

Building resilient livelihoods through nature-based solutions in the Tonle Sap Basin and Siem Reap/Phnom Kulen landscape

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID
11332
Countries
Cambodia
Project Name
Building resilient livelihoods through nature-based solutions in the Tonle Sap Basin and Siem Reap/Phnom Kulen landscape
Agencies
UNDP
Date received by PM
6/20/2025
Review completed by PM

Program Manager
Tshewang Dorji
Focal Area
Climate Change
Project Type
FSP

CEO

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Yes

Agency Response

b) Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

The intervention contributes towards CCM, BD and LD. Please update the Rio Marker

Agency Response **UNDP, 3 November 2025:** Rio Markers updated to (1) for CCM, BD and LD.

2. Project Summary.

a) Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected outcomes?

b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Yes

Agency Response

3. Project Description Overview

a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?

b) Are the components, outcomes, and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?

c) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?

d) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?

e) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Component 3: Output 3.2: Under activity 3.2.4, The proposed TA support may not motivate its uptake. Please review if any fiscal incentives can be considered.

d&e). We noticed that agency contribution of \$50,000 to PMC from the co-financing portion. If the GEF contribution is kept at 5.0%; for a co-financing of \$14,950,000.00 the expected contribution to PMC must be around \$747,500 instead of \$ 50,000 (which is 0.33%). As the costs associated with the project management must be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to the PMC, the GEF contribution and the co-financing contribution must be proportional, which means that the GEF contribution to PMC might be decreased and the co-financing contribution to PMC might be increased to reach a similar level. Please amend either by increasing the co-financing portion and/or by reducing the GEF portion.

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

a) Yes

b) Component 1:

Output 1.1: Please review the proposed activities outlined in this output with the aim of integrating them into the existing Cambodia Environmental Management Information Systems (CEMIS), rather than developing an independent system.

Output 1.3: Activity 1.3.4; This may be considered by ER-IP?

Activity 1.3.5: Kindly ensure that the results from Activity 1.3.3 are thoughtfully integrated into the current activity, and develop a land-use zones.

Component 2

Output 2.1: The primary emphasis of this output is the restoration of the degraded area. Please clarify how the proposed restoration activities are likely to differ from ER-IP. Additionally, make it clear linkages that the proposed investments under this output are intended as the implementation of the strategies and plans developed under Outputs 1.3 and 1.4.

Component 3:

Output 3.2: Under activity 3.2.4, please provide additional details regarding the nature and structure of the proposed incentives for sustainably sourced NTFPs.

Output 3.4: Consider merging this with output 2.3 to develop a unified sustainable financing mechanism.

Component 4

It is recommended to update the component name, appropriately, incorporating the proposed changes, as outlined below.

Output 4.2: It is recommended that activity 4.2.1, which focuses on the use of digital technology and tracing, be moved under outcome 3. Additionally, the proposed activity 4.2.2 to establish a Challenge Fund could be considered as part of the sustainable financing mechanism. This proposal need further details regarding the key design elements of the fund and its management structure.

Component 5:

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, please ensure regular monitoring and reporting of gender-specific interventions, including the implementation of the Gender Action Plan. Please ensure that these are reported in PIRs, MTR and TE. Under Learning, please ensure that lessons learned and

best practice in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment are captured, recorded and widely disseminated.

d&e) Co-financing contribution to the PMC is omitted. Please amend

Agency Response

UNDP, 5 December 2025:

The need for concrete incentives is well noted. The design and intention of the activity is to create sustainable incentives that last beyond project intervention. Consultations revealed that communities are keen to engage in improved market opportunities, but lack the resources and knowledge to identify, engage and partner with the private sector. On the other side, private sector are keen to engage with community producers/service providers (including tourism and local food producers), but lack the platform to identify suitable partners that are capacitated to provide goods or services at an adequate and reliable basis. Given this baseline, the TA approach was identified as a key step in creating these linkages, that will result in actual long-term partnerships and investments on the ground. The concrete nature of the incentives is further grounded in the provision of legal support to actually draft formal agreements and connect producers with financial institutions to unlock tangible investment and real market access.

The co-financing budget is being recalculated and redistributed amongst each component to align with the proportional percentage of the GEF budget allocated to each component. For instance, the co-financing of PMC is now increased to 5% (US\$ 714,272).

