



Support and build a more Sustainable Blue Economy in Aqaba through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and effective management of the first marine reserve in the country.

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11424

Countries

Jordan

Project Name

Support and build a more Sustainable Blue Economy in Aqaba through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and effective management of the first marine reserve in the country.

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

10/18/2023

Review completed by PM

11/29/2023

Program Manager

Mark Zimsky

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

MSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?

b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) yes, other than the issue with duplication with an existing investment in the same area which has to be better clarified.

b) yes.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

2. Project Summary

Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected results?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Project summary is vague and does not specify what the GEBs the project will deliver for this small investment. It also fails to clarify how this project will complement an existing MSP that is under implementation. Please see comments below on coordination.

Overall, the project summary and the PIF has to more clearly describe, without jargon, how the project proposes to deliver on these three elements: 1) marine spatial planning, 2) advancing the Aqaba Marine Reserve (AMR)=what does this mean in practice and how does this not overlap with the existing GEF MSP that is focused on improving the management of the AMR, and 3) piloting innovative nature-based solutions (NbS) on the coast= what does this mean practically. Please describe precisely what NbS will be piloted and just use that language instead of vague terms like "NbS".

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

The project summary has been revised and refined to outline its commitment to delivering Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs), with a particular focus on biodiversity conservation and addressing climate change. It emphasizes the importance of conserving globally significant biodiversity, restoring and sustaining coastal and marine ecosystems, maintaining natural systems' capacity to sequester carbon, and reducing vulnerability to climate variability and related risks while enhancing ecosystem resilience. The summary now reads as follows:

The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) lacks a strategic framework for adopting Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE), leading to increased pressure on marine resources due to competing activities. The project aims to develop a Marine Spatial Plan that will be officially adopted within the Aqaba Special Economic Zone as a management tool for conservation, restoration and sustainable use and management, to build resilience of Jordan's marine ecosystem, including the Aqaba Marine Reserve. This shift from the "business as usual" approach to a more SBE modality will support more sustainable investments, benefit people's well-being, and contribute to the GEF8 Focal Area Biodiversity strategy and GEF CI 3, 6 and 11. It will also enhance management of the coral reef ecosystem for carbon sequestration, generating ecosystem services, protecting marine wildlife, and securing local economies. The project will benefit the 188,160 people living in the Aqaba, about 50% of whom are women by securing the ecosystems on which livelihoods and jobs are based. The project will contribute to the CBD goals and the KM GBF targets 1, 2, 3, 11, indirectly 19 and support achieving SDG 14. It also supports the delivery of GEB for biodiversity and climate change[1]¹. Expected results include: i) establishing a formally mandated SBE development institutional, policy and legislative framework that will strengthen capacities and private sector engagement ii) improved business and investment community partnerships supported by financially innovative incentive mechanisms to enhance sustainable investments that will reduce pressure on the marine environment iii) improved marine ecosystem resilience to

climate change/disasters and iv) create a new research agenda coupled with M&E processes to assess project related performance.

Regarding complementarity with the IUCN project, the UNDP-GEF8 initiative will be complemented through collaborative efforts with the IUCN-GEF project. The coordination mechanism and synergy between these two projects are elaborated in the section titled "Coordination and Cooperation with Existing Initiatives and Projects.?"

3 Indicative Project Overview

3.1 a) Is the project objective presented as a concise statement and clear?

b) Are the components, outcomes and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) Please rewrite the project objective to be precise and specific as what the small investment will deliver. For example, the project currently states that the project will "conserve and restore the blue natural capital". Instead of "blue natural capital" which is jargon, precisely state what marine resources will be conserved and restored and then this should be reflected in the project's eventual logframe and monitoring framework.

b) For component one, is it gender-inclusive or gender-responsive? Be consistent in your vocabulary. Elsewhere in the document the work is referred to as being gender-sensitive. Just pick one framing and stick with it.

For component one, one of the outputs has to be an updated Marine Spatial Plan that is approved by the relevant authorities. Please include.

Component Two doesn't make sense and is actual result of the first outcome. Revise and clarify component two and the associated outcomes and outputs.

Overall, it appears that the project is focused on three deliverables:

1) marine spatial planning,

2) advancing the Aqaba Marine Reserve (AMR)=what does this mean in practice and how does this not overlap with the existing GEF MSP that is focused on improving the management of the AMR--clarify in the revised PIF please, and

3) piloting innovative nature-based solutions (NbS) on the coast= what does this mean practically. Please describe precisely what NbS will be piloted and just use that language instead of vague terms like "NbS".

All of this will be enabled by Component One, but the other components need to be more specific and focused, given the modest amount of GEF resources being provided to implement the project.

We recommend taking a step back and restructuring the components to be aligned with these key deliverables which then link more clearly to the GEBs the project will produce.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

- a) The project objective has been revised to more accurately describe the envisaged goal of the project. It now reads as "To promote ecosystem-based management of the Gulf of Aqaba marine resources through integration of Marine Spatial Planning as a tool for informing decisions for transitioning towards more sustainable investments for a more resilient socio-ecological system with the capacity to generate multiple benefits for the local economy and the well-being needs of the people of Aqaba."
- b) The PIF is now consistently utilizing the term "gender responsive."

Thank you for your suggested framing on MSP. Output 1.1.1 now reads as "Sea Use Management Plan is updated to embrace international Marine Spatial Planning principles and strategies."

Overall, the project has been restructured as suggested. Key components of the project include a process to consolidate all current management plans (ICZM, Sea Use Management Plan and any other similar tools and instruments) to integrate marine spatial planning principles and strategies, culminating in a clear MSP for approval by the authorities and adoption and implementation by the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), to support a transition towards a sustainable blue economy. It's important to note that the IUCN-GEF project will focus geographically on the boundary area of the Aqaba Marine Reserve (AMR) only, differing from the broader scope of the UNDP-GEF8 Project, which aims to enable Marine Spatial Planning for the entire length of the Aqaba coast. This way, the UNDP-GEF8 project will facilitate improvements in the enabling environment at the national level, including a regulatory framework and institutional coordination mechanisms (e.g., inter-sectoral committee) introduce governance enhancements, rather than solely focusing on operational support for the smaller AMR.

Component 2, titled "Enhancing Resilient Ocean Ecosystems and Livelihoods through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)," is designed to support implementation of the MSP and support marine ecosystem resilience by leveraging existing project initiatives, notably the IUCN-GEF7 project dedicated to operational management within the AMR and supporting implementation of selected, appropriate interventions along the coast to reduce threats and impacts on the marine ecosystem. Under Output 2.1.1, a comprehensive assessment will be conducted to identify prevailing threats and vulnerabilities encompassing climate change impacts, human-induced hazards like oil spills, marine resource extraction, and plastic pollution. This assessment will serve as the basis for tailored interventions considered most suitable and sustainable for the Aqaba marine ecosystems, including mangroves, seagrass, coral reefs. A primary focus will be on coral restoration across 500ha of the marine environment, utilizing innovative technologies for coral restoration and translocation. Additionally, the initiative will explore other interventions such as mangrove planting and seagrass bed restoration to further marine resilience.

Component 3 is designed to support/bolster an evidenced-based decision-making process, by supporting investments in scientific research on the Gulf of Aqaba related marine ecosystems to inform policy measures that can enable threat reduction and facilitate investments in building resilience of the ecosystem against climate change and human-induced impacts. Integral to this effort is the need to build public awareness, and engage stakeholders and educate the entire Jordanian society about sustainable use of marine resources, and the importance of their conservation/protection and restoration, as key components towards building Sustainable Blue Economy.

Component 4 will support the creation of a knowledge management platform for the Aqaba marine sector, using the project to generate lessons and to facilitate public engagement and awareness about not only the project results and impacts but to also elevate understanding about Aqaba marine ecosystems to inform decision-making amongst the local communities, government authorities and the different economic sectors that interact with and use these resources.

3.2 Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation included within the project components and appropriately funded?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

The Component on ME should be focused on the standard ME of a GEF project.

Clarify what an "observatory platform" is and then place that in another component along with the research plan and strategy. At present we are not sure if this platform is indeed GEF eligible and cofinancing may have to pay for this, but this will be decided when this term is clarified.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

Component 4, Outcome 4.2 focuses on standard Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practices. This outcome is divided into two key outputs; Output 4.2.1: Implementation of the Project M&E Plan, with results communicated through various channels including the Project Board, quarterly, and annual reports (PIRs), and Output 4.2.2: Conducting Terminal Evaluation (TE) and sharing reports with UNDP and GEF Independent Evaluation Offices (IEOs).

Instead of the "Observatory platform", in Output 4.1.1., the revised wording is: "Creation of a knowledge management platform to support gender responsive MSP related decision-making".

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

b) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?

c) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for FSPs or 10% for MSPs? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) Yes, but please revise as noted above to be more focused overall.

b) On the PMC Proportionality: there is not proportionality in the co-financing contribution to PMC. If the GEF contribution is kept at 5%, for a co-financing of \$20,000,000 the expected contribution to PMC must be around \$1,000,000 instead of \$200,000 (which is 1.0%). As the costs associated with the project management must be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to the PMC, the GEF contribution and the co-financing contribution must be proportional, which means that the GEF contribution to PMC might be decreased and the co-financing contribution to PMC might be increased to reach a similar level. Please amend either by increasing the co-financing portion and/or by reducing the GEF portion. A more definitive estimation of PMC may be presented and adjusted at CEO Endorsement stage.

	Sub Total (\$)	1,693,426.00
Project Management Cost (PMC) ⓘ		
	GET	83,058.00
	Sub Total(\$)	83,058.00
	Total Project Cost(\$)	1,776,484.00

c) Yes.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

The co-financing contribution to PMC is now proportional, with the amount set at \$1,000,000.

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key contextual drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective?

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) the situation analysis is comprehensive. Cleared.

b) Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

a) Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

b) Does it ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?

d) are the relevant stakeholders and their roles adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) the project response to the situation analysis appears inadequate to the long list of problems (8) that are articulated. The project premise is that eight major problems faced with marine management in the project area can be addressed through the development of a legislative framework and yet to be specified NbS pilots. This is not a convincing project intervention strategy and it is very likely the project could be successful in implementing its focused set of activities, but no movement at all is seen on the 8 problem areas given how large each one is with its own set of challenges to resolve. Please clarify and explain and consider either a more ambitious project with a larger budget or a more focused project overall.

- b) The project hypothesizes that the project as designed will ensure resilience.
- c) the project lacks a clear articulation of the relationship of the new MSP with the existing MSP in the same area that has IUCN as the GEF agency. Please map this out much more clearly.
- d) yes, cleared.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

- a) The overall project structure including situation analysis has been revised. The project addressed the problems and barriers highlighted in the project, strategic interventions within the Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) are being directed toward fostering a Sustainable Blue Economy, as outlined in Section A. Project Rationale. Based on the situational analysis, the project will support a Marine Spatial Planning process to facilitate a shift towards more integrated planning and investments that balance the needs of all users (marine sectors, tourism, livelihoods) through ecosystem-based management approaches, to reduce the impact of conflicting sectoral activities on the marine environment. The project strategy has this been revised to better articulate this, as outlined above, in the response to Question 3.1.
- b) Operating within the budget constraints, the project, through investments in an improved enabling environment and a more coordinated and science-driven planning process, using the Marine Spatial Plan as the planning tool, and coordinating with and complementing other investments, including the GEF-7 IUCN-led initiative, the UNDP-led initiative funded by the Global Fund on Coral Reefs, the EU investments and others by ASEZA, a more coherent approach, building towards a sustainable blue economy agenda, can be triggered for the Gulf of Aqaba. By supporting a Marine Spatial Plan that brings together all the previous disparate plans, and strengthens the integration of international best practices and principles, the ASEZA can be empowered to take more informed decisions on the type of investments, and their location across the entire Aqaba coast, to enable a move towards build resilience of the socio-ecological system, integrating a seascape approach, ensuring that economic, social and environmental needs are balanced in the planning process.
- c) IUCN and GEF7 project, "Supporting the Operation and Effective Performance Management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve, Jordan", aims to enhance management effectiveness and equity of the Aqaba Marine Reserve by strengthening the capacity of the institution to face future challenges. It should be noted that the IUCN-GEF7 project shall be geographically focused on the boundary area of the Aqaba Marine Reserve (AMR) only, which differs from this proposed UNDP-GEF8 MSP Project which is delivering a Marine Spatial Plan process for the whole length of coast in Aqaba. The latter UNDP-GEF8 project also will be introducing governance (institutional and capacity) enhancements that are national in focus (not specifically for the smaller AMR operational support). In addition, work identified through the

IUCN-GEF7 Project (such as the design of NbS activities) shall then be upscaled and delivered through the UNDP-GEF8 project.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

a) Is there a concise theory of change that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the expected causal pathways, and the key assumptions underlying these?

b) Are the key outputs of each component defined (where possible)?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) the theory of change is comprehensive, but the project framework and associated actions of the MSP are disconnected from the ToC. The ToC outlines a more ambitious project that would require more project components and a much larger budget than what is described in the PIF. Either revise the ToC or increase the project budget and revise the project description to be a full size GEF project.

b) yes but please clarify the following.

Please ensure consistency between this part of the PIF and the project framework once all is revised and clarified.

Component One: How do these activities complement the existing GEF project on MPA management?

Component Two: Please note that GEF resources should not be used on waste management activities. Given this restriction, clarify what GEF would pay for in component two?

Component Three: It is not at all clear what the existing GEF project is paying for, and what this project will do to complement it. Please clarify the entirety of Component three as to what GEF is supporting. Be precise and specific.

Component Four: Separate out what is traditional GEF ME activities from whatever the "observatory" is and create two components: one on ME and then the other on a very clearly described set of activities.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

- a) The Theory of Change (ToC) has been updated to ensure its alignment with both the project framework and the corresponding actions envisaged for delivering on a Marine Spatial Planning process that contributes to a transition towards a sustainable blue economy.
- b) The project outputs have been revised to better articulate the envisaged work.

Component 1 support the emplacement of a marine spatial planning process, ensuring coherence among the different management plans and guidelines, and facilitating an enabling environment for this, culminating with one clear planning tool (MSP) with the requisite regulatory and institutional frameworks and mechanisms to enable a shift towards a sustainable blue economy, and better management of the Aqaba marine environment, following an ecosystem based management approach. The IUCN-GEF7 project on the other hand, will focus on the operational and management effectiveness of the AMR.

Component 2: Waste management activities/interventions will not be implemented in this project. This component will support the implementation of elements of the MSP, including thorough assessment of marine ecosystem threats, and promoting implementation, in some cases piloting of interventions that improve resilience of the marine ecosystem (e.g.,), including sustainable harvesting and use of marine resources, reducing and mitigating threats and hazards, including oil spills, pollution from economic sectors such as shipping, fishing and tourism, coral mining, and promotion of sustainable practices and investments by these key sector players. Nature-based solutions (in an estimated 500ha) will focus on coral reef restoration, seagrass restoration and mangrove restoration.

Component 3: Please note that the activities previously categorized under Component 3 have been moved to Component 2. Please refer to the details provided above for clarification.

Component 4 has been updated to align with the suggestions provided.

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

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

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Ineligible activities have been identified above, revise the IC analysis taking this into consideration.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

Waste management activities have been removed.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

a) Is the institutional setting, including potential executing partners, outlined and a rationale provided?

b) Comments to proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception).

c) Is there a description of potential coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area

d) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) yes

b) UNDP is proposing NIM. When the MSP project document is submitted, we will assess this proposed execution arrangement and will review the full justification that is provided. We are not commenting on this proposed arrangement in this stage of the review process. Therefore, the clearance of this PIF cannot be taken as an approval for the GEF agency to execute the project.

c) Please provide a clear description of the proposed coordination mechanism and the actual complementarity between the existing GEF project w IUCN and the proposed project herein by UNDP. Currently this is not described sufficiently. Also please describe what lessons learned from the IUCN project are being incorporated into the proposed project from UNDP given that the IUCN project has had implementation start problems.

d) Yes.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

b) Thank you for your feedback, it's duly noted. Clear implementation arrangements, following the necessary capacity assessments, will be undertaken during the PPG and outlined in the CEO ER.

c) The coordination and synergies between IUCN-GEF7 project and the UNDP-GEF8 project are now better elaborated in the section titled "Coordination and Cooperation with Existing Initiatives and Projects.?"

