Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects
Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus

Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2024

Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

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

Project reference	30-018
Project title	Reviving Trans-Himalayan Rangelands: A community-led vision for people and nature
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	India
Lead Organisation	WWF-UK
Partner(s)	WWF-India & Center for Pastoralism (CfP)
Project leader	Nicola Loweth (WWF-UK); Rishi Kumar Sharma(WWF-India)
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	*31st October 2024* *HYR2*
Project website/blog/social media	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of September).

Output 1: Shared, community-led vision developed for Changthang and Mago-Chu Rangelands

1.1 Document traditional ecological knowledge, resource management

A preliminary report, building on year-one efforts, details the cultural practices, pasture management, livestock herding, governance, and ecological knowledge of the Changpa community in Changthang. Findings reveal that their traditional knowledge and practices align closely with sustainable rangeland use. The Changpa manage pastures through seasonal migrations, guided by traditional routes and decisions by the Goba (village head). These migrations are based on precipitation, allowing for optimal pasture usage and rest, and overgrazing is minimised through strict family-led adherence to rotational grazing rules, enforced by the pasture manager (Sa Khaptak). Changpa households maintain strong social cohesion and mutual support, rotating among at least seven pastures each year to sustain livestock and ecosystem balance.

In Mago Chu, 151 interviews across 11 villages (56 with women) documented the Brokpas' traditional knowledge and resource management, emphasising their sustainable methods. The Brokpas maintain water source cleanliness, avoid tree felling, and observe quiet in sacred sites to prevent natural disturbances. Local governance, led by Gaonburahs (traditional village heads) involves collective decisions on migration, taxes, and community matters. Strict bans on commercial logging and hunting are upheld by cultural beliefs and fines by the Mangma institution. Mapping of grazing areas, seasonal patterns, and wildlife presence has been completed in four villages (Kharman, Kyalengteng, Shocktsen, and Mago) and is underway in three more, with expected completion by December 2024. This mapping aims to deepen understanding of Brokpa land and resource use.

1.2 Conduct participatory appraisal workshops to explore the communities' vision of healthy rangelands, and establish the current reality, the vision, the difference between these, and what is needed to realise the vision

Based on 26 consultations covering 13 villages and involving 1,042 participants (668 males and 374 females) in Changthang, the draft vision document is now ready for further consultations. We intend to initiate the visioning process in Mago Chu in November, with key stakeholders identified for participation.

1.3 Conduct multi-stakeholder workshops to co-develop 2 vision documents

In Changthang, the multi-stakeholder meeting is planned for December, after finalising and translating the visioning report into the local Ladakhi language and getting the final community endorsement (November). Background preparatory work (socialising the emerging vision with the diverse stakeholders) has been completed.

1.4 Create 2 multi-stakeholder co-management platforms, i.e. one 'Rangelands Council' each for Changthang and Mago-Chu

After the completion of the multi-stakeholder workshop in Changthang, we will identify the key stakeholders to lead the rangeland council and to develop and implement the rangeland management plan. In the Mago Chu Valley project site, based on the current interactions with communities and other stakeholders, creating a new rangeland council is deemed unnecessary due to complex land tenure systems and traditional ownership rights. Instead, efforts will focus on clustering communities to improve coordination in rangeland management and integrating it into Community Conserved Area (CCA) management plans. This approach aims to build a sustainable rangeland management framework within the existing CCA model. For villages outside the CCA framework, existing institutions like Mangma and PRI will lead in developing, implementing, and monitoring rangeland management plans. We have conducted village-level consultations with seven CCA Management Committees to facilitate inclusion of rangeland visioning into the CCA management frameworks, as well as with six non-CCA villages to explore institutional mechanisms for managing rangelands.

<u>Output 2: Multi-stakeholder co-management of rangelands</u>

2.1 Support the regional Rangelands Councils with disseminating the 'Rangelands Vision'

In Changthang, after the completion of the multi-stakeholder meeting planned for December, the focus will shift on Rangeland Councils with one-on-one discussion with key stakeholders and actors. The socialisation/endorsement will be done during time with a translated (Ladakhi) vision document. In Mago Chu we are currently developing a rangeland visioning plan for the landscape, scheduled for completion by February 2025, with dissemination set to begin in March 2025.

