



Global capacity building towards enhanced transparency (CBIT-AFOLU+)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11316

Countries

Global

Project Name

Global capacity building towards enhanced transparency (CBIT-AFOLU+)

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

7/12/2023

Review completed by PM

6/5/2024

Program Manager

Esteban Bermudez Forn

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

CEO Approval Request

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF 11/06/2023: We take note of the justification uploaded to the documents section of the project. The CBIT Manager's approval has been uploaded to the documents section of the project.

EBF 8/17/2023: As FAO is playing a dual role i.e., both implementing agency and executing entity for this project, please send a request and justification via email for consideration by the GEF Secretariat.

Agency Response

??RE 8/17:

Thank you for your feedback. A justification note is uploaded to the portal.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF 8/17/2023: Yes, it is correctly filled out. Rio Marker is 2 for CCM and 1 for CCA.

Agency Response

2. Project Summary.

a) 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?

b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project, is well written and is it within the max. of 250 words?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

4. The revised Project Document states that the capacity-building activities at the country level will be carried out primarily following the remote one-to-one mentoring approach and in full coordination with other ongoing initiatives, mainly the CBIT-GSP, offering FAO technical expertise in AFOLU and tools developed for country applications. Six countries will be selected as part of the scope of work. Such countries will be defined at the project implementation stage. Cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. Cleared
2. Cleared
3. Cleared
4. Considering that the project expects to have activities at that the national level, yet countries haven't been selected or identified. Moreover, following our comment in the first round of review to section 8.3 of the review sheet (Source of Funds), as well as paragraph 6 of Annex 1 of the Guidelines on the GEF Project and Program Cycle Policy, global project with GEF-funded activities in the countries will require a letter of endorsement. For this reason, if the current proposal intends to have activities at the national level, it will need to identify the recipient countries and provide their respective LOEs to be processed for CEO approval. Else, the project rationale and project description including the theory of change and project outcomes/outputs will need to be adjusted to make explicit that the project will not work at the country level. If you choose the latter option, please clarify in your next round of comments and ensure it is explicit in the Portal form and the Agency project document.

EBF 8/17/2023: Please address the following comments:

1. [General comment] When referring to IPCC sectors, please refer to their official names, i.e. Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU), instead of Industry, throughout the document.
2. Please include a short paragraph clarifying this project will build on the previous CBIT global project (GEF ID 9864) and then explain why it will take a broader approach (beyond the AFOLU sector).
3. Please consider adding targets in terms of number of people and countries benefiting from the project in the summary.
4. Based on the additional text provided in the Project Description, it seems some outputs will be focused on the pilot projects while other output will assist countries based on requests for support. Is this correct? Please include a short description of the project's approach in the Project Summary.

Agency Response

RE 11/06:

Thank you for your feedback. Country support will be provided remotely and in collaboration with other ongoing activities in the country, such as CBIT, EA, SCALA and the technical support of the CBIT-GSP. The project will not be responsible for the organization of capacity-building activities in the countries. Therefore, the letter of endorsement is not due.

A sentence, highlighted in YELLOW in the Project Description, clarifies the type of support.

RE 8/17:

1. Addressed throughout the document.
2. Reference and explanation provided in the summary.
3. Targets added.

3. Project Description Overview

- 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?**
- c) **Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and appropriately funded?**
- d) **Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**
- e) **Is the PMC equal to or below 10%? If above 10%, is the justification acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 03/13/2024: Cleared.

EBF/WHF 03/13/2024:

We note that sex-disaggregated targets have been included in the Project Results Framework for the outputs mentioned below. However, our previous comment asked to reflect gender dimensions in Outputs 2.2.1, 1.2.1., 2.3.1, and 3.1.3. Reflection on gender dimensions is more comprehensive than providing sex-disaggregated targets. Please adjust these outputs so that they reflect gender dimensions or justify why this isn't possible.

EBF/WHF 02/23/2024:

Please reflect gender dimensions in Outputs 2.2.1, 1.2.1., 2.3.1, 3.1.3. Under M&E, please integrate the monitoring and reporting on gender-related results and the Gender Action Plan.

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

1. The revised Project Document states that the capacity-building activities at the country level will be carried out primarily following the remote one-to-one mentoring approach and in full coordination with other ongoing initiatives, mainly the CBIT-GSP, offering FAO technical expertise in AFOLU and tools developed for country applications. Six countries will be selected as part of the scope of work. Such countries will be defined at the project implementation stage. Cleared.

4. Per the revised Knowledge Management Strategy, the review comment is now cleared, based on the sub-comments below:

1. There is no special mention of LDCs in the revised version. Cleared.
2. The KM&L budget has been reduced to USD 70K and functions are consolidated between the Knowledge material (case studies, interviews, videos), the Trello Board for Project Management purposes, the FAO Transparency Website, discussion group, and newsletter. Cleared.
3. Trello Board will be added to a website for wider dissemination. Cleared.
4. The Knowledge Management Strategy of the CBIT AFOLU + will incorporate dissemination products from CBIT Forest 2 and the Climate Transparency Platform through its Agency section. Cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. We take note you intend to work with six pilot projects and provide support to countries on a request basis. However, as mentioned in our comment to the Summary section, per GEF policies and guidelines, global projects with GEF-funded activities in the countries will require a letter of endorsement and, for this reason, will need to identify the recipient countries and provide their respective LOEs to be processed for CEO approval.

If you intend to have activities at the national level, kindly identify the countries and ensure the wording of the project outcomes and outputs is aligned. For example, Output 3.1.1 still mentions ?FAO National CBITs?. It is unclear which countries this term includes or excludes. Please clarify or replace.

2. Cleared
3. Cleared

4. We take note that the Knowledge Management and Learning (KM&L) Strategy has been updated in the Agency Project Document. Please ensure any changes or updates are also visible in the Portal form. You can copy/paste from the Agency Project Document.

Specific comments to the KM&L Strategy:

1. The KM&L strategy mentions that there will be a particular focus on LDCs to provide accessible information. Please ensure this aligns with our previous comment (1.c.).
2. The key deliverables include four key deliverables totaling \$120k. What is the difference or complementarity between the MS Team Transparency-dedicated discussion space (\$30k) and the capacity-building information-gathering system (\$30k). Can they merge them? Similarly, what is the complementarity between the MS Teams Transparency-dedicated discussion space and the discussion group within the revamped transparency website? For efficiency, please consider consolidating functions of spaces of discussion and information gathering to optimize the overall KM&L budget, and perhaps include deliverables such as yearly reports of the main lessons learned.
3. Considering that *?The Transparency Network is open to all interested stakeholders: private sectors and civil society members are encouraged to join its online activities?* why did you decide to have closed/internal MS Teams information and discussion spaces instead of consolidating these deliverables into an open web-based one-stop-shop like the revamped Transparency webpage (KM&L key deliverable 4)?
4. Regarding the main outcomes 3 and 4 of the KM&L strategy, we encourage you to consider whether it is possible to strengthen the collaboration and synergies with the CBIT-Forest 2 project (that is currently under review), as well as the CBIT-GSP and the Climate Transparency Platform. Thereby, instead of deploying a separate capacity-building system and a revamped Transparency webpage, they could be integrated with the rest of the active CBIT global projects, especially the Climate Transparency Platform.

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. Output 3.1.1 cites the development, outreach, and visibility of *?FAO National CBITs?* enhanced. In this section, for the reader it can be interpreted as only FAO-implemented CBIT projects will benefit from this output, within a global project. It is unclear which countries will be addressed by the project as it has been commented in the alternative scenario section. Please clarify.
2. Even though it has been stated in following sections of the document, in this section, gender dimensions are not expressly stated in the project description summary/project component table. Please amend.

