

Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management and Biodiversity Conservation in the Republic of Mauritius

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

9836

Countries

Mauritius

Project Name

Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management and Biodiversity Conservation in the Republic of Mauritius

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

6/19/2019

Review completed by PM

5/12/2020

Program Manager

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy

Focal Area

Land Degradation

Project Type

MSP

PIF

CEO Endorsement

Project Design and Financing

1. If there are any changes from that presented in the PIF, have justifications been provided?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

There are slight adjustments in the result framework (formulation, merging of outputs, budget). These adjustments were driven by the results of the PPG.

- In the project document, please remove the mention of the objective SFM1 (see para. 52). The project is developed under the LD 3.4. objective.

Response to Secretariat comments

2 July 2019

Many thanks. The mention of SFM1 has been removed.

2. Is the project structure/ design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Yes.

Response to Secretariat comments

3. Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Yes.

Response to Secretariat comments

4. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Yes, we appreciate the risk assessment and the proposed mitigation measures.

Response to Secretariat comments

5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

Please, clarify the following elements:

- The letter of cofinancing from the Gouvernement of Rodrigues mentions \$1,500,000 in grants and \$795,000 in-kind. You just entered the total (\$2,295,000) in-kind. Please, explain and correct.

- The letter from Ebony Ltd mentions an amount of \$489,100 in-kind, while the amount of \$720,000 is mentioned in the portal. Please, correct.

Response to Secretariat comments

2 July 2019

The co-financing figures in the portal have been amended as per the co-financing letters. We have also amended the Confirmed sources of co-financing table in the CEO ER.

6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Please, check the carbon measurements and the coherence of value for the different indicators.

Response to Secretariat comments

7. Only for Non-Grant Instrument: Has a reflow calendar been presented?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement NA

Response to Secretariat comments

8. Is the project coordinated with other related initiatives and national/regional plans in the country or in the region?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

Yes.

There is a strong ownership by the government.

Response to Secretariat comments

9. Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Yes.

Response to Secretariat comments

10. Does the project have descriptions of a knowledge management plan?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Yes.

Response to Secretariat comments

Agency Responses

11. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments at the PIF stage from:

GEFSEC

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement NA

Response to Secretariat comments

STAP

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement NA

Response to Secretariat comments

GEF Council

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement NA

Response to Secretariat comments

Convention Secretariat

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement NA

Response to Secretariat comments

Recommendation

12. Is CEO endorsement recommended?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

Not yet. Please, address the points above.

All points are addressed. The project is recommended for CEO endorsement.

July 16, 2019

PPO reviewed this MSP CEO approval and found the issue of UNDP, as implied in the project document, to carry out some executing functions for the project without any official request from the Government. We highlighted those quotes pertaining to the issue below. We would need to request more clarification from UNDP.

Project Board: The Project Board (also called Project Steering Committee) is responsible for making by consensus, management decisions when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendations for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project plans and revisions, and addressing any project level grievances. In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, Project Board decisions should be made in accordance with standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition. **In case a consensus cannot be reached within the Board, final decision shall rest with the UNDP Program Manager.**

Senior Supplier: The Senior Supplier is an individual or group representing the interests of the parties concerned which provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project (**designing, developing, facilitating, procuring, implementing**). The Senior Supplier's primary function within the Board is to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project. **The Senior Supplier role must have the authority to commit or acquire supplier resources required.** If necessary, more than one person may be required for this role. Typically, the implementing partner, UNDP and/or donor(s) would be represented under this role. **The Senior Supplier is: UNDP Resident Representative, ROM.**

Specific Responsibilities (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board):

- Make sure that progress towards the outputs remains consistent from the supplier perspective;
- Promote and maintain focus on the expected project output(s) from the point of view of supplier management;
- Ensure that the supplier resources required for the project are made available;
- Contribute supplier opinions on Project Board decisions on whether to implement recommendations on proposed changes;
- Arbitrate on, and ensure resolution of, any supplier priority or resource conflicts.

Project Manager: The Project Manager has the authority to run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Board within the constraints laid down by the Board. The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the project. The Project Manager's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost.