UNDP, 3 November 2025:

a) Noted

b) Component 1:

Output 1.1:

Integration into the CEMIS system is indeed the intention for this output. The activity wording has been revised to clarify that the tools that are being developed are positioned within the existing CEMIS system, and not as an independent knowledge system.

Output 1.3: Activity 1.3.4;

While there are similarities in the activities between the two projects, the LDCF project will include distinct actions that expand on the efforts under ER-IP. Specifically, ER-IP Act 2.2.2 will "Identify, prioritise and map site-specific management strategies" focusing on a broader assessment of management options for the SSR watershed, including aspects of livelihoods and land use planning. The LDCF project will expand on this initial assessment to "include a more focused biophysical analysis of the SSR watershed" that covers an Ecosystem condition assessment, an Ecosystem services supply analysis, and a Socio-ecological assessment "enabling a data-driven understanding of ecosystem service supply, risks, and economic dependencies, supporting sustainable resource management and long-term resilience planning. This explanation has been expanded in the CEO-ER, drawing from the deeper discussion provided in the ProDoc.

Activity 1.3.5: Indeed, the integrated ecosystem mapping is considered a key element to be integrated into Tonle Sap Basin Watershed Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Conservation Plan. The activity wording has been adjusted to clarify that this element, in addition to the land use/land cover and climate risk assessments from 1.3.2. The development of the land-use plans are part of the process of the Tonle Sap Basin Watershed Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Conservation Plan being supported through coordinated efforts under both this project and the ER-IP project, with the results of this assessment feeding into that process.

Component 2

Output 2.1: Careful consideration went into the coordinated development of both projects to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts, including through the identification of restoration sites.

The majority of the area to be restored under ER-IP (~94%) is targeting biodiversity conservation with a focus on biodiversity corridors, as well as some of the wetland areas surrounding the lakes ? both of which are distinct from the areas targeted under the LDCF project.

There is some overlap in the nature of restoration efforts with regards to riparian vegetation and water source areas. However, these areas cover only 240ha of the effort under ER-IP, targeting only high erosion areas and degraded springs. The LDCF will complement these efforts by expanding the area of riparian zones, as well as adding additional efforts in water source areas that extend beyond the immediate areas surrounding springs, with more focus on runoff, erosion and the regulation of the hydrological conditions. An additional note clarifying this point and highlighting the complementarity of the two projects' restoration efforts has been added to the CEO-ER.

The linkages between the on-the-ground efforts and the planning under 1.3 and 1.4 have been further clarified in the chapeau of Outcome 2 in the CEO-ER.

Component 3:

Output 3.2: Further details on these incentives ? which are described in detail in the ProDoc ? have been summarized and added to the CEO-ER.

Output 3.4: The suggestion to merge is well noted and agreed. The outputs have been changed accordingly, adjusting 2.3 to incorporate the PPCP and enterprise financing aspects into the sustainable finance mechanism.

Component 4

See response below.

Output 4.2:

While the logic behind linking the innovation fund to the livelihoods is well noted given their links, the project development team remains of the view that it is better placed under the knowledge and innovation component. The reasoning behind this is twofold. First, the RGoC has placed a strong emphasis on knowledge and innovation as a pathway for scaling and improving approaches to sustainable, climate-resilient development. While initial discussions were had on potentially merging these aspects into the various components to which they relate, the government focal points stressed the importance of maintaining a dedicated component that captures tools and processes for knowledge generation and innovation. In line with this approach, the logic underpinning the decision to group innovation with knowledge and learning was that it enables dedicated focus on this important aspect of transformative project design, while creating direct, practical linkages between knowledge, innovation, and on-the ground intervention approaches.

Details on the operational modalities for the fund are presented in the ProDoc. A summary of this has been brought into the CEO-ER.

Component 5:

The need for full integration of gender actions into the MEL system is well noted and agreed. While the summarized text of the CEO-ER was indeed missing proper reference to gender responsiveness of the MEL system, the more detailed activities in the ProDoc does include specific mention of incorporating the GAP into the MEL system. This has been clarified in the CEO-ER.

