



UNDP/GEF PROJECT

## **CONSERVATION OF GLOBALLY IMPORTANT BIODIVERSITY**

and associated land and forest  
resources of Western Tian Shan  
mountain ecosystems to support  
sustainable livelihoods



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# UNDP/GEF PROJECT



**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION  
TIMEFRAME:**  
2017 – 2021



## IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:



State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry  
under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic



The Secretariat of the Global Snow Leopard and  
Ecosystem Protection Programme



**IMPLEMENTING AGENCY:**  
UNDP  
in the Kyrgyz Republic



**DONOR:**  
Global Environment  
Facility

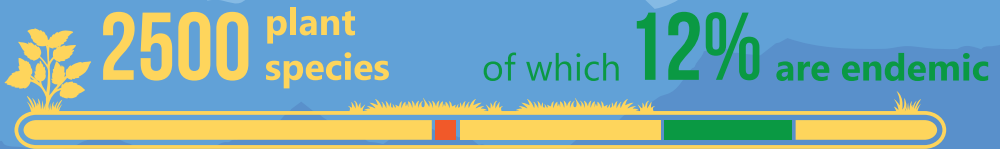


## TARGET COMMUNITIES:

Atai, Cholpon-Ata, Kok-Irim and Kyzyl-Ozgorush ayil aimaks  
of Toguz-Toro and Toktogul rayons of Jalal-Abad oblast



## WESTERN TIAN SHAN



**54** species are red-listed

Western Tian Shan is distinguished by a high level of endemism and rich flora and fauna.



makes part of the **UNESCO World Heritage List**

constitutes **one of 34 Global Biodiversity Hotspots**



features in the rating of the **World's Ecoregions Global 200** according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