The Implementing Partner, in partnership with UNDP, appoints the Project Manager, who should be different from the Implementing Partner's representative in the Project Board.

September 27, 2019

The project cannot be recommended, as the revised text to reflect the role and functions of UNDP drew our attention on a number of points:

- We take note of the revised text, notably about the Project Board, and the role of the UNDP RES/REP in case a consensus cannot be found.
- We take note that the Government of Mauritius may request UNDP direct services for specific actions. However, this way of doing should be the exception in the GEF Partnership. We do not find explanations for this exception. We did not find the annex N either. A request from the government is needed, but not enough as justification.
- We understand that these direct services provided by UNDP would be financed under the budget line (#74500, \$12,768). This amount may be increased without further information to the GEFSEC. It is a major concern. We suggest to UNDP to not provide these services and find a third partner - an Executing Agency - to well separate the Implementing and Executing functions.
- p95: We do not understand why UNDP is assigned as Responsible Party for a sub-component 3 (M&E, KM and Gender mainstreaming), as well as the Project Management Costs. UNDP should be the Implementing Agency, and an executing partner should be assigned. Please, correct.

December 19, 2019

- We take note of the request expressed by the government to allow UNDP to assist in executing some activities. The request is signed by the GEF OFP and we had a chance to discuss on the margins of the 57th Council. After internal discussions, we consider the request acceptable under the GEF policy on implementing and executing functions and the guidelines on the project and program cycle (GEF/C.41/06/Rev.01, GEF/C.52/Inf.06).
- We take note that UNDP has been removed as a responsible party for the sub-component 3.
- We take note that the cost of these additional tasks will not go above (\$12,768).

All points were addressed. The MSP is recommended for CEO approval.

January 16, 2020

PPO reviewed the re-submission of ID 9836 – Mauritius. See our observations below:

- 1- NIM audit, Stakeholder engagement plan, gender action plan are included in the M&E budget. NIM Audit should be charged to the PMC while Stakeholder engagement plan and gender action plan have to be removed from the M&E Plan – please ask the Agency to amend accordingly.

Note: when PPO reviewed the project first time in July 15, 2019, we did not detect that the M&E Plan had two ineligible expenses (Stakeholder engagement plan and Gender Action Plan – see below), neither that the Audit had to be charged to the PMC . The reason for this oversight is that only later on we realized

that UNDP consistently charged these items to the M&E. Since that moment, PPO has systematically returned all UNDP projects that have a similar situation. Please ask the Agency to amend accordingly.

NIM Audit as per UNDP audit policies	UNDP Country Office	3,000 /yr - 12,000 total	10,000/yr, 40,000 total	Annually or other frequency as per UNDP Audit policies
Lessons learned and knowledge generation	Project Manager	1,000/yr, 4,000 total	10,000/yr, 40,000 total	Annually
Monitoring of environmental and social risks, and corresponding management plans as relevant	Project Manager UNDP Country Office	1,000/yr, 4,000 total	4,000/yr, 16,000 total	On-going
Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Project Manager UNDP Country Office	1,000/yr, 4,000 total	2,000/yr, 8,000 total	On-going
Gender Action Plan	Project Manager UNDP Country Office UNDP GEF team	1,000/yr, 4,000 total	20,000/yr, 80,000 total	On-going

2- The note to the project budget indicates that part of the Project manager cost is charged to an activity line, which should not be the case. 100% of project's staff cost should be charged to PMC. Please ask the Agency to amend accordingly.

23	Budget will meet the cost of PMU: Project Manager and Project Assistant (Project assistant at US\$ 1,200 per month for four years = \$ 57,500); Part of the PMs salary will be drawn from activity lines as s/he will spend the bulk of his/her time on technical issues - implement project activities. Total \$ 101,705 at 24,750 per year.
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3- In Section 7 of the ProDoc - Governance and Management Arrangements, UNDP is assigned to carry out an executing function that can only be done by the executing partner ("The Senior Supplier role must have the authority to commit or acquire supplier resources required") – please ask the Agency to remove themselves from this function and instead, include the Executing Partner which is the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security.

189. **Senior Supplier:** The Senior Supplier is an individual or group representing the interests of the parties concerned which provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project (designing, developing, facilitating, procuring, implementing). The Senior Supplier's primary function within the Board is to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project. The Senior Supplier role must have the authority to commit or acquire supplier resources required. If necessary, more than one person may be required for this role. Typically, the implementing partner, UNDP and/or donor(s) would be represented under this role. The Senior Supplier is: UNDP Resident Representative, ROM.

1- The project budget in the prodoc still listed UNDP as responsible component 3 - M&E, KM and Gender mainstreaming and for PMC, which as per the review sheet, has been removed and changed to MAIFS and RRA. Please ask the Agency to amend.

M&E, KM and Gender mainstreaming	UNDP	62000	GEF	71200	International Consultant	30,000	0	0	0	30,000	16
				71400	Contractual service individuals	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000	17
				71400	Contractual service individuals	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000	18
				71400	Contractual service individuals	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000	19
				71600	Travel	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	12,000	20
				75700	Workshops and Confer	3,000	3,000	2,000	2,000	10,000	21
				71200	International Consultant	0	0	0	35,000	35,000	22
Sub-Total Component 3						66,000	36,000	35,000	70,000	207,000	

GEF Component/Atlas Activity	Responsible Party/ (Atlas Implementing Agent)	Fund ID	Donor Name	Atlas Budgetary Account Code	Amount Year 1 (USD)	Amount Year 2 (USD)	Amount Year 3 (USD)	Amount Year 4 (USD)	Total (USD)	Budget Note:	
Project Management Cost	UNDP	62000	GEF	71400	Contractual service individuals	27,455	24,750	24,750	24,750	101,705	23
				72800	Information Technology Equipment	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	12,000	24
				71600	Travel	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	16,000	25
				74100	Professional Services	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	12,000	26
				74596	Direct Project Costs	5,729	2,678	2,091	2,270	12,768	27
Sub-Total PMC					43,184	37,428	36,841	37,020	154,473		
Total GEF					489,184	427,901	421,841	360,278	1,699,204		

May 12, 2020,

All the points are addressed. About the item 2, we agreed that the costs of the program manager are divided and supported partially by the component 2 to support capacities, incentives, and tools related to LDN pilots and the project management costs (\$44,064 + \$47,136 for a total of \$91,200). The project is recommended for CEO endorsement.

May 22, 2020

Please, address the two following comments:

1- NIM audit is not an eligible expense within the M&E plan: please note that while NIM audit was removed from the M&E Plan in ProDoc, it was not removed from the M&E Plan in Portal (see screenshot below) – please remove it from the M&E Plan in Portal, so both versions of the M&E (Portal and ProDoc) will match.

2- On budget - Project manager cost is charged to an activity line: now Project Manager is charged to PMC and to Component 1. However, there is no explanation on how the Project Manager will contribute to Component 1 – apparently the Agency’s intent was to present “the delivery of technical outputs” (see blue underlined; table sent by email; I am facing difficulties to load these tables in the portal) – unfortunately we could not find the description of these technical outputs (or TORs) anywhere in the ProDoc. Please, present them accordingly.

June 3, 2020

The project is recommended for CEO endorsement.


Response to Secretariat comments

06 August 2019

Sections A.6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination in the CEO ER and in the prodoc have been amended to reflect the role and functions of UNDP.

' **Project Assurance:** UNDP performs the quality assurance role and supports the Project Board and Project Management Unit by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. The Project Board cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the Project Manager. UNDP provides a three – tier oversight services involving the UNDP Country Offices and UNDP at regional and headquarters levels. Project assurance is totally independent of the Project Management function.'

16 Dec 2019

 Annex N will be uploaded in support of Government of Mauritius’ request and justification for UNDP to provide direct services for specific actions during the project lifetime.

- P95: UNDP has been removed as Responsible Party for sub-component 3 (Gender, M&E, KM) of the project and replaced with MAIFS and RRA.
- UNDP Mauritius undertakes to ensure that 74596 DPC at \$12,768 will not be increased during the project lifetime.

8 May 2020

Please see below responses to points 1-3 above:

1. Thank you. NIM Audit is now charged to PMC, while the costs for Monitoring the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Gender Action remain in the M&E Table, now clearly marked.
2. Thank you, amended
3. Section 6 M&E and Section 7: Governance and Management Arrangements have been updated to reflect the latest approved UNDP project document (template provided: March 2020) in line with this requested change.

1 June 2020

In response to the comments posted above (22 May 2020), the following adjustments have been made to the project document as requested:

- 1. GEF portal entry has been amended to reflect the correct M&E table as per the prodoc
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- 2. Budget note 14: We have added a list of tasks for the Project Manager related to Outputs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. These have been highlighted in grey at page 96 of the project document.
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- Budget note 25: Reference to Finance officer has been removed and with Project Assistant reinstated instead as this is what is mentioned in the Project Governance Arrangement as well as the Annex 3: Overview of technical services. In addition to assisting the project manager, the project assistant will also be working with the finance officer of the IP to ensure compliance with GEF/UNDP Financial requirements.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

Response to Secretariat comments

Additional Review (as necessary)

CEO Recommendation

Brief Reasoning for CEO Recommendations

Context

Land degradation in Mauritius is caused by several factors: rapid urbanization with urban sprawl, land cover change (land conversion from agriculture to other land uses), deforestation in unprotected private forest areas, unsustainable agriculture (heavy mechanization), recurring wildfires on grass-covered mountain slopes, and coastal land erosion. In Rodrigues, land degradation is driven by conversion of forests to unsustainable subsistence agriculture and overgrazing. Climate change driven droughts, frequent fires, flash floods, landslides, saline water intrusion and sea level rise have exacerbated land degradation in both Mauritius and Rodrigues.

Impacts of land degradation are manifested in lost ecosystems services (loss of fertile topsoil, decrease in pasture quality and productivity, increased run-off and sedimentation of dams and lagoons), with an estimated cost to the national economy of US\$16 million annually.

The main barriers and obstacles to Integrated Land Management and an efficient framework for LDN are related to 1) a weak enabling environment (incomplete National Action Plan, no comprehensive policy on land degradation, incomplete Land Degradation Neutrality process, weak inter-sectorial collaboration, absence of a coordinating mechanism on land degradation and mainstreaming of sustainable land management, and inadequate information and absence of open-access spatial planning system); 2) lack of sustainable and land management practices for LDN, lack of knowledge and awareness on ILM, and inadequate incentives for land managers.

The project

The proposed GEF project aims to put the Republic of Mauritius on a path to Land Degradation Neutrality by catalyzing the transformation of land use planning and management. Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) planning balances different stakes and needs of targeted stakeholders, while anticipating future impacts of economic development pathways and climate change. The project meets multiple objectives, as integrating land degradation neutrality, securing watershed services, biodiversity conservation, carbon storage, and supporting resilient economic development, agricultural production and livelihoods.

The project will be achieved through three interrelated outcomes: 1) Strengthened policy and institutional framework for the promotion of integrated landscape management planning and mainstreaming sustainable land management; 2) Skills, tools and incentives provided to pilot test land degradation neutral practices and technologies on 2,063 ha, lessons generated to inform further policy and tools development; 3) Monitoring, evaluation, knowledge management and gender

mainstreaming support adaptive management and up-scaling of sustainable land management and application of integrated landscape management planning systems in the country and beyond.

Global Environment Benefits

The project will deliver global environmental benefits on 2,063 ha for multiple benefits for land, people, water, and carbon, including: 1,037 ha under management for BD, 916 ha under SLM, and 110 ha of forests and forests lands restored.

GEF Strategies

The project is developed under the LD 3.4 objective on integrated landscape management.

Country priorities

The importance of the project was recalled by the government at the GEF Council organized in Danang in June 2018.

Innovation, Sustainability & Scaling up

This project is innovative, as the landscape approach adopted in this project's design is new for the country. Sustainability will be promoted through the integration of LDN targets into national development policies, and policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks. The ultimate goal proposed by this project is to catalyse a transformation on all the islands of Mauritius, by promoting the use of best practices in production, planning and local decision-making processes to ensure the provision of ecosystem services and the improvement of human well-being.