

Support to the Development of Legal and Institutional Frameworks on Access to Genetic Resources and related Benefit Sharing and Traditional Knowledge in line with the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol in Venezuela

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10812

Countries

Venezuela

Project Name

Support to the Development of Legal and Institutional Frameworks on Access to Genetic Resources and related Benefit Sharing and Traditional Knowledge in line with the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol in Venezuela

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

4/19/2021

Review completed by PM

Program Manager

Mark Zimsky

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

MSP

PIF

Part I ? Project Information

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

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

4/20/2021

Component three is not justified from a design imperative perspective and is very costly compared to the overall budget from GEF and cofinance accounting for nearly 1/3 of the overall investment.

Please revise the proposal provided a clearer rationale for the regional component to this project and identify which countries will be part of this collaboration specifically and with what other government agencies the collaboration will take place. Finally, all of this regional exchange should be moved to online and virtual platforms to drastically reduce the costs of this interaction and reduce the costs of component three dramatically. We have learned that virtual interaction is very effective during the COVID-19 pandemic and this will also reduce the carbon footprint of the project caused by unnecessary travel. Move the budget savings from component three into investments that will take place in-country on ABS policy development and implementation.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

The budget for Component 3 has been reduced from USD 496,415 to USD 196,416 to capture a renewed focus on South-South exchanges that will, for the most part, take place virtually. The bulk of outstanding resources has been channeled to Component 2 and additional funds have equally been attributed to Component 1. Co-financing amounts have been rebalanced across components. Overall Language on output 3.1.1 has been revised: (i) reference to 'meetings' has been replaced by 'dialogues' with the purpose of both capturing the mostly virtual shape in which these exchanges will take place as well as an intent to establish a continued virtual conversation between countries as opposed to a one-off trip; (ii) explicit reference to target countries from which Venezuela wishes to learn from in regional exchanges 'Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Panama' has been included. Text on the selection of countries and virtual modality has been added under the alternative scenario description of Component 3 on page 13 of the PIF. Namely: 'Venezuela is interested in learning from two sets of countries. On the one hand, Central American countries such as Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Panama that are biodiversity rich and have demonstrated progress, albeit at different levels, in developing their national ABS regimes as of late. On the other hand, the prospect of learning from countries such as Brazil and Colombia with whom Venezuela shares transboundary ecosystems of high-biodiversity level, as well as indigenous groups with shared traditional knowledge. A final settlement of the host of countries with advanced ABS systems and/or experience in the region will be identified and contacted during the PPG phase to request their support in participating in the knowledge management activities of this project.' '(?)' 'Virtual exchanges will be mostly explored and a knowledge dissemination platform at MINEC's website to ensure a

broad audience has access to South-South knowledge sharing efforts will be contemplated.?

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

4/20/2021

In-kind contributions should be labeled recurrent expenditures. Grants should be labeled investment mobilized. Please revise.

Please revise the project management costs borne by GEF and cofinance to be in line with the overall proportion of GEF to cofinance for the project.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

Co-financing denominations have been revised and a clearer justification included. PMC co-financing amounts have been revisited.

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

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response
The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response
The LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
4/20/2021

NA.

Agency Response
The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
4/20/2021

NA.

Agency Response
Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
4/20/2021

NA.

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/20/2021

NA.

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

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/20/2021

No core indicators easily translate to the ABS policy development and implementation thus only indicator 11 is identified. Cleared at PIF.

During project design evaluate whether improved management of hectares in production landscapes could be a possible additional indicator.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

The prospect of including improved management in production landscapes as a core indicator will be examined during PPG.

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
4/20/2021

Yes.

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
4/20/2021

Yes, for the most part.

As noted above, please provide a clearer justification on how component three addresses a barrier to ABS implementation in Venezuela.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

Text has been added under:

- The description of barriers on page 8 of the PIF: ?Unlike many Latin American countries, Venezuela is still to make concerted progress on the development of its ABS regime. Besides, Venezuela has not benefited from concerted interaction with biodiversity-rich countries in the region nor knowledge sharing efforts on ABS thus far.?
- The description of the alternative scenario on page 13 of the PIF: ?Venezuela is interested in learning from two sets of countries. On the one hand, Central American countries such as Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Panama that are biodiversity rich

and have demonstrated progress, albeit at different levels, in developing their national ABS regimes as of late. On the other hand, the prospect of learning from countries such as Brazil and Colombia with whom Venezuela shares transboundary ecosystems of high-biodiversity level, as well as indigenous groups with shared traditional knowledge. A final settlement of the host of countries with advanced ABS systems and/or experience in the region will be identified and contacted during the PPG phase to request their support in participating in the knowledge management activities of this project? (?)

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

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

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

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

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

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

4/20/2021

No core indicators easily translate to the ABS policy development and implementation thus only indicator 11 is identified.

During project design evaluate whether improved management of hectares in production landscapes could be a possible additional indicator.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

The prospect of including improved management in production landscapes as a core indicator will be examined during PPG.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/20/2021

Adequate explanation provided. Cleared.

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

4/20/2021

Please note in the map that given the nature of the project the entire country will benefit from a functioning ABS framework and policy.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

Reference has been included on ? Map 1: Map of Venezuela: the entire country will benefit from ABS legal and institutional frameworks? on page 22 of the PIF.

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

.4/20/2021

The PIF mentions a number of stakeholders who have been consulted thus far, such as indigenous peoples and local communities, but provides no discussion on these consultations to date. Please provide a summary of all consultations.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

Text has been added in the Stakeholders section, pp. 16 of the PIF: ?The rationale for this project and PIF has been premised on the following stakeholder consultations contracted by MINEC between 2015-2020:

- Venezuelan Institute of Scientific Investigations (IVIC): has conducted 8 consultations with communities in M?rida, Gu?rico, Cojedes, Portuguesa, Bajo rio Caura, Maracaibo, Isla de Margarita y Apure
- Simon Bolivar University: 10 consultations with communities in Edos, Zulia, Falc?n, Carabobo, Aragua, Miranda, Dto. Capital, Anzoategui, Apure, Bolivar, Delta Amacuro, Nueva Esparta.
- La Salle Foundation: 1 consultation with the communities of Barrancas del rio Orinoco
- Individual contracts: 2 consultations in the communities of: 1) Los Olivitos, Zulia state and 2) Adjacent to the Piaroa de Betania de Topocho community, Ature Municipality. Edo. Amazon. San Jos? de Kayam?, Municipality of Cede?o, Bol?var State?

Further consultations will be undertaken during PPG and project inception phases.

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

4/20/2021

Please elaborate on this section more comprehensively as currently it is inadequate and indicates very little consideration of the gender context.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

Text has been added to the gender section (pp. 17 and pp. 18 of the PIF) with the view of elaborating on broader context elements and the project's approach to gender.

In 2021, Venezuela ranked 91 out of 156 countries on the Gender Gap Index in terms of economic participation and opportunity. Most women in the country are unable to participate in the formal economy because they lack access to education or work experience. Besides, in Venezuelan society, women are expected to play a fundamental role in raising children and managing the household. The socio-economic situation the country has been engulfed in has had a disproportionately negative impact on women, enhancing their social, economic and political vulnerability. This reality restricts women's ability to act autonomously and actively participate in public life. It further exposes women to a higher risk of gender-based violence, human trafficking, and smuggling. Venezuela has a dedicated Ministry of People's Power for Women and Gender Equality that promotes measures to curb gender inequalities. Despite the historic increase in women's access to the labour market over the past several decades, and active participation of women in local political life through local community councils, gender inequality remains a palpable issue. Most notably on what concerns access to education, health services and employment.

The project will promote capacity building and exchange of information (women-men) on the use of traditional knowledge on cocoa whilst being mindful of gender roles associated with the capture and transmission of this knowledge. Women's knowledge are more associated with plant characteristics and cocoa by-products. Men's knowledge relate more prominently to harvesting techniques. Still, in many localities, women are increasingly involved in different parts of the cocoa harvesting cycle from the drying of cocoa fruits, to the post-harvest process, to packaging for sale at local and informal markets. Male migration from rural areas has been contributing to this trend. In rural areas, gender gaps (women-men) related to access to decision-making and financial resources are accentuated.

The project aims to carry out a detailed diagnosis of the reality on gender roles and gender gaps in the field. It will strive to work with women's or mixed organizations and have a clear focus on reducing these gaps. The project will also ensure that there is a

good representation of women during project implementation and will critically consider the impact of project activities on them.

The project will be fully compliant with the GEF and UNEP's Gender Policy. In this regard, the project will have to be genuinely gender mainstreamed through-out implementation and impact evaluation. The Project will seek to institutionalize gender mainstreaming at all levels of intervention and operation of the project. In its efforts to fully integrate gender mainstreaming, the Project will be guided by the principles that gender elements are important drivers and incentives for achieving global environmental benefits, and in ensuring gender equity and social inclusion. The Project also embraces the fact that the needs, interests, and capabilities of women are contextually different from those of men, in relation to the access, use, and management of biodiversity resources within project intervention areas, and thus, must be given special consideration in ensuring equal access to the resources and services of the Project. A comprehensive Gender Analysis and Gender Mainstreaming and Action Plan will be developed for the project during the PPG phase. (?)?

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/20/2021

Yes.

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

4/20/2021

Yes for the most part. The analysis of COVID-19 risk is inadequate, thus please revise this considerably given the current state of transmission in the region and the slow rollout globally of vaccines. This will impact the design phase as well as early implementation most likely and the PIF does not discuss this sufficiently.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

While the Covid-19 scenario has evolved since the PIF was first submitted, there are still material risks to successful PPG and project execution. The COVID-19 risk session has been thoroughly revised with the purpose of better acknowledging these risks (pp. 19-20 of the PIF).

?A key risk of COVID-19 is prolonged social distancing measures and recurring national quarantine measures across the country. To guarantee the continuation of the project despite prolonged social distancing requirements, project meetings and the engagement processes could transition on-line or a combination of in-person and virtual participants to minimize contagion risks. Remote technological infrastructure would be used to facilitate this type of engagement including easily accessible videoconferencing services. For those who cannot participate remotely and to ensure effective engagement of small-holders from indigenous groups and local communities, in-person meetings could be held with a reduced number of participants and holding social distancing and hygiene best. The development of the crisis will be closely monitored, and creative responses will be explored and implemented along the way focused on advancing project outcomes through alternative forms of engagement, and flexibility in case meetings and field visits must be rescheduled. Similarly, innovative ways of ensuring co-financing funds can be effectively deployed under a COVID-19 risk scenario may also have to be explored. The project will exercise extreme caution in ensuring that its activities do not increase the risk of transmission and spread.

COVID-19 may affect the physical availability of technical expertise to provide in-situ support due to travel restrictions and limitations on physical gatherings imposed by the authorities. As suggested above, virtual means of delivery will be used in such cases and required adjustments to the timeline to accommodate the effects of the pandemic will be given due consideration during the project's annual planning processes.?

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

4/20/2021

Please elaborate on how UNEP will oversee and ensure quality project design and implementation is on track given the absence of an office in the country and the current operational implementation environment in the country.

6/16/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

15 June 2022

The Ministry of People's Power for Ecosocialism (MINEC) will act as the Executing Agency and the UNDP Country Office will act as Fund Management Agency ? having a mandate exclusively circumscribed to operational and financial management. Providing fund management services to other non-resident UN agencies is a central part of UNDP's mandate. This is the same model UNEP uses in MSPs in Venezuela and Cuba, where there is an overall paucity of locally based actors capable of administering GEF projects in dollars. Given the macroeconomic context in Venezuela, UNDP is one of the few development organizations with systems in place to hedge against severe exchange fluctuations. UNEP has an on-going biosafety GEF project in Venezuela premised on this modus-operandi and it provides proof of concept that this model can work while not affecting MINEC's leading role on execution. Initial provisions had been made for UNOPS to play this role, but it was later brought to light that the financial onus for such a small project would be considerably disadvantageous. Plus, the few UNOPS' staff based in Venezuela are placed in the UNDP Country Office and use their infrastructure. Changes to the PIF have been made on pages 1, 17 and 19 to denote this arrangement.

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

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

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

4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

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
4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Part 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
4/20/2021

Yes. Cleared.

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
4/20/2021

NA.

Agency Response

GEFSEC 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
4/20/2021

No. Please revise per comments above and resubmit.

6/16/2017

Yes, PIF is recommended for CEO approval.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	4/20/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/16/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

Additional Review (as necessary)**PIF Recommendation to CEO****Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval**

The objective of the project is to improve local capacities for the implementation of access to genetic resources (GRs) and traditional knowledge (TK) regimes in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol.

The project will strengthen capacities in two areas: 1) technical and administrative capacities to enable a functioning national ABS framework that will allow Venezuela to effectively implement the provisions and obligations set out in its national legislation and the Nagoya Protocol (NP); and 2) awareness raising to secure the buy-in and support of all stakeholders that have a role to play in Access and Benefit Sharing (i.e. local authorities, private sector, academia, local communities, custom officers, etc.). Through this approach, the project will seek to tackle the lack of a clear framework to assess the potential value of the country's genetic resources for its economy and development. Furthermore, the project will facilitate better understanding of the value of traditional knowledge associated with the use of genetic resources and the key role it could play for local and indigenous communities livelihoods and the country in general. Targeted sharing of ABS knowledge and experiences at the regional level will further strengthen institutional capacity building and support efforts to develop a national ABS regime with clear and flexible processes.

Adequate COVID-19 mitigation plan will be implemented.