3. The GEF Project Financing and the Co-Financing Contributions for PMC correspond to 9.07% and 13.33% of the total GEF grant and total co-financing contributions, respectively. If possible, please adjust the co-financing contribution to the PMC so that it is proportional to the GEF project financing contribution.
4. On Knowledge Management and Learning (KM&L), please include a brief description of the proposed communication strategy for the project and also provide a budget and timeline for the implementation of key KM&L and communications activities.

Agency Response

RE 03/13:

We have updated the relevant Outputs by including gender dimensions.

RE 02/23:

The project results framework has been updated to reflect the gender dimension in each feasible output:

1.2.1, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 3.1.3

The monitoring and reporting on gender have been included in the M&E section.

RE 11/06:

1. Our main country support will be done remotely and in collaboration with other ongoing activities. The project will not be responsible for the organization of activities in the country. Therefore, the LoEs are not due.

The FAO National CBITs are only the CBIT projects at country level implemented by FAO. Now called CBIT projects implemented by FAO in the form.

4. The KM&L information has been included in the Project Description section.

1. The revised strategy does not mention a focus on LDCs.

2. The total budget has been reduced to USD 70K, and the deliverables merged as requested.

3. Rephrased a Trello board will be developed and added to the website for wider dissemination.

4. CBIT-Forest products and activities are incorporated into the FAO Transparency website, as indicated in the KM section.

FAO has a clear mandate of helping countries and disseminating knowledge in addressing the new challenges of the agriculture, forestry and other land use sector to its unique audience.

This is done through the FAO website.

The Agency section of the Climate Transparency Platform will be used for expanding our dissemination to a wider audience.

RE 8/17:

1. Clarification added in Project Description, Component 3 (or page 19 of ProDoc).
2. Table B ? Project description summary amended to reflect gender, where feasible
3. Co-financing to the PMC reduced to 9%. New Co-financing letter uploaded.
4. Section 8 ? Knowledge Management amended (page 33)

4. Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

- a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?**
- b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?**
- c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

1. The need for cross-sectorial institutional arrangements for AFOLU and non-AFOLU stakeholders is justified for the overall fulfillment of the ETF. Comment cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. We take note of the additions to the main barriers in the Project Rationale. However, the clarification provided only reflects the institutional arrangements will be "common to all sectors", but it doesn't justify why the project has taken a broader approach (i.e., beyond the AFOLU sector). Please further elaborate on this section to ensure you adequately justify why the project should go beyond the AFOLU sector.
2. Cleared
3. Cleared
4. Cleared. The section mentions that the beneficiaries of CBIT AFOLU were 3200, of which 40% were female and 60% were male, and they were distributed worldwide. FAO states that the outputs of AFOLU+ will be monitored by collecting information on geographic location and stakeholders' involvement, such as country/region, actor

role (state/nonstate), gender (binary/women, men), and age, which would allow to define better the beneficiaries.

5. Cleared. The private sector role has been clarified on the Transparency Network and Output 3.2.1.

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. Please provide a clear link between the project rationale and the project description to justify why the project has taken a broader approach (i.e., beyond the AFOLU sector). The current root barriers and the explanation you provide are valid, but they don't properly justify why this project has to cover more IPCC sectors instead of focusing on the AFOLU sector, as you did in the previous CBIT global project (GEF ID 9864).
2. The Project Description states that Parties are required to monitor the implementation of the NDCs every two years through the BTRs, starting from December 2024, according to the ETF. Kindly reflect the flexibility provisions for presenting the BTRs for SIDS and LDC Parties, as they can submit BTRs at their own discretion.
3. This section also states that the data collection to inform the estimations and indicators of emissions and removals of the AFOLU sector are still more focused on the production side but not so much on the emission side. At this point, it is still unclear what are the differentiated emission categories included in both the production and management side. Please present brief examples of what is included in both sides to facilitate the reading.
4. This section also describes the amount of people reached during the first CBIT AFOLU global project, but not the number of countries that will be addressed and their geographical regions. The new proposal would benefit on the disaggregation of these people by gender, geographic location, and potential vulnerable / ethnic group, shall the information be available, to make a more robust case of the global impact of the project.
5. Even though, the role of the academia and youth have been emphasized on the ?Baseline Scenario and any associated baseline projects? subsection, little reference is present for the role of the private sector in the context of the project to address the barriers outlined. Kindly refer in this section to what would be the role of the private sector to overcome the challenges to be addressed in this project.

Agency Response

RE 11/06

Text is added in the barriers section: the institutional arrangements cannot follow a sectorial approach for its nature of cross-sectoral distribution of roles and responsibilities. To ensure the AFOLU stakeholders are part of the discussion, we would need to engage with the non-

AFOLU and raise awareness of the importance of the inclusion of the line ministries of the different sectors (Outcome 1.2 addresses this barrier).

In addition, many cross-cutting reporting elements have been included by the MPGs: technical capacity is still not there for AFOLU and non-AFOLU experts, as indicated in the barriers section. Component 2 is going to address the lack of wider technical capacity, based on country requests.

RE 8/17:

1. In section (1) of Project Description (pages 11 and 12), it is clarified that in several cases a more comprehensive approach is necessary or requested to achieve results in AFOLU.
2. Added in the 1st paragraph of Project Description (page 11).
3. Examples added in the 5th paragraph of Project Description (page 11).
4. The results of CBIT-AFOLU were monitored geographically and by gender. It is highlighted in the (3) Alternative Scenario section (page 15).
5. Updated accordingly (page 15). Please also refer to Private Sector Engagement.

5 B. Project Description

- 5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust solution and listing the key assumptions underlying these?**
- b) 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?**
- c) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks are properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?**
- d) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?**
- e) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?**
- f) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?**
- g) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this MSP)?**
- h) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?**
- i) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component**

description/s?

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

k) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?

l) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 06/05/2024: Cleared. Comments from Ebru Gurbuzer on behalf of the government of Canada during circulation to Council were addressed by the Agency. On June 4, 2024, Ms. Gurbuzer expressed she didn't have further comments. The comments from Canada, including the responses from FAO, as well as the clearance from Canada, are included in the documents section of this project.

Comment from Ebru Gurbuzer on behalf of the government of Canada during circulation to Council during circulation:

Overall, Canada is pleased with this project as specific capacity building support for the AFOLU sector is required given the importance of the sector in LIC and LMIC and its distinctive challenges. However, the following recommendations could be shared to encourage the partner to define approaches that could enhance the impact and cost-effectiveness of the project.

1. Scale/reach: This project (which is a second phase of the CBIT-AFOLU project) will support six pilot countries with a total budget project of \$3,500,000 (\$2,000,000 from GEF). This remains a small number of supported countries when considering the baseline scenario, which indicated that only slightly more than half of 151 countries that submitted at least one Biennial Update Report (BUR) and many countries that do not have the capacity to fulfill the reporting frequency required. Given the scale of the needs (in terms of number of countries requiring capacity building), this project could have included some results/targets on number of other countries benefitting from the knowledge generated through the six pilot countries. Having specific targets (e.g. knowledge disseminated to X non-pilot countries) could help ensuring that thorough knowledge management and scaling up strategies are devised and integrated in the project. Such scaling up efforts could target the countries that expressed their interest at EOI phase but that were not selected as pilot countries. Without an intentional and structured approach, it will remain uncertain that the dissemination events (aiming at reaching 900 people) will lead to adoption of good practices and tools in other countries.
2. Gender: The document is using interchangeably ?Gender-sensitive?, ?gender-fair?, ?gender-inclusive?, ?gender-empowered?, ?gender-balanced participation?, and ?gender-fair and inclusive participation?. The approach of the project related to

gender should be better conceptualized and terminology harmonized.