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

b) Are the project's indicative targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) Please clarify if the 200 hectares being proposed under improved MPA management overlap with the IUCN project core indicators. We cannot measure the same hectares twice with two different projects in the same location. This indicator will have to be adjusted accordingly.

Please include an estimate for CI 6.

b) yes.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

a) Marine Protected Areas under improved management effectiveness (280 ha) is indeed in the same area (Aqaba Marine Reserve) as the the IUCN-GEF7 project. For the UNDP project, the work to be undertaken under Component 1 (Marine Spatial Planning) will in the long-term lead to improved management of the AMR, but since this project will not specifically implement "PA management effectiveness" type of interventions, this indicator has been dropped. It's not entirely clear though which indicator to use to report the work to be done under Component 1 (MSP) as it seems none of the indicators are appropriate.

b) The estimated Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated: 13,796 metric tons of CO₂e.

5.5 NGI Only: Is there a justification of financial structure and use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

NA.

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category?

b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?

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

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) yes.

b) yes.

c) yes.

Agency's Comments

5.7 Qualitative assessment

a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?

b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?

c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

a) The project is too small as designed to be "transformative".

b) yes.

c) yes.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

a) The work planned under component 1 (MSP) is potentially transformative and impactful, if the final output is approved and implemented. By strengthening the planning, decision-making and institutional coordination mechanisms, the project can influence a shift away from the current heavily extractive approach to marine resource use to more a sustainable and ecosystem-based management approach. There will be also an opportunity to having actions for localizing SDGs, enhancement of coastal management and providing advocacy and awareness to different target groups.

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with focal area and integrated program strategies and objectives, and/or adaptation priorities?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors)

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e. BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

No, please identify the KMGBF targets the project will contribute to achieving.

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

The project will contribute to the goals of the CBD and the Kunming-Montreal GBF - targets 1, 2, 3, 11 and indirectly 19.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations, provided?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

NA.

Agency's Comments

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

NA.

Agency's Comments

SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

NA.

Agency's Comments
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's Comments
11/29/2023

NA.

Agency's Comments
8.2 Is the PPG requested within the allowable cap (per size of project)? If requested, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments
11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments
8.3 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?

Secretariat's Comments
11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments
Annex B: Endorsements

8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country?s(ies) GEF OFP and has the OFP at the time of PIF submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

The LOE template utilized for this project removed the footnote that conditions the selection of the executing partner to the following: *Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate?*. GEF agencies have been informed that LoEs *with modifications cannot be accepted and will be returned?*. While the removal of the footnote seems to be trivial, it is not: this footnote reduces the chances of having an executing partner that does not meet the fiduciary and procurement standards required to safely execute the project. Please get an email from the OFP accepting this footnote to be part of the LoE (this is an alternative to request a new LoE)

2. Title in LoE (*Support and build a more Sustainable Blue Economy in Aqaba through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and effective management of the first marine reserve in the country*) is different than in Portal (*Support to develop and implement a Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE) in Aqaba*) ? please include in Portal the title endorsed by the OFP in the letter.
3. LoE includes UNDP as the Executing Partner. However, in Portal there is another executing partner (*Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA)*) that is not included in the LoE. Please remove Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) as this is not endorsed by the Government (they can be included later during the preparation phase as needed).

5/24/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

UNDP 24 April 2024

1. The Letter of Endorsement has been corrected and to include the footnote.
2. The title in the Letter of Endorsement now matches the title in the portal.
3. The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) has been removed as the executing partner in the portal. Following institutional capacity assessments during the PPG, the appropriate executing entity will be confirmed and specified in the CEO ER.

Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

8.5 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project to be submitted?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

NA.

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Project Location

8.6 Is there preliminary georeferenced information and a map of the project's intended location?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.7 If there are safeguard screening documents or other ESS documents prepared, have these been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

Annex E: Rio Markers

8.8 Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

Yes, cleared.

Agency's Comments

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) 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 to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

NA.

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

9.1 Is the PIF and PPG (if requested) recommended for technical clearance?

Secretariat's Comments

11/29/2023

No. Please revise and resubmit based on review provided and comments above.

5/24/2024

Yes, it is recommended for technical clearance.

Agency's Comments

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO Endorsement/ Approval

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	11/29/2023	4/22/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/24/2024	

PIF Review

Agency Response

Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)