



# Integrated Landscape Management for a zero-deforestation coffee and rice value chains in the Central South and Eastern coast of Madagascar

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10750

**Countries**

Madagascar

**Project Name**

Integrated Landscape Management for a zero-deforestation coffee and rice value chains in the Central South and Eastern coast of Madagascar

**Agencies**

FAO

**Date received by PM**

3/31/2022

**Review completed by PM**

10/5/2022

**Program Manager**

Pascal Martinez

**Focal Area**

Multi Focal Area

**Project Type**

FSP

## **PIF**

### **CEO Endorsement**

#### **Part I ? Project Information**

#### **Focal area elements**

**1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Project description summary**

**2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

1. The output 1.2.3 "Coherent and harmonized by-laws or dinas to ensure good/integrated management and responsible governance of natural resources for ILMPs implementation" is missing in table B. Please complete to ensure consistency with the alternative scenario.
2. The core indicators (CI) in table B should be aligned with the core indicator table. Most of them are consistent but Core Indicator 4.3 and 11 are different (respectively CI 4.3 is 20,000 ha in table B while it is 81,274 ha in the core indicator table; and CI 11 is 35,000 beneficiaries in total in table B while it is 60,000 in the core indicator table and the Prodoc). Please ensure all the core indicators are consistent throughout al the project decription, including in the Annex A "Project Results Framwork".
3. As climate change adaptation is not the main objective of this project, please change the Rio marker for Climate Change Adaptation from "2" to "1".

**July 20, 2022:**

- 1, 2 and 3. Thank you for the amendment and corrections. Cleared.

Agency Response

June 6, 2022:

1. Addressed. Output 1.2.3 is now captured in Table B.
2. Table B indicators are now aligned to GEF core indicators table. Core indicator 11 was raised to 80,000 people while CI 4 sub indicators where slightly edited.
3. Addressed. Rio marker changed.

**3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**Co-financing**

- 4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?**

## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

1. The MEDD co-financing letter should be linked to Table C for easy reference. Please amend accordingly.
2. The MEDD co-financing letter indicates all the co-financing will contribute to the project PMC and no to the project components. It is difficult to understand how such amount of resources can be justified for the only project management. Can the cost of offices and meeting rooms maintenance, office supplies, clothing of staff etc. be so expensive? How many staff are expected to be part of the project management? Please clarify and consider the use of these resources also for the implementation of the project components.
3. The MINAE co-financing letter mentions 2 different kinds of co-financing: in-kind and investment mobilized. Please reflect this two 2 different kinds of co-financing in table C.
4. The FAPBM co-financing letter indicates the support will be as grant and investment mobilized. Please correct the Table C accordingly.
5. The JICA co-financing letter is not signed. Please provide a signed co-financing letter.
6. The European Union co-financing letter doesn't mention explicitly a support to this project but only the "existence" of a project "corresponding" to the topics of the FOLUR project. In addition, the implementation period of the supporting project is 2018-2023. The actual available funds from this project is unclear when the FOLUR project will begins (not all the 1.5 million Euros should be available). Please provide a co-financing letter clarifying how concretely the EU funded project will contribute to the FOLUR project and what will be the expected remaining available funds when the FOLUR project will begins.
7. The MBG co-financing letter mentions "potential resources" "likely to co-finance" the FOLUR project. This co-financing appears very uncertain. Please clarify the rationale for including this co-financing and demonstrate its reality.
8. The FAO-FLRM co-financing letter doesn't refer to the full title of the FOLUR project. Please complete the title of the project in the letter and mentions the GEF ID number (10750).
9. The GIZ co-financing letter mentions the support will be as "in-kind". Nevertheless it is referred as grant/Investment mobilized in Table C. Please correct the Table C as needed.

10. Except the letters from MEDD, World Bank and FAO, all the co-financing letters are in French. Please provide a translation in English of these letters, ideally in one single document for easy reference.

11. The overall co-financing level is by far the lowest of all the FOLUR country projects, which can mean relatively low interest and alignment from the stakeholders for the project objectives. Please explain the reasons of this situation and clarify how the expected transformation at scale can be achieved aligned with the program strategy and goals.

**July 20, 2022:**

1. Thank you for providing the link to the MEDD co-financing letter in table C. Nevertheless, the translation in English doesn't correspond to the original text in French and the amount is different (\$6,148,485 in the French letter and \$9,418,043 in the English translation). Please clarify ensuring the information is consistent between the signed letter and its translation in English.

2. The co-financing contribution to PMC is 29% of the total co-financing. This is very unusual. We understand from the Agency response that these resources support technical works related to project components, with MEDD staff providing advisory services. Please be more specific on these services providing details on their nature (studies, meetings, platforms, ...?), their number, and the technical issues they are related to. In doing so, please reconsider splitting the co-financing contribution to PMC into the relevant components they are related to.

3, 4. Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

5. The co-financing letter from JICA is in French. Please provide a translation in English of this letter.

6. Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

7. We don't see the improvement in the MBG co-financing letter in terms clarifying the uncertainty of the co-financing and there is no explanation provided by the Agency in the review sheet. In addition, the letter is in French and we don't find the English translation. Please address this comment and provide a translation in English of the co-financing letter.

8. The GEF ID number is missing but the project title is correct. Cleared.

9. Thank you for the amendment in the co-financing letter. Nevertheless, this letter is in French. Please provide a translation in English of the co-financing letter from GIZ.

10. Some translations are still missing (see above). Please ensure a translation in English is provided for each co-financing letter which is in French.

11. Thank you for the clarification on the difficulties encountered to finalize co-financing arrangements and for the plan to work further on partnering during the implementation phase. Cleared.

**September 19, 2022:**

1. Not addressed. We don't find the translation of the co-financing letter from the MEDD. To facilitate the review, please provide the translation of all co-financing letters in French in one single document.