3. General comment on the Project Results Framework (Annex A1):
 1. At outcome level: Indicators are focused on number of countries supported, number of meetings or capacity building opportunities, or number of participants or people trained. It is recommended to identify other types of indicators for measuring changes at outcome level, which should ideally be focused on measuring changes in Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices. This would align with the recommendation #2 of the CBIT-AFOLU Terminal Evaluation of the first cluster of FAO's Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency Projects[1]¹ (i.e. Recommendation: It will also be useful to include knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) surveys in future CBIT knowledge management strategies/plans.)
 2. The project proposal indicates that an increased emphasis will be placed on involving academia, researchers, and youth CSO to ensure knowledge retention. The Project Results Framework could integrate specific targets (or %) to measure the participation of non-state actors in the capacity building activities, and their involvement in the operationalization of the ETF. They are currently only captured in the stakeholder mapping indicator (output 1.2.1).
 3. As mentioned above, to consider creating additional results/indicators/targets on knowledge dissemination to non-pilot countries ? with a more structured approach than dissemination events reaching large number (900) of people.

Responses from the Agency:

1. Thank you for your comments. Indeed, we would like to provide in-depth assistance to more countries. The main constraint is the request from countries to have more and more in-person activities: the increase cost of travel and logistics has increased exponentially in the last few years and the resources available (same resources of one national CBIT) will not suffice to cover many countries with this modality. FAO expects to cover 6 countries in a hybrid-modality (i.e., using CBIT AFOLU funding for: in-person training sessions in FAO's HQ, in-person trainings at CBIT Global Support Programme Regional or global events, and fully remote/ virtual sessions). In addition, these 6 countries can opt to have in-person training sessions in their countries using funding for logistics other than those from CBIT AFOLU).

During the COVID period, we have been experimenting with remote one-to-one mentoring support that has been proven to be effective and to determine a behavioural change: we have been promoting it widely and many country stories

have been disseminated as good practices. Moreover, CBIT AFOLU funds will also be supporting 6 additional countries in 100% fully remote/virtual mode. As a result, the CBIT AFOLU will now be supporting 12 pilot countries in different modalities. In the Outcome 1.1 now the indicators are reflecting this increase: 6 countries in-depth support and 6 countries with remote support.

Regarding the second query, the project will provide technical AFOLU expertise in regional events in collaboration with the other initiatives, in addition to the technical assistance and advisory services to the FAO-implemented national CBIT projects (+20 projects). The indicator, which focuses on the stakeholders, can easily be translated as you suggested to capture the ?knowledge disseminated to 60 non-pilot countries?.

As for the behavioural change and adoption of tools in the wider audience (i.e. participants in online, regional and global events), we must admit that this monitoring is complex. We already launched in the previous phase several surveys to collect this information. Unfortunately, the response rate has always been low. We will seek the support of the colleagues from the FAO Office of Innovation (OIN) responsible for Behavioral Science to ensure we develop more adequate surveys and strategies.

2. Based on your suggestion, we harmonized the terminology to avoid potential confusion for the readers. The two main attributes are gender-inclusive when referring to capacity-building activities and gender-sensitive when we refer to results, we are going to monitor. Outcomes (1.2) and outputs (2.2.1, 2.2.2) in the log-frame have been consolidated accordingly. Language in the text of the project document has been also harmonized.
3.
 - 3.1. The project will follow the FAO Capacity Development Framework, which entails performing pre- and post-assessment surveys on the participants? knowledge of the core topic of the event to monitor the progress of capacity development. This would lead us to generate an indicator such as ?% of people trained whose score increased over the baseline?. This information is usually collected, and as you suggest we will include it as an additional indicator.
 - 3.2. Agreed. Similar to the gender approach, our registration forms contain information on the typology (government, academia, research, NGO, Youth CSO) of the participants. We would be able to capture this indicator.
 - 3.3. Addressed above.

EBF/WHF 02/23/2024:

2. Cleared.

4. Cleared.

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

General comments:

2. We take note that the country support will be conducted remotely. Notwithstanding, you haven't provided a selection criterion for the countries that will be supported (e.g., geographical distribution, countries with or without an active CBIT project, SIDS or LDCs, etc.).

6. Outputs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 have now been rephrased to include references to support provided to countries in terms of BTR Guidance and Roadmap Tool. Comment cleared.

Specific comments:

2. We take note that the country support will be conducted remotely. Notwithstanding, you haven't provided a selection criterion for the countries that will be supported (e.g., geographical distribution, countries with or without an active CBIT project, SIDS or LDCs, etc.).

5. The BTR Guidance and Roadmap Tools are now explicitly included at the output level for outputs 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. Comment cleared.

6. Thanks for the clarification. The interaction between the CBIT AFOLU+, National CBIT Projects Implemented by FAO, and the Climate Transparency Platform is explicitly stated. Nevertheless, we encourage you to consider having as target beneficiaries not only the CBIT Projects Implemented by FAO but also leaving the possibility open to CBIT projects with activities in the AFOLU sector, taking advantage of the global scope of this project and its interaction with the Climate Transparency Platform and their networks. If such an approach is feasible, kindly update the relevant sections of the Project Document.

EBF 11/06/2023:

General comments:

1. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.
2. As mentioned earlier in our comments, if you intend to conduct GEF-funded activities in the countries, you will need to identify the recipient countries and provide their respective LOEs to be processed for CEO approval. We understand you plan to take into consideration bottom-up approach and select countries (for the six pilot projects) based on their NDC commitments in the AFOLU sector, clarity on the capacity building requests and dedicated personnel assigned to the tasks?. Kindly elaborate if you will take into consideration additional criteria for the selection of the recipient countries, e.g., geographical distribution, countries with or without an active CBIT project, SIDS or LDCs, etc. If you are taking a different approach, please also specify.
3. Thanks for the provision of the indicative workplan. Cleared.
4. [Additional general comment] While we welcome the intention of the project to assist countries that are struggling to finalize and submit their pending BURs, we encourage the project to emphasize the support to countries in the preparation of their first and subsequent BTRs as requested by the ETF. Please review the wording of the project components and ensure this is highlighted.

Specific comments:

1. Regarding Outcome 1.1, we take note you have narrowed the scope to the six pilot projects/countries. Per GEF policies and guidelines, please keep in mind you will need to identify the recipient countries and provide their respective LOEs to be processed for CEO approval.
2. Cleared,
3. Cleared.
4. Cleared
5. If our understanding is correct, Output 2.1.3 will focus on BTR Guidance and Roadmap Tools, whereas Outcome 2.3 will focus on capacity-building on NDC tracking tools and M&E Guidance. Is this correct? If so, briefly ensure this is explicit in the respective output or outcome.
6. We appreciate the additional text and consider engaging with other transparency actors and initiatives is critical. We are also thankful for FAO's active involvement with the other CBIT global project, CBIT-GSP and the Climate Transparency Platform. However, the additionality of Outcomes 3.1 and 3.2 is yet unclear. Moreover, as commented earlier, we kindly request you to revise the term "FAO National CBITs" in Output 3.1.1. Please clarify which countries will benefit from Component 3. In addition, we encourage you to consider the possibility of strengthening the synergies with the Climate Transparency Platform even further as part of Component 3 (please refer to our comment 4.d of the Project Description related to the KM&L strategy).