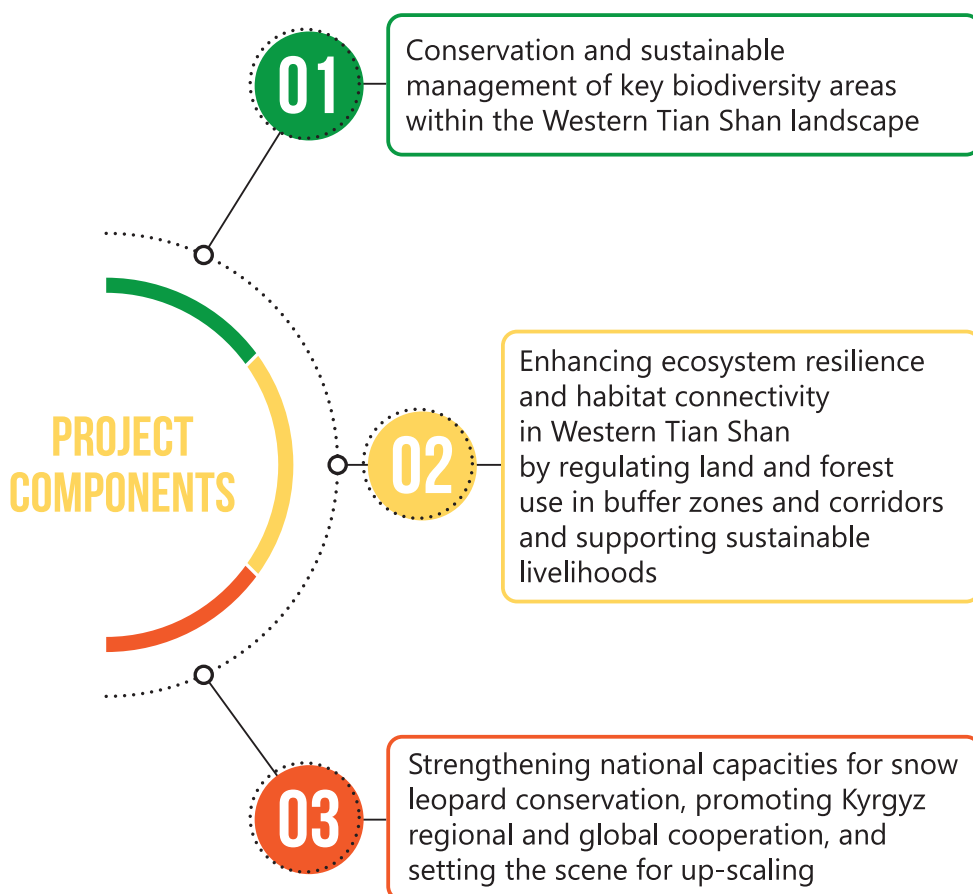


# ABOUT THE PROJECT



## OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

To promote a landscape approach to protection of globally important biodiversity, and ensure sustainable management of land and forest resources in the Western Tian Shan mountains.



# 01

## MEASURES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY





## #EnvironmentalEducation

Every year, since 2017, there has been held **an environmental campaign 'March of Parks'** in Toktogul and Toguz-Toro rayons with the participation of children, youth, rangers and local partners. The campaign involves planting of trees, cleaning of areas, environmental quizzes and lectures in schools, as well as cultural events aimed at ensuring environmental enlightenment of the population and encouraging them to preserve the biodiversity of protected areas.



## #Partnership

On 21 September 2020, in Bishkek, with the support of the UNDP/GEF project, there took place the national presentation of the draft Resolution of the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly 'Nature Knows No Borders: Trans-boundary Cooperation As a Key Factor in the Conservation and Use of Biodiversity'.



This draft Resolution introduced by the Kyrgyz Republic aims at taking joint urgent measures to protect the environment, preserve biodiversity and ensure environmental safety.





## #CITES

The UNDP/GEF project supported the construction of a special enclosure for service dogs of the State Customs Service at 'Manas' Airport to help in curbing the illegal trafficking of rare and endangered animals covered by CITES.



## #Art

In 2018, under the guidance of the People’s Artist of the Kyrgyz SSR Zh. Seydakhmatova, **theatrical performances** featuring the snow leopard preservation have been conducted in all secondary schools of Jalal-Abad oblast.



## #SaveSnowLeopard

In observance of **the International Snow Leopard Day**, the project hosts ice hockey tournaments for the National Snow Leopard Cup, environmental exhibitions, eco-debates in Toguz-Toro and Toktogul rayons, the stage play 'Sur-Echki' based on the works by Ch. Aitmatov, and various environmental events with the participation of children and youth of Bishkek city, Toktogul and Toguz-Toro rayons.

## #Cleanness

In 2019, within the framework of **the World Environment Day**, in the water area of Kara-Suu Lake, an environmental campaign took place at 'Alatau' State Nature Park to clean up the coastal area with the involvement of volunteers and rangers, which resulted in the removal of more than 15 tonnes of long-standing litter.



## #Science

In 2019, on the occasion of **the International Day for Biological Diversity**, the UNDP and SAEPF jointly held a research and training conference 'The Role of Research in the Management and Development of the Protected Areas Network' to celebrate the 40th anniversary of 'Sary-Chelek' National Biosphere Reserve opening and the 20th anniversary of its joining the network of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves. The conference was attended by the academia from Russia and Kyrgyzstan, and the heads of the country's PAs.





### #EcoTourism

In 2019, the UNDP and SAEPF initiated and carried out a number of activities to **study the avifauna of Western Tian Shan**, develop bird-watching as a promising area of eco-tourism in 'Alatai' and 'Kan-Achuu' SNPs and promote **environmental education of schoolchildren** in Bishkek city, Toktogul and Toguz-Toro rayons (photo exhibitions, information boards in secondary schools, illustrated information guides). The expedition of a group of bird-watchers resulted in the recommendations on nature parks to develop scientific and educational tourism and build observation platforms for bird-watching.