The omission of co-finance from the PMC is well noted. The co-finance from UNDP has been redistributed to include USD 50,000 in PMC
- Staff cost: UNDP co-financing on Oversight and Assurance (8k/Y x 5 Years)
- Rental and Maintenance premise: UNDP co-financing on office partial rental space and utilities (oversight and assurance staff). 2k/Year x 5 Years

- c) N/A
- d) N/A
- e) N/A

4. Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

- a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?**
- b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?**
- c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

- b. Please strengthen the narrative concerning the role of the private sector and its potential to contribute to the project

Agency Response

UNDP, 3 November 2025:

- b) Details on the role of private sector and opportunities to contribute have been infused throughout the CEO-ER document as per paragraphs: 47, 68, 125, 133 of the offline CEO-ER uploaded, and are also reflected in the GEF portal.

5 B. Project Description

- 5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?**
- b) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?**
- c) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?**
- d) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role**

of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?

- e) **Other Benefits:** Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?
- f) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?
- g) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this FSP/MSP)?
- h) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?
- i) **Gender:** Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and description/s?
- j) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?
- k) **Policy Coherence:** Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?
- l) **Transformation and/or innovation:** Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

Agency Response

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project

- a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?
- b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?
- c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

- a). Please ensure that the PSC has a adequate local people representative.

Agency Response

UNDP, 3 November 2025:

This omission from the CEO-ER is well noted. Provision for local representation was made in the ToRs for the project board, but this was not fully reflected in the CEO-ER. The definition of the

Beneficiary representatives (para 166) has been updated to match the ToRs, which specifically include: the Provincial Department of Environment, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ministry of Tourism, the Apsara Authority, NGOs/CSOs.

5.3 Core indicators

a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)?

b) Are the project's targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?

Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

a. Thanks for enhancing core indicator 3 and 4. Please explain the changes in the core indicator #5.

Also, on the meta information, please confirm project's contribution to the formulation and implementation of NAPs

Agency Response

UNDP, 3 November 2025:

a) Indicator 5 appears to have been accidentally left out of the results framework for the CEO-ER. The target of three private enterprises participating in CCA actions still applies through the Challenge fund actions to deploy innovative digital technologies ? this has been corrected in the document and added to the results framework.

Regarding the project's contribution to the formulation and implementation of NAPs, this element was not selected in the meta data as Cambodia currently does not have a formal NAP, and this project does not contribute directly to the formulation of a NAP.

5.4 Risks

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?

b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?

c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

Agency Response

5.5 For NGI Only: Is there a justification of the financial structure and of the use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Agency Response

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Please describe how the project is contributing to the climate change adaptation priorities

Agency Response

UNDP, 3 November 2025:

This is described in paragraph 173 of the CEO-ER. See extract below:

173. The LDCF adaptation project aligns closely with the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCCSP) 2014-2023 by addressing multiple strategic objectives through nature-based solutions (NbS) that enhance climate resilience and sustainable development. By implementing forest restoration, climate-resilient agriculture, and agroforestry, the project directly supports Strategic Objective 1, which aims to promote climate resilience in critical sectors, particularly agriculture, forestry, and water resources. These interventions also contribute to Strategic Objective 2 by safeguarding and enhancing ecosystem services that are vital for climate adaptation and mitigation. Furthermore, by promoting sustainable natural resource-based livelihoods such as eco-tourism and non-timber forest product harvesting, the project aligns with Strategic Objective 3, which seeks to improve livelihoods and enhance community resilience to climate change. The project also strengthens institutional and technical capacity, supporting Strategic Objective 5, which calls for the development of human and institutional capacity for climate change response. Additionally, the establishment of innovative finance mechanisms ensures long-term financial sustainability, aligning with Strategic Objective 6, which emphasises strengthening collaboration and funding mechanisms to support climate action. Finally, the project contributes to Strategic Objective 7 by enhancing the enabling environment for NbS implementation through knowledge-sharing and institutional capacity-building, fostering long-term climate governance improvements. In doing so, the project supports the CCCSP's overarching goal of integrating climate resilience into Cambodia's development trajectory.

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Agency Response

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Agency Response

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Agency Response

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: Is the proposed GEF financing (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Yes

Agency Response
SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)
a) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Agency Response
8.3 Source of Funds
Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?
Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Agency Response
8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?
e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-

kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

11/22/2025: GEFSEC

Thanks

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

In-kind co-financing is normally categorized as ?recurrent expenditure?. Please revise ?investment mobilized? to ?recurrent expenditures?.

Agency Response **UNDP, 3 November 2025:** This has been revised.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) If ? and only if - this is a global or regional project for which not all country-based interventions were known at PIF stage and, therefore, not all LOEs provided:

Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?

b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)

c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?

d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Yes

Agency Response

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Yes

Agency Response

Annex G: GEF Budget template

8.8 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?

b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/9/2025: GEFSEC:

The Chief Technical Advisor /Project Technical Advisor is listed as under UNDP's responsibility while UNDP is not performing any execution support services for the Government - please amend

Telephone card allowance and internet connection for PMU should be categorized as Other Operating Costs but not as Equipment. Please revise the budget:

11/22/2025: GEFSEC:

1. Overall, it is noted that proportionate of budget allocation towards workshops/training/international consultancy is higher. Please review and rationalize with the aim to deliver more on-the-ground results.

2. Vehicle Rental: Such costs are normally expected to be borne by the co-financed portion of PMCs. Any request to use GEF funding to purchase/rent project vehicles must be justified by the exceptional specific circumstances of the project. Please justify

3. Kindly create separate row/line for each positions/expenditures / activities. As an example, create a separate line/row for the project coordinator with its associated costs for each component, PMC. Another line for the M&E Officer, another line for the project and safeguards officer and so on.

4. M&E Officer: While reviewing the TORs, it was noted that the responsibilities of the M&E officer is purely M&E related. Therefore, charge the cost of M&E position fully to the M&E budget.

5. Budget for Component 3: It was noted that the budget allocation under the component 3 does not fully match with the project output and the activity outlined under its project component description. Please review, and realign the allocation with the various project output.

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

1. There are budget lines that include several positions / expenditures / activities. As is, it is not possible to differentiate the reasonability of charging these positions / expenditures / activities to the project components / M&E and/or PMC. Please present the positions / expenditures / activities in individual lines with succinct explanations. We suggest to present the budget per component instead of per output so the field 'Detailed Description' will be wider, and it the number of pages will be shorter.
2. A project coordinator and an M&E Officer have been charged across components. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project's execution must be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. When the situation merits (i.e. not enough co-financing funds), the project's staff could be charged to the project's components with clear Terms of Reference describing unique outputs linked to the respective component. Please provide specific TORs for the specific position.
3. The M&E officer should be charged entirely to the M&E budget.

Agency Response

•UNDP, 10 December 2025:

1. The Technical Advisor position assigned under UNDP responsibility is a shared position with the ERIP project. This arrangement is intended to enhance cost efficiency and strengthen complementarities between the two interlinked projects, which were conceptualized in the same geographical area, addressing different dimensions of development challenges. During PPG, the design team consulted with the GEF Task Manager on the added value of including this position and clarified that, because the role is already listed under UNDP in the ERIP project, it has to be reflected under UNDP in this project, noting that this would not affect the change of implementation modality.

2. GEF Budget table has been revised accordingly.

UNDP, 5 December 2025:

1. While the considerable budget towards workshops, trainings and consultancies is well noted, it is considered an essential component to building local capacities for sustainability and transformational impact. Local service providers were prioritized where feasible, but in some instances local expertise are limited and international consultants were used to bring in needed knowledge. These were primarily focused on developing economic cases and investment strategies for agroforestry, as well as similar inputs on natural capital accounting to build investment cases. Workshops and training then play a critical role in building local capacity. Many of the transformative approaches for communities are skills based, requiring extensive training and knowledge transfer. Some of the biggest line items for the training budget category cover the costs of the lead farmer approach, which uses a training of trainers approach to diffuse agroforestry and agricultural knowledge extensively within and between communities. This approach required direct support to lead farmers to farmers to facilitate their actions in training their peers. Other key investment areas in the training/workshop category include capacity development of national and local decision makers to ensure that transformative approaches are fully integrated into the planning process, as well as facilitating participatory approaches to implementing integrated policies. As stated above, while these training and capacity-building workshops are not physical interventions, they are critical enablers of on-the-ground impact. They equip farmers, community groups, and local

entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills to implement climate-resilient agriculture, agroforestry, and other sustainable, climate-resilient livelihoods. Business management and market access training ensures these interventions are economically viable and scalable. Without this foundation, adoption of sustainable practices would be limited and project outcomes potentially compromised. In short, capacity building multiplies impact; it ensures interventions are implemented effectively, adopted widely, and sustained, maximising both environmental and livelihood benefits.

