



## Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

<b>SOP number:</b> 1
<b>Version:</b> 3.0 (last update: 16 April 2020)
<b>Effective Date:</b> 21 April 2020
<b>Maintained by/Author:</b> EO/RM Focal Point

**Title:** Mobilization of Financial Resources for the UNEP administered Voluntary Special Trust Funds of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, including monitoring of the status of implementation of voluntary funded activities, donor communication and reporting

**Description:** This SOP covers harmonized operating procedures across the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions for its offices in Geneva for mobilizing financial resources for contributions to the Voluntary Special Trust Funds of the Conventions, including financial and substantive reporting, the monitoring of the status of implementation of voluntary funded activities, as well as procedures for the communication with donors.

The SOP outlines general practices in terms of resource mobilization and donor communication relating to resource mobilization-related activities that should be followed by all staff of the Secretariat. However, if the situation warrants and with prior approval of the Executive Secretary, being the responsible manager of the UNEP trust funds, as per the authority personally delegated to the ES, alternative resource mobilization processes can apply, in accordance with, as applicable, the United Nations (UN)/UN Environment Programme (UNEP) respective regulations and rules<sup>1</sup>, consistent with relevant provisions of the BRS Conventions, their financial rules, and with the respective decisions of the Conferences of the Parties.

Annex I to the SOP sets the on criteria to guide the process for the selection of priority concept notes that require funding. Annexes II and III to the SOP contain templates for the preparation of concept notes and substantive reports respectively.

**Actors:**

1. Executive Secretary (ES)
2. Deputy Executive Secretary (DES)
3. Executive Office
4. Branch Chiefs (includes the coordinator of the Rome-based part of the Secretariat)
5. Programme Officer (PO)

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<sup>1</sup> Note that this SOP does not cover FAO-related resource-mobilization activities.

6. Resource Mobilization Focal Point (RM Focal Point)
7. Fund Management Officers (FMOs)
8. Programme Officer to support resource mobilization (RM Officer)
9. Programme Oversight Group (POG)
10. Legal Officer responsible for corporate matters (LO)
11. Public Awareness and Outreach Officer

**Steps:**

**I. General principles**

1. Activities related to resource mobilization and the monitoring of the status of programmatic implementation are coordinated by the Executive Office, through the RM Focal Point, with support provided by the RM Officer.
2. UMOJA-related processes regarding fund management and financial matters are coordinated by the FMOs.
3. The RM Focal Point coordinates the Implementing Partner module of UMOJA extension II.
4. Information on resource mobilization-related matters is communicated through the Programme Oversight Group (POG; see section II below). Internal communication on specific projects is carried out either directly with the concerned lead PO, or, if coordination at the branch level is required, through the Branch Chiefs.
5. When necessary, task teams are set up by the ES/DES through the POG to coordinate the preparation of fundraising proposals and/or reports to donors for specific processes.
6. All funding needs, concept notes and project proposals are to be based on the Programme of Work (PoW) of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions as adopted by the respective conferences of the parties (COPs) and reflected in the factsheets, including consistent with previous applicable decisions of the COPs (e.g. on financial rules) as well as initiatives which contribute to the common objectives of and are in conformity with the provisions of the three Conventions.
7. All internal communication with the ES/DES seeking approval of potential funding sources, such as among others received unearmarked contributions and potential external donors, is to be channelled through the Branch Chiefs to the RM Focal Point. Allocation of existing unearmarked contributions already in BRS trust funds is part of fund management and must be approved by ES and cleared by the FMOs.
8. The FMOs are kept informed of all funding received and special conditions agreed with the donor whether in writing or verbally.

**II. Programme oversight group (POG)**

9. The POG is chaired by the ES or DES (or RM Focal Point in case of impediment) and meets on a monthly basis or as otherwise required.