### #EnvironmentalEducation

Within the framework of the International Day for Biological Diversity, the SAEPF Department for Protected Areas together with the Ministry of Education annually holds **a nationwide competition among schoolchildren** on the topic 'My Research on the Conservation of My Homeland Nature', which allows participants to share their views on the problems of biodiversity conservation.



### #SaveSnowLeopard

In 2018, the snow leopard was recognized as the mascot of **the Third World Nomad Games**. In cooperation with the SAEPF, the event hosted interactive activities, exhibitions, information campaigns and video demonstrations in 'Kyrchyn' area and Cholpon-Ata city with the call to preserve the snow leopard and safeguard biodiversity.



## #Fashion

In 2018, a new **collection of children's clothing** in the form of a snow leopard, entitled 'Save Me', was released to raise public awareness of the snow leopard conservation.



## #Sports

The snow leopard has become **the mascot of the national ice hockey team of Kyrgyzstan**. Under the motto **'Let's Save the Snow Leopards Together!'**, the team takes part in national and international tournaments, thus promoting the engagement of young sportsmen as snow leopard conservationists and demonstrating the initiative in the foreign arena.



# 02

## SUPPORT TO THE PROTECTED AREAS AND FOREST FARMS





## #Dialogue

'Alatai' and 'Kan-Achuu' National Nature Parks have **Supervisory Boards** from among the residents of Kyzyl-Ozgorush and Cholpon-Ata ayil aimaks of Toktogul rayon, Atai and Kok-Irim ayil aimaks of Toguz-Toro rayon. The Supervisory Boards establish a dialogue platform between the PAs and local communities for open cooperation. The Supervisory Board of 'Alatai' consists of 9 people, including 4 women, and the Supervisory Board of 'Kan-Achuu' has 11 people, including 4 women as well.

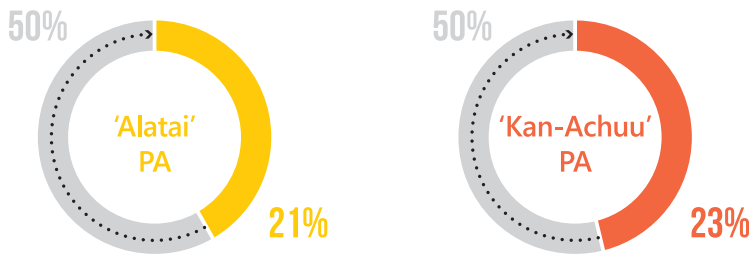


## #Efficiency

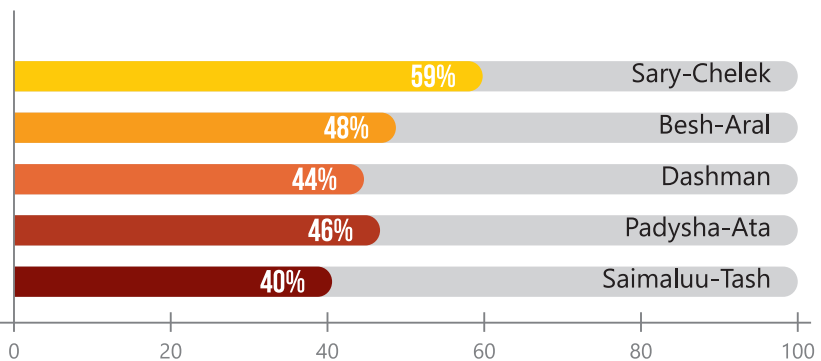
The project provided assistance in the approval of a new methodology for assessing the environmental efficiency of Protected Areas 'Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool' (METT) by the SAEPF. The methodology had been developed by WWF and adapted for use in Kyrgyzstan within the project. The representatives of Western Tian Shan PAs took necessary trainings. Now they can independently assess the conservation value, significance and efficiency of the protected areas.