2. The effective implementation of the GEF project in Cambodia critically depends on reliable and consistent field mobility for government counterparts responsible for planning, coordination, monitoring, and technical support. Project activities are distributed across multiple provinces and community areas, many of which are remote, difficult to access, and require regular face-to-face engagement. Timely and high-quality delivery of project results is only possible if dedicated project vehicles are available to support field monitoring, supervision, and technical missions. The project's geographic scope covers remote and climate-vulnerable areas, necessitating frequent travel for monitoring, supervision, and technical support. Without dedicated vehicles, field teams face significant delays and logistical challenges, undermining project outcomes and the ability to respond rapidly to emerging needs.

Furthermore, following a recent review of the Ministry of Environment's assets, it was found that vehicles currently available at the Ministry level are insufficient to meet operational needs. As a result, the Ministry has adopted a parallel mechanism, renting vehicles on a demand basis. Given the project's requirement for close engagement with communities and ongoing field monitoring and evaluation, the lack of vehicles has become a significant bottleneck. This limitation restricts the Ministry of Environment's ability to conduct regular field visits, supervise project implementation, and ensure effective oversight.

The Ministry of Environment's co-financing is primarily provided as in-kind contributions, such as staff time, office space, and recurrent expenditures, rather than direct cash allocations. The Ministry of Environment's co-financing is not structured to support cash-based expenditures like vehicle rental.

3. Kindly refer to the updated budget, which addresses the comment.

4. Please note, that while all activities are related to monitoring to some extent, those that fall outside of the M&E component are ones which are viewed as technical inputs on the project interventions. The proportion of the roles budget under Component 5 was reserved for specific project-related M&E, as opposed to broader inputs on how monitoring systems can be integrated into longer-term systems. Please see the relevant technical inputs identified below:

- Contribute to the integration of M&E considerations into project activities, including developing;
- monitoring and response mechanisms for communication/awareness programmes;
- guidelines for monitoring agroforestry practices;
- the monitoring component for performance-based incentives
- monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance in market development incentives; and
- the monitoring component for a gender-responsive communication strategy and action plan.

5. The approach to component 3 was based on the needs identified by stakeholders, balancing the limited budget against ambitious goals using what were deemed the most cost-effective approaches. This includes a strong focus on facilitating sustainable partnerships that will unlock investment. The efforts under Component 3 also need to be considered in relation to the finance mechanisms, which on recommendation from the reviewers were merged under Component 2, but still include direct measures to develop markets and unlock sustainable investment. Together, these interventions will create strong incentives for communities to

adopt resilient practices ? something they have indicated keen interest in doing, but currently lack access to knowledge/technical capacity and partnerships to do so.

UNDP, 3 November 2025:

1. The presentation of the budget has been adjusted as per suggestion

2. Given the limited PMC available, it was indeed the case that these positions were designed as not purely management roles, but technical positions that would support in the implementation of the activities. ToRs have been prepared for these positions, presented in Annex 7, which includes cross-references to specific budget notes that explain the technical contributions. This includes the M&E expert not only overseeing the M&E of project interventions, but actively contributing to the technical design of the broader MEL systems and SOPs that will be integrated into government processes, as well as several elements under Outcome 2 (which have been more explicitly added to the ToRs). Technical tasks under the PC have been separated out from administrative tasks in the revised Annex 7 for additional clarity.

Those positions that were deemed purely administrative (i.e. the admin assistant and finance officers) were placed 100% in PMC, while more technical roles were distributed across the components based on the specific focuses.

3. 42% of the M&E officer is directed to the M&E component, which covers the time specifically for project-related M&E. However, as noted above, the M&E officer is also anticipated to provide direct technical inputs to develop monitoring related tools/systems that will be directly integrated into various other project outputs ? separate from, but likely feeding into the broader project MEL system.

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.9 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.

b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.

c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation

Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/11/2025: GEFSEC

All outstanding comments are addressed.

12/09/2025: GEFSEC

Please address the above comments

1/22/2025: GEFSEC

Please address the above comments

8/21/2025: GEFSEC

Please address the above comments

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	8/28/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/22/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)	12/9/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)	12/11/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)		