2. Thank you for the clarification and action taken. In the interest of time and considering this is not GEF resource, this comment is cleared but please clarify to the GEF PM when you have update. It is hard to believe the amount of \$6.5 million is required for PMC and this means this money is not going to support project activities.

5. Thank you for providing a translation in English of the co-financing letter using JICA funds. Cleared.

7. Not addressed. Again, We don't see the improvement in the MBG co-financing as the letter provided seems to be the same as before. In addition, the translation is not complete (the last sentence is "The projects are mentioned in the table below : "). Please address this comment already made in May and repeated in July.

9. Thank you for providing a translation of the co-financing letter from GIZ. Cleared.

10. No. The translation of the co-financing letter from the MEDD is missing and the translation of the co-financing letter from the MBG is not complete in the uploaded document as noted above. Please ensure this comment is completely addressed.

**October 5, 2022:**

1, 7 and 10. Thank you for addressing the comments. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

1/7/2022:

1. MEDD letter now uploaded.

2. The number of MEDD staff that will provide advisory service directly to the Project Management Unit includes those posted in MEDD's decentralized Directorates at regional level as well as district level. Including staff from relevant national committees

such as the National FLR Committee (NFLRC) ? the project will also piggyback on events organized by MEDD and the NFLR C cost-sharing venue costs whenever possible for the whole project duration. Project staff will be hosted in MEDD's offices and will avail whenever possible of MEDD's vehicles.

3. Addressed.

4. Addressed.

5. Addressed.

6. This project was removed from the co-financing list/sources.

7. Addressed.

8. Addressed.

9. Addressed.

10. Translation uploaded in the Portal as single document as requested.

11. During the PPG phase the project team identified some key cofinancing projects such as the DEFIS programme (IFAD financed) with estimated cofinancing of 13,000,000 \$ aligned to Component 2 project activities for the period 2022-2027. While IFAD has agreed to collaborate during project implementation to see how project activities can complement each other in overlapping project areas, they refused to sign a co-financing letter. DEFIS project team has accepted nonetheless to become a member of the Project Steering Committee during implementation.

Amongst other potential cofinancing partners identified during PPG, is GIZ- led Adaptation of Agricultural Value Chains to Climate Change Project (PrAda) phase II. The phase II intends to be launched in late 2022 with a project duration of 3 years covering 3 regions in Madagascar (including the overlapping Atsimo Atsinanana region). The activities of PrAda in this region are particularly relevant to project component 2, with estimated cofinancing amounting to \$3,800,000. The focus will be on strengthening resilient value chains of targeted commodities such as coffee, pepper, vanilla, clove, honey and ginger, while supporting value chain actors in accessing climate risk insurances. While GIZ/PrAda would like to continue a dialogue on how to define areas of complementarity and collaboration between the two projects ? they are not in a position to sign off a cofinancing letters yet, as the phase II budget allocation is yet to be announced.

How the project intends to leverage and complement the above mentioned initiatives to achieve the expected transformation at scale, is detailed in Prodoc pg. 58, C. Baseline projects and Programs and pg. 154, Incremental Reasoning.

The project intends to seek additional cofinancing letters during the implementation phase, and will nonetheless work with the above mentioned partners to ensure impact is maximized for the benefit of local stakeholders.

**1/9/22:**

1. Thanks for the comment on the mistake with the document containing translated text from all cofinancing letters. The correct document has now been uploaded in the Portal.

2. As explained above in the first response, the PMC related co-financing would include MEDD staff time, cost sharing of venues to host PMU related meetings, travels of MEDD officers to national, international and regional events (conferences, workshops, technical/political committees, COPs side events, etc) raising political awareness on project's relevance. Having said this, the agency agrees with the GEF Secretariat that the PMC portion of MEDD's cofinancing total may be un-intentionally inflated by the cofinancier in the letter and that a greater portion of the overall total should be split into more relevant components. The cofinancing letter is currently under revision with the total amount unchanged - but with the PMC portion reduced to about 15% of the overall total (\$9,59,374). While MEDD stands ready to sign the letter, the recent change in senior management at the ministry is delaying the signing of any official letter. With the risk of not being able to receive a signed version within the project cancellation deadline, the agency would suggest submitting as it is, monitor closely and, if needed, revising the split at inception as soon as the letter will be made available. The change will be reported in the first PIR.

5. Correct document containing all translations including JICA's is now uploaded in Portal

7. A new letter for MBG was uploaded in Portal. Correct document with translation was also uploaded.

9. Addressed.

10. Addressed.

**22/9/2022**

1. MEDD's cofinancing letter is signed in English. Pls verify.

7. A new letter from MBG was uploaded in Portal. The revised translation is now uploaded in Portal. Note - the annex in the letter is in English and does not require translation.

10. Addressed.

#### **GEF Resource Availability**

**5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**



1. The cost of the project coordinator should be charged to the PMC only and not to the components. Please correct the budget as needed.

2. The project plans the purchase of a significant number of vehicles (4 cars and 46 motorbikes). As per GEF guidance, the use of GEF funds to purchase vehicles is strongly discouraged. Such costs are normally expected to be borne by the co-financed portion of PMCs. Any request to use GEF funding to purchase project vehicles must be justified by the exceptional specific circumstances of the project. The GEF Secretariat will assess this request and decide whether to approve them, based on following criteria: type of project, operating environment, contribution to achievement of project results, and share of costs covered by co-financing, among others.

**July 22, 2022:**

1. Thank you for the clarification. Nevertheless, in the TORs of the Project Coordinator, the share of technical functions appears relatively limited as compared to all the tasks related to the project coordination. Please separate the 2 kinds of activities in the TORs (project coordination and technical functions) mentioning the share of the time (in %) spent for each kind. The % should reflect the amount of the tasks in each category as described in the TORs and be consistent with the budget table.

