



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



global  
environment  
facility  
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

## FAO-GEF Project Implementation Report

### 2025 – Revised Template

Period covered: 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

#### Table of Contents

1. BASIC PROJECT DATA

2. PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING PROJECT OBJECTIVE(S) (DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE)

3. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS (IP)

4. SUMMARY ON PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS (ESS): RISKS FROM THE PROJECT

6. RISKS TO THE PROJECT

7. FOLLOW-UP ON MID-TERM REVIEW OR SUPERVISION MISSION

8. MINOR PROJECT AMENDMENTS

9. STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT

10. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

11. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

12. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES INVOLVEMENT

13. CO-FINANCING TABLE

14. GEO LOCATION INFORMATION

Annex. Monitoring Area-based GEF Core Indicator Commitments and Progress with FERM

#### **IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER:**

The **final version** of this PIR will be submitted to the GEF Secretariat.

The report will then be **publicly available on the GEF website** ([click here](#)).

**Sensitive information** should be submitted in Annex to be uploaded separately.

In such cases, please contact [faogef-pir-support@fao.org](mailto:faogef-pir-support@fao.org) for guidance.

## 1. Basic Project Data

### General Information

Region:	Near East and North Africa (RNE)
Country(ies):	China
Project Title:	Demonstration of Estuarine Biodiversity Conservation, Restoration and Protected Area Networking in China
FAO Project Symbol:	GCP/CPR/045/GFF
GEF ID:	4175
Type of Trust Fund(s):	GFF
GEF Focal Area(s):	Biodiversity
Project Executing Partners:	National Forestry and Grassland Administration of PRC
Initial project duration (years):	5.5

### Project Dates

GEF CEO Endorsement Date:	22/02/2013
Actual Agency Approval Date	28/11/2013
Project Implementation Start Date/EOD:	12/06/2017
First Disbursement Date	07/05/2018
Planned Project End Date/NTE <sup>1</sup> :	11/06/2022
Revised project implementation End date (if approved) <sup>2</sup> :	03/02/2027
Actual Completion Date:	N/A
Expected Financial Closure Date:	03/02/2028

### Funding

GEF Grant Amount (USD):	\$	3,516,400.00
Total GEF grant delivery (as of June 30, 2025 (USD):	\$	1,949,099.31
Total Co-financing amount (USD) <sup>3</sup> :	\$	11,845,080.00
Total estimated co-financing materialized as of June 30, 2025 <sup>4</sup> :	\$	39,443,194.00

### M & E Milestones

Date of Last Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting:	23/06/2020
Expected Mid-term Review date <sup>5</sup> :	N/A
Actual Mid-term review date (if already completed):	22/11/2022
Expected Terminal Evaluation Date <sup>6</sup> :	03/08/2026

### Overall ratings

Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/outcomes (cumulative):	Satisfactory (S)
Overall implementation progress rating:	Satisfactory (S)
Overall risk rating:	Low

### Status

Implementation Status (1st PIR, 2nd PIR, etc. Final PIR):	6th PIR
---	---------

1 Date that was originally foreseen at the project's operationalization and indicated in FPMIS.

2 If NTE extension has been requested and approved by the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit.

3 This is the total amount of co-financing as included in the CEO Document/Project Document.

4 Please refer to the Section 13 of this report where updated co-financing estimates are requested and indicate the total co-financing amount materialized.

5 The Mid-Term Review (MTR) should take place after the 2nd PIR, around half-point between EOD and NTE. The MTR report in English should be submitted to the GEF Secretariat within 4 years of the CEO Endorsement date.

6 The Terminal Evaluation date should be discussed with OED 6 months before the project's NTE date.

### Project Contacts

Contact	Name, Title, Division/Institution	E-mail
Project Coordinator (PC)	Sun Yulu, Project Manager	<a href="mailto:sun_yulu@163.com">sun_yulu@163.com</a>
Budget Holder (BH)	Carlos Aldeco, FAO Representative in China	<a href="mailto:carlos.aldecoreyes@fao.org">carlos.aldecoreyes@fao.org</a>
GEF Operational Focal Point (GEF OFP)	Fu Jing□	<a href="mailto:gef@mof.gov.cn">gef@mof.gov.cn</a> <a href="mailto:mof_operation1@mof.gov.cn">mof_operation1@mof.gov.cn</a>
Lead Technical Officer (LTO)	Li He, Natural Resources Officer (Water Development and Conservation), FAORAP	<a href="mailto:He.Li@fao.org">He.Li@fao.org</a>
GEF Technical Officer (GTO)	Yurie Naito, GEF Technical Officer, FAO RAP	<a href="mailto:Yurie.Naito@fao.org">Yurie.Naito@fao.org</a>

### Key Project Management Unit Personnel

Please indicate the composition of the PMU as per the Terms of Reference in the ProDoc. If any new position was established during the project implementation, please insert it accordingly.

Position planned (as per ProDoc)	Position filled (Yes/No)	Start date, Name, Contact	Comments
Project Manager	Yes	Start date: 1 January 2025 Name: Sun Yulu Contact: 13021916697	Acting project manager
Project Assistant	Yes	Start date: 10 April 2025 Name: Guo Yixuan Contact: 13121008499	Temporary contract for project implementation.
Technical Advisor	Yes	Start date: 1 April 2025 Name: Dong Yi Contact: 13724038945	Temporary contract for project implementation
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	No	Start date: Name: Contact:	
Interns	Yes	Start date: 10 June 2025 Name: Wang Hao Contact: 15803978722  Start date: 10 March 2025 End date: 10 June 2025 Name: Luan Xinyu Contact: 13724038945	interns contract for project implementation.
Chief Technical Advisor	No	Start date: Name: Contact:	

## 2. Progress towards Achieving Project Objective(s) (Development objective)

(All inputs in this section should be cumulative from project start, not annual)

*Please indicate the project's main progress towards achieving its objective(s) and the cumulative level of achievement of each outcome since the start of project implementation*

Project or development objective	Outcomes	Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target7	End-of-project Target	Cumulative progress level at 30 June 2025	% of cumulative progress	Progress rating
<b>Objective(s) 1: Policy, Planning &amp; Institutional Arrangements</b>	1.1 Improved policies and policy formulation in support of biodiversity conservation in estuarine ecosystems.	<p>Two local government regulations of ecological compensation for biodiversity conservation and wetlands restoration.</p> <p>Policy in support of Strategic EIA formulated and applied to economic development sector plans and programs in Dongying City (Yellow River) and Zhuhai City (Pearl River) including two draft municipal rules in conformity with State EIA Law recognizing Strategic EIA as policy tool.</p>	No local government regulations of ecological compensation and no relevant policy in support of Strategic EIA formulated and applied to economic development sector plans and programs in two project areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One new non-project supported biodiversity conservation policy formulated.</li> <li>● Add 2-3 METT indicators to existing MPA assessment scorecards in Shandong and Guangdong.</li> </ul>	<p>Two local government regulations</p> <p>One policy for each municipal</p>	<p>100% completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stakeholders for policy development and Improvement have been identified.</li> <li>● Two biodiversity conservation gap analysis conducted and strategy prepared.</li> <li>● Conducted METT assessment for 11 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and developed the Report on ecological – based assessments of assessments.</li> <li>● 5 Management Evaluation Tracking Tool (METT) indicators are added to existing MPA assessment scorecards in Shandong and Guangdong.</li> </ul>	100.00	Satisfactory (S)
	1. 2 Achievement of a more integrated approach towards promoting the conservation of biodiversity and associated habitats and ensuring the long-term “health” of the Yellow and Pearl River Estuarine ecosystems.	<p>Two long-term MPA integrated management and networking plans developed</p> <p>Two medium to long-term restoration strategies for estuarine ecosystems developed</p> <p>Two plans and accompanying inter-agency protocols on medium to long-term ecosystem health monitoring</p>	No relevant integrated management and networking plans nor strategies was developed in the two estuaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One long-term ecological “health” monitoring plans adopted and implemented by participating agencies.</li> </ul>	<p>Two long-term MPA integrated management and networking Plans</p> <p>Two medium-to long-term restoration strategies</p> <p>Two plans and accompanying inter-agency protocols</p>	<p>80% completed</p> <p>Discussions have started in the provincial level.</p> <p>Reports on the Ecosystem Health and Monitoring Plans for the Pearl River Estuary and the Yellow River Estuary has been developed.</p> <p>One long-term ecological “health” monitoring plan adopted by the Dongying Marine development and fisheries Bureau and implemented in Shandong project areas.</p>	80.00	Satisfactory (S)
	1.3 Improved	5 conflicts adversely (2 in	Number before project	● 2 conflicts adversely (1 in	5 conflicts	80% completed	80.00	Satisfactory