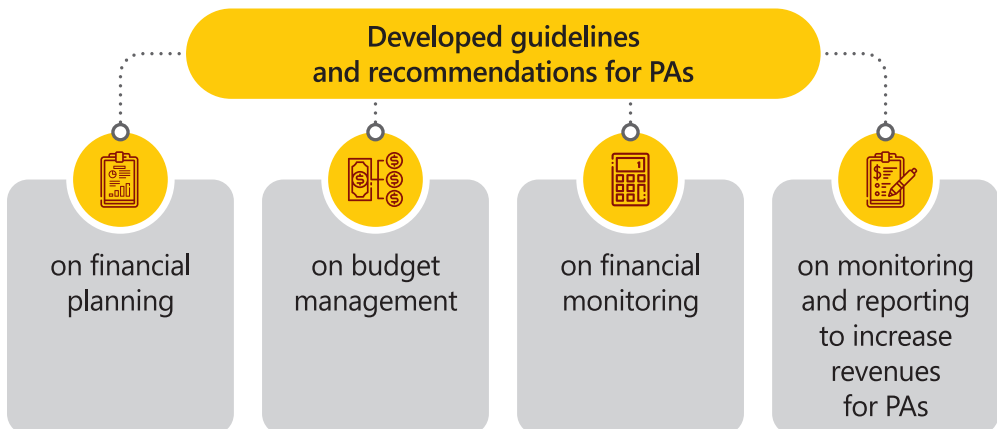
In order to identify the baseline, the efficiency of PA management has been assessed using the METT methodology to show 21% for 'Kan-Achuu' and 23% for 'Alatai' PAs. Raising these figures above 50% constitutes one of the tasks of the UNDP/GEF project.



### Assessment of management efficiency in the PAs of Western Tian Shan in 2019



The assessment of management efficiency highlighted risks and threats to the PAs management and delivered recommendations to improve the management efficiency.



## #Safety

In order to prevent and improve preparedness for forest fires, there were purchased and delivered fire safety backpacks and first aid kits for 'Kan-Achuu' and 'Alatai' PAs as well as forestry enterprises of Toguz-Toro and Toktogul rayons.



## #ForestryManagement

There has been developed and approved the 'Methodology for Forestry Management in PAs' for 'Kyrgyzlesokhotustroystvo' SOE under the SAEPF. Based on the results of the new methodology application in the forest management fieldwork, 4 328 allotments of PAs were cruised, covering the entire territory of 'Kan-Achuu' and 'Alatai'. In addition, the external and internal borders of 240 km were identified for 'Kan-Achuu'.



## #Volunteers



Joint patrol groups were created at 'Alatai' and 'Kan-Achuu' PAs, consisting of 20 freelance rangers, of which 3 were women. The groups were formed to improve control over the compliance with the requirements of environmental legislation, rules and regulations in the field of environment protection and rational use of natural resources by the local population, as well as to assist the employees and rangers of 'Kan-Achuu' and 'Alatai' PAs in the conservation of biodiversity. The JPGs members had a chance to take part in the specially organized workshops on patrolling, law enforcement and supervision.

