

# Towards low carbon footprint from ecotourism activities and management effectiveness of Aqaba marine protected area in Jordan

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10905

**Countries**

Jordan

**Project Name**

Towards low carbon footprint from ecotourism activities and management effectiveness of Aqaba marine protected area in Jordan

**Agencies**

IUCN

**Date received by PM**

12/21/2021

**Review completed by PM**

5/4/2022

**Program Manager**

Mark Zimsky

**Focal Area**

Biodiversity

**Project Type**

MSP

## PIF

### Part I ? Project Information

#### Focal area elements

**1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

The project doesn't meet eligibility criteria for CCM funding.

We recommend that the entire project be redesigned and that all the money is used for a biodiversity project focused only on Component Two of the current design, improving management effectiveness of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

With such a small amount of money overall, it will be more efficient to use focal area flexibility and channel the remaining CC-M resources into one small biodiversity investment.

5/11/2022

We note that the title is changed to reflect the revised design. However it is different between what shows in the letter of endorsement and what has been provided in the portal. Please keep the same title that is included in the LoE in Part I of the portal. Once MSP is submitted, the title can be then be changed.

Please include the submission date in Part I. As per the milestones section it would seem

that this PIF was submitted on December 17, 2021.

Per the information provided in section 6 (coordination), the executing partner for this project will be the Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan. Please revise Part I by removing IUCN as executing partner and replace with RMCS of Jordan, an CSO.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

5/31/2022

The project title is revised, and we used the original title that was used in the first submission. Kindly note that the revised LOE is annexed to this PIF.

Part 1 revised accordingly.

#### Indicative project/program description summary

**2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

No.

We recommend that the entire project be redesigned and that all the money is used for a biodiversity project focused only on Component Two of the current design, improving management effectiveness of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

The wording of the project objective is not complete, please correct.

6/1/2022

Cleared.

### Agency Response

The project was re-designed and it focusses now on management effectiveness of the reserve and on participatory approaches to enhance the governance and management.

May 2, 2022

The wording of the project objective was completed and rephrased

### Co-financing

**3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

No.

Once the project is redesigned as indicated in the review, please resubmit a revised cofinancing package.

5/11/2022

1. ?in-kind? should be classified as ?recurrent expenditures?; and ?grant? as ?investment mobilized?.

2. Government of Jordan 4.5M: based on the project document, it appears there is lack of clear financing plan at this stage. In this case, please report this amount as ?in-kind / recurrent expenditures?. At CEO endorsement request submission, submit responsible ministry(ies)? co-financing letters and classify the co-financing accordingly.

3. EU Commission: It appears that this refers to MED4EBM?s Integrated Coastal Zone management project (which is on-going), and a software monitoring tool that is developed by the project will be used for the GEF project. If this is the case, please report this amount as ?in-kind / recurrent expenditures?.

4. Please remove ?Green Fund? entry at this stage. At CEO endorsement request

submission, report as 'confirmed' co-financing and submit co-financing letters from the co-financing sources.

6/1/2022

Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed. The co-financing was revised!

May 2, 2022

no action needed

5/31/2022

1. Classification is added to co-financing in Part I, table C

2. The government's 4.5M is reported as 'in kind'/'recurrent expenditures'. The co-financing letters will be provided accordingly

3. The EU co-financing is reported as 'in kind'/'recurrent expenditures'

4. Done. Noted

#### GEF Resource Availability

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

This will be re-evaluated once a revised project design is submitted.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

#### **The STAR allocation?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Yes, but as indicated above we suggest all resources be channeled into a biodiversity project.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

#### **The focal area allocation?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Yes, but as indicated above we suggest all resources be channeled into a biodiversity project.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**The LDCF under the principle of equitable access?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

NA.

Agency Response

**The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

NA.

Agency Response

**Focal area set-aside?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

NA.

Agency Response

**Impact Program Incentive?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
12/22/2021

NA.

Agency Response  
**Project Preparation Grant**

**5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed. However, a PPG is still needed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**Core indicators**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Please include numbers for Core Indicator 11.

Please consider estimating the GHG emission reduction benefits from the project; Core Indicator 6 based on land-based project investments. If this is not considered a potential benefit, please just explain your thinking on this indicator.

5/4/2022

Cleared.

### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

Numbers for GEF Indicator 11 added

As the project was re-designed to remove the CC-M component, and is now focused on management effectiveness of Aqaba marine reserve, we consider that this indicator is not now essential for the project. However, all activities will aim to be environmentally friendly will indirectly contribute to reducing the GHG emissions

### Project/Program taxonomy

**7. Is the project/program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

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

**1. Has the project/program described the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?**

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

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

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

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

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

The project was re-designed to focus on one focal area which is biodiversity. The components related to the CC-M were removed.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

#### **Project/Program Map and Coordinates**

**Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please include in the revised submission.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

The map is included.

May 2, 2022

no action needed

#### **Stakeholders**

**Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

5/11/2022

The project should be able at this stage to provide more details on the consultations that have been taken place during project design (including information on the potential roles of different stakeholders including civil society organizations). The project should also be able to provide further information on the anticipated roles that different stakeholders

may play in project development and implementation, means of engagement and plans for developing a stakeholders engagement plan during PPG phase. Please elaborate further on both point above.