EBF 8/17/2023:

General comments:

1. The summary section and the alternative scenario state that "the project will explore the expansion of the scope of work to include Waste, Energy and Industry as appropriate." Although we welcome the expansion of the scope to other relevant IPCC sectors, we kindly request to clarify which sectors will be covered by the project and to what extent. The same applies if an outcome or output will focus on AFOLU only or if it will include other sectors.
2. From the alternative scenario, which and how many countries will the project cover? Are any of these countries part of the previous CBIT global project (GEF ID 9864)? Will all of them benefit from the global project at the same level or would it differ depending on their level of engagement with the AFOLU sector within their NDCs (those with quantifiable targets, those only mentioning the AFOLU sector, and those with other considerations on the sector? Which countries will be supported for which country situation? How would the outputs be additional to those related to capacity building in the forest sector data collection and management of the CBIT Forest 2? The project results frameworks indicates that you aim to work with 6 countries, what was the criteria for selection? Please provide an explanation based on the aforementioned questions.
3. If possible, indicate the activities and/or deliverables expected for each output.

Specific comments:

1. Outcome 1.1 seems quite ambitious as it relates to addressing the capacity needs identified in transparency in potentially all the mitigation sectors. Given that national circumstances vary considerably, even among countries within the same region, it seems unlikely that these barriers could be addressed at a regional level, but rather at a national level for them to be effective. How would this outcome guarantee additionality to efforts made by CBIT national project, the CBIT-GSP, and other non-GEF related transparency efforts to gather information on climate transparency gaps in each of the sectors? Please explain.
2. As far as Outcome 1.2 is concerned, in line with what has been stated for Outcome 1.1, the institutional arrangements shall be strengthened at a national level for them to be effective. How would this effort be made from a global project, considering differentiated national circumstances and stakeholders? In addition, it is also still unclear how the Academia and Youth be involved past the intervention of this global project in the form of institutional arrangements? would MoUs be drafted and signed between the relevant national public institutions and local academic institutions / youth organizations? How would these efforts be additional to current ongoing efforts to engage academia and youth organization in each of the countries through CBIT National Projects, CBIT GSP or other non-GEF projects on climate

transparency and governance? Moreover, the private sector is mentioned but their role in this outcome is unclear past the provision of data to public institutions ? how could the engagement of local companies be engaged from a global project? Please explain.

3. Component 2 and its Output 2.1 state that FAO has identified specific areas of work to support countries in the transition to reporting on the BTRs. It would enrich this section to refer to what specific areas has been already identified in terms of meeting the new BTR requirements around the AFOLU sector (or the rest of the IPCC sectors that the project expects to address) specific challenges. Similar to what has been inquired for the previous component, how would these efforts guarantee additionality to other GEF and non-GEF ongoing initiatives at a national level and how would it be done from a global project to address specific country needs? Please explain.
4. Outcome 2.2 states that it will focus on addressing the strengthening of information systems procedures and management of the inventory cycle and the technical capacities to address the MPGs on GHG Inventories. What concrete examples of actions related to the relevant IPCC sector needs in target countries could be implemented based on FAO's experience? Are there specific examples you could mention from the previous CBIT global project (GEF ID 9864)? Would the ad hoc training include IPCC 2019 Refinements to 2006 IPCC Guidelines? Please clarify.
5. Similarly, for Outcome 2.3 what could be mentioned as potential specific examples of tools and strategies related to the relevant IPCC sectors as they relate to mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation actions (support needed and received)? How would they differ from the capacity building to implement the roadmaps towards preparing the BTRs of Output 2.1.3? Please explain.
6. With regards to Outcomes 3.1 and 3.2 kindly, confirm if these outcomes will only address CBIT projects in which FAO is the implementing agency? Also explain how this approach will be additional to the support provided by the CBIT Global Support Program (CBIT-GSP) and their regional networks in terms of sharing of experiences and lessons learnt as well as measuring transparency progress over time? Please elaborate.

Agency Response

RE 01/19:

2. Response provided in the proposed alternative scenario and is highlighted in blue accordingly.

6. As per revised sections in the alternative scenario, it is spelled out that the project will provide AFOLU capacity-building support in countries with CBIT implemented by other agencies.

RE 11/06:

2. As indicated in the previous comment, our main country support will be done remotely and in collaboration with other ongoing activities. The project will not be responsible for the organization of activities in the country. Therefore, the LoEs are not due.

4. The output has been rephrased: as of December 2023, the activity is obsolete.

1. The work will be carried out without any engagement with the organization of events at the country level. No LOE is required.

5. The tools are explicitly cited at Output levels.

6. Outcome 3.1 is updated to incorporate the comments.

RE 8/17:

1. Redrafted to increase clarity (page 14).

2. The alternative scenario redrafted to increase clarity on the number of countries, criteria for selection. If a CBIT-Forest country will request assistance, the technical support will focus on the use of the data for the BTR reporting (mainly GHG inventory).

3. The activities for each output are detailed in the work plan (Annex A4).

a. It has been clarified that Outcome 1.1 is for six pilot countries. FAO is collaborating with the CBIT-GSP and avoid duplication.

b. Clarified that the activities are for selected countries. For Academia, the project is raising awareness of their potential role, and presenting options, such as MoU, for formalizing their participation in the institutional arrangements. In selected countries, it facilitates the connection with the government. For the private sector, the activity is firstly focused on selected countries and builds our experience.

c. Component 2 has been enriched as requested. The AFOLU focus of our activities guarantees addition to other initiatives.

d. Examples added. The 2019 Refinements are part of our training for the new additions in the agriculture sector, even though 2006 is the main focus in particular for the LULUCF that is not yet fully applied.

e. Examples added. Output 2.1.3 is more general and raises awareness, while outputs under Outcome 2.3 will be more technical capacity building.

f. Yes, clarity was added in the ProDoc. The CBIT-GSP is training countries on the platform, but a continuous reminder in sharing info, lessons learned, stories and progress is required to achieve the goal: a lesson learned from phase I. Please keep in mind that FAO is collaborating with all networks

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?

b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?

c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

1. Explicit mentions of the agriculture, land use, and forest categories are included within this section as part of the scope of the project. Comment cleared.

4. References to the coordination between the CBIT AFOLU+ and CBIT-GSP and the Climate Transparency Platform are explicit within this section. Comment cleared.

6. References to supporting the Request for Support Letters from the NDC Partnership have been removed. The interaction with this donor will be done through the capacity needs assessment and the establishment of cross-sectorial institutional arrangements of Outcomes 1.1 and 1.2. Comment cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. Cleared.
2. Thank you for the clarity provided to differentiate the CBIT Forest 2 and CBIT AFOLU+ project. Given that the CBIT AFOLU+ will mainly focus on land use, land use change, and forestry-related activities, please further clarify if the CBIT AFOLU+ is not considering any focus on the agriculture category within the AFOLU sector.
3. Cleared
4. Regarding CBIT-GSP, please refer to our previous comments in the review sheet. More specifically comment 4.b of the Project Description Overview and comment 6 of the Project Description section. We encourage you to consider additional ways to strengthen the collaboration with CBIT-GSP.
5. Cleared
6. The comment from 8/17/2023 was not addressed during this review. Given that there is a growing number of countries requesting support for the NDC Partnership in the AFOLU sector, kindly advise if the CBIT AFOLU+ will be co-financing NDC Partnership ongoing initiatives such as Request for Support Letters, Partnership Action Fund requests, and Thematic Calls on LT-LEDS and NDCs Request for Support Forms.

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. The Implementing and Executing Agency are the same for this global project. While the responsibilities of the Implementing Agency are well defined in this section, the justification for the Executing Agency is only "to manage a global project" (see screenshot below). Kindly further elaborate on the responsibilities of the Executing Agency in this case and how the differentiated roles done by the same agency will avoid potential conflicts of interest. Please justify why FAO has this dual role, instead of selecting a third party to execute the project.