10. The POG discusses the preparation of concept notes (see section IV below); resource mobilization (see section VI below); status of project implementation and monitoring (see section VII below); reporting (see section IX below); the use of unspent funding (see section X below); and arrears of assessed contributions of the parties to the conventions.
11. At each POG meeting, the RM Focal Point provides information on ongoing and upcoming resource mobilization activities; upcoming donor reports; and other upcoming/ongoing requests for input from lead POs, FMOs, LO, such as extension of donor agreements.
12. Branch Chiefs, the FMOs and the RM Focal Point bring to the attention of the POG any issues related to project implementation, such as delays; spending issues; requests for extensions; and other implementation issues affecting the contractual obligations towards the respective donor.

### **III. Communication with donors**

13. Official communication with donors is channelled through the RM Focal Point, who keeps the ES/DES, Branch Chiefs, FMOs and lead POs informed, as necessary.
14. Staff members, at any time during the biennium, may interact with donors regarding the mobilization of resources. The RM Focal Point and, if appropriate the ES/DES and the respective Branch Chief(s), should be copied on any relevant communication with potential donors.
15. No commitments are to be made by individual staff members regarding the acceptance of pledges and/or proposed projects.

### **IV. Preparation of concept notes**

16. During the preparation of the budget for consideration by the conferences of the parties, fact sheets are prepared by the FMOs (finance part) and the relevant PO (programmatic part), in consultation with the RM Focal Point taking into account the need to facilitate the preparation of fundraising concept notes following adoption of the budget by the COPs meetings.
17. Within two months following the meetings of the COPs, the FMOs prepare, in cooperation with relevant POs, a revised version of the factsheets reflecting the outcomes of the COPs.
18. The revised factsheets are submitted for review and clearance by relevant Branch Chiefs and clearance by the ES/DES.
19. Notwithstanding paragraph 6 of the general principles, the revised factsheets constitute the basis of funding needs and fundraising concept notes. Within three months following the meetings of the COPs, the RM Focal Point and FMOs transpose the fact sheets into the concept note format (set out in Annex II), ensuring that all voluntarily funded activities in the approved programmes of work and budgets of the three conventions have been included in the concept notes. The RM Focal Point shares the concept notes for review with

relevant POs and submits them for clearance to relevant Branch Chiefs and, subsequently, to the ES/DES.

20. Following the clearance by the ES/DES, the concept notes are posted on the RM section of the synergies website at the latest at the beginning of the new biennium. Once posted, the RM Focal Point will send out a general fundraising letter to donors covering all the concept notes.
21. Tailored concept notes for activities of the POW or initiatives that are in line with the common objectives of and are in conformity with the provisions of the three Conventions can be developed at the request of ES/DES. In that case, the RM Focal point contacts the lead PO(s) to prepare such a note under the responsibility of the Branch Chief(s).

#### **V. Fundraising strategy and programmatic priorities**

22. After each COP meeting, a fundraising strategy for the implementation of activities for the following biennium will be developed by the Executive Office, with input from the Branch Chiefs and FMOs, to determine an overall strategic RM approach.
23. The mobilization of resources takes into account the fundraising strategy and is based on the submission of funding needs by Branch Chiefs at regular intervals outlining branch priorities. When preparing their branch priorities, Branch Chiefs liaise as needed with one another. The POG will launch such calls as follows:
  - (a) Three months following the meetings of the COPs, for activities that need to be undertaken before or early in the new biennium;
  - (b) By October 15 of the year prior to the start of the new biennium for activities that require funding in the first 12 months of the biennium;
  - (c) By October 15 prior to the second year of the biennium for activities that require funding in the second 12 months of the biennium.
24. Branches are to compile the following information in their funding needs submissions: Convention, PoW # (factsheet), project title, brief description of the activities, activities, implementation timeframe, COP-approved budget in USD, funding needed in USD, and available co-funding in USD. All budget figures are to be submitted including programme support costs (PSC) of 13% (in principle, unless a waiver is granted pursuant to the applicable financial rules). The RM Focal Point compiles all branch submissions and makes them centrally available in an Excel table.
25. Ad hoc and urgent funding requests by branches not included in the funding needs submissions pursuant to paragraph 23 above are channelled through Branch Chiefs to the RM Focal Point, with copy to the ES/DES together with a funding needs submission or a concept note, including a justification for the ad hoc funding need. These are

discussed with the ES/DES, and a decision is given back to Branch Chiefs.