2. Thank you for the justification. Nevertheless, please consider the following:

2.1. We note in the budget and in the KM section that the project will also support the maintenance of the vehicles, which is contradictory with what is explained in the Agency response in the review sheet. Please clarify making clear the maintenance of the vehicles is supported by the co-financing by removing it from the Budget (including Annex E) and from the KM section. This is critical for GEF Sec assessment and decision.

2.2. There is a relatively significant co-financing as investment mobilized from the private sector, JICA, World Bank, FAO and GIZ. Please consider using this co-financing to at least share the cost of the vehicles. Relying on the only GEF resources for all (or nearly all) the transportation is not a good sign of the local appropriation and partnership of the project.

**September 20, 2022:**

1. The share between the 2 functions in the TORs is 50%/50% (note: it doesn't reflect the share in the the budget table: \$65,000/\$91,000). According to the budget table, the Project Coordinator (PC) is funded with 42% from the project budget (rather than PMC). Managing such a \$9.9 million project should be a full time job, and we don't see how the PC will be able to spend so much time on the specified technical activities. As per GEF policy and as already mentioned, please cover the cost of the PC with the PMC resources.

2.1. Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

2.2. Thank you for the assessments. Nevertheless, as this project will be articulated with significant co-financing as investment mobilized, we expect the cost of vehicles will be shared with the co-financing. Please revise this cost and amend the budget accordingly.

**October 5, 2022:**

1 and 2.2. Thank you for addressing the comments. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

1. The project coordinator is expected to deliver technical backstopping and guidance required to deliver technical outputs across project components. These tasks are of technical nature and go beyond PMC eligible tasks. The technical deliverables are detailed in the TORs in Prodoc Annex M.

2. Government lacks appropriate vehicles (basic motorcycles and pickups) required to support project implementation and monitoring. Lack of mobility will hinder project delivery and compromise the quality of delivery. Ensuring farmers' adoption of innovative systems and technologies and the transition towards sustainable intensification in agriculture and forest production in remote areas with limited/poor communication infrastructures is only possible if project facilitators and extensionists have the means to visit all target areas with high frequency. This implies having transport autonomy that the project would be ensuring in a basic way through the procurement of simple motorbikes and pickups. Otherwise, the possibility to visit target areas will be extremely reduced or simply not possible. MEDD's and MINAE's existing vehicle fleet is not sufficient to support project implementation ? The vehicles fleet available to MEDD and MINAE is currently not sufficient to support project implementation. MEDD has one 4x4 vehicle in each regional district (covering an average of 13,652 km<sup>2</sup> per car). Available cars are not sufficient and are no longer in decent conditions. Drivers will be provided as cofinancing. In addition to these vehicles MEDD and MINAE committed to make available whenever possible vehicles available to the central administrations to support to the daily coordination transportation of the PMU members, as well maintenance costs for the vehicles. Moreover, joint missions with cofinancing partners will be conducted to the extent possible to ensure the complementarity and synergy of the actions supported by each project.

In consideration to the above, the following vehicles are being requested from the project:

- Purchase of 1 pickup per region;

- Purchase of 46 motorbikes for the 46 community facilitators who will work at field level (1 facilitator/28,419 ha on average, taking into account the extent of the project area which is 1,307,287 ha)

**1/09/2022**

1. The % share is now specified in the TORs as suggested.

2.1 The budget was revised as suggested.

2.2 Lengthy consultations and fleet assessments throughout the PPG period confirmed the need for the vehicles to be procured by the project.

**22/9/22**

1. The Project Coordinator is now 100% under PMC.

2.2 Budget amended. During project implementation the project management team will seek to access vehicles from cofinancing partners to the extent possible ? otherwise, when this will not be possible, rental will be considered (i.e vehicles are being used by other project/partners and are therefore not available to the project for timely mobilization of the PMU and technical staff in the target landscapes and for the delivery of inputs/material). For this reason the travel budget line has increased.

**Project Preparation Grant**

**6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Core indicators**

**7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E? Do they remain realistic?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

The core indicator targets at PIF stage are not in the portal (while it is available in Annex F of the prodoc). Please include them.

**July 20, 2022:**

Thank you for trying. Cleared.

Agency Response The portal does not allow us to input PIF indicators. However, these are captured in Prodoc Annex F.

### **Part II ? Project Justification**

**1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 27, 2022:**

1. The description says "Only in 2019, the country lost 254,000 ha of tree cover, equivalent to 80.8Mt of CO<sub>2</sub> of emissions. Around 15 percent (601,100 ha) of this loss have occurred in the target regions". How 15% of 254,000 ha can be 601,100 ha? Please clarify the extent of deforestation in the project targeted area.

2. A relatively long part of the description is a detailed climate change analysis in Madagascar (from "Projected changes in climate for Madagascar..." to Table 1. Climate change impacts and farmers? adaptation measures). To help focus the presentation on the problems the project will contribute to solve, please provide a summary of this part in this section of the Portal entry and ensure all the climate analysis is uploaded in a separate document in the document section of the Portal.

3. Similarly, the description of the agriculture productions is very long and includes other crops in addition to coffee and rice. Please summarize all this description, focus mainly on coffee and rice, and ensure all this very informative text is uploaded in the document section of the Portal entry.

4. Please clarify what "tavy as a rice production system per se" means. As describe it is unclear while it is a key production system targeted by the project.

5. Please clarify what "VOI regulations" means.

6. We learn that "Honey offers significant commercial and REDD+ impacts". Please clarify what REDD+ impacts honey offers.

7. This section include a part "B. Underlying causes and barriers" but we don't see the part "A". Please clarify.

8. The project description includes many acronyms. Please ensure the full name of these acronyms is used the first time they appear in the text (it is not always the case such as SNGF, KMCC...).

**July 20, 2022:**

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Thank you for the clarifications and amendments. Cleared.

8. We see references have been added to the acronyms but they are not clickable, so we still don't know in the Portal entry what the acronyms stand for. As requested in the previous review, please simply write the full name of the acronyms (along with their acronym) the first time they appear in the text of the Portal entry.

