

Strengthening the Resilience of Central Asian Countries by Enabling Regional Cooperation to Assess High Altitude Glacio-nival Systems to Develop Integrated Methods for Sustainable Development and Adaptation to Climate Change

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10077

Countries

Regional (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan)

Project Name

Strengthening the Resilience of Central Asian Countries by Enabling Regional Cooperation to Assess High Altitude Glacio-nival Systems to Develop Integrated Methods for Sustainable Development and Adaptation to Climate Change

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

12/17/2020

Review completed by PM

Program Manager

Steffen Hansen

Focal Area

International Waters

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

SH (2.7.21): Yes, the project is aligned with the GEF IW strategic directions.

Since the approval of the PIF, two additional countries in the form of Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan have joined the project. The funding requested from the GEF has remained the same, but co-cofinancing has increased.

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

SH (2.7.21):

1. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are now included in the project as participating countries. Please upload to the GEF portal the signed LOEs.

SH (5.17.2021): Thank you. Cleared.

2. In the portal CEO endorsement submission countries section, please add Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

SH (5.17.2021): UNDP has made a request to GEF SEC to modify the portal entry Part 1 countries section. Cleared.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

Signed LOEs of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are uploaded to the portal.

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are listed in the CEO endorsement submission countries section of the portal for the project.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

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

SH (2.7.21):

1. Co-finance table C: For all nongovernment listed co-finance, please explain if the proposed activity proposed for co-finance directly supports project activities or the project objective? If yes, then please consider if such co-finance should be classified as grant co-finance and with an accompanying description in the investment mobilized section.

SH (5.17.21): Not cleared. Thank you for adding the table C description. In the portal table C, please re-classify the Cicada co-finance as investment mobilized.

2. Please re-submit the Global Water Futures co-financing letter with a clear reference to the 369,300.00 USD. Further, please make sure that the letter mentions the duration over which the co-finance will be programmed.

SH (5.17.21): Thank you. Cleared.

3. Please note that the UNDP 300 K co-finance letter is missing. Please submit the letter and make sure that the letter includes a reference to the 300 K and mentions the duration over which the co-finance will be programmed.

SH (5.17.21): Thanks you. Cleared.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

1. Co-financing from Cicada/UniFri has been re-classified as investment mobilized and a description has been added in the investment mobilized section.

2. The co-financing letter from GWF has been re-submitted with specified co-financing in the amount of USD 392,000 (an increase of USD 22,700 from the original letter), and the CEO ER (Table A, Table B) and agency Project Document (cover sheet, Section VIII, TBWP) have been adjusted to reflect that amount. The duration over which the co-financing will be programmed (the entire project period) is now specified in the letter.

3. The UNDP co-financing letter has been uploaded to the portal.

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

SH (2.7.21):

Yes, also pilots will aim to build on existing/planned interventions and may increased project co-finance. 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

SH (2.7.21):

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

SH (2.7.21):

Yes, indicators have been populated. 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

SH (2.7.21):

Yes, the project sufficiently indicates problems, root causes and barriers. 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

SH (2.7.21):

The Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects have been sufficiently described. 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

SH (2.7.21):

1. Output 2.1.2: Please update the output description and the results framework so that it is clear that the SAP will be signed by the relevant minister(s) specific to each participating country.

SH (5.17.21): Not cleared. Please remove "or the equivalent" from the output formulation/description. While water resource management arrangements may defer across countries, the clear goal should be to have the SAP signed by at least one Minister from each participating country. Rare cases where the SAP may be signed by a minister equivalent should be discussed with GEF SEC in advance of the SAP signing.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

The wording of the output is standard GEF IW language.

The phrase "or the equivalent" has been added to the output to reflect the different arrangements for water resources management in each participating country (e.g. state agency in Kyrgyzstan and a committee in Turkmenistan).

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

1. Sufficient justification has been provided. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21)

Yes, the expected co-finance and its contribution against project outputs and outcomes have been sufficiently described in the PRODOC. 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

SH (2.7.21)

Yes, the expected project contribution against GEBs is indicated. Overall, the project advances country corporation via a well proven GEF TDA-SAP conceptual framework. 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

SH (2.7.21)

Yes, the project is both innovative at the GEF IW portfolio level in that it advances sustainable management of cryosphere systems and as part of an highly ambitious five country central Asia intervention. At the national/regional level, the TDA/SAP approach

and subsequent introduction of best practice technology applications across monitoring and data sharing etc. is innovative for the region. 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

SH (2.7.21)

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

NA

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

SH (2.7.21):

Stakeholder engagement during PPG and as part of the foreseen project has been sufficiently described. Also, a detailed public participation strategy will be developed under Output 5.1.2. of the project. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

SH (2.7.21):

Gender aspects has been thoroughly incorporated into the project, including via the SAP and NAPs and associated regulatory and policy agendas. Also, the project RF and stakeholder engagement incorporate gender considerations. 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

SH (2.7.21):

1. Please insert text in the SAP/NAP PRODOC descriptions that the private sector will be considered, and consulted, as one of several stakeholders in the development of the SAP and NAPs.

SH (5.17.21): Thank you. Cleared.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

During the SAP development, the private sector will be consulted regarding potential participation in implementation activities. The private sector will also be represented in the stakeholder forum created under Output 2.2.4 as previously documented.

Text has been added to the SAP/NAP descriptions under Output 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 that the private sector will be considered and consulted, and this role is noted in the 'Private sector' section of the UNDP ProDoc.

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

SH (2.7.21):

Risks have been sufficiently addressed. GEF notes that a separate annex has been developed with COVID considerations. 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

SH (2.7.21)

1. The project organizational structure diagram references 'UNDP CO Focal Points'. Please confirm that UNDP will not be self-executing parts of this project?

SH (5.17.21): thank you. Cleared.

2. The institutional arrangement diagram and subsequent text does not clearly indicate the level of national execution and subsequent capacity building. Please include such information in the portal/PRODOC submissions. It is an important priority for GEF to secure arrangements that support the long term increase of national capacity in all five countries.

SH (5.17.21): thank you. Cleared.

3. Please include information in the portal/PRODOC submissions that speaks to UNESCO's track record, capacity and competitive advantage as the designated primary executing partner. Further, the PRODOC should include information that clearly

describe how long-term capacity is distilled in national/regional country driven institutions.

SH (5.17.21): Not cleared. Per below agency response the PRODOC section VII should contain information specific to UNESCO's Almaty office and national commissions, including synergies with national level government/stakeholders. It appears this information has not been included in PRODOC section VII. Please include the information or reference the correct PRODOC section where it may be found.

4. please note that the GEF portal submission ?Institutional Arrangement and Coordination? section has been populated with info identical to the portal submission risks section. Please update the portal submission institutional arrangement section content.

SH (5.17.21): Not cleared. In the GEF portal submission ?Institutional Arrangement and Coordination? section, please include text describing the institutional arrangements for the project coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation. Please also insert the project organizational structure figure into this section.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

1. UNDP will not be self-executing parts of the project. The CO focal points will participate in the project board in order to provide oversight on implementation at the national level.
2. All governments will participate in the project board as indicated in Section VII. In addition, national institutions are designated in Section VII. as project beneficiaries, which formalizes their status as key target groups for increasing national capacity in all five countries.
3. It should be noted that this project uses agency execution (through UNESCO), and it is not a nationally executed project (NIM). That said, national activities will be carried out by national partner organizations. In the area of capacity building, national partners will participate in training and capacity strengthening programs to build their capacity in securing and sustaining outcomes of the project.

While capacity in government institutions will be strengthened through all project components, there is a particular emphasis on strengthening capacity through the national inter-ministerial committees (Output 2.2.2), national institutions supporting cryospheric research and monitoring (2.2.3), and country-level monitoring activities (Component 3).

Information on UNESCO's track record, capacity and competitive advantage is provided in the portal under the PIF submission. Information on the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office and national commissions, which will work in coordination with participating country governments, is provided in Section VII. of the Project Document.

Regarding long-term capacity, text under Components 2 and 3 contains a description of activities that support long-term capacity (see response directly above). Additional information is provided in the sub-section of the Project Document entitled 'Sustainability'.

This has been adjusted in the portal.

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

SH (2.7.21):

The project is in alignment with national strategies and programmes. 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

SH (2.7.21):

Yes, it is noteworthy that the project KM strategy will support the dissemination of lessons learned from the gender output of this project and will promote the use of guidance and good practice in gender mainstreaming. Importantly, the project will provide valuable lessons across the IW portfolio using the TDA/SAP approach specific to cryosphere systems. 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

SH (2.7.21):

1. Yes, however, the SESP has not been signed. Please provide a signed version.

SH (5.17.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

The SESP is internal documentation, which will be signed following GEFSec approval. Please refer to page [12 of SESP Guidance Note](#).

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

SH (2.7.21):

Yes a sufficient M&E plan has been presented. 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

SH (2.7.21):

Yes, benefits are sufficiently clear and the SAP/NAPs clearly indicate the gains derived from the project approach. During mid-term the PIR will provide further information specific to expected benefits from the selected pilots. Cleared.

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

1. Please resubmit and include the Checklist for CEO Endorsement Template duly filled out for this project that responds to the recent audit findings.

SH (5.17.21): An audit template has been submitted.

2. Per previous comment, the SESP should be signed and re-submitted.

SH (5.17.21): Cleared.

Comments specific to the project budget:

3. The Budget Note CTA/PM expenses does not seem to align with the International Consultants expenses as listed in the budget per component. Please make corrections as necessary.

SH (5.17.21): Not cleared. As an example, component 1, item 1, states: "(CTA/PM) 90 weeks @ USD 3500/week". This implies CTA total expenses of \$315,000. However, when looking at the Budget Table Component 1 the "international Consultants" line item is costed at \$361,173. Please have a second look at the Project Budget to make sure that figures align with the information stated in the Budget Note.

4. PMU staff are charged against individual project components. The Budget Note should clearly indicate all such staff (technical assistant, procurement specialist etc.).

SH (5.17.21): Cleared.

5. In the ToR for the Chief Technical Advisor/Project Manager, please in bullet form list the expected technical duties of the CTA under the sub-category *?Perform technical advisory work in the area of integrated water resources management (80% time)?*

SH (5.17.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

1. The completed checklist has been included with this resubmission.
2. The SESP is internal documentation, which will be signed following GEFSec approval. Please refer to page [12 of SESP Guidance Note](#).
3. Revised as per comments.
4. Budget note is updated.
5. Revised - Annex 6 (page 77) and Annex 7 (pp. 79-80) of ProDoc are updated, as the CTA functions were included in job description in Annex 6 but not Annex 7.

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

1. The PRODOC RF states 2 shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management, while the GEF portal indicator states 3 shared water ecosystems (Any-Darya, Syr Darya and Illi river). Please secure alignment between the GEF portal indicator and the PRODOC RF.

SH (5.17.21): Cleared.

2. Specific to Outcome 3.2 and indicator 11 and 12, please introduce in the RF more tangible mid-term and end of project targets.

SH (5.17.21): Cleared.

3. Specific to Outcome 5.1, please introduce another indicator and subsequent target that in a tangible way shows how the project intends to engage key decision makers.

SH (5.17.21): Not cleared. Please introduce into the RF an indicator and subsequent targets that show the projects progress in showing project results to decision makers at country level.

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

1. The three river basins correspond to the two glacier basins, as the Amu Darya River is a water ecosystem in the Pamir glacier basin, while the Syr Darya and Ili Rivers are water ecosystems in the Tien Shan glacier basin. Table I.E in the CEO ER and the project results framework and Annex 14 in the ProDoc have been updated to refer to river ecosystems.
2. New mid-term and end of project targets are now included for Indicators 11 and 12 in the project results framework.

3. Indicator 17 (?Level of awareness of decision-makers?) has now been added to the Project Results Framework, and the subsequent indicator for Component 6 has been renumbered.

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

Please describe the level of discussion with relevant regional institutions during the PPG phase and how the project intends to secure country driven regional capacity and coordination following the closure of this project?

SH (5.17.21): Not cleared. Please note that the PIF review sheet contains the below recommendation to be considered by the agency at the time of CEO endorsement. Subsequently, please provide clarity as to the projects engagement with IFAS during PPG and subsequent evidence of IFAS buy-in towards the project activities?

Comment at PIF stage: ?As part of the CEO endorsement package, please provide a letter of support from the relevant IFAS donor coordinating bodies, which shows that the regional organization is fully onboard and will be coordinated with as part of project implementation.?

Agency Response

UNDP Response 12 April 2021

During the PPG phase, the project held consultations with several regional institutions working on water and climate change issues, including the Regional Glaciological Centre (which also participated in the in-project validation workshop) and the regional civil society organizations Aga Khan Habitat and the Regional Environmental Centre of Central Asia (CAREC). The project will undertake additional coordination with existing regional organizations during the inception phase, and regional organizations will be involved in the diagnostic analyses and stakeholder organizations in the project.

Several project activities will strengthen the capacity of regional organizations, including training and capacity strengthening for the Regional Glaciological Centre and the development of a strategy to ensure continued funding for regional monitoring. The ?sustainability? section of the Project Document discusses the linkages between specific activities, such as the NAPs and SAP and regional capacity and coordination following the closure of the project.

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

Council comments have been addressed. Cleared.

Agency Response

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

Yes, STAP comments have been incorporated into the design of the project. Cleared.

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

Cleared.

Agency Response

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

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

NA

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 NA

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

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (2.7.21):

Please address comments and resubmit.

SH (5.17.21):

Please address comments and resubmit.

Further, while GEF notes that STAP comments at large have been incorporated into the project design, please submit a response matrix that clearly indicate how comments have been addressed. Please also provide a formal response to Canada's council comment specific to the projects contribution toward relevant Aichi targets.

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)
Additional Review (as necessary)

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations