



# Mex30x30: Conserving Mexican biodiversity through communities and their protected areas

Review PPG Request and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

11510

**Countries**

Mexico

**Project Name**

Mex30x30: Conserving Mexican biodiversity through communities and their protected areas

**Agencies**

CI

**Date received by PM**

3/5/2024

**Review completed by PM**

**Program Manager**

Mark Zimsky

**Focal Area**

Biodiversity  
**Project Type**

GBFF

## GEF-8 Project Preparation Grant request Review Sheet

### 1. General Project Information / Eligibility

- a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GBFF funding?
- b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

### II. Indicative Project 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?

Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

The project's title refers to 30x30 and component 2 implies that the launch of a PfP to fund PA expansion is part of the project, but no PA expansion is included as part of the anticipated results (core indicators 1.1 and 2.1). Please clarify if PA expansion and the development of a PfP are part of the project. Please revise the logframe, component 2's description and the core indicator targets accordingly. Please in particular reformulate and further specify outputs under component 2, reformulating output 2.1, which is currently identical to its parent outcome.

3/8/2024

Cleared.

However, please note that this request was overlooked: "Please in particular reformulate and further specify outputs under component 2, reformulating output 2.1, which is currently identical to its parent outcome." Please address at the CEO endorsement stage.

## Agency's Comments

3/7/2024

The project will build the basis for achieving the 30x30 in Mexico.

Component 2 will launch a PfP to fund the full effectiveness of all the existing PAs (12.3% terrestrial territory, 22.5% of marine territory). CONANP plans to close the present administration in 2024 with PA decrees and ADVOC covering 14% of the terrestrial area of Mexico and 25% of the Mexican oceans decreed as PAs.

To reach the 30% of the terrestrial area under protection by 2030, CONANP estimates that the federation can reach 22% of the land surface of Mexico. The additional 8% will come from subnational PAs, where efforts to finance their long-term conservation are underway. Since the Mexican oceans fall under federal jurisdiction, Mexico is committed to reach 30% of its marine area as PAs by 2030.

A preliminary analysis estimates that US\$87 million are the financial gap for CONANP that needs to close to achieve efficiency in already decreed PAs.

Through Component 1, MEX30x30 project will support CONANP to close the financial gap by increasing US\$10 million the CONANP budget per year. It will focus on securing the public funds for sustained funding for the future. While CONANP cannot commit to future decrees by the next federal administration, the record budget reached in 2023 shows Mexico's commitment with taking bold steps for the 2030 goal.

The text in the proposal in relevant sections has been modified to reflect this approach, and the objective slightly reformulated:

The goal of Mex30X30 is to support Mexico to reach an effective management of the existing protected areas and contribute to conserve 30% of the territory by 2030 that is of global importance for biodiversity and of key priority in ecosystem services. This goal is aligned with GBFF targets and responds to the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan, ENBioMex.

**c) Are the components adequately funded?**

**d) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional (only for Multi-trust Funds PPGs with BD from the GEF Trust Fund)?**

**e) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for projects of more than \$2 million or 10% for projects of less than \$2 million? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?**

Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

### **III. Project Rationale**

**a. Does the project adequately describe the: (i) current situation/baseline conditions within the project geographic area or project thematic area; (ii) problem(s) that the project will address; (iii) goal and objectives of the project; and (iv) justification for the project intervention; and (v) expected results including the Global Environmental Benefits and an estimate of the project's contributions to the relevant biodiversity core indicators.**

Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

### **IV. Project Description**

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

**b) Are the project components and activities identified in the theory of change adequately described.**

**c) Is a list of stakeholders that will be involved in the project and their roles in the design and implementation of the project provided?**

**d) Are the Specific Action Area(s) that the project is aligned with identified and an explanation provided on and how the project will support the achievement of the specific Action Area objective(s).**

Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

Cleared for a, b, and c.

d) Please include the entire project under Action Areas 1, 2 and 4. At this PPG request stage, alignment with Action Areas 3 and 5 is unclear and not necessary.

3/8/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

3/7/2024

d) Noted and modified in relevant sections.

**V. Does the proposal adequately describe how the project meets the following criteria:**

**a) Potential to generate global environmental benefits (GEBs) (include a description of the GEBs the project will generate per the GEF-8 Core Indicators for biodiversity);**

**b) Alignment with the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and/or National Biodiversity Finance Plans or similar instruments to identify national and/or regional priorities;**

**c) The level of policy coherence and coordination across multiple ministries, agencies, the private sector, and civil society that the project aims to support;**

**d) Whether the project will mobilize the resources of the private sector and philanthropies'; and**

**e) Whether and how the project will engage with and provide support to IPLCs.**

Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

**VI. Project results indicators**

**Is the table correctly populated and consistent with the Project Description?**

Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

Please clarify, in the PPG request, whether ADVCs are formally considered to be PAs in Mexico's legislation. If not, please revise the core indicator targets, shifting all terrestrial ADVCs to core indicator 4.1 and, if ADVCs are recognized as OECMs, on sub-indicator 4.5 dedicated to OECMs, and shifting all marine ADVCs, if any, to core indicator 5 and, if ADVCs are recognized as OECMs.

Please confirm that there is no double counting and that all 400,000 reported under core indicator 3 (terrestrial restoration) are outside of the surface area reported under core indicators 1 and 4. All restoration that is to take place in the surface area reported under core indicator 1 or 4 should be removed from core indicator 3. It will be captured in a separate indicator of the project results framework that is to be developed during PPG.

Please provide the FAO EXACT sheet that was used, as suggested in the PPG request, or clarify what are the main assumptions used to set the target, i.e. what are the scenarios with vs without the project that were used to calculate mitigations outcomes. At this PPG request stage, we suggest limiting the calculation to the 400,000 ha of restoration activities planned, using conservative emission factors.

3/8/2024

1-Thank you for the clarifications, revisions and the EX-ACT spreadsheet However, the target on core indicator 6 is now 8.3 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>eq, when it was most likely meant to be 8.3 million tCO<sub>2</sub>eq as shown in the attached. Please correct.

2-Please also revise the justification under the core indicators table to reflect that the target, to be refined during PPG, is based on a conservative estimate of climate mitigation from the restoration of 400,000 ha within protected areas, using average carbon sequestration values in Mexican coniferous and cloud forests as detailed in the annexed spreadsheet.

**Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)**

For Core Indicator 1 and 2: The hectares were estimated using official government geospatial data. For Core Indicator 6: FAO EXACT tool was used for this calculation, using the assumptions that similar ha of C6 have GGH mitigation per average ha in Mex30x30 and 400,000 hectares. For Core Indicator 11: The numbers presented are based on the population record of communities who will be directly benefitted in the target site.

3- Please update the PPG request according to the updates made in the core indicator targets:

- **AA1- GEF TF Target 1, Target 2.** Component 3 will directly contribute to finance 22,241,504.0 ha of terrestrial protected areas and 20,937,389 ha marine protected areas under improved management effectiveness. Components 1 and 2 will leverage finance to achieve the 30x30 conservation target.
- **GEF TF Target 3.** Component 3 will finance the restoration of 400,000 ha in degraded agricultural, forest natural grass and woodlands.
- **GEF TF Target 6.** Component 3, will contribute to carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector, both direct and indirect. Based on previous projects, is expected to maintain 12.1 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq.
- **GEF TF Target 11** Component 3 will directly support the inhabitants of the PAs and ADVC, by increasing capacities and financing activities to conserve, restore, and manage sustainably. The total number of people benefiting will be 163,293, 50% women.

This means removing a reference to core indicator 3 (which seems to be referred to as a ?GEF TF Target? here), clarifying instead that the project will restore 400,000 of degraded ecosystems within protected areas.

It also means replacing 12.1 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq by 8.3 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq.

3/12/2024

Cleared.

### Agency's Comments

03/11/2024

1) 8.3 M tCO<sub>2</sub>eq included in the portal

2) Core indicator table revised to include the following text:

The calculation is based on a conservative estimate of climate mitigation from the restoration of 400,000 ha within protected areas. As the ex-act tool is not recommended by experts for calculating restoration (the afforestation line in Ex-Act has methodological limitations) we followed an approach similar to the analysis for a Green Climate Fund restoration project recently approved (RIOS- SSAP023).

Using average carbon sequestration values in Mexican coniferous and cloud forests as detailed in the annexed spreadsheet

We used the following assumptions:

1. We assumed that the intervened ha by PAs was in an equal proportion (1/6 of the 400,000 ha restored in each PA).
2. The vegetation type was calculated based on the data from CONABIO using the potential vegetation Vegetation and Land Use based on Series VII.
3. The emission factors were calculated for this vegetation, for the number of ha per PA: three PAs have mainly Coniferous Forest (199,999.98 ha), two Cloudforest (133,333.32 ha). The PA Bajos del Norte is not considered, as the restoration will be marine.

4. The directly intervened area with to be restored with a direct effect on removing carbon will be 20% of the ha, based on previous experiences.
5. This surface was multiplied by the emission factors, using average carbon sequestration values for above-ground biomass and below-ground biomass emission factors obtained from Table 70 (Mexico National Inventory Report- NIR, 2018).
6. The period of the interventions will be 5 years of project implementation plus 15 years, for a total of 20 years.

The target will be fully and detailed calculated in the final ProDoc.

3. We updated the PPG request, by removing reference to Core Indicator 3 and revising the number to 8.3M.

3/7/2024

a) The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines a protected natural area *as a clearly defined geographical area, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other types of effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature and its ecosystem services and associated cultural values*

In Mexico, the General Law of Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection, in accordance with article 77 Bis section I, considers the Areas Voluntarily Destined for Conservation (ADVC) as protected natural areas under the jurisdiction of the federation. The ADVC are established through a certificate issued by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources<sup>1</sup>.

The main difference that distinguishes Protected Areas (PAs) and ADVC from OMECs lies in the legal recognition of the first two as conservation areas. ADVCs are recognized by Mexican legislation as natural protected areas and must have a primary conservation objective; while OMECs are not recognized in Mexican legislation, regardless of their objectives (they may have there are no changes on those indicators as ADVCs are formally considered to be PAs in Mexico's legislation<sup>2</sup>.

b) the 400,000 are part of the PAs, and therefore reported under core indicator 1. It is removed now from core indicator 3.

c) The FAO EXACT computation has been adjusted using 400,000 ha of restoration activities planned. Please find the spreadsheet attached in this resubmission.

## **VII. Project Financing Tables**

**a) Are all the tables correctly populated?**



**b) Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines (only for projects with GEF TF components)?**

Secretariat's Comments

a) cleared.

b)

Please confirm that the entire \$12,051,639 of GBFF funding reported as ?amount to support action by IPLCs [for] biodiversity? corresponds to project activities supporting action by IPLCs and does not encompass project activities that will benefit IPLCs without supporting their actions. Please clarify in the PPG request to what the \$12,051,639 of GBFF correspond, with cross reference to anticipated outcome / outputs. Whether the project as a whole or certain project activities support action by IPLCs could entail a number of circumstances including but not limited to: IPLCs directly receive resources through the GEF agency for execution of project components/activities; IPLCs lead the design and management of some project activities but do not manage financial resources; the project provides in-kind support to actions by IPLCs for biodiversity, etc.

3/7/2024

Please ensure consistency across the financial table in the amounts programmed per Action Area:

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing(\$)
GBFF Action Area 1	GBFF	9,169,862.00	79,649,652.00
GBFF Action Area 2	GBFF	5,835,367.00	34,850,100.00
GBFF Action Area 4	GBFF	1,667,248.00	1,667,248.00
	<b>Total Project Cost (\$)</b>	<b>16,672,477.00</b>	<b>116,167,000.00</b>

3/12/2024

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

3/11/2024:

Financing figures updated.

3/7/2024

b) The full amount of GBFF funding under Component 3 (US\$12,051,639) will support actions in support actions by IPLCs, mainly in two ways: 1) in the case of the ADVOC, IPLCs directly receive resources for execution of project components/activities; s; and 2) in the other PAs, IPLCs lead the design and management of some project activities but do not manage financial resources. In the six proposed areas, there are indigenous groups that inhabit/are owners of the territories, and are included in designing and implementing the management plan (see Figure 2).

#### **VIII. Project Endorsement**

**a) Has the project been endorsed by the country's(ies) OFP and has the OFP at the time of PPG request submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?**

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

3/8/2024

Cleared.

3/6/2024

Letter of Endorsement (LoE) states that the project will be *?executed by Fondo Mexicano para la Conservacion de la Naturaleza ? with the support of ? CONANP? ?* however, CONANP is not included in Portal as the other Anticipated Executing Entity (in red underline below). Please correct in the portal.

## General Project Information

Project Title:

**Mex30x30: Conserving Mexican biodiversity through communities and their protected areas**

Region:

**Mexico**

GEF Project ID:

**11510**

Country(ies):

**Mexico**

Type of Project:

**GBFF**

GEF Agency(ies):

**CI**

GEF Agency Project ID:

Anticipated Executing Entity(s):

**Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza A.C.**

Anticipated Executing Type:

**CSO**

GEF Focal Area (s):

**Biodiversity**

Submission Date:

**3/2/2024**

To: Orissa Samaroo  
Conservation International GEF Agency  
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 600 Arlington, VA 22202

Subject: Endorsement for "Mex30x30: Conserving Mexican biodiversity through communities and their protected areas"

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Mexico, I confirm that the above project proposal (a) is in accordance with my government's national priorities including the priorities identified in the National Biodiversity Strategy of Mexico, and our commitment to the Convention of Biological Diversity; and (b) was discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points.

I am pleased to endorse the preparation of the above project proposal with the support of the GEF Implementing Agency(ies) listed below. If approved, the preparation of the proposal will be supported by and the project executed by Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, A.C. as the lead executing agency, with the support of federal counterpart National Commission for Natural Protected Areas (CONANP). I request the GEF Implementing Agency(ies) to provide a copy of the project document before it is submitted to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement.

3/12/2024

Cleared.

### Agency's Comments

3/7/2024

As stated in the LOE, CONANP is the government counterpart for the project. The EA is expected to coordinate with them, and they are part of the decision-making process. As for other projects in Mexico, the EA is the entity receiving and administering the GEF resources.

Within the Mexican legislation, CONANP cannot receive directly GEF resources and therefore cannot be named "Executing Entity". The project proposal highlights in the description and institutional arrangements the strong role of CONANP, and therefore highlights its role as the leading government agency of MEx30x30, as the LoE also mentions.

In other previous LoE to GEF from the government of Mexico and documents, the focal point has followed a similar approach to recognize the active role of the government counterparts (see, for example GEF-8 CONECTA), even when they do not receive resources and therefore are not co-EA.

#### **IX. GEFSEC Decision**

**a. Is the PPG recommended for technical clearance?**

**b. Additional comments to be considered by the Agency during project preparation**

#### Secretariat's Comments

3/6/2024

No, please revise the PPG request and resubmit as soon as possible.

Also, please narrow down the number of KMGBF targets the project will contribute to and focus on those that the project will make a significant direct contribution towards.

3/7/2024

Please carefully make all the revisions listed above and resubmit. Please pay attention to the detail requested and outlined above.

3/12/2024

PPG is recommended for technical clearance.

By the time of CEO endorsement, please narrow down the number of KMGBF targets the project will contribute to and focus on those that the project will make a significant direct contribution towards. We had requested that in this PPG request review, but it was not done.

In addition, please note that this request was overlooked: "Please in particular reformulate and further specify outputs under component 2, reformulating output 2.1, which is currently identical to its parent outcome." Please address at the CEO endorsement stage.

#### Agency's Comments

03/11/2024:

Revisions were completed

3/7/2024

Noted and modified., focused on those on AA 1,2,4.

**Review Dates**

	<b>PPG Request Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>3/6/2024</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>3/8/2024</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>3/12/2024</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		