**September 19, 2022:**

8. Not addressed. For instance the acronyms FOFIFA, SNGF, KMCC, CAFPA, EFTA, NFLRC, FFPO (under the COVID analysis?)... appear for the first in the text without their developed name. Please address this comment as already requested in the previous reviews.

**October 5, 2022:**

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

June 6, 2022:

1. Clarification provided, with updated information from 2021. See PRODOC document section: 1.a Project Description: (i) Global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description) (page 20).

2. Summary provided and additional climate change analysis was included in Annex P.

3. The text was shortened, focusing on coffee and rice, and the larger informative text was included as Annex N.

4. Clarification provided in Prodoc pg. 27-30 (Rice Value Chain description).

5. Clarification was provided in page 32: Underlying causes and barriers.

6. Clarification was provided in page 31 (Honey value chain section).

7. Reference eliminated.

8. Acronyms? revised and integrated in the document.

**1/9/2022**

8. Revised.

**2. Is there an elaboration on how the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects were derived?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 27, 2022:**

Thank you for providing an extensive list of baseline initiatives. Nevertheless, the description is very long and how these initiatives relate with the project is not always clear, such as the New Energy Policy, the National Tourism Plan, the NDC, the National REDD+ Strategy, the National Risk and Disaster Management Policy and the National Social Protection Strategy. Also under "B. Baseline knowhow by component area", the description is very complete but doesn't necessarily relate to the project. For instance how temporary fencing, the Analamanga region (EU project) and the pilot project CallvsCorona constitute a baseline for the project? For all the identified initiatives/policies, please summarize, focus on what is relevant for the project and its targeted area, and clarify the link with the project so that we can understand how the project activities can build on and/or articulate with the relevant identified policies/initiatives.

**July 20, 2022:**

Thank you for the amendments and clarifications. Cleared.

Agency Response

The chapter was edited, providing clarifications and summarized tables on relevant issues and link with the project. Detailed baseline information on relevant policies is included in the new Annex O.

**3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**May 27, 2022:**

1. This section is very difficult to read as it includes important parts which don't belong to the description of the alternative scenario. In particular, all the description from "TARGET PROJECT LANDSCAPES" until "... and play a relevant role in local associations and village councils." should be removed and included in an annex focused to the target project landscapes and uploaded in the document section of the Portal entry. This part should be replaced in the alternative scenario by a short summary of which landscapes have been selected and why (importance of coffee and rice causing environmental degradation such as deforestation and forest degradation).

2. In the "TARGET PROJECT LANDSCAPES", we find sub-sections of "climate change" and "COVID-19 Pandemic"... are they relevant here specifically under the "Atsimo Atsinanana Landscape (AAL)". Please clarify.

3. In the description of the TOC, the "vertical level" only includes coffee production. Won't rice value chain be also considered by the project? Please clarify.

4. Please check the structure of this section. We find the sub-section "3. Project description by component and output". Where are the sub-section 1 and 2?

5. Please clarify what "dinas" means the first time it appears in the project description.

6. Some names of components and outputs are different in Table B and in the alternative scenario (such as Component 2, output 1.1.1...). Please check the consistency and ensure all the names of components, outcomes and outputs are the same in Table B, the alternative scenario and the Project Results Framework.

7. The output 3.1.3 "Long-term financing of the landscape restoration and sustainable coffee agroforestry production piloted through innovative mechanisms" seems to go well beyond the proposed activities as they are presented and which mainly focus on studies, meetings and reports. Please clarify how the project will concretely and actually implement innovative mechanisms to pilot long-term financing. Some PES-related agreements between the involved stakeholders need to happen.

8. While Component 4 and the outcome 4.1 are focused on M&E-related activities, their title includes confusing text referring to activities normally supported by the PMC ("Project coordination", "execution of the project"...). Please remove these terms and make clear the Component 4 and its outcomes don't include any activities supported by the PMC.

**July 21, 2022:**

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Thank you for the amendments, clarification and additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. This section was edited, and the detailed information on each landscape is now available as a separate annex (Annex Q).
2. This was clarified in the Annex Q.
3. Missing information on rice 'vertical level' now included in page 68 (Section 1: THEORY OF CHANGE THROUGH A LANDSCAPE APPROACH).
4. Reference was eliminated
5. The meaning of 'dina' has been included in the first paragraph the term appears (page 32, Section 'Underlying Causes and Barriers').
6. Edited.
7. Further information about PES-related activities is included in Output 3.1.3, page 144-145.
8. Edited.

**4. Is there further elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 27, 2022:**

Partially. It is also important to demonstrate in this section the alignment with the FOLUR Impact Program and particularly on the following 2 aspects which are not clear: 1- on the engagement of the private sector towards improved sustainability along the entire value chains (including through commodity platforms, relevant initiatives and agreements, co-financing...); and 2- on the project contribution to the Program strategy notably through the Global Platform. Please elaborate briefly on these aspects too.

**July 21, 2022:**

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Information about alignment with the FOLUR IP has been included in 'Section (iv) Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies', page 150.

**5. Is the incremental reasoning, contribution from the baseline, and co-financing clearly elaborated?**



Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 27, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

Partially. Overall the information provided is limited to the targets, there is no clarification on how they were assessed (For instance how the number of ha of avoided deforestation was calculated?) and on how they contribute to global environmental benefits (in terms of land degradation avoided, restoration, biodiversity conservation...). In addition, the expected contribution to environmental benefits is relatively low as compared to the FOLUR portfolio of country projects. Please explain for each CI how it has been calculated, elaborate further on the environmental benefits provided, and consider the possibility to increase the expected results (core indicators).

**July 21, 2022:**

Thank you for the clarification. Considering the 3,274 ha are actually an area of avoided deforestation, shouldn't it be reported under the Core Indicator 4.4 "Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided"? Also, in order to avoid deforestation over 3,274 ha, shouldn't be the total area of forest under improved management much bigger? It is unclear how the 17% rate is used in the calculation to obtain the 3,274 ha result. Please clarify the calculation.

**September 19, 2022:**

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

The project team strongly suggests to keep the targets as they are. Additional explanation for each CI target was provided in the Global Benefits table in Prodoc pages 157-159. Increasing targets without a thorough understanding of contextual challenges would only result in having to change again targets during MTR (as currently happening with many over-estimated targets).

**1/9/2022:**

On average from 2001-2020, 115,530.59 ha of forests were lost over the targeted project areas, and 17% (19,255.10 ha) of this loss is caused by general agricultural expansion.

Based on consultations and looking at specific drivers of deforestation under the overall agricultural expansion, small scale agriculture (slash and burn) is the major driver (@17%) and looking at the project scope, it was estimated that the project interventions could avoid deforestation over 17% of this predicted area of deforestation (3,273.37). As project activities relate more to improved agroforestry and agriculture management to actively avoid deforestation, we believe the estimates are warranted.

The reason why we have not reported this area under CI 4.4, is because the ha are under forest loss avoided in the buffer zones of PAs, and as such project interventions will be looking at spillover effects from training of COBAs and local communities on improved management for biodiversity, restoration and agroforestry interventions. The focus area is already much larger than the 3,274 ha.

**7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

1. The "process to follow" seems to be quite logical for many projects (common understanding, same rules...). Please clarify what is innovative in this process.
2. In this section, the text under "Capacity Development" is relatively long and doesn't seem to be clearly related to sustainability. Please summarize what is meant here and explain clearly how it contributes to sustainability.

**July 21, 2020:**

1 and 2. Thank you for the clarification and amendments. Cleared

Agency Response

1. Clarifications on innovative issues are provided in the "Innovativeness" chapter of the Prodoc in pg. 163-165.
2. The summary of capacity development sustainability under project components has been included in pages 192-193 in the Sustainability chapter of the Prodoc

**Project Map and Coordinates**

**Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Child Project**

**If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

Yes, cleared

Agency Response

**Stakeholders**

**Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase? Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

1. The consultation process during the project design is well described with details, but the stakeholders engagement plan is missing. Please clearly explain in this section of the Portal the engagement of all the involved stakeholders (kind of activities, means and timing of engagement, consultation modalities during project execution, and how the project information will be disseminated).

2. On the role civil society will play in the project, the 3 categories are not informed: "Consulted only", "Member of Advisory Body, Contractor", and "Co-financier. Please complete with a "yes" or "no" these categories too.

**July 21, 2022:**

1. We take note of the revised stakeholders engagement plan uploaded in the documents section. Nevertheless, as the Portal entry is the main document for the GEF (equivalent to GEF Prodoc), it was requested to provide the explanation in this section of the Portal. Please provide here a summary of the engagement plan. This summary must include information on stakeholders activities, means and timing of engagement, consultation

modalities during project execution, and how the project information will be disseminated.

2. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

**September 19, 2022:**

1. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

1. The Stakeholder Engagement Plans was revised to include the missing information.

2. Done.

**01/09/2022**

1. Summary now included in Portal.

**Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

**Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

**May 31, 2022:**

1. The project does include a gender action plan with specific measures and indicators to address the gender equity challenges. Nevertheless, We don't know on which analysis this plan has been built. In this section, the text vaguely mentions weaknesses of women's access to land and participation in natural resource management and decision-making processes. Please summarize in this section a gender analysis identifying gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project objectives and activities, so that we can understand the rationale of the proposed activities and indicators in the gender action plan.

2. The category "Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources" is not checked with a "yes" which contradicts what the gender action plan aims to address. Please complete as needed.

3. The uploaded document "Gender Action Plan" is actually titled "Gender Action Plan and Budget" and includes a budget column but this column is empty. Please clarify.

**July 21, 2022:**

1, 2 and 3. Thank you for the additional information. cleared.

Agency Response

1. A summary was added introducing the GAP.
2. Completed
3. GAP was revised to include missing budget information

**Private Sector Engagement**

**If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Risks to Achieving Project Objectives**

**Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

1. The climate change risk needs to be deeper analyzed. More clarification on threats and impacts, along with their appropriate mitigation measures is needed. Please outline the key aspects of the climate change projections/scenarios at the project location or at country level if not available at local scale (including a time horizon, ideally 2050, if the data is available) and list key potential hazards for the project that are related to the climate scenarios. For further guidance, the Agency may want to refer to STAP guidance available here: <https://www.stagef.org/stap-guidance-climate-risk-screening>.
2. On the COVID-19 analysis, while some adaptive measures are indeed considered, the risks that can affect the project implementation and success are not clearly listed. Please

clearly identify all the potential risks (including on the availability of experts, capacity of meetings, value chains disruption, no-confirmation of co-financing due to Government change of priorities...) and link all these risks with appropriate mitigation measures. Please also consider a section on opportunities this project can provide to enhance the resilience of the beneficiaries against possible future pandemics. For further clarification, we advice to refer to the note "Project Design and Review Considerations in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis and the Mitigation of Future Pandemics" shared by GEF Secretariat with the GEF Agencies on September 14, 2020 and available here: <https://www.thegef.org/documents/project-design-and-review-considerations-response-covid-19-crisis-and-mitigation-future>.

**July 21, 2022:**

1. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.
2. Thank you for the additional information. Nevertheless, the consideration of opportunities remains unclear. As requested in the previous review, please consider a section on opportunities this project can provide to enhance the resilience of the beneficiaries.

**September 19, 2022:**

2. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

1. Annex R was added with the climate risk analysis, recommendations incorporated into project design as well as risk rating.
2. Information added as requested.