## #Equipment



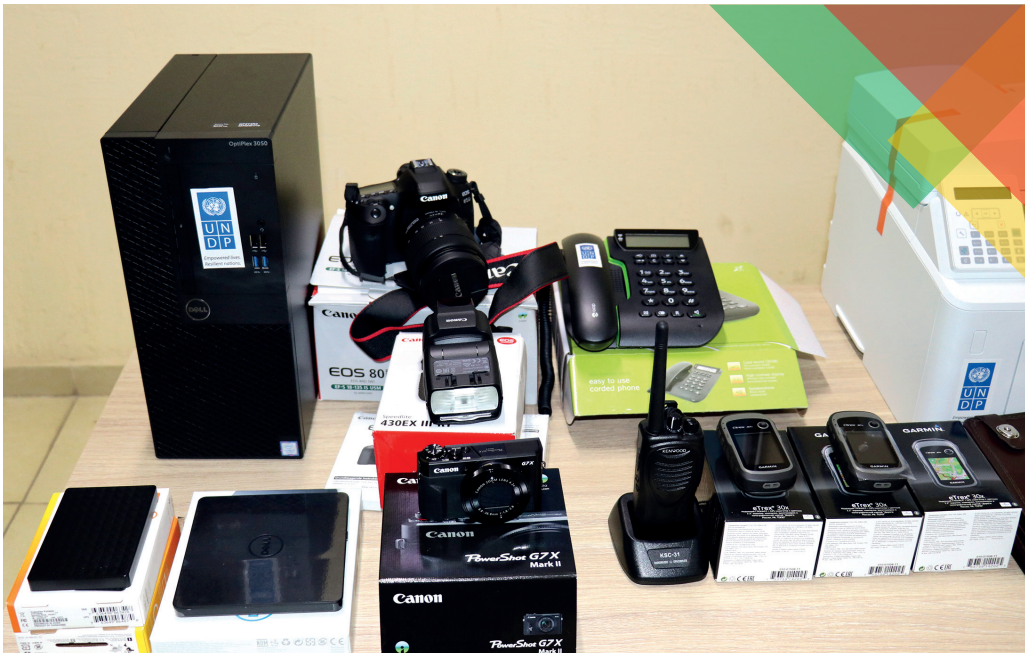
Joint patrol groups at 'Kan-Achuu' and 'Alatai' SNPs were equipped with communication tools, overalls, optics, camera traps, expedition equipment and horses.



■ ■ ■ ■ Support to the protected areas and forest farms

## #Equipment

The administrations of 'Kan-Achuu' and 'Alatai' SNPs received new off-road vehicles, office appliances and equipment.



## #Monitoring

In the territories of 'Kan-Achuu' and 'Alatai' SNPs, there were installed camera traps, the rangers trained in how to use them.



## #Science

'Alatai' SNP received a motor boat to conduct research of fish fauna in Kara-Suu Lake and fight against fish poachers.

# 03

## TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE





## #ExperienceExchange



In 2018, the representatives of Western Tian Shan PAs had a chance to go on a study tour to 'Khan-Teniri' SNP organized to communicate the results of the accomplished UNDP/GEF project on PAs management in Central Tian Shan. The participants studied the positive experience in the project implementation, got acquainted with the work of 'Khan-Teniri' SNP and small businesses in Ak-Suu rayon of Issyk-Kul oblast.



In 2019, the representatives of pasture committees together with a delegation from Uzbekistan became the target audience for a two-day study tour to Suusamyr Valley, where they were introduced to the IT system 'Electronic Pasture Committee'.

## #HCVF

The SAEPF representatives explored the possibilities of successful application of the concept of high conservation value forests (HCVF) in Italy and Switzerland.



