



Sustainable Management and Restoration of Degraded Landscapes for Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in India

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10876

Countries

India

Project Name

Sustainable Management and Restoration of Degraded Landscapes for Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in India

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

12/9/2022

Review completed by PM

5/3/2023

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Land Degradation

Project Type

FSP

PIF
CEO Endorsement

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Project description summary

2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

Co-financing

4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

03/16/2023: However, we were not able to locate the following co-financing letters:

- State Govt. of Maharashtra (grant & in kind)
- State Govt. of Karnataka (grant & in kind)
- State Govt. of Gujarat (grant & in kind)

Please upload to the portal.

05/02/2023: Not fully addressed.

1) Please remove the lines in Table C that indicate co-financing from Karnataka Province (you have removed the amount, please remove the entire line).

2) Response sheet indicates that co-financing letters from Maharashtra and Gujarat have been issued. Reviewer could not locate these two letters. Please upload them to the document section of the portal.

Agency Response

UNDP, 2 May 2023

The Co-finance letter (Grant & In-Kind) from the State Government of Maharashtra and Gujarat have been issued. Co-finance commitment from the state government of Karnataka is expected by the time of project inception, and will be reported in the annual PIR.

Please refer to the co-finance letters from the State Government of Maharashtra and Gujarat. The unconfirmed co-financing amount is removed from the CEO ER Doc (Table A, B & C) and ProDoc.

GEF Resource Availability

5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Project Preparation Grant

6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Core indicators

7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E? Do they remain realistic?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Part II ? Project Justification

1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Project Map and Coordinates

Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Child Project

If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
n/a

Agency Response
Stakeholders

Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase? Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Yes.

03/16/2023: It is appreciated that a very detailed stakeholder engagement plan was annexed. Agency is however requested to provide a summary in the portal provide how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement and how information will be disseminated.

05/02/2023: Text has been inserted in the portal.

Cleared

Agency Response
UNDP, 2 May 2023

Thank you for the comment on stakeholder engagement.

The multi-stakeholder collaboration strategy of the project involves strengthening capacity of government institutions at all levels as well as local self-governance institutions and local champions in the landscapes, to lead collaborative processes that transform systems and serve as catalysts and enablers for systems transformation of sustainable land management. The

project will engage with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, utilizing existing structures as much as practicable.

Representation and participation of stakeholders will be facilitated at all levels, from Government to local community members, including women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The project will emphasize the use of participatory approaches, as well as seeking and obtaining Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of tribal communities for each step of its implementation.

The project implementation phase includes designing, implementing, and monitoring a communication strategy that is gender-responsive, is sensitive to local nuances and can channel messages coherently to and from specific stakeholder groups and audiences involved with the project. Information will be provided and shared transparently, without marginalizing any stakeholder groups.

To ensure appropriate stakeholder engagement - inception workshops, capacity building workshops and expert consultations will be conducted to improve capability, capacity and effectiveness of officials, staff and local body representatives entrusted with the responsibility of planning and implementing land restoration actions. Meetings will be organized with local communities, including women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other marginalized classes, in addition to the local governance structures, to regularly monitor the representativity of their structures and to ensure engagement at the grassroots level.

The project will engage with the private sector for business incubation support, acquiring sustainable agriculture technologies, rolling out marketing and branding strategy, market linkages, as well as setting up of small and medium enterprises in a value chain.

Summary on stakeholder engagement inserted in the portal.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Private Sector Engagement

If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Coordination

Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes, however, the required OFP support letter has not been provided.

While the institutional arrangement has been fully described and the support role of UNDP in execution of the project is justified, including the costs that will be charged to the PMC for UNDP's execution support, the required OFP support letter is missing.

Please provide an OFP support letter in the standard format: <https://www.thegef.org/documents/ofp-letter-support-template-gef-agency-execution>

What has been provided in Annex 2 provides all necessary information, based on this letter, the standard template can be completed and signed by the OFP.

After such letter has been provided, please also make reference to it in section 6. "Institutional Arrangement and Coordination".

Please also include UNDP as an executing partner in Part I "Project Information" alongside the MoEFCC.

03/16/2023: While the OFP letter has been provided and the budget table reflects the execution support categories that will be provided by UNDP, there are significant discrepancies with the support activities that are described in the UNDP checklist which indicates (i) the recruitment of staff; (ii) procurement of goods; (iii) knowledge sharing and South-South cooperation; and (iv) travel ? these don?t match exactly the functions listed in the OFP letter. Please bring this documents in line, either by revising the checklist or the OFP letter.