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this project? Yes

If so, please describe that role here and the justification.

To manage a global project

2. It is stated that the CBIT Forest 2 project will focus on Capacity Building for data collection of the forestry sector, while the CBIT AFOLU+ project will focus on capacity building on ETF reporting requirements following the MPGs of the Paris Agreement, encompassing the entire AFOLU sector, and even non-AFOLU sectors. Kindly clarify the wording in this section to reflect differentiated scopes of work, considering that the ETF MPGs consider national GHG inventory reporting, which includes data collection principles, and that the AFOLU sectors include the Forestry categories within it.
3. This section states that: "The capacity development material developed in CBIT-AFOLU will help CBIT-Forest to inform forest inventory and monitoring specialist on the specific needs of the AFOLU sector's GHG inventories and reporting?". If CBIT Forest 2 will focus on data collection for the forestry sector, which are part of GHG inventories and reporting for the Forestry categories, how would the CBIT AFOLU+ be additional in this sense? Please clarify.
4. Kindly note that the CBIT Global Support Program (CBIT-GSP) is the combination and continuation of the CBIT Global Coordination Platform and the Global Support Program (GSP). Hence, references to the CBIT Global Coordination Platform should be renamed as CBIT-GSP. In addition, and as expressed before in this revision, kindly elaborate in detail on how the CBIT the capacity building activities of this project will be additional to the capacity building activities for the AFOLU sector within the CBIT GSP Phase IIA?
5. As far as the interaction with Enabling Activities projects is concerned, please advise on how the project will communicate with other agencies to ensure that the relevant deliverables of the project become instrumental for BTR preparation for these agencies and countries.
6. Kindly advise if the CBIT AFOLU+ will be co-financing NDC Partnership ongoing initiatives such as Request for Support Letters, Partnership Action Fund requests, and Thematic Calls on LT-LEDS and NDCs Request for Support Forms.

Agency Response

RE 11/06:

2. The CBIT-AFOLU+ project focuses on the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use sector: in this section, the description was concentrated on LULUCF to explain the differences with the CBIT-Forest 2. Agriculture has been included to avoid misunderstandings.
4. New text added in the coordination section. To note that the CBIT-GSP is also a member of the PSC.
6. No, we don't. The text is removed.

RE 8/17:

1. The section has been amended to make clear the two roles. An explanation of the dual role is provided in the justification note.
2. Amended accordingly to provide clarity and examples.
3. Amended accordingly to provide clarity
4. Amended accordingly (pages 13, 14, 30) and additional information provided.
5. Amended accordingly (pages 13-14) and additional information provided.

5.3 Core indicators

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 targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable? Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

1. The number of stakeholders has been augmented to reflect the scale of a global project with the interaction of State and non-State actors. Comment cleared.
2. Noted. Considering that the project will include interactions with non-State actors and not only those involved in government affairs, please take all plausible opportunities to engage with women and increase their rate as beneficiaries of the project during its implementation. Comment cleared.
3. Comment cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. If our understanding is correct, the current project expects to engage with an extended set of stakeholders from academia, youth and the private sector. Is this correct? If so, would it be appropriate to calculate the number of direct beneficiaries based on the preceding CBIT-AFOLU project or should it be reconsidered?
2. In line with the previous comment, should the project aim for a higher participation of women?
3. [Additional comment] Considering that the beneficiary countries need to be defined, please ensure that changes are also reflected in the calculation of the core indicators.

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. The explanation provided after the Core Indicators provides valuable information, but it doesn't explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators. Please explain.

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

[View](#)

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (n approximately 1/2 page)

Building on the results in women's participation established in the previous project, the project will continue to preparation of the necessary documentation and publications in which the principle of gender sensitivity and s information are included. The external evaluation of the Global CBIT-AFOLU project highlighted how flexible tim outreach approaches can encourage women's engagement, which resulted in an increase of participation of w activities. The evaluation also stressed how the Global CBIT-AFOLU project contributed to gender equality by st participation and decision-making with most of the project's ETF champions being female. The Global CBIT AF to work on the results achieved in the previous project, building on the good practices developed. The number c also based on the results achieved during in the previous project, and taking into consideration the expansion o and geographical focus. Gender concepts, gender equity and issues in energy, agriculture and climate change v mainstreamed during project implementation, making sure a more meaningful participation of women in the p facilitated, as illustrated above. In cooperation with governmental partners, the project intervention will be in lin Gender Equality Action Plan and with FAO's Policy on Gender Equality. The project will ensure that women's spe that women enjoy equal access to project activities and that women benefit equitably from the project's activiti not limited to capacity building. This will contribute to facilitate the presence of women in relevant technical an positions such as those related to tracking of NDC implementation, reporting of GHG emissions and removals s data management systems and infrastructure.

2. In line with the previous comment, kindly advise how the project aims to ensure gender equality and that women will benefit equitably from project's activities, if the project expects to benefit 33% more men than women. Please clarify.

Agency Response

RE 11/06:

1. The number of beneficiaries has been increased. We remain conservative as CBIT-AFOLU was implemented during the COVID period. Ideally, the number could be further revised during implementation.
2. 40/60 is the most realistic number of general participation of women in government affairs and is already an improvement compared to phase I.
3. As per comment above.

RE 8/17:

1. The target level is justified by the gender analysis of the CBIT-AFOLU project (in annex F). Explained at the page 10.
2. CBIT-AFOLU+ is targeting a slightly increased gender rate 40/60

5.4 Risks

- a) **Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?**
- 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 and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

2. Cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. Cleared. Refer to the next comment.
2. The risk mitigation measure is described but the risk itself is not described. For each risk, please provide a short description of the risk and then explain the mitigation measure.

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. The risk table is incomplete. Please describe each risk you have identified in the "Comments" column.
2. In addition, provide for each identified risk, the corresponding mitigation measure that is considered.

The risk rating should reflect the overall risk to project outcomes considering the country setting and ambition of the project. The risk scale is: High, Substantial, Moderate, Low.

Risk Categories	Rating	Comments
Climate	Low	
Environment and Social	Low	
Political and Governance	Moderate	Political commitment and appropriate governance are required for ensuring participation to the project activities. To mitigate this risk, the activities will be implemented based on governments' expression of interest
Macro-economic	Low	
Strategies and Policies	Low	
Technical design of project or program	Low	
Institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability	Low	The PMU has the capacity to implement the project, based on the experience from the first phase
Fiduciary: Financial Management and Procurement	Low	
Stakeholder Engagement	Low	

Agency Response

RE 11/06:

2. The risk descriptions have been added in the comments column, which also contain the mitigation measures.

RE 8/17:

The table has been redrafted according to the GEF-8 template, including level and mitigation measure.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

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

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or LDCF/SCCF strategy?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request EBF 8/17/2023: Yes, the project is aligned with the GEF-8 Programming Strategies, more specifically Pillar II, Objective 2.1 of the Climate Change Mitigation Focal Area GEF-8 Strategy. Cleared.

Agency Response

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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF 11/06/2023: Cleared.

EBF 8/17/2023: Although this is already explained in other sections of the proposal, briefly explain how the project is aligned and/or coherent with global priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors).

Agency Response

?RE 8/17:

In section C of the portal, the first three paras of Section 7 of the prodoc should be included to respond to the comment.

Text on the alignment with GEF-8 programming strategies should be kept.

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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request EBF 8/17/2023: Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF 11/06/2023: Cleared.