<p>institutional coordination demonstrated through strengthened policy formulation, decision-making and integrated planning in support of biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>Guangdong and 3 in Shandong) affecting the two estuaries resolved during life of project (LOP).</p>	<p>implementation</p>	<p>Guangdong and 1 in Shandong) affecting the two estuaries resolved during life of project (LOP).</p>	<p>resolved.</p>	<p>Report on the Settlement of Conflicts Adversely Affecting the Pearl River Estuary has been completed.</p> <p>2 conflicts adversely (Garbage on the beach in Guangdong and abandoned oil wells in Shandong) affecting the two estuaries resolved .</p> <p>Organized more than 60 volunteers (39 female) to carry out beach cleaning activities.</p> <p>The policy analysis of abandoned oil well (conflict adversely affecting the Yellow River Estuary) is in progress.</p> <p>Successfully held a national training on MPA to management staff from 11 provinces at in Yantai, Shandong, 100 members been trained</p>	<p>(S)</p>
--	--	-----------------------	--	------------------	---	------------

<b>Outcome 2 MPA Networking and Wetland Restoration</b>	2.1 Improved management effectiveness of existing, participating MPAs.	<p>11 updated management plans including measures to support co-management, biodiversity monitoring, and biological connectivity at the MPA network level</p> <p>GIS system operating in 6 MPAs to support management, surveillance and monitoring.</p> <p>Equipment for surveillance and monitoring upgraded in 11 MPAs</p>	<p>No updated management plans</p> <p>No GIS system was implemented in 6 MPAs</p> <p>No upgraded equipment for surveillance and monitoring in 11 MPAs</p>	<p>Updated workplans for the 2 estuaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●6 MPAs' implementation of GIS system.</li> <li>●METT scores of MPAs increased by individual targets.</li> </ul>	<p>11 updated management plans</p> <p>6 MPAs' Implementation of GIS system</p> <p>Upgraded equipment for surveillance and monitoring in 11 MPAs</p>	<p>100% completed</p> <p>Updated workplans for the 2 estuaries.</p> <p>11 MPAs (6 MPAs in the Yellow River Estuary and 5 MPAs in the Pearl River Estuary) signed Information Sharing Agreement in March 2021.</p> <p>The update of management plans and application of GIS system have started.</p> <p>METT assessment for the 11 MPAs had been completed in April 2021. Compared with the previous assessment, all the METT scores of the 11 MPAs have been greatly improved (55.32% on average), and all of them have reached the expected scores.</p> <p>The construction of GIS digital information website in the Pearl River Estuary and the Yellow River Estuary has been completed when and running smoothly. Through this platform, it can realize the management display of the basic data of 11 MPAs and update the latest achievements in time, provide technical support for the establishment of the data sharing network and comprehensively improve the capacity of biodiversity conservation and management in MPAs.</p> <p>The GIS digital information systems for the Pearl River Estuary and Yellow River Project areas including the physical geography, socioeconomic status, biological resources of 11 MPAs within the Pearl River Estuary Demonstration Area in Guangdong and the Shandong Project Area in Shandong. The system consists of two parts, including a public website and a GIS-based management system for professional users such as natural reserves management agencies at all levels. The public version of the website will serve as the portal window for China's typical estuary biodiversity conservation and restoration and protected area network projects, and will be used to declare and express the work content and work results of the PMO.</p>	100.00	Satisfactory (S)
	2.2 Improved ecological connectivity among participating MPAs in two	Two biodiversity conservation gap analyses and strategy for increased ecological connectivity completed	No biodiversity conservation gap analyses	Preliminary progress in the construction of the two estuaries ecological collaborative monitoring	Two biodiversity conservation gap analyses and strategy	<p>Gap analysis report of 6 MPAs in Shandong has been developed.</p> <p>Preliminary progress in the construction of the two</p>	80.00	Moderately Satisfactory (S)

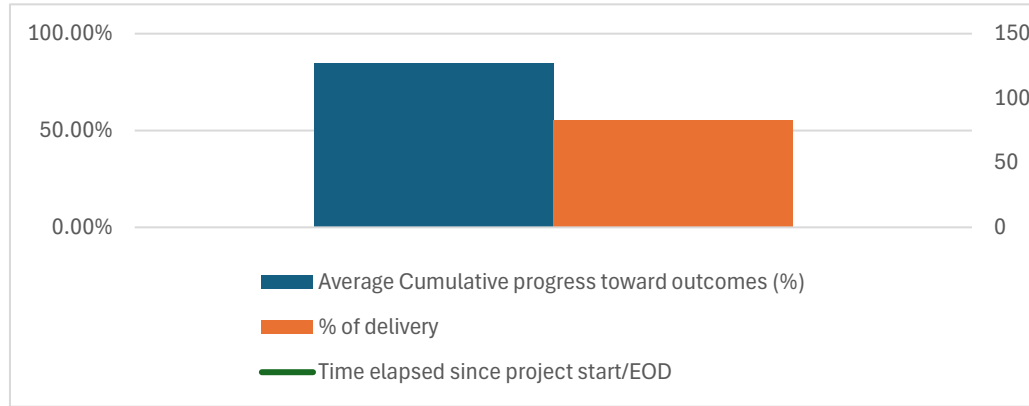
	estuaries.	Two MPA coordinating networking mechanisms established one for each of the two estuaries based on signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and agreements on protocols on monitoring enforcement and information sharing in the 12project supported MPAs	NO MPA coordinating networking mechanisms	mecanism ●2 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) signed among MPA networking members ●Agreed on protocols on monitoring, enforcement and information sharing in the 11 projects supported MPA.	Two MPA coordinating networking mechanisms	estuaries ecological collaborative monitoring mechanism  2 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed among MPA networking members  Agreed on protocols on monitoring, enforcement and information sharing in the 11 projects supported MPA.  Co-organized the 7th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Nature Reserve Study and Research Symposium in Zhuhai, with the theme of “Promoting Harmonious Coexistence between Human Beings and Nature”		
	2.3 Increased provision of ecological “goods and services” through the restoration of wetlands in two ecosystems.	Increased density of fish egg and fish larva of at least 10% in two sites (please see baseline in the section 6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation). Increased presence of indicator migratory bird species (increase in Oriental White Stork as quantified through census of nests from 3 to 10) (Shandong); increased coverage of mangrove by 20% (baseline: 5% coverage on Qi’ao Island in Guangdong).	Density of fish egg and fish larva before project implementation  Oriental White Stork nests: 3;  Coverage of mangrove: 5% on Qi’ao Island in Guangdong	Increase in Oriental White Stork as quantified through census of nests from 3 to 10) (Shandong).	Density of fish egg and fish larva of at least 10%  Oriental White Stork nests 10  Coverage of mangrove 20%	Report on the analysis of increased density of fish egg, fish larva and migratory bird species has been completed.  According to the monitoring data, increased density of fish egg and fish larva is over 10% in two sites, and the densities of fish egg have increased by 30 times respectively.  Nets increased in Oriental White Stork as quantified through census to 120, with an increase of 117 compared to the baseline (2017 82, 2018 54, 2019 105, 2020 115). (Shandong). Increased coverage of mangrove by 10%.	70.00	Satisfactory (S)
<b>Outcome 3 Threat Analysis, Mitigation and Monitoring</b>	3.1 Increased investment for improved environmental quality in the two estuaries.	Relevant investments estimated to increase by 5%.	Investments amount before the project implementation.	Relevant investments estimated to increase by 3%.	Increase by 5%	Total investment to improve environmental quality in the 2 estuaries reached 35,024,820 USD as co-financing funds by the end of June 2021, which has increased by 201% compared to the baseline.  Investment in ecological restoration has reached to 1.227 billion yuan in the Yellow River Estuary since 2017, and Report on Investment Analysis of Ecological Restoration in Yellow River Estuary Demonstration Area has been developed.	100.00	Satisfactory (S)
	3.2 Reduced human – induced stress on critical habitats in the two estuaries.	Reduced area of degraded land in Shandong project area (5,000 ha); Effective management control over	The coverage before project implementation. Baseline information will be collected in 2021.	Reduced area of degraded land: 5,000 ha.	Reduced area of degraded land: 5,000 ha	13 ecological restoration projects have been implemented in the Yellow River Estuary since 2017, with an area of 18,800 ha.	100.00	Satisfactory (S)