The PIF mentioned that a brief workshop report is annexed to the PIF, but there is no annex to the PIF.

6/1/2022

Cleared.

### Agency Response

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

5/31/2022

More details on the stakeholder consultation that took place during the drafting of the PIF is provided.

More details on the potential roles of different stakeholders during the project preparation phase and implementation are provided.

Stakeholder workshop report is added to the annexes. (ANNEX D, ANNEX E)

### Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

**Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

5/11/2022

The submission does not elaborate on any indicative gender dimensions related to the project objectives or components. In addition, it does not provide information on any planned gender assessments/ analysis to be carried out during PPG stage. Please elaborate further on both points above.

6/1/2022

Cleared.

### Agency Response

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

5/31/2022

More elaboration on the indicative gender dimensions is added to Part II, Section 3

More elaboration is added on the planned gender analysis during project preparation, and the planned gender assessments planned during project implementation

### Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**Risks to Achieving Project Objectives**

**Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**Coordination**

**Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined? Is there a description of possible coordination with**

**relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Given the historical development of the MPA as described in the PIF, and the aim of GEF investments in biodiversity to build capacity of the Government agencies responsible for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, we can not accept the institutional arrangements whereby IUCN is serving as both the GEF agency and the project executing agency as this goes against GEF policy. It appears from the PIF's very own description, the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority and the staff/agency of the AMR should be the executing agencies for this project. No justification is provided in the PIF as to why this is not the case.

If the Government wants IUCN wants to serve as the project executing agency and provides a rationale in writing for this, please arrange for another GEF agency to serve as the GEF agency. Based on the history of the declaration of the AMR, it appears UNDP might be the agency who could fill this function.

5/4/2022

Cleared.

**Agency Response**

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

Section 6 was re-written to solve the issue. We are now proposing IUCN as the implementing GEF agency, and JREDS, which is the only national NGO in Jordan, specialised in marine conservation, as the executing agency. We are also proposing the ASEZA as an implementing partner.

The justification for this set up is as follows:

- The ASEZA, as a government entity, must adhere to the Jordanian government procurement procedures while executing any project, which are long and complicated procedures and might hinder the implementation of the project within the planned short time frame which is 2 years.

- JREDS, as an executing agency, is the only NGO in Jordan specialized and dedicated for the conservation of the marine environment. JREDS already has an office in Aqaba, and already has a well-established relationship with ASEZA and the AMR management. As an NGO with extensive experience in executing projects funded by international donors, JREDS will be capable of executing this project in coordination with all stakeholders.

- IUCN, as an implementing agency, has a robust internal procedure for monitoring and financial control, however, its internal systems are much more flexible than the government systems. IUCN with its global mandate, will be able to guide and support JREDS in the execution of this project.

#### **Consistency with National Priorities**

**Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**Knowledge Management**

**Is the proposed ?knowledge management (KM) approach? in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project?s/program?s overall impact and sustainability?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

5/11/2022

The project has knowledge management activity particularly Component 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. It is, however, not clear 1) how existing lessons informed the project concept and plan, and 2) plans for strategic communications in the KM section in the Portal. Please elaborate further on this point.

6/1/2022

Cleared.

Agency Response

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

5/31/2022

Elaboration on how existing lessons and work informed the development of the project concept is added

Elaboration on plans for strategic communication in knowledge management is added in part II, Section 8

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response  
Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

### **Part III ? Country Endorsements**

**Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
12/22/2021

Please revise to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve.

4/7/2022

Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Revised in alignment with the revised PIF

May 2, 2022

no action needed

**Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects**

**Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

NA.

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/22/2021

No.

Please revise the PIF to be aligned with the new project design focusing solely on the management of the Aqaba Marine Reserve and resubmit.

4/7/2022

No. While the design elements of the PIF are now adequate, the executing arrangements as evaluated above are not. Please revise as instructed above and resubmit as soon as possible in order to meet GEF-7 deadlines.

5/11/2022

Please make the final revisions above carefully and resubmit.

6/1/2022

All revisions are now adequate.

PIF is recommended for CEO clearance.

#### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

#### **Review Dates**

	<b>PIF Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>12/22/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>4/7/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/11/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>6/1/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>6/1/2022</b>	

**PIF Recommendation to CEO**

### **Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval**

The objective of the project is to enhance and strengthen the management effectiveness, equity and operational capabilities of Aqaba Marine Reserve (AMR) through capacity building and participatory approaches. This small technical assistance project will be executed through one targeted component on MPA management that will seek to produce the following outcomes: 1) AMR delivers ongoing successful conservation of its biodiversity and ecosystem service values through improved governance, capacity for effective operational management for conservation and nature-based tourism, sufficient equipment, and sustained financing; and 2) Participatory approaches to equitable governance and effective management have strengthened the management effectiveness and improved equity of the AMR and reduced unsustainable resource use.

The global environmental benefits of the project will be: 1) 280 hectares of marine protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use; 2) 1000 hectares of landscapes under improved practices that benefit biodiversity; and 3) 5000 hectares of marine habitat under improved practices that benefit biodiversity.

An adequate COVID-19 risk mitigation plan is proposed to support implementation.