**01/09/22**

2. Additional text on opportunities reflected in Portal and Prodoc.

**Coordination**

**Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

1. In the budget, the FAO support services include the procurement of a "Execution Capacity Development and ESS Specialist". Please note that such activity must be implemented by the executing agency of the project and not by FAO. Please correct accordingly.
2. The definition of the diagram is very low in this section of the Portal entry, which makes it very difficult to read (format issue). Please copy a more readable version of the diagram.
3. The text says "A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be co-funded by the GEF". This is a mistake. Please clarify.

**July 22, 2022:**

1. Thank you for the justification provided. Please explain why a third party (other than FAO) has not been identified to perform this task. If FAO can demonstrate that no other organization can do it, then please provide a request form the GEF OFP that the implementing Agency FAO execute some executing functions. This request should detail which executing functions and their cost, explain why the executing partners can't do it, and confirm there is no other possible organization than FAO to perform these tasks.

2 and 3. Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

**September 20, 2022:**

Thank you for the OFP letter and explanation. We understand the important added value of the task and opportunity to facilitate the link with the Global Platform through such arrangement, but it remains unclear why the executing partners or other possible organization than FAO can't do it. Please clarify further why the dedicated national consultant can't be recruited/paid by one of the EAs or by another third party (eventually with the advice or support from FAO).

**October 5, 2022:**

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

1. The executing agencies proposed by the project are MEDD and MINAE. While MINAE guarantees most (but not all) the set of expertise, convening power and compliance with UN and GEF fiduciary standards required to execute, MEDD needs major PMC and Risk Mitigation Monitoring support of its execution capacities, as further described below. Fiduciary assessments available if needed. Both MEDD and MINAE have an overall medium fiduciary assessment risk with significant risks in several sub-categories.

Moreover, complex institutional arrangements (2 main Executing Entities and several sub- partners) require a high level of coordination, M&E and learning efforts that none of the potential Executing Agencies can bear without support. Under the circumstances, even inputs provided through implementing agency fee and own co-financing, alone, are not expected to be sufficient to ensure the desired level of coordination, application of environmental and social safeguards, coherent flow of knowledge and monitoring of agencies' performances and contributions. In order to address the above institutional, technical, and operational complexity and to ensure that the program is delivered as one coherent project, the Government of Madagascar has requested FAO to perform minor, targeted execution support functions essential to the smooth and consistent delivery of the program. This support will be provided by a dedicated national consultant, namely:

? An Execution Capacity development Support and ESS monitoring specialist. The fiduciary assessment of execution capacity (conducted by the external audit firm BDO ) has identified a number of weaknesses that will need minor active support and capacity building to enable MEDD and MINAE to perform their role of Executing Agencies. This will be required especially during the first 2 years of implementation. As part of this process, the EA has requested training for harmonizing their procurement standards and process with UN and GEF standards, specifically on OPIM requirements. The fiduciary assessment also highlighted significant risks posed by MEDD and MINAE's limited sub-contracting capacities. FAO's specialist will build their capacities and closely support the implementation of the risk mitigation plan.

Even more importantly, to mitigate the risks associated with the operational and institutional complexity of the program, this profile, co-funded by FAO's own fees and resources, will ensure that all AWP&B, procurement plans and all reporting products are prepared in a consistent manner for smooth review and approval from the Project Steering Committee, a key PMC support task that Executing Agencies, alone, will not be able to ensure for a program of this complexity.

Coordination with the FOLUR IP K2A: FAO is well-positioned to ensure that the project optimizes its interactions both regionally and globally. Through the above minor execution support functions, FAO will be in a better position to enable the project management unit to interface directly with the ensuring a consistent and reliable bi-directional flow of data and knowledge.

Specifically the Execution Capacity development Support and ESS monitoring specialist, will perform the tasks as specified in the TORs in Prodoc Annex M.

2. A more readable version was uploaded in the Portal
3. Revised

**1/9/22**



1. As requested by the national partners and as explained above, FAO has been identified as unique/best suited partner to execute the above mentioned tasks as these relate mostly to M&E/ operational capacities activities. The cost-sharing arrangement as detailed in the TORs (see Prodoc annex A) would allow an efficient use of resources. As you can see from the amounts involved, it is a very small investments within the space allowed by the policy (M&E and PMC) yet instrumental for the overall delivery of the project: high value for money. A third party might add complexity and not necessarily be able to ensure coherence and harmonization of reporting requirements and assurance activities. The reasons why no other organization was identified to conduct these tasks is detailed in the response above. The OFP support letter is uploaded in the Documents section of the Portal.

**22/9/22**

The cost-shared arrangement required to deliver all of the interrelated tasks detailed in the TORs (which directly address capacity gaps identified in the EA's fiduciary assessments) is more efficiently and effectively management by the same contracting entity and, to a large extent, is focused on GEF ad FAO specific fiduciary requirements. The national lead EA has explicitly requested FAO's support as they and other national partners lack capacity in this specific fiduciary aspects of the work. This support to the national executing entities initiated during PPG and the national counterpart has requested FAO to continue assisting them via tailored capacity development during the initial years of implementation. FAO is co-funding this service with its own funds and asking a third party, not exposed to FAO's and GEF's fiduciary requirements, to build capacity on these sensitive issues would be of little benefit to both the EA and IA and would require extra costs. It is a minimal investment for the project within the limits of PMC and M&E costs as provisioned by the policy with major benefits for risk management, coordination, effective delivery of the project and for the prompt operationalization without delays.

**Consistency with National Priorities**

**Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response  
**Knowledge Management**

**Is the proposed ?Knowledge Management Approach? for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**May 31, 2022:**

The sum of the 2 tables provided in this section (\$491,550) is different from the total of component 4 (excluding M&E) provided in the budget (\$500,280). Please explain the difference.