EBF 8/17/2023: Please note that the GEF has a Policy on Gender Equality (2017) and a Gender Equality Implementation Strategy (2018). Kindly amend the reference to the GEF Gender Equality Action Plan accordingly. Consider amending the references to collection of gender-disaggregated data (non-binary), if the intention is to collect sex-disaggregated data - binary/women-men.

Agency Response

RE 8/17:

Gender Analysis and Action Plan improved to address the comment.

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

2.1. Cleared.

2.2. Cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. Cleared.
2. Regarding Annex E in the Agency Project Document
 1. The table mentions consultations with ?Line Ministries of pilot and national CBIT countries? which took place in 2022. Do they refer to line ministries of the countries that participated in the CBIT AFOLU project (GEF ID 9864)? Please clarify.
 2. Considering that the beneficiary countries need to be defined, please ensure that any changes in the stakeholders are also reflected in Annex E.

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. Please indicate the role that civil society and the private sector will play in the project.
2. Please upload the stakeholder engagement plan and provide a summary of the project stakeholders and their role in the portal form.

Agency Response

RE 11/06:

1. Yes, we referred to the one of CBIT-AFOLU project (GEF ID 9864).
2. Due to the project's special focus on agriculture, forestry and other land use, the stakeholders identified are the expected ones.

RE 8/17:

1. The Transparency Network is open to all interested stakeholders: private sector and civil society members are encouraged to join its online activities. They had and will continue to have, direct access to knowledge products, virtual capacity-building activities and online training on tools developed within the project, as the pilot country retains useful.
2. Annex E is the engagement matrix, which is uploaded in the Portal.

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: 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 comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
N/A

Agency Response

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestEBF 8/17/2023: Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

a) Is PPG reimbursement requested and if so, is it within the eligible cap of USD 50,000?

b) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestEBF 8/17/2023: No, the project is not requesting PPG.

Agency Response

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the OFP's LOE? Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

The revised Project Document states that the capacity-building activities at the country level will be carried out primarily following the remote one-to-one mentoring approach and in full coordination with other ongoing initiatives, mainly the CBIT-GSP, offering FAO technical

expertise in AFOLU and tools developed for country applications. Six countries will be selected as part of the scope of work. Such countries will be defined at the project implementation stage. Cleared.

EBF 11/06/2023:

As mentioned earlier in our comments, considering that the project expects to have activities at that the national level, yet countries haven't been selected or identified. Moreover, following our comment in the first round of review to section 8.3 of the review sheet (Source of Funds), as well as paragraph 6 of Annex 1 of the Guidelines on the GEF Project and Program Cycle Policy, global project with GEF-funded activities in the countries will require a letter of endorsement. For this reason, if the current proposal intends to have activities at the national level, it will need to identify the recipient countries and provide their respective LOEs to be processed for CEO approval. Else, the project rationale and project description including the theory of change and project outcomes/outputs will need to be adjusted to make explicit that the project will not work at the country level. If you choose the latter option, please clarify in your next round of comments and ensure it is explicit in the Portal form and the Agency project document.

EBF 8/17/2023: The requirement of LoEs is contingent on whether or not there will be GEF-financed activities in countries, regardless of the number of participant countries. Per the project description, there will be some GEF financed activities in countries (i.e. outputs 1.1.1.; 2.1.1.; 2.1.2.; 2.1.3.; 2.2.2.; 2.3.1.; 3.1.2.; 3.1.3.) and, as previously stated, in our comments is yet unclear which countries will be addressed by this project. Kindly note, LoEs of the participant countries (that one can assume will be identified during the preparation phase) will be required by the time of CEO Approval.

Agency Response

RE 11/06:

We addressed the concern in the previous sections. Please refer to the above feedback.

RE 8/17:

The project is global in nature and LoE are not required.

8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines? e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is

there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 03/13/2024: Cleared.

EBF/WHF 02/23/2024:

The letter of co-financing indicates USD 135,000 in-kind and USD 1,365,000 in grant. Please revise the numbers on co-financing table accordingly for consistency.

EBF 8/17/2023: Yes, \$1,500,000 in co-financing (\$1,300,000 in grant and \$200,000 in-kind) will be provided by FAO. The co-finance letter has been uploaded to the documents section. Cleared.

Agency Response

RE 02/23:

Table C of the project document and in the Portal have been revised accordingly.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024: Cleared

EBF 11/06/2023: Please refer to our comment on section 8.3 Source of Funds and amend accordingly.

EBF 8/17/2023: Please refer to our comment on section 8.3 Source of Funds and amend accordingly.

Agency ResponseThe project is global in nature and LoE are not required.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024: Cleared

EBF 11/06/2023: Please refer to our comment on section 8.3 Source of Funds and amend accordingly.

EBF 8/17/2023: Please refer to our comment on section 8.3 Source of Funds and amend accordingly.

Agency ResponseThe project is global in nature and LoE are not required.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024: Cleared

EBF 11/06/2023: Please refer to our comment on section 8.3 Source of Funds and amend accordingly.

EBF 8/17/2023: Please refer to our comment on section 8.3 Source of Funds and amend accordingly.

Agency ResponseThe project is global in nature and LoE are not required.

8.6 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project before the PIF submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.7 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?

b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of the budget (too high? Too low?)

c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?

d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 06/05/2024: Cleared. Comments from Ebru Gurbuzer on behalf of the government of Canada during circulation to Council were addressed by the Agency. On June 4, 2024, Ms. Gurbuzer expressed she didn't have further comments. The comments

from Canada, including the responses from FAO, as well as the clearance from Canada, are included in the documents section of this project.

The table below summarizes the comments from Canada and the responses from FAO:

Results chain	Indicators	Final target	Means of verification	COMMENTS FROM CANADA
Outcome 1.1: Awareness of institutional capacity priority needs in transparency increased	Number of EOI gathered	20	EOI document submitted	To verify if this indicator and mean of verification are appropriate. If the project aims to support 6 pilot countries, more than 6 EOI should be gathered to enable a selection process. It is mentioned p.14 that <i>The pilot countries will be selected among the ones that will submit an official Expressions of Interest (EOI)?</i>
	Number of EOI selected for in-depth support	6	Signed EOI document	
	Number of EOI selected for remote support	6		
Outcome 1.2: A gender-sensitive Institutional arrangements strengthened	Number of stakeholders identified and/or outreached, disaggregated by gender and type	90	Stakeholder mapping document Meeting reports	To consider defining an indicator focused on changes behaviour, practice or performance.

Output.1.2.1 Gender-sensitive stakeholder mapping of the main transparency actors (e.g. line ministries from all sectors) and non-state actors (e.g. academia) carried out	Number of stakeholders mapped disaggregated by gender and type	150 60 F 90 M	Stakeholder mapping document	Is it useful to have a target on a minimum number of stakeholders to be mapped (150)? Should the indicator not be about having comprehensive and updated stakeholder mapping in place to ensure that the project will then be inviting all relevant stakeholders to relevant capacity building activities?
Outcome 2.1: Transition towards the BTR enabled	% of people trained whose score increased over the baseline	80	Submission of relevant documents developed Meeting reports/E-mail exchange	To consider defining an indicator focused on changes behaviour, practice or performance.
Outcome 2.2: National GHG inventories improved	Number of countries supported	6	Submission of relevant documents	To consider defining an indicator focused on changes behaviour, practice or performance.
Outcome 2.3: Knowledge of new and emerging ETF reporting requirements enhanced	% of people trained whose score increased over the baseline	80	Meeting reports E-mail exchanges	To consider defining an indicator focused on changes behaviour, practice or performance.

