



The First Biennial Transparency Report (1BTR) and a combined Ninth National Communication and Second Biennial Transparency Report (9NC/2BTR) of the Republic of Kazakhstan to UNFCCC

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11519

Countries

Kazakhstan

Project Name

The First Biennial Transparency Report (1BTR) and a combined Ninth National Communication and Second Biennial Transparency Report (9NC/2BTR) of the Republic of Kazakhstan to UNFCCC

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

3/18/2024

Review completed by PM

7/22/2024

Program Manager

Esteban Bermudez Forn

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

EA

Expedited Enabling Activity req (CEO)

Section I - Enabling Activity Summary

Funding elements.

Is the enabling activity aligned with the relevant GEF funding elements as indicated in Table A and as defined by the GEF-8 Programming Directions? Is the General Enabling Activity Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

EBF 3/26/2024: Yes. This project is aligned with the GEF-8 climate change focal area strategy.

Agency's Comments

Cost Ranges.

If there was a deviation in the cost range, was this explained?

Secretariat's CommentsEBF 3/26/2024: Cleared. The project has no deviations in the cost range. The costing is in line with [Information Note GEF/C.62/Inf.15](#).

Agency's Comments

Enabling activity summary.

Is the enabling activity summary clear? Are the components in Table B and as described in the enabling activity request sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objectives?

Secretariat's Comments

TY/EBF 5/23/2024:

1. Cleared.
2. Cleared.
3. Cleared.

TY/EBF 3/26/2024:

1. It seems that the word "adaptation" in the title of Component 4 (*?Publication and submission of combined 1BTR/ and 2BTR/NC9 reports to the UNFCCC adaptation?*) is unnecessary. Please check and determine whether the title needs to be updated.
2. Regarding stakeholder involvement, please be more specific about who will be involved from academia, the private sector, and civil society.
3. Please incorporate gender dimensions at the output level. For example, in outputs 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 3.1.1, and 4.1.1.

Agency's Comments

UNDP response, 19 April 2024:

1. Yes, thank you, we agree, the word ?adaptation? is unnecessary, and the updated title is as follows: ?Publication and submission of combined 1BTR/ and 2BTR/NC9 reports to the UNFCCC?
2. The stakeholders from academia, private sector and civil society have been added and specified as follows:

Academia ? Nazarbayev University, Green Campus (jointly organize an annual Climate Talks to present outcomes of COP29, COP 30. COP31, outline priorities for Kazakhstan); International Science Complex Astana, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan-German University, Astana Medical university, Agrarian University - for Chapter Adaptation, Climate Risks, Vulnerability Assessment; Astana IT University;

Private Sector ? according to the MENR's Order #57 dated 23 February 2023
(<https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/ecogeo/documents/details/281248?lang=ru>)

some active organizations will be involved: Atameken, including Rural women association, KEA, AGMP, EPA, Kazenergy, Kazaqua, EcoJer, Zhasyl Orman, RES association Qazaq Green, ;

Civil society ? Ecom NGO, KBCSD, Kazwater, Kazwaste, ACBK, AEOK, NGO Climate Change Coordination Center, PF Avalon, GreenKaz,

3. Gender dimension was added.

Output 2.1.1 Information improved to track the progress made in the implementation of the NDC, including gender sensitive knowledge management measures suggested for the NDC implementation

Output 2.1.2 ? Knowledge management for the NDC implementation improved including gender sensitive communication and analysis of gender disaggregated information (Indicator 6)

Output 3.1.1 - Vulnerability and adaptation chapter for 1 BTR and 9NC/2 BTR developed with gender analysis and submitted for national review (Indicator 7)

Section 2 - Enabling Activity Supporting Information

Eligibility Criteria.

Is this enabling activity eligible for GEF funding?

Secretariat's Comments

EBF 3/26/2024: Cleared. We note that UNDP will provide partial execution services under the Country Office support to UNDP National Implementation (NIM) modality with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources as the Executing Entity. We also note that Kazakhstan's OFP's exceptional request, UNDP's description of the partial execution services, and the GEF GPU Manager's approval on August 22, 2023, are uploaded in the document section of this project.

Agency's Comments

Institutional framework.

Are the institutional arrangements for implementation adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments EBF 3/26/2024: Cleared. We take note that UNDP will provide partial execution services under the Country Office support to National Implementation (NIM) modality with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources as the Executing Entity. We also take note of the exceptional request by Kazakhstan's OFP, the description of the partial execution services by UNDP, and the approval by the GEF GPU Manager on August 22, 2023, which are uploaded in the document section of this project.

Agency's Comments

Monitoring and Evaluation.

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan?

Secretariat's Comments EBF 3/26/2024: \$20,400 are budgeted for M&E-related activities. Please ensure that gender-related results are included in the project's Monitoring and Evaluation activities.

Agency's Comments

UNDP response, 19 April 2024:

Annex 10 of the UNDP Project document includes the following: "Integrating Gender into M&E Processes: Gender considerations should be integrated into monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes, evaluating the qualitative and quantitative benefits for women".

Monitoring of the Gender Action Plan is included in the Monitoring and Evaluation table (pg. 31 of the UNDP Project Document). The budget has been allocated through the following budget lines for personnel/consultants:

- Gender expert (\$160 x 50 days), see p.54 of the UNDP project document.
- 2 UN Volunteers, working with the UNFCCC national focal point on gender issues (\$883.25 x 24 months), see p.56 of the UNDP project document.

Monitoring and Evaluation section in UNDP Project document (pages 24-32) contains M&E Plan with all outlined Indicators (including Gender related indicators) to be monitored and evaluated.

Section 3. Information Tables

GEF resource availability.

Is the proposed GEF financing in Table F (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program InclusionEBF 3/26/2024: Yes. Cleared.

Agency Response

Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

SCCF (Adaptation or Tech Transfer)?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's CommentsEBF 3/26/2024: Yes, this is in line with the information note GEF/C.62/Inf.15.

Agency's Comments

Rio Markers.

Are the Rio Markers for CCM ,CCA, BD and LD presented?

Secretariat's Comments EBF 3/26/2024: Yes. Cleared.

Agency's Comments

Country endorsement.

Has the project been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point at the time of the EA submission and has the name and position been checked against the GEF database? Are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in Portal

Secretariat's Comments

EBF 7/10/2024: We take note of the acknowledgment and no objection of Mrs. Saule Sabiyeva, as OFP of the country. Cleared.

EBF 7/2/2024: Thank you for submitting a new LOE from the current OFP. The new LOE is missing the footnote that is included in the template ("Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate."). Please ask Mrs. Saule Sabiyeva, as OFP, to acknowledge her no objection to this footnote via email or submit a new LOE including the footnote.

EBF 6/17/2024: My sincere apologies for my mistake. As my PPO colleagues point out, the GEF guidelines require "the LoE signed by the current country's GEF OFP is a requirement when requesting GEF funding." Please submit a new LoE from the current OFP and ensure that the latest execution arrangements are reflected in this letter.

EBF 6/10/2024: The agency didn't obtain a new LoE. However, as mentioned earlier, we take note that the first LoE was signed by the former OFP, Zulfiya Suleimenova, when she was still the OFP of the country on August 4, 2023. This comment is cleared by the Primary PM.

TY/EBF 5/23/2024: Please clarify if you obtained a new letter of endorsement.

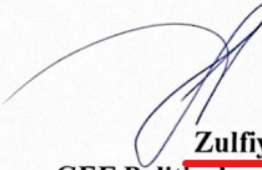
Notwithstanding, we take note that the first LoE was signed by the former OFP, Zulfiya

Suleimenova, when she was still the OFP of the country on August 4, 2023. This comment is cleared by the Primary PM.

TY/EBF 3/26/2024: The LoE is signed by Zulfiya Suleimenova (see screenshot 1), but according to our records, the official OFP by the time of the EA submission (March 18th) is Saule Sabiyeva since September 2023 (see screenshot 2). Please provide a new LoE.

Screenshot 1:

| Source of Funds | GEF Agency | Focal Area Source | Amount (in US\$) | | | | Total |
|----------------------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------|
| | | | GEF Project Financing | GEF Project Financing Agency Fee | Project Preparation Grant (PPG) | Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Agency Fee | |
| GEFTF | UNDP | CC Set Aside | 1,233,000 | 117,135 | N/A | N/A | 1,350,135 |
| Total GEF Resources | | | 1,233,000 | 117,135 | N/A | N/A | 1,350,135 |

 Sincerely,
Zulfiya Suleimenova
GEF Political and Operational Focal Point
Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the
Republic of Kazakhstan

Screenshot 2:

Kazakhstan

Mr. Yerlan Nyssanbayev

Political Focal Point since 2024-01-29

Minister

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

Mangilik El Avenue 8, The House of Ministries, 14th Entrance

Astana 010000

Kazakhstan

Tel: +7 7172 74 1297

Email: e.nyssanbayev[at]ecogeo.gov.kz

Mrs. Saule Sabiyeva

Operational Focal Point since 2023-09-07

Deputy Director of the Climate Policy Department

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Agency's Comments

UNDP response, 5 July 2024:

The GEF OFP for Kazakhstan, Mrs. Saule Sabiyeva, has confirmed that she has no objection to the footnote ("Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate.") in the LoE letter.

Below is an unofficial translation of communication between UNDP Country office and GEF OFP Ms. Sabiyeva. The original email communication is uploaded in the GEF portal.

----- Original post -----

Subject: Footnote LoE

Date: Wednesday, July 03, 2024 15:47 +05

From: Assel Nurbekova <assel.nurbekova@undp.org>

To: Sabiyeva Saule Sagdatovna <s.sabiyeva@ecogeo.gov.kz>

Dear Saule,

Today we have received a comment from the GEF, it is about the Letter of Endorsement. As you know, the development of the project proposal for the project "First Biennial Transparency Report (1BTR) and Combined Ninth National Communication and Second Biennial Transparency Report (9NC/2BTR)" of the The Republic of Kazakhstan for UNFCCC was initiated on the basis of LoE signed by Zulfiya Suleimenova when she was GEF focal point (attached 6708 Kaz OFP LoE). However, due to your appointment as the GEF OFP, we were asked to provide a new letter of support, which you kindly signed

(attached LoE). However, the LoE letter you have signed is missing the footnote(below) that is a part of the GEF template, apparently it seems it fell out when the letter was transferred to the letterhead (LoE).

Footnote

"Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate".

Could you please confirm that you have no objection to this footnote by replying to this email?

Thank you,

Regards,

Assel

From: ?????? ????? ?????????? <s.sabieva@ecogeo.gov.kz>

Sent: Thursday, July 4, 2024 8:19 AM

To: Assel Nurbekova <assel.nurbekova@undp.org>

Subject: Re: Footnote LoE

Assel, good afternoon.

I have no objection.

Your sincerely / Saule

UNDP response, 19 June 2024

The LoE signed by the current GEF OFP for Kazakhstan, Ms. Saule Sabiyeva is uploaded in the GEF portal. The letter was signed on 16th May however, the Ministry sent the letter to UNDP only after the last resubmission (after 10th June). Thank you for understanding.

UNDP response, 10 June May 2024:

We confirm that we have not obtained a new LoE and are proceeding with this submission with the original LoE signed by Ms. Zulfiya Suleimenova.

UNDP response, 19 April 2024:

The LoE was signed in August 2023, when Ms. Suleimenova was in the position of GEF OFP.

Your comment on the change in GEF OFP position is well noted. We have requested a signature from the current GEF OFP (Ms. Sabiyeva).

Due to the short deadline for submitting the BTR1 report, we are resubmitting the proposal while we are still in the process of signing the new LoE letter. At the same time, we would like to assure you that we will inform the PM (Mr. Esteban Bermudez Forn) as soon as the

letter is uploaded to the GEF portal. We believe and expect that the new LoE will be signed soon. Thank you for understanding.

Response to Comments

Are all the comments adequately responded to? (only as applicable)

Gef Secretariat comments

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

Council comments

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

STAP comments

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

CSOs comments

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

Project Budget Table.

Is the project budget table attached? Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

Secretariat's Comments

EBF 7/22/2024:

1. ToRs for the Project Administrative and Financial Assistant are provided in the documents section of the project. This position is charged to project components and PMC. Cleared.
2. Category updated. Cleared.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| <p>Other Operating Costs</p> | <p>Total: \$39,740 Direct Project Costs (DPCs), as stipulated in the Letter of Agreement (Annex 13), pertain to the expenses incurred by UNDP in providing administrative services related to human resources, procurement, finance, and other functions for the project. These costs will be calculated based on the UNDP Universal Price List or the actual corresponding service cost, adhering to the GEF rules on DPCs. The figures provided here are estimates, and detailed DPCs will be outlined during the annual project operational planning process, being incorporated into the yearly budgets. DPCs can only be utilized for operational costs per transaction and are not a flat fee</p> | | | | | | | | <p>39,740</p> | <p>39,740</p> | <p>UNDP</p> |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------|---------------|-------------|

EBF 7/16/2024:

Following on comments from PO, please:

1. Please charge 100% of the Project Administrative and Financial Assistant costs to PMC, and not to project component.
2. Please change the expenditure category of UNDP's Direct Project Support Costs (\$39,740) into 'Other Operating Costs' but not 'Sub-contract to executing partner'

EBF 6/10/2024:

3. UNDP is responsible for the budget line that used to be assigned to an unspecified responsible party (RP). The request for exceptional execution by the agency, including the letter of support from the OFP and justification, is included in the documents section of this project. Cleared.

EBF 5/23/2024:

1. Cleared
2. Cleared

3. The entity responsible for this budget line must be specified in the Portal form and the LoE and cannot be assigned to a general entity as "RP". Please correct the responsible entity for this budget line.

EBF 3/26/2024:

1. In the next review, kindly upload the budget table in Excel format in the documents section for easy review.
2. As explained in the Institutional Framework section, the GEF Secretariat approved the request from the OFP of Kazakhstan so UNDP could provide limited execution services for this project on an exceptional basis for \$39,741. While these execution services are listed as a budget line in Annex B, it is unclear why UNDP is responsible for the rest of the budget lines. There seems to be a footnote in the right column of the budget table (Responsible Entity) with the reference of "[1]", but we couldn't find the explanation for this footnote in the portal form or in the Word or Excel versions of the document that have been uploaded. Please clarify in Annex B why UNDP appears responsible for several budget lines totaling \$ \$1,033,800 or amend them as appropriate.
3. The budget table lists two entities responsible for receiving funds: UNDP (refer to our previous comment) and IGTIP?. The latter, IGTIP?, appears in the budget table as responsible for executing \$199,000 to *"organize expert support for the project, procure experts, develop policy papers, provide support for project knowledge management, create and conduct capacity-building initiatives, engage stakeholders, and collect and analyze national statistics (and beyond) data."* Notwithstanding, IGTIP? is not mentioned in the portal form or in the letter of endorsement. The endorsement letter only lists the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources as the entity in charge of project execution. Please either (1) replace IGTIP? with the correct executing entity or (2) provide a new letter of endorsement with IGTIPC as an executing entity and ensure the portal form is aligned with this change (e.g., EA summary section, institutional framework, etc.).

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------|--------|--------|--|---------|--|
| <p>Contractual Services – Company</p> | <p>Total: \$199,000 Output 2.1.1 = \$50,000 Output 2.1.2 = \$58,800 Output 3.1.1 = \$90,200</p> <p>The Responsible Party will be engaged to: organize expert support for the project, procure experts, develop policy papers, provide support for project knowledge management, create and conduct capacity-building initiatives, engage stakeholders, and collect and analyze national statistics (and beyond) data.</p> <p>Technical thematic experts provided by the RP include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education Expert 2. Extreme Weather and Hydro Events Expert 3. Water Resources 4. Caspian Sea Climate Expert 5. Bioclimatic Index Expert 6. Drought Expert 7. Biodiversity Expert 8. Climate Finance Expert 9. Forestry Expert 10. Economic Impacts of Climate Change Expert 11. Technology Transfer Expert 12. Industry Decarbonization Expert 13. Energy Transition Expert | | 50,000 | 58,800 | 90,200 | | 199,000 | |
|--|---|--|--------|--------|--------|--|---------|--|

Agency's Comments

UNDP response 19 July 2024:

1. With reference to the GUIDELINES ON THE PROJECT AND PROGRAM CYCLE POLICY (2020 UPDATE) (kindly see below), the policy indicates that if project staff performs functions under technical components, a detailed Terms of Reference and definition of outputs are required. In the Agency Project Document, Annex 16: Terms of Reference for Project Board and Project Team details the functions of project staff under PMC and relevant technical components separately. The Annex is also uploaded to the GEF Portal.

10. **Agency Fee and Project Management Costs:** This guidance was previously included under Implementation and Execution Functions and has been moved to a dedicated section to add detail and clarity. It reflects changes to the Agency Fee Policy related to tranching based on milestones. It refers to existing policy documents confirming project cycle management costs are covered by the Agency Fee, and references in the accompanying tables are clarified. In exceptional cases where project staff funded from PMC perform functions charged to project budgets, clear Terms of Reference and definition of outputs are required. References to treatment of Agency Fee upon cancellation are updated to reflect the new policy and clarify that fees are cancelled, but not necessarily returned by Agencies. It is clarified that motorized vehicles may be purchased with GEF financing only under specific conditions and should instead generally be covered

2. The category for direct project costs was marked as "Other Operating Costs" in the GEF budget.

UNDP response 10 June 2024:

Having in mind approval of the OFP's request for support services, as well as tight deadline for BTR1 submission, it is suggested that UNDP takes over procurement for this budget line. Related parts in the UNDP project document are amended accordingly, including Results and Partnership Section, pg. 13, Management Arrangements section, pg. 34, and Total Budget and Workplan, pg. 41-46.

UNDP response, 10 May 2024:

At this stage it is not possible to replace the expression "RP" in the budget by a specified Responsible party. Explanation is as follows:

IGTIPC as a Responsible party was taken into consideration for some project activities at early stages of project design. But the situation became uncertain due to investigation initiated towards the Chairman of IGTIPC and the final decision of MENR was to reject IGTIPC as the Responsible Party.

Currently there is no conclusion what organization could replace IGTIPC and in this regard, following the UNDP corporate guidelines and procedures, the Responsible Party will be identified during the initiation stage of the project implementation to manage the funds that they will receive as per the responsible party engagement rules and eligibility criteria.

Selection and participation of a Responsible Party has been addressed within the ProDoc, under partnership provisions of the Results and Partnership section (pg. 14) and under the

Governance and Management Arrangements section (pg. 34). Actions are well defined in case a Responsible Party is not selected timely in the item 3 of the table contained in the Annex 6 UNDP Risk Register of the ProDoc. Also, in Annex 19 entitled Results of the Partners Capacity Assessment Tool (PCAT) and HACT Micro Assessment it is outlined that PCAT and HACT will be done at the later stage when a Responsible Party is selected. UNDP will adhere to its corporate guidelines and procedures concerning the Assessment and Selection of a Responsible Party.

UNDP response, 16 April 2024:

- 1) The GEF budget in excel format has been uploaded into GEF portal documents.
- 2) The project will be executed under Country Office Support to NIM modality as communicated with and approved by the GEF Secretariat.

A footnote explanation is added under GEF budget table (in the online Portal) to clarify that UNDP will be the entity to process the payments and provide the execution support services to the project based on the request of Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources is the Executing Entity and will maintain ultimate responsibility and accountability for the use of GEF resources and the successful achievement of project outputs, in alignment with the approved annual work plans. Related reference is also available in the UNDP Project Document under the 'Governance and Management Arrangements' section.

The footnote mentioned in the GEF Programme Manager's comment is a standard clause that is inserted by the GEF Secretariat in GEF budget template.

Additionally, Responsible Parties are entitled to manage the funds that they will receive as per the responsible party engagement rules.

- 3) IGTPC was taken into consideration for some project activities at early stages of project design, but the final decision was to reject IGTPC as the RP. The project will appoint another more convenient candidate/organization for the mentioned activities in the initiation stage of implementation. The IGTPC was removed from the budget table and replaced with general term 'RP'.

Environmental and Social Safeguards.

**If there are screening documents or other ESS documents available, have these been attached?
(only as applicable)**

Secretariat's Comments EBF 3/26/2024: ESS documents have been attached. The overall project risk is categorized as low risk.

Agency's Comments

**GEFSEC DECISION
RECOMMENDATION.**

Is CEO endorsement/ approval recommended?

Secretariat's Comments

EBF 7/22/2024: The PM recommends the project for further processing.

EBF 7/16/2024: Please address the comments from PO to the budget table and resubmit.

EBF 7/2/2024: Please address the comment related to the letter of endorsement and resubmit.

EBF 6/17/2024: Please address the comment related to the letter of endorsement and resubmit.

EBF 5/23/2024: Please address the comments above and resubmit

EBF 5/14/2024: Please address the comments above and resubmit

EBF 3/26/2024: Please address the comments above and resubmit. Please highlight **in yellow** the changes you make to the portal form for ease of revision.

REVIEW DATE(S)

| | Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement | Response to Secretariat comments |
|---|---|---|
| First Review | 3/26/2024 | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 5/23/2024 | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 5/14/2024 | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 5/23/2024 | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 8/19/2024 | |