



Fostering Water and Environmental Security in the Ma and Neun/Ca Transboundary River Basins and Related Coastal Areas

Basic Information

GEF ID

10193

Countries

Regional (Viet Nam, Lao PDR)

Project Title

Fostering Water and Environmental Security in the Ma and Neun/Ca Transboundary River Basins and Related Coastal Areas

GEF Agency(ies)

FAO

Agency ID

FAO: 658320

GEF Focal Area(s)

International Waters

Program Manager

Astrid Hillers

PIF

Part I – Project Informatic

Focal area elements

1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) Yes, the project is supporting cooperation between Lao and Vietnam on the Ma and Neun/Ca Transboundary basins and supports the development of a cooperative mechanisms, a Transboundary Diagnostics and Strategic Action program and on the ground pilots and is aligned with IW objective 3.

In the PIF: Please split table A allocation of the GEF IW funds to align funds with support to the respective sub-objectives of the IW strategy objective 3 (i.e. on information, institution and Nexus investments).

(4/16/2019) The comment has been addressed/Table A revised. **Cleared.**

Agency Response Table A split has been updated as requested.

Indicative project/program description summary

2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) The overall logic and components of the PIF are well described and build on related processes. It reflects country commitments and areas of interest expressed in the recently signed MoU between Laos and Vietnam on cooperation on a range of areas of interest around natural resources and hydrology.

We would like the team to address a few comments at PIF stage:

- ((1) Please note that while the finalized TDA is usually signed off on technical levels (e.g. heads of agencies) , in the SAP (component 4) countries are committing to agreed priority action. The SAP therefore needs to be signed by at least one Minister from each country. Please note this in the PIF.
- (2) Component 3 – “Testing solutions on the ground: please label this component as 'investment' not 'TA' in table B.
- (3) Strategic Action Program (SAP): please consider that a five year (only) time frame for SAP priority actions is often hard to achieve. It is often good to capture both short term priorities (1 – 5 year) as well as capture (and not loose) medium term actions (5 - 10 years).
- (4) The outline of activities in cooperation with IW learn are well noted (output 5.2). Please indicate that at least 1 % of the project grant will be programmed for this.

(4/16/2019) The comments above have been addressed in the resubmission. **Cleared.**

Further at **ENDORSEMENT** stage:

- Component 1: output 1.5 is well noted to develop agreed key environmental status indicators. Please aim to encourage that the SAP process makes use of these indicators to agree on quantifiable targets for stress reductions based on these indicators - as applicable.
- TDA: In project design and developing an overall work plan, assure that the TDA remains a step in the process to underpin the SAP which in itself may prioritize further detailed studies. As a guide point: the TDA should best be finalized before/by midterm to allow digestion of its content and then serve as the base for consultations and agreement on the Strategic Action Program.
- Please assure that the TDA process includes to build on and use (and with that possibly strengthen) local scientific capacity.
- In terms of 'designing multi-purpose monitoring networks' (2.3): we would strongly suggest during project design to also consider innovative, remotely sensed and freely available data sources AND building comparative capacities in each country to access and analyze such information. This could also greatly complement DRR capacities (See MoU between countries and the voiced need for this). In addition, when establishing environmental status indicators (component 1.5), please cross-check and assure that monitoring systems are in place or being designed to assess these over time.
- Pilots (component 3.1): in the draft PIF there has been some indication of possible focus areas for these pilots which is now omitted.

While this is acceptable at PIF stage, by endorsement there needs to be an agreed manual indicating e.g. the type and scope (\$\$ range) of the pilots, criteria for selection of the pilots, and a process for selection and approval of proposals for pilots. Agreement on this should be assured during project preparation to allow timely implementation during the project.

- Please reconsider during design whether the output on a Shared Vision (2.2) is better placed in component 2 or 4. Conversely, the IMCs may fit better in component 2.
- NAPs: Please note that NAPs could be free-standing documents or developed as annexes to the SAP.
- Training and awareness raising (component 5): Please avoid a series of "one off" training events which often do not create lasting uptake and capacity enhancement. Second, in terms of dissemination: please assess what media/formats are best to reach which target groups in the countries. There seems to be a focus on on-line tools which still have limited reach in the countries where access to and use of these technologies vary greatly. The social assessment during project design should contribute to identify what media are best to raise awareness – e.g. to reach communities radio, school materials, and oral media (theatre etc) are sometimes more effective (also given the high prevalence of non-literate in the region).
- SAP adoption/endorsement: the PIF states that it will be signed at "ministerial level". In the the project document/endorsement stage , please be explicit and clear that this means signature of at least one Minister from each country.

Agency Response

1. Changes made in Table A (Outcome 1 indicator) as well as in project description and Outcome 4 indicator.
2. Changed to INV
3. Updated to - Two Strategic Action Programs (SAP) with horizon of 5-10 years, consistent with the Shared Vision in Table A, as well as in project description
4. Done

Co-financing

3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?

(4/11/2019) Yes, the PIF provides transparent explanation on the sources, types, and contribution of co-finance to the project.

Agency Response**GEF Resource Availability**

4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) Yes, the requested GEF resources are available and fees and PPG within GEF norms.

Agency Response**The STAR allocation?****Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

N/A

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

yes, see above.

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

N/A

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

N/A

Agency Response**Focal area set-aside?****Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

N/A

Agency Response**Impact Program Incentive?****Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

N/A

Agency Response**Project Preparation Grant**

5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) Yes, the requested PPG is within GEF norms.