2.2 Conduct an assessment on climate change impacts

A climate change impact assessment in Mago Chu, involved interviews with 60 respondents across eight villages. Most community members view climate change as a distant issue with little direct impact, often not linking it to local challenges like pests or wildlife conflicts. This limited perception of climate change's effects on health and livelihoods varies within families, showing little concern for extreme weather or rising temperatures. While pride in land ownership fosters

independence, it also limits cooperative approaches. The shift to commercial crops in some areas has led to deforestation, increased pests, and pesticide use, with women especially vulnerable due to increased workloads, rising temperatures, and health risks from pesticide exposure and insect bites.

Based on a study conducted in Changthang, climate change vulnerability index (a function of the sub-indices for exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity) (Pandey et. al, 2017; Gupta et. al, 2020) for all the three administrative blocks of Changthang (namely Nyoma, Durbuk and Rong) were calculated. The value of sensitivity index suggested that Durbuk (0.56) was most sensitive of all the three blocks followed by Rong (0.55) and Nyoma (0.53). Durbuk (0.41) also exhibited higher adaptive capacity as compared to Rong (0.41) and Nyoma (0.37). In terms of exposure, Rong block had higher exposure (0.47) as compared to the other two blocks. Overall, communities residing in Nyoma (0.35) had higher vulnerability to climate change as compared to Durbuk (0.32) and Rong (0.29) blocks.

Located at a lower altitude than Nyoma and Durbuk, Rong block features narrow valleys along rocky cliffs, allowing limited agriculture. As a result, Rong residents practise a more diversified livelihood strategy, balancing agriculture and pastoralism, which helps them adapt and cope with various vulnerabilities. In contrast, most residents in Durbuk and Nyoma are nomadic pastoralists, as farming is generally unproductive there. This reduced diversity in livelihood options increases their vulnerability to climate change impacts.

2.4 Facilitate the Rangelands Councils with development of regional Rangelands Co-management Plans

This is expected to be completed in Changthang by the end of this year, following community endorsement of the visioning and multi-stakeholder meeting

2.5 Socialise the Rangelands Visions and Co-management Plans among key stakeholders, particularly relevant government departments

The draft rangelands vision document in Changthang has been socialised through one-to-one meetings with councillors from Nyoma, Rupshu, Durbuk, Chushul, the director of the sheep & animal husbandry department, chief executive councillor of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Chief Wildlife Warden (Leh), Officer on Special Duty to the Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Director Tourism & Deputy Commissioner Leh. The final community endorsed vision document will be discussed again with the key stakeholders by January, 2025.

2.10 Conduct occupancy estimates of wild carnivores and wild ungulates

In the Hanley watershed (Changthang), we deployed 65 camera traps across 2,500 sq. km at elevations from 4,400 m to 6,000 m (December 2023 to March 2024). In the current reporting period, we retrieved data from the camera trap deployed. We also established a data management system towards efficient segregation of camera trap images using Artificial Intelligence Models. The analysis of the data thus retrieved shows approximately 1,000 photographs of snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*) at 20 stations over 37 independent snow leopard capture events, identifying 11 individuals, including a mother and cub. Additionally, cameras captured images of other carnivores: Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx)* at 2 stations, Himalayan wolves (*Canis himalayensis*) at 15 stations, red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) at 20 stations, Pallas's cat (*Otocolobus manul*) at 1 station, and Tibetan sand fox (*Vulpes ferrilata*) at 1 station.

Double observer surveys were conducted along 25 transects to assess the population of mountain ungulates. The five-day survey targeted different ungulate species, including kiangs, Argali, blue sheep, and Tibetan gazelle. Results indicated that kiangs (*Equus kiang*) were the most populous, with an estimated 1,055 individuals (CI: 597–1,751) in 61 groups, averaging 17 per group. Blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*) populations were estimated at 79 individuals (CI: 48–152) in nine groups, with an average group size of 9. Argali (*Ovis ammon*) were estimated at 23 (CI: 6–48) in four groups, averaging 7 per group. Tibetan gazelles (*Procapra picticaudata*) were estimated at 46 individuals (CI: 26–77) across eight groups, averaging 6 per group.