		60% of area in Miaowan MPA and effectively manage the ecological tour activity in the rest area.			Effective management control over 60%	Study on strengthening the management effectiveness of Miaowan Coral Reef Nature Reserve in Zhuhai has been completed, and six suggestions were put forward to increase the effective control area by 60% based on the actual situation.		
	3.3 Improved relationships between the local communities and the MPA staff.	Formation of 5 local village conservation groups (Shandong) and 500 volunteers participating in MPA activity and formation of 1 local village conservation group (Guangdong).	No local village conservation groups and volunteers in project areas.	Local village conservation groups: SD 2; GD 1.  Volunteers participating: SD 200.	Local village conservation groups: SD 5; GD 1  Volunteers participating: SD 500	5 village conservation groups in 5 MPAs in Dongying have been formed and they will report the problems found to the management department in time.  1 local village conservation group formed (Guangdong).  590 volunteers (372 female) participated in the environment protection and popular science education.  PMO has visited the communities around the MPAs to discuss opportunities for creative conversion of the project to professionalism with local popular science schools and visited the aquaculture demonstration sites and compared notes on new models of scientific and efficient industrial development, etc. More and more local people have been encouraged to the MPA activities.	100.00	Satisfactory (S)
	3.4 Improved decision-making leading to ecosystem-based management in two estuaries.	Ecosystem based principles "mainstreamed" at minimum one time into decisions taken by local coordination bodies each Estuary leading to improved ecosystem "health." Consider this concept in decision making at least one time.	Ecosystem based principles are not considered during decision making processes	1 MOU and supporting protocols and annual meetings and minutes.	Two multi-agency, integrated monitoring plans developed and implemented.	2 MOUs have been drafted and will be signed in two estuaries.  2 plans and corresponding inter-agency protocols on medium to long-term ecosystem health monitoring have been developed.	100.00	Satisfactory (S)
<b>Outcome 4 Capacity Building and Increasing Environmental Awareness</b>	4.1 Increased institutional capacity and political support for the conservation of biodiversity in the two project supported demonstration sites.	Recognition of principles of estuarine biodiversity conservation manifested through at least 2 major government development programs.  In-country training for senior officials and technical staff in ecosystem-based	Estuarine biodiversity conservation hasn't been considered during decision making processes.  No training for senior officials and technical staff in ecosystem-based management and	Recognition of principles of estuarine biodiversity conservation manifested through at least 2, 13th, 5 year sector plans.	Two major government development programs.  Training: 30 participants  Cross-site visits: 20	Cross-site visits: 27.  A training on MPA policy and management to the technical and management staff at provincial, local and MPA level for all the 11 coastal provinces, 100 members have been trained.  Online meeting on the international training has been organized between PMO and FAO.	60.00	Satisfactory (S)

		ecosystem-based management and conservation of estuaries including application of Strategic EIA	management and conservation of estuaries			working discuss meeting with the participants of Guangdong Provincial Forestry Bureau and demonstration MPAs		
	4.2 Increased public participation and awareness of the significance of biodiversity conservation and estuarine ecosystems.	<p>Primary and secondary school courses developed during the project adopted in other school systems in each site.</p> <p>Number of communities engaged in estuarine biodiversity conservation increased by 30 % over baseline levels in the two sites.</p>	<p>Courses for primary and secondary schools development and increased student awareness and knowledge of the significance of marine biodiversity conservation and the role of MPAs (200 students per year have received education)</p> <p>Two communities engaged in estuarine biodiversity conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●1 popular science readers developed for 1 primary school.</li> <li>●50 students know the project and relevant knowledge in each estuary.</li> </ul>	<p>Courses are provided annually to 2-3 schools and reach 100 students in each estuary.</p> <p>At least 3 communities</p>	<p>Popular science lectures for children have been actively carried out in 2020. Number of audiences reached more than 1,000 people. The results of the questionnaire showed that more than 80% of students under 16 have knowledge of biodiversity</p> <p>“My Mother River—The Yellow River” National Children’s Painting Competition was carried out in 2020. More than 300 paintings were submitted. And this competition was reported by well-known media.</p> <p>Marine Science Reader for Primary School Students in Dongying had been compiled and published (book number: ISBN 978-7-5027-9261-9).</p> <p>Fishery skill trainings for local fishermen had been organized in the Yellow River Estuary, and more than 150 fishermen (22 female) participated in the training. These trainings include: aquaculture of Litopenaeus vannamei, treatment of aquaculture wastewater and so on. By those skill trainings, the team of high-quality fishermen (fish-farmers) are more adaptable to the needs of mod1 popular science readers developed for 1 primary school.</p> <p>Book-donating activities in two elementary school in Dongying City and organized several popular marine science lectures to stimulate children’s understanding and interest in estuarine conservation.</p> <p>The second Children’s Painting Competition-- The Painting Competition of Chinese Estuarine Ecological Features: Moving forward from the Sea and Intoxicated with the Natural Beauty has successfully applied for the UN “Ocean Decade” Activity, and will be conducted in 2023.ern fisheries.</p>	80.00	Satisfactory (S)
<b>Outcome 5 Project</b>	5.1. Project execution based on results-	Program activities executed in a timely and cost-effective	Progress made in the initial stage in meeting	Program Activities executed in a timely and cost-effective	Midterm and final evaluations	The revised overall work plan and budget have been approved by PSC. Project activities are being executed	70.00	Satisfactory (S)

<b>Management, M &amp; E and Replication of Project Results</b>	based management	manner.  Project monitoring system operating providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcome and output targets	project outcome and output targets.	manner.	conducted	in a timely and cost-effective manner.  AHP monitoring and evaluating system was established and in operation.  The risk mitigation plan has been updated.  Before the project office was relocated to the AFIP, the equipment purchased in the early stage of the project had already completed the handover procedures and was officially transferred to FIO, where it was managed as a fixed asset of that entity.  OPA has been signed on Dec30.2024, and the workplan and budget have been adjusted accordingly, the project account and PMO officially transferred from FIO to AFIP  The project has been approved to extend the closing date to 3 February 2027.  OPA Amendment No.1 (with Annex) has been countersigned on 26 May 2025, PMO staff recruitment, procedures of subcontract tendering and preparation for the Project Steering Committee meeting have started.		
	5.2. Evidence that "best practices" from the ecosystem-based approaches in the two sites is being taken up and replicated elsewhere in the province and country.	Chinese project-supported experiences cited in the design, preparation and implementation of at least 2 other projects in the country.	No other project cited	Potential risks identified and resolved in the project's early stages.	Two projects applying experiences and practice of this project.  At least 5 publications of project-related "best-practices" and "lessons-learned" disseminated.	The website of the project has been established.  5 Newsletters, 66 WeChat articles/videos and newspaper articles and have been developed to share project news and experiences.  After the national MPA training was held, the Guangming Daily, Green Times, the website of the NFGA, and the official WeChat account of the AFIP all made relevant reports.	70.00	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Average Cumulative progress toward outcomes (%)	Time elapsed since project start/EOD	% of delivery
85.00%	98	55.43%



