boundaries and ensure PA integrity through mutually agreed sustainable use of natural resources, other biodiversity-friendly activities, and participatory management involving affected parties.
- (iv) **Human Use and Impact.** The socioeconomic assessments will involve local communities in PA buffer zones in identifying and developing biodiversity friendly community development, livelihood and income generating activities and employment to alleviate poverty while relieving pressure on biodiversity. As part of this process, appropriate conservation and awareness educational programs will increase community awareness of conservation issues and, improve local environmental management that will form grass roots building blocks for a next step broader conservation awareness program in the country.
- (v) **Project Management.** The project will train and assist core management staff (Project Implementing Unit) from the MoA in charge of day to day project management to direct the implementation of project activities that will include all aspects of project management from accounting and procurement to staff and consultant selection and performance, coordination of technical work and

reporting, and review of work in progress to meet ADB, GEF and government requirements for successful project implementation.

- (vi) Conservation Development Model. The focus and structure of the project will serve as an appropriate model to initiate protected areas and buffer zone management in other parts of the country while providing an essential building block towards the development of a NBSAP for Afghanistan.
- (vii) Sustainability will also be ensured through the strategic link to the National Solidarity Program (NSP), also implemented by the government. NSP is aimed to address the risk and deprivation experienced by large parts of the rural Afghan population; the program focuses in five areas: institutional strengthening, macroeconomic regeneration, community-based development, protection of lives and livelihoods and income generation.

2. Risk Assessment

20. Project risks include above all else a possible increase in security due to instability in border areas (Afghanistan-Pakistan), and tensions in few scattered parts of the country, particularly in southern Afghanistan. Although at this time, such risks do not pose difficulties in working in any of the selected protected areas other than perhaps Ajar Valley, some difficulties could arise in communications routes to/from the protected areas. Additional risks could be potential conflict in regional and local development plans. However, the project will make every effort to coordinate and inform local and regional authorities through direct consultations and workshops. A further risk will be the reluctance of newly settled groups (such as the mixed ethnic composition of settlers in Ajar Valley and Ab-i-Estada) to support conservation initiatives without extensive consultations including awareness raising, and economic incentives. These activities would however be addressed in the poverty alleviation component of the project.

F. Stakeholder Involvement and Social Assessment

21. Key stakeholders include the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Forests and Range-DFR), the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the NGO Save the Environment Afghanistan (SEA), and the local communities and settlements which lie in the buffer zones of the protected areas as well as the local governments in the provinces.

22. The essential community development activities and provision of livelihood programs for protected areas buffer zone residents will go hand in hand with conservation efforts to ensure success of the project. This issue has been widely and strongly voiced by all Afghan senior policy advisors and officials in the government consulted during the preparation of this project concept and is a caveat to moving forward in project implementation. Poverty is a basic feature of the social economy in Afghanistan which extends to and is often exacerbated among communities in the periphery of existing nature reserves; it is also the greatest threat to the development of nature conservation in the country.

G. Incremental Cost Analysis

	Baseline	Alternative	Increment
Global Environment Benefit	Globally significant biodiversity is increasingly eroded due to abusive and unsustainable anthropogenic practices	Rationalized use of biodiversity and natural resources increased through: a) management and monitoring schemes in line with biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, b) creating alternative options promoting sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biological recovery in ecosystems and species of global significance ▪ Protecting the integrity of ecosystems where globally significant biodiversity is present ▪ Support for global conservation values ▪ Sustainable use of a greater number of globally significant species that are important to local livelihoods
Domestic Environmental Benefit	Short term returns from grazing and agricultural lands, while biodiversity and the ecosystems they are part of are being eroded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long term benefits for local communities through biodiversity friendly resource use ▪ Better management and monitoring of biodiversity and protection of ecosystem integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protection measures for globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem they are part of ▪ Sustainable use options compatible with local needs to alleviate pressures on globally significant biodiversity
<u>Cost of Output</u> Management Plans	Management capacity in PAs very weak, and no coordination with DRED. Cost \$150,000	Improved management in PAs and effective coordination mechanism established with DRED authorities Cost \$470,00 (of which \$150,00 is baseline)	Cost: GEF, \$320,000
<u>Cost of Output</u> Institutional Strengthening	Weak enforcement and ineffective habitat protection. Cost \$1,000,000	Strengthened capacity for habitat conservation in PAs Cost \$ 1,645,000 (of which \$1,000,000 is baseline, \$300,000 (ADB))	Cost: GEF, \$345,000
<u>Cost of output</u> Improved Infrastructure	Most of the infrastructure in PAs nonexistent. Cost 1,750,000	Effective monitoring and surveying of PAs Cost \$1,750,000 (of which \$1,750,000 is baseline)	Cost: GEF, \$ 175,000
<u>Cost of output</u> Biodiversity is used sustainably and natural resources protected	Various government programs in communities in buffer zones Cost: \$1,500,000	Sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resource base enhanced through creating incentives; -renewable energy -traditional handicrafts -rehabilitation of native forage seeds Cost \$ 2,185,000 (1,500,000 is baseline, \$450,000 ADB, \$100,000 (GoA))	Cost, GEF: 135,000
Total	\$4,400,000	\$6,050,000	\$ 975,000