Agency Response**Core indicators**

6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) The IW freshwater specific indicator (core indicator 7) and sub-indicators have been filled. Please revise the following:

- (
- (1) Please only fill in sub-indicators at PIF stage (no “zero” or other entries for later project cycle stages)
 - (2) Please revisit sub-indicator 7.2. A rating of 3 appears too high (note: a rating of 3 indicates “3 = Regional legal agreement signed and RMI in place”).

(4/16/2019) Comments have been addressed. **Cleared.**

Agency Response

- 1. The 0 in the indicators seem to be generated by the Portal as an addition of all sub-indicators values – FAO did not enter those 0 values.
- 2. The value has been revised to 2

Project/Program taxonomy

7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) Yes, the taxonomy/tagging and the Rio Markers are appropriate.

Agency Response

Part II – Project Justification

1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) Yes, the environmental situation and challenges and drivers for cooperation on the Ma and Neun/CA rivers are sufficiently outlined at PIF stage. The project itself will be designed to bring countries together to further elaborate on this during the process of developing the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis.

Agency Response

2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) Yes, the baseline has been described and covers projects on national levels.

Agency Response**3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?****Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

(4/11/2019) Yes, overall this description is sufficiently outlined. Please through refer back to the comments in Part 1/question 2 above both for PIF and endorsement stage.

Agency Response**4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?****Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

(4/11/2019). Yes, the project is well aligned with objective 3 of the International Waters strategy and its sub-objectives.

Agency Response**5. Is the incremental / additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, the project is addressing the incremental costs for transboundary cooperation between Vietnam and Laos on these two basins which are above and beyond the current uni-lateral planning and investment planning.

Agency Response

6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019) Yes. The GEBs as measured through the core indicators and as furthermore outlined in the PIF are reasonable and achievable.

Agency Response

7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, the project will aid the countries to develop agreed Action Plans which the existing MoU (from February 2019) outlines as the basis for joined or coordinated implementation.

Agency Response

Project/Program Map and Coordinates

Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). The Map does not show in the Portal. Can you please try to reattach this? Please let us know if we can aid in case of technical/portal challenges.

(4/16/2019) Comment has been addressed and the map now shows in the Portal. **Cleared.**

Agency Response The Map has been re-pasted and is also uploaded in the "document" section.

Stakeholders

Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, the PIF includes an initial description of a list of stakeholders and their role in the project.

Agency Response

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, the description at PIF level is very detailed and considers specific country contexts and considers different levels of engagement and gender differentiated roles and impacts of various components of the project.

At ENDORSEMENT: during project design, please place special attentions to component 3 – investment in solutions/pilots – and mechanisms to ensure women's access and gender balance and participation in all aspects of selection, design and implementation.

Agency Response

Private Sector Engagement

Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, the key private sector actors and interests are outlined.

During project design/by **ENDORSEMENT**: Please highlight in the project design the benefits of private sector engagement in the TDA and the SAP process and to encourage engagement during later SAP implementation. The private sector and AWS may also have an important contribution in the design, finance and/or implementation of component 3/pilots/solutions.

Agency Response

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Please add climate risk in table under Annex 5 and add in the component description that the TDA and SAP will need to address climate variability and change and identify actions to increase resilience.

(4/16/2019) The comment has been addressed (PIF stage). The TDA and SAP need to explicitly address climate risks and measures to increase resilience. Please expand on this in the project document/at endorsement. **Cleared.**

Agency Response

Has been included under risk section and in project description as requested.

Coordination

**Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined?
Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, at PIF stage this outline is adequate.

Please expand in more detail during project design (i.e. by ENDORSEMENT), including consideration of connection to South China Sea LME, particularly the UNEP project on SAP implementation.

(5/1/2019) As also communicated via email today: PLEASE NOTE ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE at ENDORSEMENT:

(1) Project Management Costs (PMC):

- Please provide a budget at CEO endorsement submission. Please recall that PMC cannot be used to finance: (i) Government staff salaries; (ii) Salaries and fees for GEF Agency staff or consultants; (iii) Purchase of vehicles; and (iv) M&E activities which should be under M&E component budget.

- Please assure and show co-finance for PMC related/budgeted activities. This is to ensure and demonstrate country ownership as well as sustainability and continuity post project closure.

(2) Please also recall and note that Agency staff who are performing GEF-specific project cycle management services and corporate activities should be financed from Agency fee, but not to be budgeted out of the project GEF financing under project components/activities.

Agency Response

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes. Key relevant national strategies are described. In addition, the project directly builds on the MoU between Vietnam and Laos signed in February 2019.

Agency Response

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed “knowledge management (KM) approach” in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project’s/program’s overall impact and sustainability?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, the PIF outlines the need and provision for sharing of experiences both for the overall project (e.g. component 5), including but not limited to collaboration and participation in IW-Learn and holding yearly stock-taking meetings. There is also explicit attention to learning and knowledge exchange with regard to the pilot investments (component 3).

Agency Response

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

art III – Country Endorsements

Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/11/2019). Yes, both OFPs have signed an LOE in support of the project.

By **ENDORSEMENT** : Please provide a revised LOE for Vietnam. The table in the letter should simply state the entire GEF IW amount for the whole project (note: splitting the amount evenly is unlikely; in this case many of the activities (such as including the TDA and SAP process) are truly regional.

Agency Response

Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects

Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

EFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/16/2019) Yes, the project is technically cleared and recommended for inclusion in a future work program.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

(4/16/2019) Please note a number of comments to be addressed by endorsement.

/view Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	4/12/2019	4/5/2019
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/16/2019	4/16/2019
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/1/2019	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval