

# Towards the Transboundary Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) of the Sixaola River Basin shared by Costa Rica and Panama

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10172

**Countries**

Regional (Costa Rica, Panama)

**Project Name**

Towards the Transboundary Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) of the Sixaola River Basin shared by Costa Rica and Panama

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

12/10/2020

**Review completed by PM**

5/13/2021

**Program Manager**

Christian Severin

**Focal Area**

International Waters

**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**

21st of January 2021 (cseverin): No, even though it was specifically mentioned several times during PIF development, the project still includes solid waste investments (Specifically mentioned in on of the pilots "2.1.1 Pilot 1. Improved municipal waste management practices in riverine communities in Panama and Costa Rica.". Please, make needed changes in order to make the proposal eligible.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): the uploaded information in the portal template still includes "pilot 1: Improved municipal waste management practices in riverine communities in Panama and Costa Rica." Please remove as indicated above. the pilot seems to have been removed from the uploaded document. please make sure that the template in the portal reflects upon ALL changes in the word document.

26th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

**Agency Response**

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez): Component 2 has been fully reformulated and the pilot intervention related to waste management has been removed. Since waste pollution (domestic and agricultural) is still a problem in the basin, it has been considered in the

environmental problems and cause and effect analysis. It will still be studied, during TDA phase, to provide a comprehensive understanding and foresee potential SAP investments.

Please, see related changes, highlighted in yellow, in the Prodoc (project summary, component 2, figure Theory of Change, Monitoring and evaluation, results framework, budget, and other correspondent text) and in CEO (Table B, Annex F, Theory of Change and correspondent text).

21st of April 2021 (anamarianunez): changes included in the GEF portal.

### **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

21st of January 2021 (cseverin): Partly, please address following comments:

- 1) As mentioned several times, GEF International does NOT fund solid waste management project activities. Please remove these from the submitted project.
- 2) Please explain why the engagement with people in the basin has decreased by 87%. If the project is now goign to benefit 4000 people, it begs the question if this is investment is worthwhile. Most, if not all TDA/SAP foundational investments are part of a transformative shift in managing the water resources in question, which more often than not inform policy changes, which then again informs management decisions and leverage investments.
- 3) Following on above point, the core indicator framework mention 4000 beneficiaries, however, in the project results framework (annex A) other numbers are inserted. Please ensure coherency between the different entries.
- 4) the 400000 ha of marine area under improved management, is not linked to the results framework. Please do so.
- 5) The entries under BENEFITS (section 10) have been listed in million ha, even though it makes little sense considering the project is delivering in the order of thousands, please change.
- 6) Please make sure to include wording in Table B, the project results framework and in the component description that specifies that the SAP will be endorsed at ministerial level.
- 7) According to the Gender section the project will not be having gender sensitive indicators included. This is odd, as gender specific indicators have been included in the

results framework. Please make sure answer ALL questions, that may most likely fix this issue.

8) Please upload a document that outlines the short, medium and long term opportunities and constraints that the current COVID Pandemic presents to the project. Currently the Risk section only includes one comments pertaining to COVID impacts.

9) Please upload the more specific budget for the project, it seems to be missing.

10) there is a difference between one of the cofinancing letters and what has been inserted into the cofinancing table. Please make sure that there is full coherency between co-financing letters and table C.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): Partly, please address missing issues below:

1) the CEO information uploaded still includes solid waste. Please remove. Further, solid waste component also is featured in the results framework in multiple places, please remove from here too.

2) the core indicator framework, still includes the 400k hectares of marine area. If this is part of the project deliverable, please ensure to include in results framework, component description etc. If this is not part of the project deliverables, please remove.

26th of April 2021 (cseverin): addressed

29th of April 2021 (cseverin): No, please address the below comment:

1. Please adjust the expected completion date to 2/1/2025 to meet the 48months duration.

13th of May 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

### Agency Response

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez):

1) As mentioned several times, GEF International does NOT fund solid waste management project activities. Please remove these from the submitted project.

Component 2 and Output 3 have been fully reformulated, and the pilot intervention related to waste management activities, has been removed. See details in question1.

2) Please explain why the engagement with people in the basin has decreased by 87%. If the project is now goign to benefit 4000 people, it begs the question if this is investment is worthwhile. Most, if not all TDA/SAP foundational investments are part of a transformative shift in managing the water resources in question, which more often than

not inform policy changes, which then again informs management decisions and leverage investments.

It was a mistake. The beneficiaries included in the first submission were only the direct beneficiaries from pilot interventions (4,000 people). Currently, the total direct beneficiaries' number has been adjusted, to include the total population of the basin, as indicated in the PIF. Countries agree that TDA/SAP foundational investments are part of a transformative shift in managing the water resources in the basin, and these will inform management decisions and leverage investments. See changes highlighted in yellow in PRODOC (Section Project Results Framework, and Annex 7 GEF Core Indicators?) and in CEO (Table F, Annex F, section 10).

3) Following on above point, the core indicator framework mention 4000 beneficiaries, however, in the project results framework (annex A) other numbers are inserted. Please ensure coherency between the different entries.

See related response in previous question. See changes highlighted in yellow in CEO Endorsement (in Annex A and F), PRODOC (in Section Project Results Framework: core indicators and its Annex 7 GEF Core Indicators).

4) the 400000 ha of marine area under improved management, is not linked to the results framework. Please do so.

Marine area is not considered in this project which is based on Sixaola river basin. A total of 4,000 Hectares has been estimated as a core GEF indicator target, as a summatory of 'Area of land restored (3,000 Hectares)' and 'Area of landscapes under improved practices (1,000 Hectares).

5) The entries under BENEFITS (section 10) have been listed in million ha, even though it makes little sense considering the project is delivering in the order of thousands, please change.

Corrected. Entries listed in hectares, instead of million hectares (see changes in yellow in CEO section 10).

6) Please make sure to include wording in Table B, the project results framework and in the component description that specifies that the SAP will be endorsed at ministerial level.

Revised to include wording that specifies that the SAP will be endorsed at ministerial level. See changes highlighted in yellow in CEO endorsement (Table B, Table 2, Annex A and correspondent text) and PRODOC (Table 7, Section V. project results framework and correspondent text).

7) According to the Gender section the project will not be having gender sensitive indicators included. This is odd, as gender specific indicators have been included in the results framework. Please make sure answer ALL questions, that may most likely fix this issue.

26th of March: all questions were checked in the GEF Portal.

8) Please upload a document that outlines the short, medium and long term opportunities and constraints that the current COVID Pandemic presents to the project. Currently the Risk section only includes one comments pertaining to COVID impacts.

Document that outlines the short, medium and long term opportunities and constraints of covid-19 can be found as **Annex H** in the CEO, as well as along the text in Prodoc and CEO highlighted in **yellow**.

9) Please upload the more specific budget for the project, it seems to be missing.

26th march 2021: Budget has been uploaded to Annex F in the portal.

10) there is a difference between one of the cofinancing letters and what has been inserted into the cofinancing table. Please make sure that there is full coherency between co-financing letters and table C.

26th march 2021: co-financing has been adjusted to what is stated in the letter.

21st of April 2021 (anamarianunez):

1) Solid waste mentions were removed from CEO Endorsement and GEF Portal.

2) 400k has of marine area were removed from the core indicator framework in the GEF portal, it was a mistake during upload.

3rd May 2021:

1) In a timely manner, the project would start about 2 weeks after CEO endorsement, likely 1 July 2021, therefore, the end date would be 30 June 2025.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

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

21st of January 2021 (cseverin): Please make sure that there is coherency between the Cofinancing letters uploaded and what has been included in Table C

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): addressed

Agency Response 26<sup>th</sup> march 2021: Table C has been adjusted.

**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 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2021

(cseverin):Yes

Agency Response

**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 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2021

(cseverin):Yes

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

21<sup>st</sup> of January 2021 (cseverin): Please explain the 87% decrease in project beneficiaries compared to at PIF stage

20<sup>th</sup> of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

Agency Response

26<sup>th</sup> of March 2021 (anamarianunez):

The total direct beneficiaries? number has been adjusted, to include the total population of the basin, as indicated in the PIF. See changes ?highlighted in yellow? in PRODOC (Section Project Results Framework, and the ?Annex 7 GEF Core Indicators?) and in CEO (Table F, Annex F, section 10). More details in question 2.2. above.

## 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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Partly. The project continues to have investments in solid waste management. It was noted very clearly in the PIF review that such investemtns would not be eligible. Please remove these from the GEF financed budget.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): The issue persists, please remove from Table B, results framework and wherever else it is still included.

27th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

Agency Response

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez): Component 2 and Output 3 have been fully reformulated, and the pilot intervention related to waste management activities, has been removed. See details in related questions above.

21st April 2021 (anamarianunez): mentions to solid waste pilot have been removed from the GEF Portal and CEO.



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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): No, Please strengthen the incremental reasoning. It is not possible to understand from reading the section what activities the project will be building on and further how the co-financing resources will be supporting the project delivery.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): No, It is still not possible to understand how the GEF investment is incremental to national baseline investments.

26th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed adequately.

Agency Response

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez): Part II, regarding the 'Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline?', has been improved. See CEO endorsement in yellow.

21st of April 2021 (anamarianunez): How the project will build on current baseline and how the GEF investments are incremental is detailed in the CEO and highlighted in green.

**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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): NO, also under this point is solid waste management included, please remove as it is not eligible under this investment, as has been pointed out during PIF process. Further, the short description under this heading is lacking description of the GEBs that will be delivered, that specifically pertain to the IW mandate.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

### Agency Response

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez): Component 2 and Output 3 have been fully reformulated, and the pilot intervention related to waste management activities, has been removed. See details in related questions above.

The project contribution to GEB has been reformulated to give an overall understanding of the project's impact on GEB. See changes in CEO Endorsement, Part II, section ?Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)? **in yellow.**

**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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): No, Please elaborate further on what the innovative aspects are. the description that has been included is not doing this in a convincing manner.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez): The project innovation approach has been reformulated to give a better understanding. See Part II in **yellow.**

### 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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

### 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

NA

### 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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Partly, the project document includes a risk analysis, but the COVID Pandemic is only touched briefly upon. Please include a more detailed analysis of the risks and opportunities that the COVID Pandemic may have on the project, on the short, medium and long term.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed, PRODOC now includes the COVID risk and opportunity analysis.

#### Agency Response

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez): Document that outlines the short, medium and long term opportunities and constraints of COVID-19 can be found as **Annex H** in the CEO, as well as along the text in ProDoc and CEO highlighted in **yellow**.

#### 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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

##### 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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

#### 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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

29th of April 2021 (cseverin): No please address below comments:

29th of April 2021 (cseverin): No, please address the below comment:

1. The M&E Budget does not match the M&E Total in the Budget Table. Please amend (unless the M&E budget allocation in the excel budget table is actually a combination of both KM and M&E and thus reached \$590,700 which is same as component 4- KM in the Portal entry ? if confirmed, no need to do anything)
- 2) There seems to be some input error in the table as in some cases the sub-total amount does not match the amount in the subcomponent.
- 3) M&E Specialist should be charged to M&E Budget and not to PMC.
- 4) Finance/Admin support are charged across all components and PMC ? Project staff must be charged to the Project Management Costs of both ?the GEF portion and the co-financing portion? (see Guidelines paragraph 5 ? page 49)
- 5) Travel for MTR and TE can be charged to M&E.

13th of May 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

## Agency Response

3rd of May 2021:

- 1) It is confirmed that the M&E budget allocation in the excel budget table, as well as in the Total Budget and Workplan table (section IX, p. 89) is a combination of KM and M&E.
- 2) Tables were revised and miscalculations fixed.
- 3) M&E specialist is under the M&E component.
- 4) Finance/admin support has been reallocated under the PMC.
- 5) Travel for MTR and TE has been moved under the M&E component.

### **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

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

## Agency Response

### **Annexes**

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

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): No, please include the Checklist for CEO Endorsement Template duly filled out for this project that responds to the recent audit findings.

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed, the checklist has been uploaded.

## Agency Response

26th of March 2021 (anamarianunez): The checklist for CEO Endorsement Template has been completed and included as Annex I in the CEO.

### **Project Results Framework**

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 22nd of January 2021

(cseverin): Yes

Agency Response  
**GEF Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response  
**Council comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response  
**STAP comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response  
**Convention Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response  
**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response  
**CSOs comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response  
**Status of PPG utilization**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 22nd of January 2021  
(cseverin): Okay

Agency Response  
**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 22nd of January 2021  
(cseverin): it is attached

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

NA

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

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

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22nd of January 2021 (cseverin): No, Please address above comments and resubmit

20th of April 2021 (cseverin): No, please address above comments and resubmit

27th of April 2021 (cseverin): Yes, CEO Endorsement is being recommended.

29th of April 2021 (cseverin): No, please address above comments.



13th of May 2021 (cseverin): Yes, CEO endorsement is being recommended.

**Review Dates**

|                                             | <b>Secretariat Comment at<br/>CEO Endorsement</b> | <b>Response to<br/>Secretariat<br/>comments</b> |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>First Review</b>                         |                                                   |                                                 |
| <b>Additional Review<br/>(as necessary)</b> |                                                   |                                                 |
| <b>Additional Review<br/>(as necessary)</b> |                                                   |                                                 |
| <b>Additional Review<br/>(as necessary)</b> |                                                   |                                                 |
| <b>Additional Review<br/>(as necessary)</b> |                                                   |                                                 |

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**

The Sixaola Binational River Basin is located in the border area between Costa Rica and Panama, covering an area of 2,848.3 km<sup>2</sup>; 19% of this territory is located in Panama and 81% in Costa Rica. The Basin has a very rich biodiversity and a terrestrial ecosystem of global importance. The central Cordillera de Talamanca contains at least 10% of the main habitat types on the planet. The mountainous region has been classified as one of the world's 200 ecological priority regions, as defined by the World Wildlife Fund. The ecosystems found here include tropical forests, pre-montane forests, cloud forests and high mountain wetlands (paramo, in Spanish). This area has a high percentage of endemism and endangered species, which includes 975 plant species and 1,077 species of birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles.

This project seeks to create long-term conditions for an improved shared river basin governance, with timely information for the Integrated Water Resources Management in the Sixaola River Binational Basin between Costa Rica and Panama, and will contribute to reducing agrochemical pollution and the risks associated with periodic flooding in the basin.

The project will support (i) development of a participatory process to generate a science-based integrated diagnosis on the current situation of the binational basin (Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis) and a Strategic Action Programme, to be endorsed at ministerial level, (ii) implement three pilot projects to generate learning on key issues (sustainable agricultural practices, restoration of banks to reduce erosion, multi-stakeholder platform to reduce pollution in the river basin), (iii) build a binational early warning and monitoring system, with innovative approaches and citizen participation to strengthen the capacity of local communities and organizations to respond to flood risks on the banks of the basin, and (iv) generate IWRM-relevant information to all stakeholders.