With the data now processed and cleaned, we are preparing two detailed reports, one on the status of wild carnivores and the other one on the population-density of wild ungulates.

In Mago Chu, the state-wide assessment of snow leopard survey was successfully completed that revealed 8 individual snow leopards in 40 capture events. Using the Null model, the population estimate of snow leopards in Arunachal Pradesh is 36 snow leopards (SE = 15) in 14,156 sq. km of snow leopard habitat in the state. To initiate a long term monitoring of snow leopards, we trained 16 local youths in conducting camera trap surveys, focusing on handling the BackCountry Navigator app, using camera traps, filling out datasheets, and basic knowledge of snow leopards and their prey.

Long term monitoring of snow leopards in the project site has been initiated, covering an area of 1,863 square kilometres with camera traps deployed across six blocks: Zemithang, Thingbu, Chuna, Zithang, Luguthang, and Sela. The survey began in July and concluded in the last week of September 2024, during which 138 camera traps were installed at 81 locations. The cameras will be retrieved in April 2025.

2.12 Assess the recovery of vegetation at pilot sites compared to baseline and control plots

In Changthang, we have established six vegetation recovery plots across the Hanley region to monitor long-term changes in rangeland health. These plots are strategically located in Rekyu, Dekyu, and Punguk, with one plot each in the winter and summer pastures of each location. Data collection is underway, and we have already gathered preliminary data from one of the six plots. This initial data includes measurements on soil stability, vegetation cover, and species composition. Further data collection from the remaining plots is scheduled in the coming weeks, with findings to be included in the Year 2 annual report.

<u>Output 3: Enhanced tolerance of community towards wildlife</u>

3.1 Conduct assessments in both regions with WWF's well-being tool

The well-being surveys were tailored to the local context of two distinct landscapes: Arunachal Pradesh, where 130 surveys were conducted, and Ladakh, with 138 surveys. In total, 268 households were interviewed across both regions. The collected data is currently being processed and analysed via a dashboard, revealing initial patterns in community well-being shaped by each landscape's unique environmental and socio-economic conditions. The initial data analysis from the *Changthang landscape* reveals notable trends in local well-being, attitudes toward wildlife, and perceptions of market access among its residents. Overall, 68% of the population in Changthang reports a satisfactory level of well-being. However, this rate shows a gender discrepancy, as 76% of men feel satisfied with their well-being compared to only 61% of women. This difference may point to underlying socio-economic or cultural factors that affect well-being among genders, suggesting a need for targeted measures to improve the quality of life for women in particular. The preliminary data analysis from the *Western Arunachal Landscape* reveals an encouraging level of well-being among residents, with 81% of individuals reporting a satisfactory sense of well-being. However, a closer look at gender-based well-being indicators shows a disparity: while 88% of men express satisfaction with their well-being, only 63% of women report a similar level of contentment. These figures suggest that while the overall well-being is high, there may be underlying gender-specific factors influencing the experiences and satisfaction levels of women and men in this region.

3.2 Examine the nature and extent of conflicts with wildlife

The causes and patterns of livestock loss were examined across 15 villages in Mago Chu (Mago, Thingbu, Luguthang, Jang, Jangda, Rho, Seru, Mukto, Kharman, Kyalengteng, Shocktsen, Nyukmadung, Lubrang, Senge Dzong, and Thembang) using data from 2022 to June 2024. A sample of 30% of herder households from each village was selected, totaling 103 households. The survey revealed that 81% of respondents rely entirely on livestock, including Yak (2,698), Dzo/Dzomo (1,181), Cow (1,087), Horse (127), and Goat (9), for their livelihoods. Across all villages, a total of 827 livestock losses were reported, with disease as the leading cause (450 cases, 54%), followed by depredation (281 cases, 34%), weakness (59 cases,

7%), starvation (7 cases, 0.84%), pregnancy complications (1 case, 0.001%), and other causes (33 cases, 3.99%), which included accidents, missing livestock, and unknown factors. Among depredation incidents, wild dogs were the primary contributor (163 cases), followed by snow leopards (70), feral dogs (39), bears (7), clouded leopards (1), and common leopards (1).In response, we have initiated a collaboration with the National Research Centre on Yak (NRC-Yak) to reduce disease-related losses, through vaccination, nutrition and improved husbandry practices.