### Development Objective (DO) Ratings, and Overall Assessment

Please note that the overall DO ratings should be substantiated by evidence and progress reported above. The ratings and comments should reflect the overall progress of results since project start

	Project Manager/ Coordinator	Budget Holder	Lead Technical Officer <sup>13</sup>	GEF Operational Focal Point	GEF Technical Officer (GTO)
<b>FY2025 Development Objective rating<sup>11</sup></b>	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)
<b>Comments/reasons<sup>12</sup> justifying the ratings for FY2025 and any changes (positive or negative) in the ratings since the previous reporting period</b>	<p>The two main shortcomings of the project during this reporting period are as follows: 1. The project activities carried out in the project regions were relatively few, and the participation of the demonstration protected areas was insufficient during this reporting period. 2. Low delivery rate.</p> <p>Given the obvious deficiencies, the reason why the project manager rated DO as S is as follows: After being suspended for two years, the project signed the OPA to restart. The completion of the preparatory work</p>	<p>This project has got S rating during MTR. Due to change of PMO, the project was suspended for about two years. But during the reporting period, the project has made good progress to restart by signing the new OPA. Over 800,000 USD was transferred to OP and the new PMO has recruited staff and prepared the subcontracts, which has laid strong foundation to speed up the project implementation.</p>	<p>Due to government restructuring, changes in implementation arrangements (including the PMO reorganization), and the COVID-19 pandemic, the project implementation experienced significant pauses and delays. Nevertheless, the mid-term review ultimately received a satisfactory rating. With the signing of the new OPA, establishment of the reconstituted PMO,</p>	<p><i>This project signed new OPA at the end of 2024 and now moves on the right track. The PMO should speed up the implementation to achieve the project objectives before Feb. 3rd 2027.</i></p>	<p>This project was approved in 2013 under the GEF-4 cycle. Due to various reasons, the project implementation has been delayed. However, the previous PMO had made great progress until the project was suspended in early 2023. The current PMO is committed to delivery and look forward to visiting the project sites during the new PIR cycle to observe the progress on the ground.</p>

	<p>such as the transfer of fixed assets, the relocation of the project office and project accounts, the application for project extension, and the re-establishment of the project office through recruitment involved complex procedures and multiple approval processes, with strict time requirements. This consumed a significant amount of time and human resources. the project accurately grasped all the timeframes, and all the above tasks were successfully completed, laying a foundation for accelerating the progress of various project activities during the extension period.</p>		<p>completion of CTA and project implementation team recruitment, as well as finalizing subcontract preparations, the project is now approaching completion with all expected deliverables on track.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

**Measures to address MS, MU, U and HU ratings on Section 2 above**

Outcome	Action(s) to be taken	By whom?	By When?
5.2. Evidence that “best practices” from the ecosystem-based approaches in the two sites is being taken up and replicated elsewhere in the province and country.	10 best practices will be summarize and extract, this task has been included in a sub-contract that is currently being prepared. These cases will be promoted through publication in print or through seminars, etc.	PMO	Ongoing and continuing until the end of the project

<sup>7</sup> Some indicators may not identify mid-term targets at the design stage (refer to approved results framework) therefore this column should only be filled when relevant.

<sup>8</sup> Use GEF Secretariat required six-point scale system: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

### 3. Implementation Progress (IP)

(Please indicate progress achieved during this FY as per the Implementation Plan/Annual Workplan)

Outcomes and outputs	Indicators (as per the logical framework)	Main achievements in the last 12 months (please DO NOT repeat results reported in previous year PIR)	Describe any variance 9 in delivering outputs
<p>Outcome 1. Policy, Planning &amp; Institutional Strengthening (NOTE: The Operation partners changed and the project was suspended until 30 December 2024, on which day the OPA amendment was counter-signed, and before which day, there was no any annual Work Plan developed or approved. The project activity has been launched since 30 December 2024.)</p>			
<p>1.1 Improved policies and policy formulation in support of biodiversity conservation in estuarine ecosystems.</p>	<p>Two local government regulations of ecological compensation for biodiversity conservation and wetlands restoration.</p> <p>Policy in support of Strategic EIA formulated and applied to economic development sector plans and programs in Dongying City (Yellow River) and Zhuhai City (Pearl River) including two draft municipal rules in conformity with State EIA Law recognizing Strategic EIA as policy tool.</p>	<p>the tender preparation of subcontractentitled "Integrated management of ecosystem protection and restoration in Yellow River estuary and Pearl River Estuary" contributes to all five outcomes is currently underway.</p>	
<p>1.2 Achievement of a more integrated approach towards promoting the conservation of biodiversity and associated habitats and ensuring the long-term "health" of the Yellow and Pearl River Estuarine ecosystems.</p>	<p>Two long-term MPA integrated management and networking plans developed</p> <p>Two medium to long-term restoration strategies for estuarine ecosystems developed</p> <p>Two plans and accompanying inter-agency protocols on medium to long-term ecosystem health monitoring</p>	<p>the tender preparation of subcontractentitled "Collaborative action and data sharing in estuarine ecosystems" contributes to outcome 1, 3 and 4 is currently underway</p>	
<p>1.3 Improved institutional coordination demonstrated through strengthened policy formulation, decision-making and integrated planning in support of biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>5 conflicts adversely (2 in Guangdong and 3 in Shandong) affecting the two estuaries resolved during life of project (LOP).</p>	<p>Successfully held a national training on MPA to management staff from 11 provinces at in Yantai, Shandong, 100 members been trained. □ □ □</p>	
<p>Outcome 2 MPA Networking and Wetland Restoration (NOTE: The Operation partners changed and the project was suspended until 30 December 2024, on which day the OPA amendment was counter-signed, and before which day, there was no any annual Work Plan developed or approved. The project activity has been launched since 30 December 2024.)</p>			

2.1 Improved management effectiveness of existing, participating MPAs.	11 updated management plans including measures to support co-management, biodiversity monitoring, and biological connectivity at the MPA network level  GIS system operating in 6 MPAs to support management, surveillance and monitoring.  Equipment for surveillance and monitoring upgraded in 11 MPAs	the tender preparation of subcontractentitled“Capacity building on typical estuary protection” contributes to outcome1-4 is currently underway.	
2.2 Improved ecological connectivity among participating MPAs in two estuaries.	Two biodiversity conservation gap analyses and strategy for increased ecological connectivity completed  Two MPA coordinating networking mechanisms established one for each of the two estuaries based on signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and agreements on protocols on monitoring enforcement and information sharing in the 12project supported MPAs	the tender preparation of subcontractentitled "Digital twins and applications in estuarine ecosystems" contributes to outcome1and 2 is currently underway.	
<p>Outcome 3. Threat Analysis, Mitigation and Monitoring and Enforcement  (NOTE: The Operation partners changed and the project was suspended until 30 December 2024, on which day the OPA amendment was counter-signed, and before which day, there was no any annual Work Plan developed or approved. The project activity has been launched since 30 December 2024.)</p>			
3.1 Increased investment for improved environmental quality in the two estuaries	Relevant investments estimated to increase by 5%.	Accomplished the landscape analysis and ecotourism research of Pearl River Estuary. And the subcontract contribute to Integrated monitoring and data sharing of the Pearl River Estuary ecosystem tasks have been completed and payment can be made in the third quarter	
3.2 Reduced human – induced stress on critical habitats in the two estuaries.	Reduced area of degraded land in Shandong project area (5,000 ha); Effective management control over 60% of area in Miaowan MPA and effectively manage the ecological tour activity in the rest area.	a subcontract contributed to landscape analysis and ecotourism research of Pearl River Estuary tasks have been completed and payment can be made in the third quarter	
3.3 Improved relationships between the local communities and the MPA staff.	Formation of 5 local village conservation groups (Shandong) and 500 volunteers participating in MPA activity and formation of 1 local village conservation group (Guangdong).	a subcontract contributed to training for local villagers and volunteers tasks have been completed and payment can be made in the third quarter	
3.4 Improved decision-making leading to ecosystem-based management in two estuaries.	Ecosystem based principles “mainstreamed” at minimum one time into decisions taken by local coordination bodies each Estuary leading to improved ecosystem “health.” Consider this concept in decision making at least one time.	a subcontract contributed to co-ordinating Committee in demonstration Protected Areas tasks have been completed and payment can be made in the third quarter	

<p>Outcome 4 Capacity Building and Increasing Environmental Awareness          (NOTE: The Operation partners changed and the project was suspended until 30 December 2024, on which day the OPA amendment was counter-signed, and before which day, there was no any annual Work Plan developed or approved. The project activity has been launched since 30 December 2024.)</p>			
<p>4.1 Increased institutional capacity and political support for the conservation of biodiversity in the two project supported demonstration sites.</p>	<p>Recognition of principles of estuarine biodiversity conservation manifested through at least 2 major government development programs.</p> <p>In-country training for senior officials and technical staff in ecosystem-based management and conservation of estuaries including application of Strategic EIA</p>	<p>Started the procurement of ecofarming handbook and software.          Successfully conducted a training on MPA policy and management to the technical and management staff at provincial, local and MPA level for all the 11 coastal provinces, 100 members have been trained, The proportion of females was 31%.</p>	
<p>4.2 Increased public participation and awareness of the significance of biodiversity conservation and estuarine ecosystems.</p>	<p>Primary and secondary school courses developed during the project adopted in other school systems in each site.</p> <p>Number of communities engaged in estuarine biodiversity conservation increased by 30 % over baseline levels in the two sites.</p>	<p>Through multimedia and multi-channel promotion of project activities, and the dissemination of project achievements</p>	
<p>Outcome 5 Project Management, M &amp; E and Replication of Project Results          (NOTE: The Operation partners changed and the project was suspended until 30 December 2024, on which day the OPA amendment was counter-signed, and before which day, there was no any annual Work Plan developed or approved. The project activity has been launched since 30 December 2024.)</p>			
<p>5.1 Project execution based on results-based management</p>	<p>Program activities executed in a timely and cost-effective manner.</p> <p>Project monitoring system operating providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcome and output targets</p>	<p>The risk mitigation plan has been updated.</p> <p>Before the project office was relocated to the AFIP, the equipment purchased in the early stage of the project had already completed the handover procedures and was officially transferred to FIO, where it was managed as a fixed asset of that entity.</p> <p>OPA has been signed on Dec30.2024, and the workplan and budget have been adjusted accordingly, the project account and PMO officially trasfered from FIO to AFIP</p> <p>The project has been approved to extend the closing date to 3 Feburary 2027.</p> <p>OPA Amendment No.1 (with Annex) has been conter-signed on 26 May 2025, PMO staff recruitment, procedures of subcontract tendering and preparation for the Project Steering Committee meeting have started.</p> <p>The 2025 PSC meeting has been arranged to he held on July 22</p>	

5.2 Evidence that “best practices” from the ecosystem-based approaches in the two sites is being taken up and replicated elsewhere in the province and country.	Chinese project-supported experiences cited in the design, preparation and implementation of at least 2 other projects in the country.	After the national MPA training was held, the Guangming Daily, Green Times, the website of the NFGA, and the official WeChat account of the AFIP all made relevant reports. The new policies related to MPAs have been disseminated to other marine provinces beyond the project demonstration areas and even the entire country through training and media promotion.	
---	--	--	--

### Implementation Progress (IP) , and Overall Assessment

Please note that the overall IP ratings should be substantiated by evidence and progress reported above. The ratings and comments should reflect the overall progress of results during the fiscal year (July 1 2024, to June 30, 2025)

	Project Manager/ Coordinator	Lead Technical Officer	Budget Holder	GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP)	GEF Technical Officer (GTO)
<b>FY2025 Implementation Objective rating<sup>10</sup></b>	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)
<b>Comments/reasons justifying the ratings for FY2025 and any changes (positive or negative) in the ratings since the previous reporting period</b>	<p>Although the delivery in this reporting period was significantly lower than expected due to factors such as the preparation of the subcontracting contract tender and personnel recruitment, the reason why the project manager rated IP as S is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A great deal of work has been carried out in the field of project management. For instance, signing the OPA and OPA amendment No.1, transferring the fixed assets, establishing the project office, and applying for project extensions, etc. The above-mentioned tasks formed the foundation for the smooth implementation of the project, and they were all successfully completed in accordance with the timeframes.</li> <li>2. The training for 100 people on marine conservation was successfully completed as planned, and the results and impact were very good.</li> <li>3. The ongoing contract preparation work provides a foundation for accelerating the project progress later on.</li> </ol>	<p>The transformation of project implementation arrangements required a transitional period. With the recent recruitment of key personnel (CTA, M&amp;E specialists, and PMO management) now complete, subcontracts for project deliverables currently in preparation, and a successful PSC meeting conducted to review progress and workplans, we have established strong confidence in achieving all project deliverables</p>	<p><i>The project made good progress during the reporting year. The new OPA was signed and the project extension was approved. The event to train 100 people on marine conservation was conducted with high quality. With the new PMO set up and the preparation of subcontracts are ready, we expect the project will be completed before the new deadline.</i></p>	<p><i>This project has moved back to right track and it is expected this project will be completed by Feb. 3rd 2027.</i></p>	<p>While low delivery is something to monitor, with the onboarding of PMU personnel and finalizing key contractual agreements, we expect to see accelerated implementation.</p>

		and successful implementation completion.			
--	--	---	--	--	--

<sup>9</sup> Variance refers to the difference between the expected and actual progress at the time of reporting.

<sup>10</sup> Implementation Progress Rating – A rating of the extent to which the implementation of a project’s components and activities is in compliance with the projects approved implementation plan.

## 4. Summary on progress and challenges

**Please provide a summary paragraph on project implementation progress consistent with the information reported in section 2 and 3 of the PIR (Max 400 words) (This section will be uploaded to the GEF portal)**

The project was initially managed by the former State Oceanic Administration. Following the institutional reform in 2018, the Ministry of Natural Resources transferred the Project from the former State Oceanic Administration to NFGA. On 12 April 2021, NFGA signed the Amendment No.3 to the Execution Agreement with FAO, thereby formally assuming the role as the Execution Partner. In order to maintain the continuity of project management, with the consent of the Ministry of Finance and FAO, the Project Management Office (PMO) continued to be located at the First Institute of Oceanography (FIO) at that time.

The project has made substantial contributions to protected area coordination, estuarine ecosystem protection and restoration, biodiversity conservation in the Pearl River Estuary, and technical support for the Yellow River Delta National Park and ecological restoration efforts. The overall rating of the Mid-term Review (MTR) in 2022 was "Satisfactory".

On December 30, 2024, the NFGA signed the OPA with FAO and restarted the project. At the same time, the project office and the project account were transferred from FIO to the Academy of Forestry Inventory and Planning (AFIP), NFGA. On 12 March 2025, FAO allocated the project's 2025 budget of USD 897,974 (equivalent to RMB 6,493,429.59) to the bank account of AFIP.

The closing date of the project has been officially approved to extended to 3rd February 2027. Currently, AFIP is undertaking activities including PMO staff recruitment, procedures of subcontract tendering and preparation for the Project Steering Committee meeting, etc.

**Please provide a summary paragraph on challenges of project implementation consistent with the information reported in section 2 and 3 of the PIR (Max 400 words) (This section will be uploaded to the GEF portal)**

The original implementation period of the project was five years (from 12 June 2017 to 11 June 2022). In 2021, with the consent of all parties, it was extended to 3 February 2023. Due to the impact of COVID-19, the project activities failed to be completed on schedule. The Ministry of Finance agreed to extend the project again. However, a formal extension approval had not been obtained before the financial closing date, and the account of the project was closed in FAO's management system due to the EA expiration, leading to project suspension.

The COVID-19, institutional reforms, project management and other factors have all exerted varying degrees of influence on project implementation at an early stage. As a direct result, the delivery of the funds was only about 30%, far below the expected target. Furthermore, the re-establishment of AFIP as the new PMO involves complex procedures, the bidding processes for subcontracts are cumbersome, and the Terminal Evaluation of the project needs to be conducted six months before its closure, etc.

The 2025 PSC has been held in Dongying on July 22, 1. The PSC meeting deliberated and approved the 2025 annual work plan of the project. It was resolved that the PSC shall enhance its coordinating role to ensure effective collaboration among all implementing units, accelerate project implementation, and improve the fund utilization rate to achieve expected outcomes. Meanwhile, cross-project exchanges with other international cooperation initiatives shall be strengthened to foster mutual learning and knowledge sharing.

## Implementation of Exit Strategy

<p><b>Has the project developed an Exit Strategy? If yes, please describe the progress to implement it.</b></p>	<p>Not yet. The project has been designed to be sustainable. Environmental and social sustainability are main objectives of the project and were assessed during the PPG and MTR phase. A sustainability plan will be developed soon to identify how the project's results can be continued beyond the GEF funding, including identifying institutional roles and responsibilities for the continuing operation of key project deliverables after the GEF project. The project aims to improve estuary biodiversity mainstreaming. The key word of project sustainability planning is mainstreaming. The aspects of sustainability such as environmental, social, financial and institutional, etc. all will be covered in this plan.</p>
<p><b>How is the project enhancing institutional capacities to foster country ownership for more durable / sustained results?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase domestic and international exchanges by workshops, trainings, study tour, etc;</li> <li>2. Refine and organize project best cases, and promote project experiences through publishing, printing and conference formats.</li> <li>3. Promote the project achievements through multiple channels and methods</li> <li>4. Expand financing channels to ensure the sustainability after project closure</li> </ol>

## 5. Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS): risks from the project

<b>Initial ESS Risk Classification</b> (at CEO Endorsement/Approval Stage)	
<b>New environmental and social risks.</b>	There were no new social and environmental risks during the reporting period.
<b>Progress made towards implementing the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)</b> (only for Moderate and High Risk Projects)	<i>no update, no existing ESMP was found</i>
<b>Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)</b>	<i>GRM"was not been identified in the project documents and previous reports, and no update has been made.</i>

## 6. Risks to the Project

The following table summarizes risks identified in the Project Document and reflects also any new risks identified during the project implementation.

	Type of risk	Risk rating <sup>1</sup>	Identified in the ProDoc Y/N	Description of Risk	Mitigation measure implemented
1	Partnership & Coordination	Low	Yes	Lack of Effective Project Coordination. Failure to achieve close and collaborative cooperation between the many institutional stakeholders with vested interests in the two estuaries, both in the public and private sector, will significantly reduce the chances of the project to achieve its stated goal and objectives.	In the preparation of the PIF consultations at the national (Ministry of Finance), provincial (Departments of Finance and Oceans and Fisheries) and local (municipal) levels indicated there was widespread political and financial support for the Project. Resources in project preparation were used to support the needed public consultation and participation to broaden the existing political support for the Project to the community at large. During implementation, one of the main priority actions to be supported under the Project will be to promote increased interinstitutional coordination through supporting the Dongying's existing Integrated Coastal Management Committee (Yellow River Estuary) and the Marine Affairs Leading Group (Pearl River Estuary). At the level of the MPA, the Project will strengthen the existing (or create new) inter-institutional coordinating committees and support the acceptance of principles of co-management with local communities.
2	Political	Low	Yes	Slow Uptake of Policy Recommendations. This risk is associated with the degree to which policy studies and recommendations in support of increased conservation of estuarine wetlands and associated biodiversity can be "mainstreamed" into provincial and municipal policy frameworks.	This risk has been partly mitigated by a recent shift in national and provincial government priorities beginning in 2007 placing greater emphasis on environmental quality. More specifically, this risk has been addressed in project design through: (i) supporting relevant policy reforms during the process of development of the 12th provincial and municipal development plans; (ii) providing support for the creation of public fora to address issues and threats related to the conservation of biodiversity; (iii) increasing capacity in line agencies; and (iv) promoting a number of awareness raising activities in support of relevant policy reforms directed at both key decision makers as well as the public at large which may include site visits to areas where policy related studies and related activities are being supported. As a monitoring measure the Project would integrate tracking tools (in its M&E system) with well defined triggers to ensure a timely integration of policy reforms into municipal/county policy frameworks.
3	Environmental	Low	Yes	Climate Change. The Pearl and Yellow River basins are subject to extreme climate events (primarily precipitation and droughts), which appear to have increased in both intensity and frequency in recent years. These events are projected to continue or increase under most future climate change scenarios and would likely adversely impact the two deltaic systems, their respective habitats and biodiversity that they support as well as the livelihoods of community who depend on their respective resources.	The PRC has taken actions to cope with climate change and applied integrated watershed management principles that would help to minimize the impact of changes on estuarine ecology through the adjustment in the timing and amounts of water released from upstream impoundments. Moreover, by strengthening management and promoting the improved environmental "health" of the deltaic systems, the Project would contribute to build the ecosystem's resilience to climate change. Providing support to local communities through sustainable/alternative livelihoods would enable them to better cope with climate change impacts. Furthermore, the Project would forge linkages and synergies with other ongoing climate change adaptation activities in their respective delta regions and contribute to the knowledge base through its information dissemination and public awareness activities.
4	Economic	Low	No	Currency Risk. Significant changes in foreign currency	This was addressed through incorporating appropriate price contingencies in the project budget and will continue to be

			exchange rates may pose a risk to the achievement of all project outputs and outcomes.	monitored closely during implementation for the purpose of making cost-savings wherever possible through the 5 years life of project.
--	--	--	--	---

**Project overall risk rating (Low, Moderate, Substantial or High):**

FY2024 rating	FY2025 rating	Comments/reason for the rating for FY2025 and any changes (positive or negative) in the rating since the previous reporting period
Low	Low	The risk mitigation plan has been updated after the approval of project extension, during this reporting period, no new risks occurred and the original risk levels did not increase.

11 Risk ratings means a rating of the overall risk of factors internal or external to the project which may affect implementation or prospects for achieving project objectives. Risk of projects should be rated on the following scale: Low, Moderate, Substantial or High.

## 7. Follow-up on Mid-term review or supervision mission

If the project had an MTR or a supervision mission in 2024, please report on how the recommendations were implemented during this fiscal year as indicated in the Management Response or in the supervision mission report.