## #Partnership

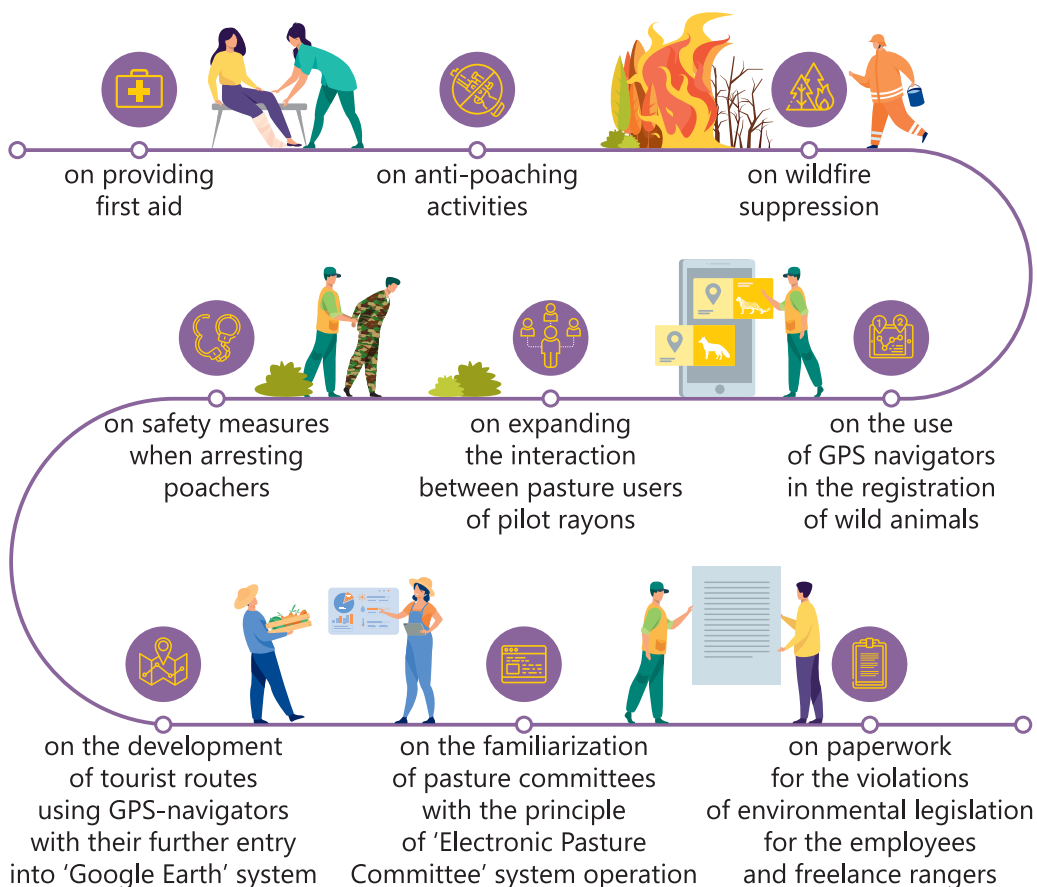
In 2019, the SAEPF and UNDP/GEF project representatives got acquainted with the work experience of Russian colleagues from environmental departments and non-governmental organizations, as well as the operations of some PAs in the Russian Federation. In particular, the study-tour participants learned about the work experience of 'Priksko-Terrasniy Reserve', met the representatives of the Russian National Scientific and Research Institute for Environment Protection, the Federal Service for the Supervision of Natural Resources Use and the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation. During the meeting, the discussion covered mutual cooperation for further preservation of the snow leopard, future collaboration in combating poachers and strengthening the information exchange between the countries.

## #Training

To increase the capacity of Western Tian Shan PAs staff, there were delivered

# 88

### workshops, meetings and trainings:



Attended by  
**5656**  
people



Trainees included  
**2446**  
women

## #Training

To increase the capacity of Western Tian Shan PAs staff, a series of trainings and exchange visits on a range of environmental topics was launched in 2020. The representatives of 'Alatai', 'Kan-Achuu', 'Sary-Chelek', 'Padysha-Ata', 'Dashman', 'Besh-Aral' and 'Saimaluu-Tash' nature reserves and national parks were trained in the whole range of PA operations, depending on the specifics of their functional duties. The trainings were delivered with the visits to PAs in Naryn, Issyk-Kul and Jalal-Abad oblasts.



## #Training

The trainings are organized jointly with the PA Department of SAEPF and 'CAMP Alattoo' and cover all key areas of work of natural parks and reserves: biodiversity conservation, environment protection, monitoring animals, environmental legislation, work with maps, inventory taking of flora and fauna, etc.



## #Cooperation



Since 2018, together with the CITES Secretariat, there have been annually delivered workshops on the implementation and compliance with the CITES convention for representatives from Central Asian countries.

## #ExperienceExchange

In 2019, there took place an exchange visit for 10 jamaats of Issyk-Kul and Chui oblasts to the project pilot areas, which allowed the participants to exchange experience in community mobilization and micro-grants management, share information on the development of eco-tourism and starting small businesses.