**July 22, 2022:**

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response Knowledge Management tables updated and in line with the submitted budget (excluding M&E). Kindly note the first table shows KM budget under output 4.1 and 4.2 whereas the second one shows the draft details/deliverables of the KM Service Provider (Contract/ USD 132,000) already mentioned in the first table  
**Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**May 31, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response  
**Benefits**

**Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**May 31, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Annexes**

**Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

Please see some specific comments below. Cleared.

Agency Response

**Project Results Framework**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

In the Project Results Framework, we don't find any explicit reference to the GEF core indicator 11 "Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment". Please complete the Framework with this indicator too.

**July 22, 2022:**

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response Addressed. Framework completed.

**GEF Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

**Council comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 31, 2022:**

1. The first comment from Germany on the PFD has not been considered ("The PIF does not adequately address ... incentive system more explicitly"). Please explain why and consider including it.

2. The first comment from US beginning with "Coordination. This program will overlap ..." is missing. Please explain why and consider including it.

3. Again, the first comment from Norway beginning with "We welcome the proposed IP ..." is missing while it looks relevant for the project in Madagascar. Please explain why and consider including it.

4. The responses to Germany's comments on PFD Addendum III are not easy to link with the Agency responses. Please check all these comments, number them and number the responses, and ensure the responses clearly respond to the comments.

**July 22, 2022:**

1, 2 and 3. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

4. We don't see the requested clarification. As requested in the previous review, please check all these comments, number them and number the responses, and ensure the responses clearly respond to the comments.

**September 19, 2022:**

4. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

1. Comment included.

2. Comments included.

3. Comment included.

4. Done.

**9/9/2022**

4. Revised as suggested.

**STAP comments**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

**May 31, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Convention Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**CSOs comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**Status of PPG utilization**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 23, 2022:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

**Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Is CEO endorsement recommended? (applies only to projects and child projects)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 27, 2022:**

Not yet. Please address the comments raised above. In addition, for all the sections under "1a. Project Description", please provide a clean and well structured document respecting the structure and the numbering of the CEO endorsement Request in the Portal entry.

**July 22, 2022:**

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments. In doing so, please explain in the review sheet how the comments are addressed in the review sheet and highlight the changes in yellow to facilitate the review process.

**September 20, 2022:**

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments.

**October 12, 2022:**

Not yet. Please address the following comments completed by further policy checking. Please also note that the extended cancellation deadline of this child project is December 6th, 2022, and it has to be circulated to Council before the CEO endorsement. So please address the comments below urgently to avoid the project cancellation.

1. Project Expected Implementation start date will past before the actual CEO endorsement ? please adjust and make sure that the elapsed time from implementation to completion is 60 months.

<b>Submission Date</b> 3/31/2022	<b>Expected Implementation Start</b> 11/1/2022	<b>Expected Completion Date</b> 10/31/2027
<b>Duration</b> 60 In Months		<b>Agency Fee(\$)</b> 888,671.00

2. Status of Utilization of PPG: please provide details of 'Contracts' and 'General Operating Expandables' and ensure they are all eligible.

**ANNEX C: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG). (Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below.**

\*Committed amount includes: translation of the project document into French, finalization of execution partner agreements, training to execution partners on reporting requirements

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: 200,000			
GCP /MAG/099/GFF			
Project Preparation Activities / Implemented	GETF Amount (\$)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
(5011) Salaries Professional			
(5013) Consultants	117,200	79,925	9,000
(5014) Contracts	22,000	100,424	0
(5021) Travel	37,000	0	
(5023) Training	20,000	106	9,000
(5024) Expendable Procurement		315	
(5028) General Operating Expenses	3,800	976	254
<b>Total</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>181,746</b>	<b>*18,254</b>

3. Chief Technical Advisor (whose functions as described in the TOR?s are very similar to the TORs of the National Coordinator) is charged to project components and PMC. As per guidelines PMU staff should be charged to the PMC portion of the budget. Please review and correct the budget accordingly as needed, including considering that this project has allocated \$6.9 million of co-financing to PMC, and nearly \$20 million of the co-financing is represented in grants.

**ANNEX E: Project Budget Table**

Please attach a project budget table.

FAO Cost Categories	Unit	No. of units	Unit cost	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	MIS	FMC	Total GEF	OP1: MEDD	OP2: MNAE	Other executing entities	FAO Support Services	Total
				Total	Total	Total	Total								
<b>5013 Consultants</b>															
GIS/Collect Facts	Day	30	450	13500	0	0	0			13,500					13,500
Household Survey report (SHARP)	Day	80	450	36000	0	0	0			36,000					36,000
FLR Chief Technical Advisor	Day	300	450	30000	34500	28,000	12,000		30000	135,000					135,000
International markets for green value chains	Day	130	450	27000	31500	0	0			58,500		50,500			58,500
Agriculture innovations	Day	130	450	27000	31500	0	0			58,500		50,500			58,500
Ecosystem Management & R&D Conservation	Day	130	450	27000	0	31,500	0			58,500		50,500			58,500
Payment for Ecosystems Services Report	Day	150	450	0	0	67,500	0			67,500		67,500			67,500
<b>Sub-total international Consultants</b>				<b>160500</b>	<b>97500</b>	<b>127500</b>	<b>12000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30000</b>	<b>427,500</b>	<b>310500</b>	<b>117000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>427,500</b>

4. In the letter of support signed by the OFP there is a request for ?the recruitment of an Execution Capacity Development and Environmental and Social Safeguards specialist. The expert will be responsible for carrying out tailored, in-country capacity development activities in support of the agreed work plan and results framework, and the successful implementation thereof?.

Jeffrey Griffin  
Senior Coordinator  
GEF Unit, Food and Agriculture Organization

No. 07 /2022/MEDD/M/GEF OFP.

**Subject:** Letter of Support to request GEF Agency Execution for “Integrated Landscape Management for a zero-deforestation coffee and rice value chains in the Central South and Eastern coast of Madagascar” [GEF ID 10750].