Additionally, a perception and attitude survey was conducted as a pre-intervention assessment to understand herders' values, risk perceptions, interactions with wildlife, and attitudes toward conflict species. This survey involved 99 of the households, including 27 female respondents, though one remote village could not be surveyed. Results showed that 80% of respondents held negative perceptions of wild carnivores, with the highest animosity directed at the dhole (Asiatic wild dog), followed by the snow leopard. Most respondents expressed willingness to coexist with wildlife only if they did not incur any losses. These findings provide a baseline for future assessments and potential interventions.

3.3 Finalise and implement human-wildlife conflict mitigation solutions and preventive solutions pilots

In the past six months, we completed 25 pre-assessments in the villages of Hanley (Punguk and Buk-Shado), Rongo, and Kargyam. Additionally, we deployed foxlights to help mitigate predator threats, with 7 foxlights in Buk-Shado, 6 in Punguk, 6 in Rongo, and 7 in Kargyam. We also conducted a study to identify challenges and issues within government compensation schemes for livestock loss. Insights from this study are detailed in Section 6, addressing our reviewers' comments.

3.4 Assess livestock losses from human-wildlife conflict at the pilot sites to determine efficacy of implemented solutions

In Changthang, we have completed 40 post-assessments on the human-wildlife mitigation measures (Foxlights and flashlights) provided to the villages of Hanley, Rongo, and Tsokar in Year 1, with an additional 20 post-assessments planned for the coming months. In Thingbu village, 14 foxlights initially proved effective in deterring predators. However, herders have since deviated from the deployment protocol, leaving livestock to graze overnight away from the livestock pens where the foxlights are set up. This inconsistency has made it challenging to accurately assess the current effectiveness of the lights.

Output 4: Changpa and Brokpa pastoral households have diversified and augmented income from 'rangelands-friendly' products and micro-enterprises

4.1 Conduct training sessions for 200 women and provide material support

Enhanced training on processing raw pashmina: Aligned with the training needs identified in the first year, we have made considerable progress in empowering women to process raw pashmina and yak wool, producing value-added, rangeland-friendly products in Changthang region. From April to September 2024, 65 women from Chumathang, Phulak, and Nyoma received training in collaboration with Looms of Ladakh. Additionally, 45 more women in Hanley village are currently being trained in weaving techniques.

Material support provided to women groups: To support the trained women, essential equipment and materials were provided. Women's groups in Changthang, Phulak, Nyoma, and Hanle received a total of 21 looms and 5 spinning wheels (Changthang: 3 looms, 1 spinning wheel; Phulak: 3 looms, 1 spinning wheel; Nyoma: 5 looms, 1 spinning wheel; and Hanle: 10 looms, 2 spinning wheels). Across these four villages, we also distributed 23 kilograms of dehaired and spun pashmina, along with 100 kilograms of yarn. For the training sessions, 45 looms, 9 spinning wheels (Bobbin Charkha), and 4 warping drums were procured, with a portion of the looms, spinning wheels, and warping drums already handed over to beneficiaries.

Training on goat hair collection and goat manure: Between April and September, two workshops were conducted in Ladakh. After distributing barrels, a significant quantity of goat

hair was collected and utilised in a training session where 28 women were taught to produce goat hair insulating material under the guidance of experts from the Himalayan Institute of Alternatives, Ladakh. Additionally, a composting workshop was organised in Kargyam, attended by 23 participants, focused on the use of goat manure for compost production.

In August and September 2024, a five-week training and capacity-building workshop was held in Nyukmadung, the hub village in Mago Chu, in partnership with 'It's All Folk.' A group of 15 women received comprehensive training in operating fly-shuttle looms, warping, loom setup, basic weaving techniques, and fabric production. They also gained hands-on experience in fibre cleaning and processing using newly introduced equipment.

During the first half of the training, the women produced 36 metres of fabric, which will be used to create bags and accessories. The second half of the training will focus on preparing fabric for jackets. The workshop is equipped with three fly-shuttle looms, one warping drum, two spinning wheels (bobbin charkhas), and all necessary equipment and raw materials provided under the project. A weaving centre, complete with essential facilities, has been established in Nyukmadung.

This period also saw the collection of 24 kilograms of yak fibre (both Pu, or down hair, and Tchitpa, or coarse hair) from eight households in Mago, particularly from the Chuna area. Additionally, groups of Brokpas in Mago and Lubrang have been identified for future fibre collection starting next year.

Six Brokpa women from Lubrang (Lish) village visited the Nyukmadung weaving centre to gain practical experience in using fly-shuttle looms and fibre cleaning and processing. This visit aimed to encourage them to implement similar activities in their village, with plans to collect yak hair to support these initiatives in Nyukmadung.

4.2 Support establishment of women-led micro-enterprises

Handloom products (sheep wool and pashmina wool): A partner, Reetsot, has been selected to support the women of Changthang in forming micro-enterprises focused on handloom products, specifically sheep wool and pashmina wool. While Reetsot is in the process of formal onboarding for this project, they have already initiated steps to establish a structure for these micro-enterprises. The formation process is expected to be completed by the end of February 2025. Although the initial target was to establish two micro-enterprises in Changthang, the final number may exceed this due to the distance between the target villages.

Goat hair insulation: In Ladakh, primary research was undertaken to experiment with an existing shredding machine, with the goal of identifying the most suitable equipment for goat hair insulation treatment in support of micro-enterprises. An initial lot of goat hair was transported to Leh, where a testing and treatment workshop was conducted. Additionally, a value chain study for goat hair and manure was carried out, mapping manure collection points based on last year's data. The institutionalisation of prototyping progressed as the Kharnak Ling women's group participated in the insulation workshop and expressed interest in continuing the initiative.

Yak products (hair and milk): Nyukmadung serves as the central hub for weaving activities in Arunachal Pradesh, with the surrounding villages of Lubrang, Mago, Luguthang, Thingbu, and Jang identified as potential spoke villages due to their high population of Brokpas (yak herders). A women weavers' group has been established in Lubrang to facilitate the sourcing of yak fibre, with plans to gradually expand these activities across the area. Lubrang, being the nearest Brokpa village to the hub, shows significant potential for development. Additionally, a Brokpa group in Mago has expressed readiness to start supplying yak hair beginning next year. Consultations on yak hair and milk have been conducted across key Brokpa villages and circles in Arunachal Pradesh, identifying areas with strong potential for community-led livelihood initiatives.

4.3 Conduct an end-to-end business and market analysis for rangelands-friendly pashmina and other products

Market analysis for rangelands-friendly pashmina: In Changthang, efforts to create a business model for the pashmina supply chain began with an initial meeting with EZMA, a major textile company in India, to generate bulk demand for Ladakh pashmina. A sample, as requested by the company, has been sent for testing. In addition, scientific testing of yak and goat manure was initiated, with samples sent to three different laboratories.

Market analysis for yak hair and milk: In Arunachal, a value chain assessment for yak hair and milk covered 10 circles and over 30 villages & hamlets, with the assessment completed for 5 circles, including more than 14 villages & hamlets. Meetings were held with various stakeholders, including ADC Jang, ADC Tawang, village heads, student union leaders, the Yak Research Institute, the Dirang yak cooperative, and the Tawang DVO, to gain insights into yak pastoralists, ongoing research, and government schemes. Livelihood partner Namrata from 'It's All Folk' was supported in procuring sheep wool and identifying women's groups for sheep wool-based work, such as the Syroh women collective. One pastoralist was also identified for their potential and interest in community mobilisation.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

None to highlight at this stage

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes/ **No**
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes/ **No** None in FY 2024/25
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes/ **No**

Change Request reference if known: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome*

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

Actual spend:

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2025)?