Outcome 3.1: Global understanding on transparency promoted	Number of participants disaggregated by gender and type Knowledge disseminated to non-pilot countries	900 360 F 540 M 60	Transparency Network statistics Event reports Newsletters	To consider defining an indicator focused on changes in behaviour, practice or performance.
Output.3.1.2: Gender-sensitive results monitored, and knowledge and experiences gathered and disseminated	Number of country case studies prepared	6	Documents uploaded on the CBIT GCP	Given the pilot country approach of the project, to consider developing 6 country case studies instead of Report and Lessons learned documents. This would align with recommendation #3 of the CBIT-AFOLU Terminal Evaluation of the first cluster of FAO's Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency Projects (i.e., Recommendation: <i>Develop a broader collection of country case studies on good ETF practices and lessons from different countries across regions, integrate them into training courses and materials, and share them in global, regional and national CBIT workshops.</i>)

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024: Cleared

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. Cleared. Please take into consideration the comments made in the core indicators sector.
2. Cleared.
3. [General comment] Please address the comment in the other sections related to the selection of countries and the conduction of GEF-funded activities at the national level and then ensure that the Project Results Framework is in line with the rest of the project proposal.
4. Cleared.
5. Cleared
6. Cleared
7. Cleared
8. Cleared

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. Please include an indicator related to GEF core indicator 11.

2. [General comment] Please disaggregate by gender the indicators that are related to number of stakeholders.
3. [General comment] As highlighted in the alternative scenario, the project is unclear about the selection criteria or the countries that will be covered by the project. At first glance, 6 countries for a global project seems low. Please address the comments in the alternative scenario and ensure they are reflected in the Project Results Framework.
4. For output 1.2.1 the number of 30 stakeholders seems low for a global project in 6 countries, considering line ministries from all sectors and non-state actors and that the institutional arrangements with them already exist. Please justify or amend.
5. For output 1.2.2., the number of 12 meeting reports means that there will be 2 meetings per country. They seem low to truly build capacities in the countries. Please justify or amend.
6. For output 2.1.2, what do you mean by 'ah-hoc relevant documents'? Please amend and be more specific.
7. For Output 2.2.1, what do you mean by 'relevant documentation'? Please amend and be more specific.
8. For Outputs 2.2.2, 2.3.1, and 2.3.2, the number of trained people seems low. Please justify or amend.

Agency Response

RE: 11/06:

Core Indicator in the Portal has been updated to reflect the new beneficiary target.

RE 8/17:

1. Included in the Annex A1
2. Addressed accordingly.
3. Countries are requesting more and more in-person trainings. Due to the high costs of flights and location we are phasing after COVID and due to the war, 6 countries, in addition to regional and global events and advisory work for the FAO CBIT National projects and the FAO EA, will realistically absorb most of the budget.
4. Amended to 90
5. This is the maximum of the in-person meetings that the project is able to finance due to the limited budget and the high costs we are experiencing in this period. Other activities will be performed online.
6. Amended with a Number of relevant roadmaps

7. Removed. It was a mistake.

8. Here we refer to very technical capacity-building activities for specific experts that would need to prepare the BTR in the short term: the # has been increased for 2.3.1. from 40 to 90. A broad understanding of transparency topic is under comp.3 and the # is very high.

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.8 Are geo-referenced information and maps provided indicating where the project interventions will take place ?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 03/13/2024: Cleared.

EBF/WHF 02/23/2024: Please add the location of project activities, location name, latitude, longitude, and Geo Name ID (if applicable) in the ?GEO location? section of the portal.

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024: Cleared

EBF 11/06/2023: Please address the comment in the other sections related to the selection of countries and the conduction of GEF-funded activities at the national level and then ensure that Annex E in the portal is in line with the rest of the project proposal.

EBF 8/17/2023: In Annex E, on Project Map and Coordinates, please consider inserting the geographic location of the site directly under the dedicated ?GEO Location? data entry field in the portal. This includes the Location Name, Latitude, and Longitude. Please include the geographic location of any physical project activity (such as an event or knowledge-sharing activity) to ensure the project is visible on the map.

Agency Response

RE 02/23:

The following information has been provided in the previous review and has been already cleared.

This is a global project, therefore, no geographic coordinates can be added. To locate the project on a map, we suggest adding the coordinates of Rome, where the project coordination unit will be located.

These are 41.88319-12.48925.

This is in line with the already approved Global Forest Phase II project (GEF ID 11308).

RE 8/17:

This is a global project, and therefore no geographic coordinates can be shared. To locate the project on a map, we suggest adding the coordinates of Rome, where the project coordination unit will be located.

These are: 41.88319-12.48925.

Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.9 Have safeguard screening document and/or other ESS document(s) attached and been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request EBF 8/17/2023: Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Annex G: GEF Budget template

8.10 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?

b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 03/13/2024:

1. The budget table has been updated, and a detailed description of the respective expenditure category and responsible entity receiving funds to execute has been included. Cleared.
2. Terms of reference of the (1) Project Coordinator, (2) MRV/ETF and M&E/ETF Specialist, (3) Communication Specialist, and (4) Country Engagement and M&E Expert have been uploaded to the documents section in the portal. Cleared.
3. Misc. expenses have been removed from the budget table. Cleared.

EBF/WHF 02/23/2024:

1. The budget provided in Annex G is missing two key columns: one providing a detailed description of the respective expenditure category and another with the responsible entity receiving funds to execute the category. We would kindly suggest the agency use the budget template provided in Appendix A of the Project Cycle guidelines; this would allow us to review the budget appropriately.

Appendix A: Indicative Project Budget Template

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)							Sub-Total	M & E	P M C	Total (USD eq.)	Responsible Entity (Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency) ⁱⁱⁱ
		Component 1		Component 2		Component 3							
		Outcome 1.1	Outcome 1.2	Outcome 2.1	Outcome 2.2	Outcome 3.1	Outcome 3.2						
Works	--												
	--												
Goods	Equipment 1												e.g. Ministry of Environment
	Equipment 2												
	--												
Vehicles							xxx			xx	x		
Grants/ Sub-grants	--												
Revolving funds/ Seed funds/ Equity	--												
Sub-contract to executing partner/ entity													
Contractual Services – Individual	--												
Contractual Services – Company	--												
International Consultants	Int'l consultant 1	xxx											
	Int'l consultant 2			xxx									
	--												
Local Consultants	--												
	--												
Salary and benefits / Staff costs	e.g. Technical Coordinator	xxx		xxx									
	e.g. Project Manager									x	xx		

2. Please upload the Terms of Reference of the Project Coordinator in the documents section in the portal.
3. Misc. expenses are ineligible for GEF funding, please request the agency to provide some level of information on what these could entail.

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024:

1. We take note that the Project Coordinator's budget line has been reduced from 15% to 14.25% of the total GEF grant. Regarding the terms of reference of this

position, please provide more information related to its contribution (e.g., role and deliverables) in output 1.2 (USD 57,000) and output 3.1 (USD 88,350), as well as any other technical activities this position is expected to conduct.

2. Thanks for providing additional information. Cleared.
3. Cleared
4. Cleared
5. Cleared
6. Cleared
7. Cleared

EBF 11/06/2023:

1. Thank you for your explanation. However, the GEF Secretariat remains firm on its concern regarding the salary of the Project Coordinator, representing 15% (\$300k) of the total project financing. We appreciate the level of co-financing provided for these positions thus far, but in order for the project to be cleared for further processing, we kindly request that you either reduce this cost or provide additional co-financing to cover this position.
2. Please provide a detailed breakdown of the budget line for the ETF/MRV specialist to reflect how many specialists will be hired and for how long.
3. Similar to the comment to the Project Coordinator, the Communication Specialist represents 11.7% (\$234k) of the total project financing. Please either reduce this cost or provide additional co-financing to cover this position.
4. Refer to Comment 1.
5. Cleared
6. Cleared
7. [Additional comment] We would appreciate it if you could share the revised budget in Excel format. The word format is difficult to read and forces us to export it to Excel to be able to review it.