26. Resource mobilization for the participation of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in standing subsidiary body meetings follow a separate process and will be launched by the POs through the RM Focal Point well ahead and no later than nine months before each of such meetings.

## **VI. Mobilization of resources**

27. In the case where a donor expresses interest in funding BRS activities, the RM Focal Point coordinates the process for recommending the selection of potential concept notes to the ES/DES for submission to the donors. If the level of interest is USD 200,000 or higher, inputs are sought from all branches and where the level interest is USD 1 million or above<sup>2</sup>, special attention needs to be given to the human resource requirements for the delivery of such projects. If the level of interest is less than USD 200,000, Branch Chiefs may be consulted, and urgent funding needs submitted by branches will be taken into account. In all cases, the criteria set out in annex I to the present SOP as well as the above fundraising strategy will be taken into account. Final decisions on what fundraising concept notes will be submitted to the donor will be decided by the ES/DES. Branch Chiefs, FMOs and the lead PO are provided by email by the RM Focal Point a copy of the text of the funding proposal that was submitted to the donor.
28. The RM Focal Point keeps the lead PO informed of the communications with the donor, seeking guidance as needed to answer questions from the donor and providing feedback.
29. Ad hoc pledges often need to be handled quickly and follow the above process immediately following the receipt of the pledge. Before the ad hoc pledge is accepted, the RM Focal Point liaises with the relevant Branch Chief and FMOs and seeks confirmation that the Secretariat would be in a position to use the funding according to the wishes of the donor.
30. Once the donor agrees to the funding, the RM Focal Point, in collaboration with the lead PO, the Legal Officer responsible for corporate matters and the FMOs, coordinates the preparation, signature and submission of the required documents: for exchange of letters with invoice within 5 working days, and for standard donor agreements within 10 working days of the agreement to the donor, in line with the Standard Operating Procedure 34 on Legal Instruments No 1 "Funds Received". The agreement should, in principle, contain in its annex a concept note.

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<sup>2</sup> Over USD 1million, the contribution agreement to be signed by ES will first have to be cleared by UN Environment Corporate Services Director as per the UNEP 'Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework for the management and administration of Multilateral Environmental Agreement Secretariats and other bodies for which UN Environment provides the secretariat or secretariat functions'.

31. In case the donor requires a tailored concept note, the RM Focal point contacts the lead PO to prepare such a note.
32. In case the donor does not require a donor agreement, an Exchange of Letters (EOLs) with the donor should be used to confirm the pledge. The EOLs should clearly specify the reporting requirements and contain, in principle, a concept note outlining, at a minimum, the mandate of the project(s), planned activities, implementation timeframe, expected outcomes, project budget and PSC rate.
33. Donors should be encouraged by the RM Focal Point/ES/DES to avoid transferring their voluntary contributions to the BRS Conventions together with other UNEP contributions, as the reconciliation of deposits in UNEP may delay the availability of funds and thus project implementation.
34. In case the donor requires more detailed information, the RM Focal Point initiates and coordinates the preparation of the full project document in collaboration with the lead PO(s).
35. Following ES/DES clearance, the documentation, including as required concept note(s), project document(s), exchange of letters and donor agreement, are submitted to the donor through the RM Focal Point. The respective Branch Chief(s), FMOs, LO and the lead PO(s) are provided by email by the RM Focal Point a copy of the communication to the donor.
36. The Legal Officer responsible for corporate matters provides a BRS-internal reference number for each donor agreement and EOLs. This reference number is to be cited in all relevant processes and forms (e.g. the pre-commitment form) as well as in internal and external communication related to the pledge.