H. Budget

Estimated Breakdown of Project Costs (US\$000)

Project Component	GEF	ADB	Project Total
Personnel/Consultants ³	350.0		350.0
Training	250.0		250.0
Equipment	175.0		175.0
In-Country Travel/ Field Operations	100.0		100.0
PIU Office Setup/Staff	50.0		50.0
Environmental Mgmt		300.0	300.0
Renewable energy Development		450.0	450.0
Evaluation Mission	30.0		30.0
Miscellaneous	20.0		20.0
Project Total	975.0	750.0	1,725.0

I. Project Implementation Plan

23. The natural resources management components of the project⁴ will be executed by the Department of Forests and Range, Ministry of Agriculture in partnership with international consultants and local NGOs. These components will be coordinated by a Project Implementing Unit (PIU) that will be established in the MoA (DFR).

24. The environmental management component will be executed by the Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Environment and the renewable energy component will be executed by the Ministry of Water and Power.

25. As the project involves two different but complementary sectors a project Steering Committee will be organized and composed of representatives of the concerned agencies and local governments in the various project sites including NGOs. The Steering Committee will be the main instrument to direct strategies and approaches with respect to the design and implementation of project activities, and resolve development conflicts to ensure the project proceeds in a harmonious way and remains on schedule.

26. At each selected site, a Local Support Committee will be created. These committees will be responsible for the smooth execution of the local activities and for arbitration in the event of conflicts or difficulties.

27. The ADB Resident Mission in Kabul will facilitate the timely implementation of the project over the two year period, and will provide the necessary backstopping and supervision to monitor project activities in close cooperation with the steering committee and site committees and the Government of Afghanistan.

³ Cost estimate includes international air travel, per diems, insurance, et al.

⁴ The natural resources management components include Project Objectives (i) advance the conservation of natural ecosystems and wildlife resources in selected key protected areas; and (ii) promote human resource development through capacity building and institutional strengthening for natural resources and protected areas management.

J. Project Implementation Schedule

Duration of Project (24 months)										
Activities	Project Months									
Completion of project activities	1	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	
1. Pre-project preparation (2 wks)	-									
2. Scientific assessments & monitoring of biodiversity resources (23 months)	-----									
3. Capacity strengthening (23 months)	-----									
4. Community participation in management (12 months)					-----					
5. Environmental management (21 months)						-----				
6. Renewable energy development (21 months)							-----			

K. Public Involvement Plan

28. Aside from the GEF and ADB, the key stakeholders are: a) national, regional and local governments who have a responsibility to ensure sound natural resource management, ensure sustainable use of biodiversity resources, reduce biodiversity loss; environmental management and renewable energy development b) project executing agencies including the MoA, MIWRE and MWP, government, local and international NGOs who have a special interest in the performance and impact of the project; c) buffer zone communities who will be directly involved and affected by conservation interventions in protected areas.

29. The nature of the project which emphasizes a participatory approach to natural resource conservation, community development and poverty alleviation and inter-sectoral coordination and partnerships necessitates frequent and continuous consultations between government, community and NGO stakeholders in the country. This will take place informally and in arranged workshops that will be programmed during the course of the project.

L. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

30. Monitoring of the project will be accomplished periodically and jointly by the PIU established at the MoA and relevant authorities at the MIWRE and MWP. The monitoring of the project will conform to standard ADB procedures (supervision missions, tripartite review, mid-term review, and final review.)

Designated Protected Areas⁵

Name	Area Ha	Year	Elevation meters	Designation	IUCN Category
Dashte Nawar	7500	1977	3200-3210	Waterfowl Sanctuary	IV
Pamir-i-Buzurg	67938	1978	3250-6103	Wildlife Reserve	IV
Ab-i-Estada	27000	1977	1950-2100	Waterfowl Sanctuary	IV
				Proposed National Park	
Ajar Valley	40000	1978	2000-3800	Wildlife Reserve	IV
				Proposed National Park	
Bande Amir	41000	1973	2900-3832	National Park	II
Kole Hashmat Khan	191	1973	1792-1794	Waterfowl Sanctuary	IV

Proposed Protected Areas⁶

Name	Area	Elevation meters	Proposed Designation	IUCN Category
Nuristan	unknown	4876-6293	National Park	unknown
Darquad (Takhar) Wildlife Management Reserve	unknown	2000-4000		unknown
Imam Sahib (Kunduz) Wildlife Management Reserve	unknown	1900-2095		unknown
Hamun-i-Puzak	35000	1620-1731	National Park	unknown
Registan Desert Wildlife Management Reserve	unknown	800-1200		unknown
Northwest Afghanistan Managed Reserve (Badghis)	unknown	1200-2000		unknown
Bamiyan Buddha Complex (cultural heritage site)	unknown	unknown	National Park	unknown
Zadran (cultural heritage site)	unknown	unknown	National Reserve	unknown
Khulm Landmark (cultural heritage site)	unknown	unknown	Protected Area	unknown

⁵ Data from the World Conservation Monitoring Center, IUCN. Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK

⁶ Ibid.