# 04

## IMPROVING PASTURE AND FOREST MANAGEMENT



## #Reforestation



In the territory of forestry enterprises of Toktogul, Toguz-Toro and Aksy rayons, there were planted more than 300 hectares with valuable forest species. For that purpose, the project mobilized and temporarily employed 50 people from local communities. As a result, over 200 thousand seedlings of walnut, pistachio, larch, pine and Tian Shan spruce replenished the forest resources of Western Tian Shan.



Forestry enterprises of Toktogul, Toguz-Toro and Aksy rayons received materials for the installation of fences around new forest plantations, the fenced area is currently 320 hectares in total.



## #PastureRestoration



Within the measures to restore degrading pastures, such pilot ayil aimaks as Atai, Kok-Irim, Kyzyl-Ozgorush and Cholpon-Ata received materials to organize demonstration plots for the planned studying of local geobotanics.



In 2019, there took place the 6th regular meeting of the Pasture Coordination Council that resulted in the recommendation to all pasture committees, including pilot ones, of providing all-round support in the implementation of pasture management activities within the framework of the UNDP/GEF project.



05

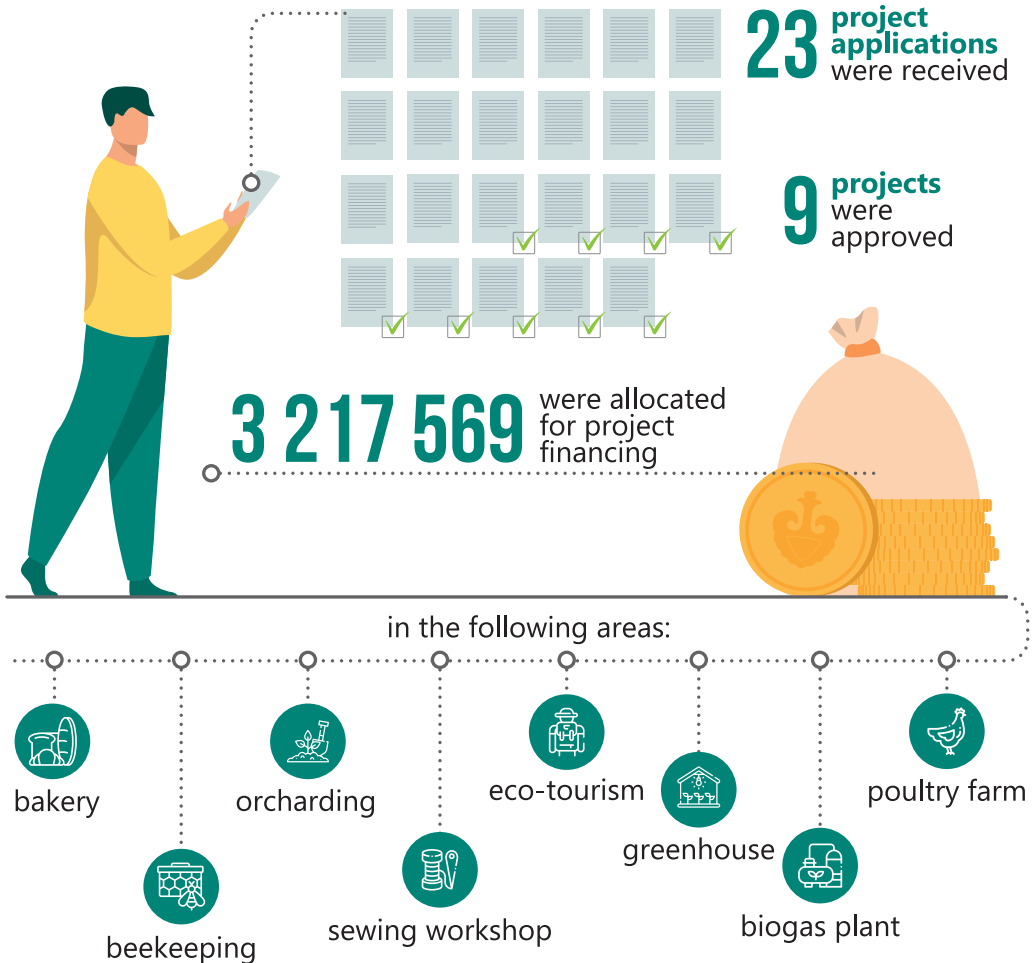
**THE PROGRAMME  
OF ALTERNATIVE  
LIVELIHOODS FOR  
LOCAL COMMUNITIES**



## #LocalDevelopment



In late 2019, there took place **the first stage** of the competition to select project applications for grant financing in the pilot ayil okmotu of Toktogul and Toguz-Toro rayons.