## **VII. Project implementation and monitoring**

37. A centrally stored Tracking Tool is established by the RM Focal Point that indicates donor, convention, reference to the POW, title of activity, amount received, lead POs, date received, starting and ending dates of the project, reporting deadlines, Donor Agreement/EOLs reference and date of entry into force or signature/expiry, and the status of implementation. Under the coordination of the RM Focal Point, relevant information to feed in the Tracking Tool will be provided by the RM Focal Point/Officer for donor related information, Legal Officer responsible for corporate matters for the legal instruments concluded, the FMOs/Assistant for budget/accounts information, and the lead PO for implementation related information. The information to be provided and by whom are specified in the Tracking Tool.
38. Once a month the FMOs/Finance Assistant informs all staff of all voluntary funds received in BRS during that month and updates the project tracking tool.
39. Branch Chiefs or their alternates inform the POG of the progress of the implementation of each donor-funded activity, and particularly in of delays or other issues encountered.

40. The implementation of the projects and utilisation of funds can start when the funds have been received in UNEP and BRS voluntary trust funds.
41. In order to initiate expenditure for voluntary funded activities, the lead PO processes a form for pre-approval of financial commitments. The RM Focal Point confirms that the proposed programmatic activities are in accordance with donor's requirements. The FMOs certify as per their delegation of authority and in accordance with financial rule 105.5 e that the proposed obligations, commitments and expenditures are in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules and related administrative Instructions of the United Nations, and in line with the budgetary purpose(s) for which the relevant appropriation(s), allotment(s) and staffing table(s) were approved and can be met from the available relevant fund balance with due regard to foreseeable future commitments.
42. POs are neither entitled to change the allocation of funds between activities and between different funding sources once approved by the Executive Office, nor are they entitled to modify the signed pre-commitment forms. Consequently, any changes in the allocation of funding towards voluntary funded activities in the signed pre-commitment forms or allocation between different funding sources have to be authorized, in writing, by the Executive Office and certified by the FMOs and cleared RM Focal Point.
43. Lead POs are required to follow the donor visibility plan for the implementation of voluntary funded activities available on the shared drive.
44. At least two days prior to each POG meeting, the Branch Chiefs and Executive Office ensure that the entries relevant to them are updated. A green, yellow and red flag coding system would be used to indicate which projects are on schedule; are at risk of missing deadlines, or at risk of having to return funds to the donor respectively.
45. The POG discusses issues raised related to the status of implementation of donor-funded activities, such as delays; spending issues; the need to ask donors for extensions; and other implementation issues as raised by members of the POG. Lead POs are to inform their Branch Chiefs in a timely manner on any issues arising from the implementation of activities, who bring it to the attention of the POG.
46. As needed by the lead PO during the implementation of the project (e.g. for reporting purposes or to determine whether there are spending issues), the lead PO can seek information from the FMOs on the funding spent and remaining balances for the project.
47. Once the activities in a project is completed, the POs, within seven days, should inform the POG through the Branch Chiefs and the RM Focal Point about the completion of the project. This is included in the tracking tool.

## **VIII. Information sharing**

48. In order to facilitate fundraising and reporting requirements, the Public Awareness and Outreach Officer, FMOs, Legal Officer responsible for corporate matters, RM Focal Point and POs make the following information centrally available within the secretariat:
  - (a) Donor visibility plan (prepared and updated by the Public Awareness and Outreach Officer);
  - (b) Fundraising strategy (uploaded by the RM Focal Point)
  - (c) Any materials produced in accordance with the Communications Strategy for the Secretariat of the BRS Conventions (uploaded by the PO as soon as such materials are available);
  - (d) Documentation related to donor funded activities, e.g. official communication with donors other than legal agreements, submitted concept notes, final narrative and financial reports (uploaded by the RM Focal Point and the FMOs);
  - (e) Signed donor agreements and EOLs (uploaded by the Legal Officer responsible for corporate matters);
  - (f) Financial information of donor-funded projects, including expenditure rates (provided by the FMOs at regular intervals).

## **IX. Reporting**

49. The RM Focal Point sends to the FMOs and the relevant PO leads, copying the Branch Chiefs, at least four weeks before the reports are due, requests for reports to be prepared (the BRS reporting template for substantive reports is set out in Annex III).
50. The FMOs, liaising as needed with the lead PO, prepares the financial reports and submits them to the RM Focal Point at least 2 days before the reports are due.
51. The lead PO, liaising as needed with the FMOs, prepares the substantial narrative report and submits it to the RM Focal Point at least 2 days before the reports are due.
52. In case inter-branch coordination is necessary for the preparation of the narrative reports, these are prepared by task teams referred to in paragraph 4 of the present SOP.
53. The RM Focal Point and the FMOs, in consultation as needed with the lead POs, verify that the content in financial and substantive reports matches. The RM Focal Point sends the cleared final financial and substantive reports, including required letters and invoices, to the donor. The RM Focal Point also sends a copy of the reports to the lead POs and the FMOs.

## **X. Use of unspent funding**

54. Based on the information contained in final financial reports prepared by the FMOs, the Branch Chiefs inform the POG about un-spent funding.



55. The final decision on the use of unspent funding is taken by the donor and the ES/DES.

#### **Document revision history**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.0	First version issued and posted	30.09.2012
2.0	Second version issued and posted	22.03.2013
3.0	Third version issued and posted	21.04.2020

## **Annex I: Criteria to guide the process for the selection of priority concept notes that require funding**

The following non-exhaustive list of criteria is intended to inform the decision-making process and aims at ensuring an objective and balanced RM approach throughout the biennium:

1. Timing when funding is needed;
2. Conformity with the provisions of the BRS Conventions and with the financial rules pertaining to each Convention;
3. Consistency with the PoW of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, as adopted by the conferences of the parties, as well as with other relevant decisions of the COPs as well as initiatives which contribute to the common objectives of the three Conventions set out in their provisions; compliance with applicable UN/UNEP regulations and rules, policies and procedures, business practices;
4. Consistency with the COPs- approved voluntary budget for a given PoW activity;
5. Un- or underfunded PoW activities;
6. Availability of core funding or co-funding from other donors;
7. Donor priorities;
8. Balanced support across all three conventions;
9. Balanced geographic/regional focus;
10. Requirement of additional voluntary funded staff that would need to be hired to ensure the implementation of the activity;
11. Activities of strategic value to BRS;
12. Potential multiplying effect of the envisaged project;
13. Involvement of regional centres and other partners;
14. Cost-effectiveness of the envisaged activity;
15. UN/UNEP safeguard, risk management and due diligence policies, as appropriate;
16. UN Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant UN policy frameworks.

## Annex II: Concept note Template

### PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

<b>CONVENTIONS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> BC <input type="checkbox"/> RC <input type="checkbox"/> SC <input type="checkbox"/> SYN		<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	
<b>FUNDING OPTIONS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Funding in full <input type="checkbox"/> Partial funding possible		<b>TYPE / LOCATION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Global <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> National	<b>TARGETED COUNTRIES:</b>
<b>MANDATE</b> Convention Article: COP decision(s): Programme of Work:			
<b>RATIONAL</b>			
<b>OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT</b>			
<b>Outcomes:</b>			
<b>Indicators of achievement:</b> 1. 2. 3.		<b>Means of verification:</b> 1. 2. 3.	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME</b>			
Project start date: <dd/mm/yyyy>		Project completion date: <dd/mm/yyyy>	Total duration: <xx> months
<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS</b> Sustainable Development Goals: Gender mainstreaming: Integrated Approach:			
<b>PARTNERS</b>			
<b>PROPOSED ACTIVITIES AND BUDGET [USD]</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Output type</b>	<b>Voluntary budget</b>	
<b>DIRECT PROJECT COST OPERATIONAL BUDGET</b>			
<i>Programme Support Costs (PSC) 13%</i>			
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL BUDGET</b>			

**Annex III: Template for the Preparation of Substantive Reports**

**Final Project Report**

**< Indicate title of the project >**

Prepared by

**< Indicate name of PO/ name of branch >**

SIGNATURES	
Name of Project Manager:	Signature  Date: _____ / _____ /20__
Name of Supervisor:	<b>Clearance</b> Signature  Date: _____ / _____ /20__
Name of Branch Chief Managing Project:	<b>Sign Off</b> Signature  Date: _____ / _____ /20__

## DESCRIPTION

Project Title	<Project title >		
Name of the Donor	<Insert name of the donor>		
Legal agreement	<Insert BRS EOL or Grant Agreement Reference Number >		
Convention Article	<Insert Convention Article(s) to which the project contributes to>		
COP decision	<Insert COP decision reference(s) to which the project contributes to>		
PoW	<Insert BRS PoW number(s) to which the project contributes to>		
Link to relevant SDG target(s) and SDG indicator(s)	<Insert the relevant SDG target(s) and indicator(s) to which achievement of the project contributes to>		
Name of Implementing Partners	<Insert names of implementing partner(s)>		
Type/Location	<Global, Regional, National – List as ‘global’ if no involvement of specific countries>		
Region ( <i>delete as appropriate</i> )	<Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe Latin America and Caribbean, North America, West Asia>		
Names of Countries	<Enter country name(s)>		
Project Start Date	<dd/mm/yyyy>	Project End Date	<dd/mm/yyyy>
Overall project duration	<Indicate initial overall project duration in months as well as any extension of project implementation period approved by the donor >		
Total budget incl. programme support costs (PSC) (USD)	<Indicate total budget, incl. 13% PSC, of your project in USD >		

## I Assessment of Results Achieved

Per outcome and output, if appropriate (use the indicators set per each outcome and, if appropriate, per output and its targets to assess performance)

Outcome 1	Indicator(s)	Target vs. Actual result	Description of the results achieved
Output (s)	Indicator(s)	Target vs. Actual result	Description on immediate benefits to target groups

### Highlights

- i) Describe the key success factors and contribution to higher level results (BRS PoW).
- ii) State, if appropriate, institutional, financial and capacity measures the project has put in place for the sustainability of project results and continued use of products and services.
- iii) State, if appropriate, initiatives taken for replication and/or upscaling of the project outcomes, outputs and approach by interested institutions or governments.

## **II Incorporation of Gender and Social Sustainability**

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- i) Briefly articulate how gender sensitive the project approach was and how gender mainstreaming helped in achieving the project results.
- ii) In addition to gender, there may be some other social issues (e.g., poverty, household types, religion, ethnic groups, geographical differences, age, political views, etc.) that the project needed to factor in if and when relevant. Capture any contributions that a project made on gender equality, empowerment of women and any other social issues if there are any highlights to share.

## **III Implementation challenges and risks and, approach taken**

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What were the main actions and corrective/management measures taken to address implementation challenges and risks (including operational ones)?

## **IV Partnerships Arrangements and Roles**

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- i) Which were the Project partners, and what was achieved through them, in terms of scaling up and multiplied effects?
- ii) Describe what did partners bring to enable capacity development and what did they take from the project. Will they be using this project experience in the future?

## **V PROJECT IMPACT**

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Provide an assessment of the positive impact of the project through listing the changes that can be attributed to the project implementation.

## **VI Resources and Budget<sup>3</sup>**

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Provide: i) narrative description of financial implementation and any remark on the overall project budget; ii) indications of whether there was a delay in spending the funds and its clarifications.

## **VII VISIBILITY<sup>4</sup>:**

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In line with the BRS Communications Strategy, provide i) a list of communication, visibility and outreach activities undertaken at project level for the overall duration of the project; ii) an outline of your key communication and visibility activities and products developed showing the key targeted outreach (i.e. focusing on recognized policy impact both generated and feeding into policy processes, impact on the ground and specific targeted audience); and iii) related evidence of developed communication and visibility materials (e.g. video; picture; interview; newsletter; accessible web links; etc.) covering respectively i) and ii).

## **VIII Lessons Learned, Conclusions and Recommendations**

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State lessons learned, observations that can be used to improve similar projects or the sustainability of the project results.

## **IX ANNEXES**

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Please list annexes to the final project report, as appropriate, including communication and visibility products as detailed in section VII Visibility.

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<sup>3</sup> This section will provide a narrative description of the project financial implementation only, but should be developed in close liaison with the Fund Management Officer. Financial reporting will provide detailed figures.

<sup>4</sup> With communication activities, increasingly important for the EU, please raise where and how EU support has been mentioned and acknowledged in your communication activities.