MTR or supervision mission recommendation	Measures implemented <u>during this Fiscal Year</u>
Recommendation 1:	<p>The Project should be extended to 12 June 2025 in order to complete 60 months of effective implementation since the inception workshop held on 12 June 2020. This extension should be granted on the condition an interactive workshop is conducted to:</p> <p>a) Prepare the ToC for Project 045, paying particular attention to establishing clearer and more coherent results (immediate and wider outcomes) that reflect the current political and institutional context, in particular the creation of the new YRE National Park that will absorb five of the six MPAs;</p> <p>b) Update and clarify the Project's RM, paying particular attention to:</p> <p>(i) improving the causal logic between the Project's outcomes selected above and their corresponding outputs;</p> <p>(ii) ensuring all outputs are updated to reflect the current institutional context and needs of stakeholders and end beneficiaries;</p> <p>(iii) integrating gender equality and risk management as cross-cutting themes in all main outputs and outcomes to deliver greater inclusiveness and resilience.</p> <p>c) Revise the GEF budget by relocating funds to actions that will add most value in the time remaining (i.e. achieve immediate outcomes/wider outcomes) and downsizing/removing, budgets for actions that are not a priority, no longer valid, or where there is scope for co-finance to fill the gap.</p> <p><b>On December 30, 2024, the OPA of this project has been signed between FAO and NFGA, at the same time, the project office and project account were transferred from FIO to AFIP, NFGA. In order to ensure the completion of all activities of the project, to better serve the current demand for protected area construction in China, to use the grant funds more efficiently, and to achieve the project outcomes. On April 27, 2025, the project closure date was extended by 20 months to February 3, 2027, and this was approved by the Ministry of Finance.</b></p>
Recommendation 2:	<p>FAO should identify and apply an adequate budget that enables FAO-CN and, if possible other country offices that have a large portfolio of GEF-funded projects, to fulfil the administrative and technical duties demanded of them to a satisfactory standard. This should be resolved before the start of the recommended extension of Project 045 on 04/02/2023.</p> <p><b>On May 29, 2025, OPA Amendment No. 1 has been signed and clearly stipulating that 30,000 US dollars would be directly managed by the FAO and used to cover expenses such as audits, etc.</b></p>
Recommendation 3:	<p>A Chief Technical Adviser, a Monitoring and Evaluation specialist and a Gender specialist should be recruited from the start of the extension period. It is recommended the M&amp;E specialist is recruited on a full-time basis and the CTA and gender specialist employed on a part-time basis (both up to 150 work/days per annum).</p> <p><b>On July 29, 2025, AFIP,NFGA organized an interview to recruit staff for the project office, including a part-time chief technical advisor and full-time M&amp;E officers. There are no dedicated gender expert at present, but all the work of the project now pays more attention to gender mainstreaming.</b></p>
Recommendation 4:	<p>The Project should train the MPA management teams to integrate the following framework plans, regulations and actions into their management plans (Output 2.2): the eco-compensation plan (Output 1.1); MPA network regulations (Output 1.3); integrated management and networking plans (Output 1.4); restoration strategies (Output 1.5); long-term ecosystem health monitoring plans (Output 1.6) investment strategies (Output 3.1). In addition, the Project should identify two framework plans that are currently missing on: capacity development (to develop and maintain co-management, ecological and social networks) and law enforcement (to develop a multi-sector mechanism to control illegal or bad practices with the support of local communities).</p> <p><b>The tasks that were not carried out before MTR have all been included in the current work plan. The main form of this is by being incorporated into the subcontract .</b></p>
Recommendation 5:	<p>The GIS database should be expanded to develop risk maps that show marine habitats and biodiversity that are most vulnerable to climate variability and change, natural disasters and degradation due to socio-economic activity in the PRE MPA network and the YRE National Park.</p> <p><b>The recommendation of MTR has been implemented. The work above mentioned have been incorporated into the 2025 work plan in the form of a subcontract, and it is one of the key tasks. Preparations for the tender process are underway.</b></p>
Recommendation 6:	<p>FAO-CN should establish a communication platform to encourage the PMOs of GEF-funded projects explore</p>

opportunities

**FAO-CN is promoting inter-project communication by creating opportunities, such as increasing mutual visits among projects or participating in other project activities.**

## 8. Minor project amendments

Minor amendments are changes to the design or implementation that do not have significant impact on the project objectives or scope, or an increase of the GEF project financing up to 5% as described in Annex 9 of the GEF Project and Program Cycle Policy Guidelines <sup>12</sup>. Please describe any minor changes that the project has made under the relevant category or categories and provide supporting documents as an annex to this report if available. *(This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)*

Category of change	Provide a description of the change	Indicate the timing of the change	Approved by
Results framework	N/A		
Components and cost	The components remained unchanged. The specific activities of each component and the corresponding cost arrangements were adjusted accordingly during the signing of the OPA amendment No. 1.	25-May	FAO, NFGA
Institutional and implementation arrangements	The national government changed the PMO settings. The PMO in FIO has been dismissed and the new PMO is going to build in AFIP.	Dec-24	MoF
Financial management	The national government has changed the project account from FIO to AFIP.	Dec-24	MoF
Implementation schedule	The project is extended to February 2027	May-25	MoF, FAO
Executing Entity	National Forestry and Grassland Administration of PRC	Apr-21	MoF, FAO
Executing Entity Category	National Government		
Minor project objective change			
Safeguards			
Risk analysis			
Increase of GEF project financing up to 5%			
Co-financing			
Location of project activity			
Other minor project amendment (define)			

<sup>12</sup> [GEF Council meeting documents, guidelines, project and program cycle policy 2020 update](#)

## 9. Stakeholders' Engagement

Please report on progress, challenges, and outcomes on stakeholder engagement (based on the description of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan) included at CEO Endorsement/Approval during this reporting period. (This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)

Profile	Stakeholder name	Type of partnership	Progress, results & Challenges on Stakeholder's Engagement
Government Institutions	Ministry of Finance	OFP	Leading the restructure and financial control of the project management.
Government Institutions	National Forestry and Grassland Administration	Operational Partner	Restructuring the project management following the guidance of MoF
Government Institutions	Academy of Forestry Inventory and Planning	PMO and project account	Accepted the project as the new management entity following the guidance of MoF and NFGA. A new PMO has been built and project account was set in AFIP.
IGOs	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	GEF agency	Manage and disburse funds from GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO; Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document; Provide technical guidance; Report to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office through the annual Project Implementation Review on project progress and provide financial reports to the GEF Trustee.
Others	First Institute of Oceanography	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Provide trainer/experts for the training organized by Project on MPA management nationwide
Others	Chinese Academy of Sciences	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Responsible for certain project activities and contribute to project outcomes
IGOs	Wetlands International	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Responsible for certain project activities and contribute to project outcomes
Others	The Ocean University of China	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Provide trainer/experts for the training organized by Project on MPA management nationwide
Others	Institute of Marine Development Strategy, Ministry of Natural Resources	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Provide trainer/experts for the training organized by Project on MPA management nationwide
Others	South China Sea Monitoring Centre	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Ecosystem monitoring and data sharing in the PRE
Others	Yat-sen University	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Landscape analysis and ecotourism research of the Pearl River Estuary, Coordination meetings among 5 MPAs in Guangdong and volunteer training
Government Institutions	Natural Resources and Planning Bureau of Dongying City	Local partners	County level (in Guangdong) and District level (in Dongying) governments play a crucial role in implementing the on-the-ground pilot activities along the two pilot estuaries.
Government Institutions	Dongying Bureau of Ocean and Fisheries in Shandong and the Bureau of Ocean and Fisheries in Guangdong	Local partners	They are the lead actors in implementing the project activities in the field.
Government Institutions	County/District level government	Local partners	County level (in Guangdong) and District level (in Dongying) governments play a crucial role in implementing the on-the-ground pilot activities along the two pilot estuaries.
Government Institutions	Shandong Prov. Government/ Natural Resources Department	Local partners	They are the lead actors in implementing the project activities in the field.

Government Institutions	Guangdong Prov. Government/ Natural Resources Department	Local partners	They are the lead actors in implementing the project activities in the field.
Government Institutions	Management Bureau of Zhuhai Qi'ao Provincial Nature Reserve	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Zhujiangkou Chinese White Dolphin Reserve	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Jiangmen Chinese White Dolphin Provincial National Reserve	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Neilingding-Futian National Nature Reserve	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Zhuhai Miaowan Civic Coral Reserve	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Dongying Laizhou Bay Razor Clam Ecological National Special MPA	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Shandong Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Shallow Sea Shellfish Ecological National Special MPA	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	The Lijin Benthic Fish Ecological National Special MPA	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.