February 2020 **witnessed the announcement of the second stage** of the competition to select project applications for grant financing in pilot ayil okmotu, and the trainings on how to fill in the application forms and prepare the budget.



# 06

## MEASURES TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION AND REGIONAL PLANNING FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION



## #Legislation

Assistance provided in the development of the following regulatory documents:



Methodology for Assessing Environmental Efficiency



Methodology for Forest Management Fieldwork and Biodiversity Tracking



Snow Leopard Preservation Action Plan for 2018–2022



Guidelines and Recommendations on Financial Planning and Budget Management for Increased Revenues

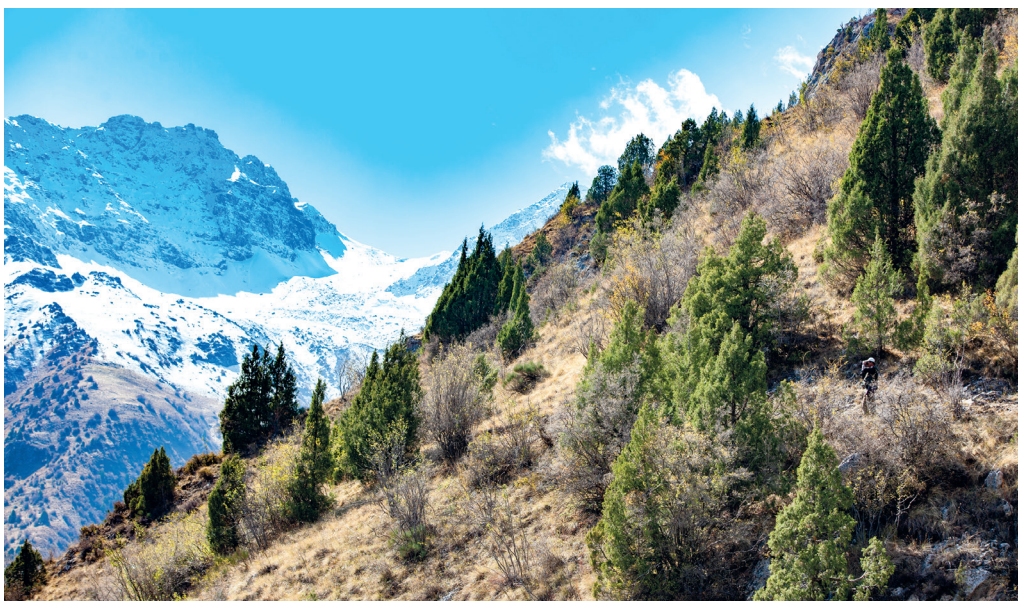


The need to create proper conditions for the preservation of endangered species of fauna urged Cholpon-Ata village council to adopt the Resolution 'On the Establishment of a Zoological and Geological Protected Area for the Preservation of the Snow Vulture (Kumai) and Mountainous Territory in the Village of Cholpon-Ata' No 110 dated 4 December 2019.



### #SavingBiodiversity

In 2019, the Regional Development Plans of Toktogul and Toguz-Toro rayons for 2018-2023 were expanded with additional activities aimed at biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of land and forest resources. In total, there were introduced about 39 new items.



#Alatai



#Alatai





#Kan-Achuu



#Kan-Achuu



#ForestryEnterprises



#ForestryEnterprises



#ForestryEnterprises



#WesternTianShanBiodiversity



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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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