Yes x **No** ☐

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes to your project if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

We will shortly be submitting a Change Request Form as we would like to request changes between budget lines within the Year 2 budget and notify Niras of some staff changes.

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

Government Compensation schemes: Feedback recommended that we focus on examining challenges with the existing government compensation scheme for livestock loss, rather than pursuing new insurance models. In response, we conducted a study and compiled a report detailing key insights. Many community members affected by Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) report delays or denials in compensation, leading to underreporting and dissatisfaction. Limited awareness of HWC reporting procedures also results in missed compensation opportunities. Additionally, logistical issues—such as repeated trips to administrative centres—add time and financial burdens. Increasing feral dog populations, partly due to improper waste disposal near military sites, are causing more livestock losses. However, current compensation schemes lack provisions for losses caused by feral dogs, leaving affected community members without support. Community members suggested several improvements, including empowering local leaders (e.g., Goba, Sarpanch) to verify losses without requiring photographic evidence, sensitising military personnel on proper waste disposal to help control feral dog populations, and implementing sterilisation or relocation programmes for feral dogs to protect livestock.

To address these issues, we propose targeted reforms which advocate for simplified, expedited compensation processes and implement digital reporting options to streamline claims; increase awareness of HWC reporting procedures to ensure affected community members understand how to access compensation,and establish monitoring frameworks to continually assess and adjust strategies, promoting community ownership in conservation efforts. These recommendations will require further discussion and active collaboration with the wildlife department for successful implementation.

Data Analysis and research interpretation: A comment was made about the huge amount of data WWF India has collected during the first 18 months, but with little evidence of it having been analysed. We are therefore committed to addressing this issue alongside other areas of concern identified. As outlined in this report, the project team has now analysed most of the data and provided key insights from the findings. Additional capacity will be provided. Dr Mark Wright, WWF-UK's special scientific advisor will work closely with the project field teams to analyse the research conducted to date and to produce a series of brief research reports that summarise the project's key findings. The reports will facilitate knowledge sharing, support broader communications and enhance the visibility of the project's outputs, including recognizing Darwin's contribution.

Establishing Co-management models and councils: Feedback on our Year 1 annual report highlighted concerns regarding community fears of curtailed rights due to government policies favouring protected areas, as well as risks associated with delays in establishing co-management models and councils. Both issues are critical contextual factors that we plan to address more comprehensively during NIRA's mid-term review of the project scheduled for early next year and in our next annual report.

The Changthang region is experiencing significant political changes. The ongoing border conflict with China, Ladakh's recent designation as a Union Territory governed by the central

government, and local demands for the implementation of the Sixth Schedule (of the Indian Constitution which aims to protect tribal populations and their interests through autonomous governance) have created an atmosphere of uncertainty. Local political dynamics are also affecting the protected area, with the government currently having commissioned an exercise aimed at rationalising its boundaries to seek a balance between conservation and developmental goals. In a nutshell, the politics is fluid and volatile and overall, the situation is increasingly complex. One of the outcomes might be to stop the push for expansion of PA. We are closely monitoring these developments and will adjust to any challenges that arise.

Given the complexities of land tenure systems, traditional ownership and user rights, and the existing conservation framework through CCAs, consultations have revealed that establishing a separate mechanism or institution such as a rangeland council is not desirable in Mago Chu. Instead, for the project site in Mago Chu Valley, efforts would focus on clustering communities to improve coordination and synergy in rangeland management, while integrating rangeland management into the CCA management plans. This approach will create a more structured and sustainable framework for managing rangelands within the CCA model, ultimately enhancing conservation outcomes across the landscape. To support this approach, we will submit a change request to outline the rationale for adjusting our approach in Mago Chu.

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1st April 2024)	
Have you **responded to any additional feedback** (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	n/a
If not already submitted, have you attached your **risk register**?	n/a
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to **feedback from your latest Annual Report Review?** You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
For All Projects	
Include your **project reference** in the subject line of submission email.	yes
Submit to **BCFs-Report@niras.com**.	yes
Have you **clearly highlighted any confidential information** within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	yes
Have you reported against the most **up to date information for your project?**	yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	yes