Government Institutions	Yellow River Estuary Ecological National Special MPA	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Dongying Guangrao Polychaeta National Ecological Special MPA	Local partners	Responsible for the coordination of marine environmental protection affairs, development of the marine environmental monitoring and assessment sub-component, design of the marine ecological compensation policy activity, oversight for the marine biodiversity and marine ecological environmental conservation, management of the marine nature reserves and Special MPAs, and organizing marine monitoring network.
Government Institutions	Nature Reserve Management Office of Qi'ao Dangan Is.	Local partners	Mainstreaming biodiversity into PA network must include a social component since people will do this mainstreaming work and knowledge and local knowledge will be critical to its success.
Others	Haole Nature Research Base	Local partners	Mainstreaming biodiversity into PA network must include a social component since people will do this mainstreaming work and knowledge and local knowledge will be critical to its success.
Others	Jiangmen No. 1 Middle School Development Center	Local partners	Mainstreaming biodiversity into PA network must include a social component since people will do this mainstreaming work and knowledge and local knowledge will be critical to its success.
Government Institutions	Jiangmen Prov Chinese White Dolphin Nature Reserve	Local partners	Mainstreaming biodiversity into PA network must include a social component since people will do this mainstreaming work and knowledge and local knowledge will be critical to its success.
NGOs	Beijing Entrepreneurs' Environmental Protection Foundation	Consultants/Consulting institutes	Provide trainer/experts for the training organized by Project on MPA management nationwide
IGOs	United Nations Development Programme	GEF agency of Flyway project	Assist in providing more opportunities for interaction among different projects
Others	Local communities	Local partners	Mainstreaming biodiversity into PA network must include a social component since people will do this mainstreaming work and knowledge and local knowledge will be critical to its success.

## 10. Gender Mainstreaming

**Information on Progress on Gender-responsive measures as documented at CEO Endorsement/Approval in the gender action plan or equivalent (when applicable) during this reporting period. (This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)**

Category	Yes/No	Briefly describe progress and results achieved during this reporting period.
a. Closing <b>gender gaps</b> in access to and control over natural resources	Yes	Successfully held a national training on MPA to management staff from 11 provinces at in Yantai, Shandong, 100 members been trained, among them, 31 women, accounting for 31% .
b. Improving <b>women's participation and decision making</b>		Increased female staff from 1 to 3/4 total; set 25% minimum women's attendance in substantial meetings.
c. generating <b>socio-economic benefits or services for women</b>		We plan to establish a women's professional support group in selected demonstration MPA to address career challenges through solution-oriented workshops, enhancing workplace competencies.
Any other good practices on gender		/

## 11. Knowledge and Learning Activities

Knowledge activities/products (when applicable), as outlined in Knowledge Management (and Learning) Approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval, <u>during this reporting period</u> . (This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)	
<b>Knowledge management and Learning (KML):</b> Does the project have a KML strategy?	Yes
If <b>YES</b> , what is the implementation progress? In your answer, please describe how the project is fostering knowledge sharing and learning among stakeholders at national and sub-national level.	1. training 2. meeting 3. environmental education materials 4. site-visit
If <b>NO</b> , how does the project identify, collect and document good practices?	
Please list good practices, including key-technical and/or institutional innovations, from the project thus far.	
<b>Communication strategy:</b> Does the project have a communication strategy?	Yes
Please provide a brief overview of the communications successes and challenges <i>this fiscal year</i> .	After the national MPA training was held, the Guangming Daily, Green Times, the website of the NFGA, and the official WeChat account of the AFIP all made relevant reports.
<b>Human-interest story:</b> Please share a <i>human-interest story</i> from your project, focusing on how the <i>project has helped to improve people's livelihoods</i> while contributing to achieving the expected Global Environmental Benefits. Please indicate any <i>Socio-economic Co-benefits</i> that were generated by the project. Include at least <i>one beneficiary quote and perspective</i> , and please also <i>include related photos and photo credits</i> .	
Please provide links to related website, social media account	<a href="https://www.forestry.gov.cn/lyj/1/lcdt/20250626/631836.html">https://www.forestry.gov.cn/lyj/1/lcdt/20250626/631836.html</a>  <a href="https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/EwZgPxixKEEjiShX7iuZtA">https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/EwZgPxixKEEjiShX7iuZtA</a>  <a href="https://app.gmdaily.cn/as/opened/n/70ebc759923a43bc9637e9df84ece97b">https://app.gmdaily.cn/as/opened/n/70ebc759923a43bc9637e9df84ece97b</a>  <a href="https://api.jinantimes.com.cn/h5/xhh-app/#/content?catid=38&amp;id=5112179&amp;fx=1">https://api.jinantimes.com.cn/h5/xhh-app/#/content?catid=38&amp;id=5112179&amp;fx=1</a>  <a href="https://app.gmdaily.cn/as/opened/n/fec25c0ba2e74f79b50897e0a3b40d6e">https://app.gmdaily.cn/as/opened/n/fec25c0ba2e74f79b50897e0a3b40d6e</a>
Please provide a list of publications, leaflets, video materials, newsletters, or other communications assets published on the web, if any.	
Please indicate the Communication and/or knowledge management focal point's name and contact details.	

## 12. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Involvement

**Are Indigenous Peoples and local communities involved in the project (as per the approved Project Document)? If yes, please briefly explain.**

If applicable, please describe the process and current status of on-going/completed, legitimate consultations to obtain Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) with the indigenous communities.

N/A

Do indigenous peoples and/or local communities have an active participation in the project activities? If yes, briefly describe how.

N/A

### 13. Co-Financing Table

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Amount Confirmed at CEO endorsement/approval (in USD)	Actual Amount Materialized at 30 June 2025 (in USD)
Recipient Country Government	NFGA	Grant	\$ 50,300	\$ 220,373
Recipient Country Government	NFGA	In-kind	\$ 648,304	\$ 50,587
Recipient Country Government	Shandong Province	Grant	\$ 3,352,600	\$ 691,662
Recipient Country Government	Shandong Province	In-kind	\$ 789,527	\$ 28,085,268
Recipient Country Government	Guangdong Province	Grant	\$ 6,025,100	\$ 2,502,760
Recipient Country Government	Guangdong Province	In-kind	\$ 747,035	\$ 7,729,079
GEF Agency	FAO	Grant	\$ 139,300	\$ -
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind	\$ 92,914	\$ 163,465
		<b>Total</b>	\$ 11,845,080	\$ 39,443,194

**Please explain any significant changes in project co-financing since CEO Endorsement/Approval, or differences between the pledged and materialized co-financing amounts.**  
 Compared with the data since CEO Endorsement approved, the project has already secured more than 3.3 times the co-financing funds. In the remaining time of the project, the amount of co-financing funds will continue to increase.

## 14. Geo Location Information

This section should be completed **ONLY** by projects with 1st PIR and in case the geographic coverage of project activities has changed since last reporting period.  
*This information is required by GEF Secretariat in GEF Portal*

Are there any changes in the geographic coverage of the project activities since the last PIR report?

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	Geo Name ID	Location & Activity Description*

## Annex. Monitoring Area-based GEF Core Indicator Commitments and Progress with FERM

The Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM), developed by FAO, is the official monitoring platform for tracking global progress and disseminating good practices for the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration. The FERM can serve as an integrated GIS-based platform, providing GEF staff and all relevant stakeholders the chance to display the progress of committed versus achieved land under restoration or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use, along with clear results such as the percentage of project achievement. Having a common tracking and monitoring platform allows users to comprehensively assess and report on project progress. A user-friendly dashboard showcasing project results gives stakeholders a clear understanding of the extent to which project targets have been achieved. Projects with area-based GEF Core Indicators (GEF Core Indicators 1-5 and LDCF Core Indicator 2) are encouraged to register in the FERM platform.

### Useful links:

- [FERM website](#)
- [FERM User Guide \(PDF\)](#)
- [FERM YouTube channel](#)
- [Email Carmen Morales](#)

<sup>26</sup> It also supports countries in reporting areas under restoration for the Kunming-Montreal GBF Target 2 (areas under restoration) for which FAO is the custodian agency.