EBF 8/17/2023:

1. Although we take note that the terms of reference (ToRs) for the Project Coordinator have been provided. The salary for this position is very high. It represents 15% of the project budget. In addition, it seems like the Project Coordinator will only be hired for 20 months of the 36 months of the project. Please reduce the cost of the Project Coordinator, justify why this person is hired 20 months of the 36 months of the project, and make the applicable changes to the ToRs and reupload them.
2. There is an error in the calculation number of units for the ETF/MRV Specialist, right now it is 142, resulting in a total of USD 923,000 (see screenshot below).

Please correct.

AO Cost Categories	Unit	No. of units	Unit cost	Component 1			Component 2				Component 3			M&E	PMC	Total GS		
				1.1	1.2	Total	2.1	2.2	2.3	Total	3.1	3.2	Total					
#11 Salaries professionals																		
Project Coordinator	Months	20	15,000		60,000	60,000						93,000		93,000	30,000	117,000	30,000	
#11 Sub-total salaries professionals				-	60,000	60,000	-	-	-	-	-	93,000	-	93,000	30,000	117,000	30,000	
#12 GS salaries																		
#12 Sub-total GS salaries				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#13 Consultants																		
ETF/MRV specialist	Months	142	6,500	161,525	161,525	323,050	167,678	167,678	167,678	503,035	46,150	46,150	92,300	4,615			92,300	
ETF/M&E specialist	Months	16	5,500	13,200	13,200	26,400	14,667	14,667	14,667	44,000	8,800	8,800	17,600				17,600	
Country engagement and M&E expert	Months	18	4,500	4,050	4,050	8,100	2,700	2,700	2,700	8,100	8,100	8,100	16,200	16,200	32,400		8,100	
Communication specialist	Months	36	6,500	11,700	11,700	23,400	15,600	15,600	15,600	46,800	70,200	70,200	140,400	23,400			23,400	
Sub-total International Consultants				190,475	190,475	380,950	200,645	200,645	200,645	601,935	133,250	133,250	266,500	44,215	32,400		1,320,000	

- The global project expects to deliver all its products with only four consultants, including 1 ETF/MRV specialist, 1 ETF/M&E Specialist, 1 Country Engagement Specialist, and 1 Communication Specialist. It also seems like the first three consultants cited on point 3 in the previous comment will only be present for some months of the project and not for the whole duration, how would the project guarantee to deliver all its products with this structure? Moreover, the project is expecting to engage with several stakeholders at the national level in the selected countries, could only 1 Country Engagement Specialist for only half of the project or part-time be enough? Please reconsider or indicate how it will be done to accomplish the project objective?
- Considering our first comment related to the Project Coordinator, we recommend reducing the salary of the Project Coordinator and ensuring you have enough personnel to achieve the targets of the project.
- We take note that the ToRs for the country engagement and M&E expert are provided. This position is charged to both project components and PMC.
- The budget for the inception workshop is USD 60,000. This is twice the amount for the In-country/Regional workshops. We recommend increasing the number of in-country/Regional workshops and reducing the cost of the inception workshop.

Agency Response

RE 02/23:

- The new budget table contains the description of the expenditure and the responsible entity.
- The ToRs of the project coordinator uploaded in the documents section.
- The misc. expenses have been deleted.

RE 01/19:

In the ToRs (updated and uploaded) this contribution is summarized in:

- ? Ensuring high-level collaboration and coordination among participating institutions and organizations at the national and international levels.

The coordinator will facilitate the discussion between ministry of environment and agriculture and ensure the participation of non-state actors for a stronger institutional arrangement (Outcome 1.2, Deliverables: national meetings facilitate).

The coordinator will lead the coordination and collaboration with other transparency initiatives at the international level (Outcome 3.1, Deliverables: monthly coordination calls; joint transparency events).

RE 11/06:

1. Kindly note that the weight of the cost of the PC has been reduced to 14.25% of the total GEF grant (against 15%). Please note that the project coordinator is also in charge of the technical coordination of the overall CBIT and EA portfolio at FAO and the transparency team leader following all the coordination calls and meeting with all the transparency initiatives, including CBIT-GSP, UNFCCC (#Together4Transparency, GCE, MRV/ETF Group of Friend), ICAT, PATPA. Furthermore, the cost is financed by this project and co-financing resources. FAO will continue to monitor opportunities to finance global capacity building work and therefore discuss and map co-financing opportunities with resource partners.

2. At the end of the budget table, a breakdown of the budget line for the ETF/MRV specialist has been provided:

2. Full-time specialists (total of 72 months), 1 part-time 50% co-financed (18 months), 4 ad-hoc contracts (13 months each, for a total of 52 months)

3. As requested, the communication specialist cost has been lowered below 10%.

4. As per feedback provided above.

7. The budget is shared in Excel.

RE 8/17:

1. The project coordinator's salary is within the brackets of the UN System salary scale for P3 level staff. His/her salary will be co-financed for the remaining 16 months.

2. The 142 months is the results of hiring for three years (36 months) between 4 and 6 ETF/MRV consultants (some of them part-time) to support the countries' activities. The average monthly salary of the consultants is around 6,500 USD.

3. As indicated above: there will be between 4 and 6 ETF/MRV consultant; the ETF/M&E specialist and the country engagement expert will be co-financed. The co-

financing from a project with similar activities will guarantee to have enough consultants for the whole duration.

4. As indicated in the ToRs and in the budget, the project coordinator is also in charge of several activities required for accomplishing the project objective.

5. Yes.

6. The budget of the inception workshop was reduced to 40,000 and the in-country increased to 110,000 USD (more than double). Please also note that the cost of the ETF experts going in the country is covered by the line international travel (+50,000 USD).

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.11 a) 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.

b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.

c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

EBF/WHF 05/03/2024: Comments from Ebru Gurbuzer on behalf of the government of Canada during circulation to Council were addressed by the Agency. In June 4, 2024, Ms. Gurbuzer expressed she didn't have further comments. The comments from Canada, including the responses from FAO, as well as the clearance from Canada, are included in the documents section of this project. For this reason, the PMs recommend the project for CEO approval.

EBF/WHF 05/03/2024: Following our communication via email. Please address the comments provided by Canada during the project circulation and include them in the project document as appropriate. Please highlight the changes **in red**.

EBF/WHF 03/20/2024: The PMs recommend the project for further processing.

EBF/WHF 03/13/2024: Please address the outstanding comment in the agency project document and the portal form, highlight them **in pink** and resubmit.

EBF/WHF 02/23/2024: Please address the comments in the agency project document and the portal form, highlight them **in green** and resubmit.

EBF/WHF 01/19/2024: Please address the comments in the agency project document and the portal form, highlight them **in blue** and resubmit.

EBF 11/06/2023: The Agency is requested to address comments and resubmit. Please ensure any changes or updates made to the Agency Project Document are also visible in the Portal form. Please highlight the new additions or corrections **in yellow** for ease of reference.

EBF 8/17/2023: The Agency is requested to address comments and resubmit.

** Please highlight **in green** the changes made on the portal version of the CEO approval document for ease of reference. **

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	1SMSP CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	8/17/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/6/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/19/2024	

**1SMSP CEO
Approval**

**Response to Secretariat
comments**

Additional Review (as necessary)	2/23/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/13/2024