05/02/2023: Addressed. Both letters are now consistent in their description of execution support services provided by UNDP.

Agency Response

UNDP, 1 Mar 23:

Letter of support to request GEF Agency for execution support services has been issued by the GEF OFP.

Reference has been made to the execution support in 6 "Institutional Arrangement and Coordination"

UNDP has been included as an executing partner in Part I of CEO ER document

UNDP, 2 May 2023

The execution services mentioned in the OFP letter are referenced in the execution support services mentioned in the UNDP Checklist.

| Execution services mentioned in the OFP letter | Execution support services mentioned in the UNDP Checklist |
|---|---|
| Establishment of the Project Management Unit (PMU) | Refers to establishment of PMU and recruitment of project staff |
| Recruitment of Human Resources | Refers to recruitment of other project technical experts for specific tasks and expertise required. |
| Procurement of Goods and Services | Refers to procurement of goods for completion of specific activities. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Financial Reporting and Direct Payments | Refers to payments that will be made by UNDP to vendors/suppliers when the contracting process is done by IP/EA according to its own rules and regulations. This will be requested by IP to UNDP as agreed and approved in the annual workplan. |
| Logistics | Refers to travel, and other logistic arrangements to facilitate knowledge sharing and South-South cooperation. |

As advised, we have amended the checklist to align with OFP request letter.

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed Knowledge Management Approach for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Benefits

Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Yes.

Please note comment below on project logframe.

Agency Response

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes, however: Annex A is outside the portal margins.

Please adjust the project logframe so that it fits in the margins.

03/16/2023:

Please include the project logframe in Annex A. It has become standard practice to include it in the portal.

02/05/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

UNDP, 1 Mar 23:

The table has been removed and replaced with reference to section and page number in Project Document.

UNDP, 2 May 2023

PRF is already included in Annex A of the CEO ER doc and in the portal.

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response
Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response
CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response
Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
12/21/2022: Has been submitted in Annex C.

Cleared

Agency Response
Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: Has been submitted.

Cleared

Agency Response

Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

n/a

Agency Response

Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/21/2022: No. Please address comments made in this review.

03/16/2023: No. Please address additional comments made in this joint review.

05/02/2023: No. Please address comment made in box 4 on co-financing. After re-submission, the project will be circulated to Council for a 4 weeks period.

Review Dates

| | Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement | Response to Secretariat comments |
|---|---|---|
| First Review | 12/21/2022 | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 3/16/2023 | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 5/2/2023 | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | | |

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

Sustainable Management and Restoration of Degraded Landscapes for Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in India (GEF ID: 10876) Agency: UNDP; GEF Project Financing: \$6,600,000; Co-financing: \$46,200,000. The project has the objective to achieve land degradation neutrality (LDN) through sustainable ecosystem-based management and restoration of degraded landscapes across agricultural, forest, pastoral lands and surface water bodies. The project will assist the GoI to achieve its goal to combat land degradation and desertification and at the same time addressing the negative impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss across the degraded landscapes ultimately supporting the achievement of LDN, NDCs and Post-2020 Biodiversity commitments. Interventions on policy and planning reform will incentivize sustainable land management, climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation and remove disincentives, along with enhanced capacity of stakeholders at all levels to support a stronger enabling framework. Emphasis will be given to develop, demonstrate and up-scaling successful SLM approaches and support the development of SLM land use planning and decision support system.

In order to further develop scientific approach and facilitate induction of

technology to land degradation issues, India will set up a 'Centre of excellence on Sustainable Land Management' at Dehradun-based Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICRFRE), under the overall guidance and support from MoEF&CC (as announced by The Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, while inaugurating the High-Level Segment of Conference of Parties to the UNCCD, September, 2019). Accordingly, GEF funds will be contributing to facilitate the establishment of the Centre of Excellence for South-South cooperation and capacity building and dissemination of best practices for cross-learning through exposure visits, development of course curriculum and its implementation in coordination with international alliances and engagement and contributions to global knowledge platforms to address UNCCD global agenda. The project will bring 108,000 ha of degraded lands under restoration, improve management on 209,000 ha of agricultural land and forests, sequester 6.8 million t of CO₂eq, and benefit 180,000 women and men.