Dear Mr. Griffin,

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Madagascar, I hereby request the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the GEF implementing agency for the aforementioned project, to also carry out execution services for the above project/program, on an exceptional basis.

The execution services provided by FAO are expected to include the recruitment of an Execution Capacity Development and Environmental and Social Safeguards specialist. The expert will be responsible for carrying out tailored, in-country capacity development activities in support of the agreed work plan and results framework, and the successful implementation thereof. The TORs are detailed in Prodoc Annex L, also enclosed herewith. FAO will cost-share this function with its own resources as identified in the draft TORs in Annex L. FAO is the best entity placed to execute this function as this will facilitate the direct liaison between the FOLUR child project in Madagascar and the FOLUR global knowledge platform (K2A) as well as facilitate project operations supporting coordination amongst executing entities and implementing partners.

Execution activities, including those provided by FAO, will be described in detail in the GEF CEO Endorsement/Approval request and accompanying project/program documents, including the project/program budget.

The TORs are below:



Tasks/deliverables	Funding source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the Executing Agency (EA) in assessing capacities and monitoring application of Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) in line with the provisions of the ESS mitigation plan.</li> <li>• Provide on the job training and support to the OP on Results Based Monitoring after a capacity needs assesment of PMU and OPs core staff members</li> <li>• Support harmonization of OP's reporting templates with the OPA templates in line with FAO and GEF reporting standards .</li> <li>• Support the streamlining of M&amp;E roles and responsibilities across the numerous executing and sub-executing agency</li> <li>• Support coherent flow of monitoring data in a timely manner from Executing and Sub-executing agencies ensuring that methods for data collection and processing and roles and responsibilities are well established.</li> <li>• Provide project and program level data Quality Assurance support of all monitoring products</li> <li>• Support the OP in the actualization and harmonization of relevant reporting frameworks and templates with the OPA templates in line with FAO and GEF standards.</li> <li>• Advise and support the OPs in the preparation of work plans ensuring compliance with FAO rules/regulations as specified under the signed OPAs.</li> <li>• Ensure that the OPs maintain records of supporting documents for each financial transaction to be made available to Resource Partners' verifications missions.</li> <li>• In case of ineligible expenditures detected in the quarterly based financial reports advise and support the Operational Partner in th formulation of remedial action.</li> <li>• <del>Facilitate flow of knowledge sharing sessions, learning and knowledge capture sessions among project staff and national counterparts with documenting good practices.</del></li> <li>• <del>Assist the PMU with the preparation of the PIR</del></li> </ul>	Project Budget/M&E

Please note that this is the type of activities that aimed to be covered by the Agency Fee for the Implementing Agency to carry out. Kindly refer to the Guidelines in which during project implementation, the Implementing Agency has to provide technical guidance / advise Government / oversee procurement and financial management (please see below screenshot from Table A - Activities Covered by the Agency Fee, pages 50 ? 53 of GEF guidelines GEF/C.59/Inf.03 from July 20, 2020). The Implementing Agency has to use the expertise they have in-house through their specialist.

- (e) Project implementation and supervision
  - (i) Conduct at least one supervision mission per year, including briefing operational focal points on project progress.
  - (ii) Provide technical guidance, as necessary, for project implementation.
  - (iii) As necessary, include Agency's technical staff or consultants during supervision missions to advise government officials on technical matters and provide technical assistance for the project as needed.
  - (iv) Oversee procurement and financial management to ensure implementation is in line with Agency policies and timeline.
  - (v) Disburse funds to the EA and review financial reports.
  - (vi) Oversee the preparation of the required reports<sup>100</sup> for submission to the GEF Secretariat.
  - (vii) Monitor and review project expenditure reports.
  - (viii) Prepare periodic revisions to reflect changes in annual expense category budgets.
  - (ix) Undertake the Mid-Term Review (MTR) and send a copy to the GEF Secretariat.

GEF cannot authorize to charge the GEF Project Financing to pay a service/activity that is already covered through the Agency Fee. Please amend the budget as needed.

**Octubre 24, 2022:**

1. Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.
2. Thank you for the clarification. Please ensure this clarification is included in the CEO Endorsement Request (in the annex C on the status of the PPG).
3. Thank you for the explanation. Nevertheless, the change made is on TORs only while the GEF Sec comment was about charging the project components to cover expenses related to PMU activities. It is normal and expected that a project coordinator provide technical guidance too. Such staff should be charged to the PMC portion of the budget. Please review and correct the budget accordingly.
4. Thank you for the justification. Nevertheless, GEF Sec considers such function should be covered by the Agency fees. Please amend accordingly.

**October 31, 2022:**

2. Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.
3. We take note of the replacement of a Chief Technical Advisor by a ?Food systems and restoration technical specialist? only charged to the components. While we found surprising such important technical requirement was determined at this very late stage of the project design, we accept the justification provided by the Agency based on the following: 1. If the first version of the project would have been presented with this technical function, we would have accepted; 2. The international food system and restoration specialist will not have any project management related function. Cleared.

4. The Agency plans to recruit an "Execution Capacity Development and Environmental and Social Safeguards specialist". As part of its function is to support the weak capacity of the Ministry with monitoring and capacity building, part of his cost is covered by the project budget under M&E (\$130k, the other part being covered by the Agency fees and co-financing). While we first rejected this arrangement considering such specialist should be all covered by the Agency fees, the Agency provided a justification based on a fiduciary assessment demonstrating the need for this support and highlighting this support should notably include an important role of capacity building, which is different from and goes beyond the technical guidance expected to be covered by the fees. The fiduciary assessment of the Ministry of Environment has been uploaded and the TORs of the specialist have been revised to make clearer the need for such arrangement. we accept the new elements provided by the Agency. Cleared.

Thank you for addressing the remaining comments. The CEO endorsement is now recommended.

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>5/31/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>7/22/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>9/20/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/12/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/24/2022</b>	

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**