

# Meeting the Challenge of 2020 in The Bahamas

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

9791

**Countries**

Bahamas

**Project Name**

Meeting the Challenge of 2020 in The Bahamas

**Agencies**

UNEP

**Date received by PM**

5/29/2019

**Review completed by PM**

10/7/2019

**Program Manager**

Sarah Wyatt

**Focal Area**

Multi Focal Area

**Project Type**

FSP

**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**

7/8/2019

Yes.

**Response to Secretariat comments**

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

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

7/8/2019

No, please address the following issues:

- System-wise financial sustainability - The GEF-6 strategy is focused on system-wide financial sustainability for PAs. The goal is to think of the system as a whole for financial sustainability rather than one-by-one. This is particularly important in the Bahamas where certain parks have high visitation and, therefore, potential to make enough money to fund themselves and possibly other more remote PAs. It can be understandable that uniform national fees may not make sense, but that isn't the required approach. There could be different fees at different parks, differentiation between foreigners and nationals, etc.

The CER lays out a number of reasons why this approach may be difficult, but it would be good to see a long term vision in this direction of a national plan to try to support the less "profitable" parks. It may require looking at establishing the park system with separate financing. The GEF has supported the Seychelles in achieving this goal. It would be good to consider how to take an approach that supports all the parks.

- Blue Finance - Has the project discussed ideas with Blue Finance on how to generate more revenue from cruise passengers? Many cruise ship visitors don't even get in the water when they get off the boat, so there is a need for creativity and innovation in generating revenue from them.

- Renewable Energy - The project states that the installation of these systems is meant to catalyze broader adoption of RE through demonstration. However, there doesn't seem to be a plan for how that will happen. Will there be signage (tested for behavior change potential)? Will there be visits from politicians or other influential people? How will this be approached?

- Invasive species - 1. It would be helpful to have a better explanation of why the selected species was chosen for eradication and the likelihood of success. 2. It's unclear how the long term sustainability of the management activities is being provided for. Will the community undertake it out of their own interest? Is there a potential economic gain or income stream?

- 3.1.2 - It seems like this is about more than reduced chemical use if the intent is to implement GAP. It may be worth revising the output.

- Gender - Equality of opportunity does not mean equality of outcome. Therefore, it may not be enough to simply practice non-discrimination in hiring and programs. Beyond engaging women producers, how will the project specifically target women and ensure their participation?

10/1/2019

Yes. Thank you for the revisions. As the project moves forward, please keep sustainability of IAS interventions front and center.

## Response to Secretariat comments

20/08/2019

- **System-wise financial sustainability** - The UNEP ProDoc in sections 2.7 (Para 78 and 80) makes the references to the national framework, Sustainable Finance Plan for the Bahamas National Protected Area System completed in 2008 and an update in 2017. The 2008 Plan included an overview of the PA system, a financial gap analysis based on a needs assessment for improved PA management, a market analysis of goods and services from natural resources, an analysis of potential sustainable financing mechanisms (SFMs) and a 10-year action plan with viable funding mechanisms. Out of the recommendations from this plan, the Bahamas Protected Area Fund was established. The 2008 Sustainable Finance Plan and a subsequent update, the 2017 Sustainable Financing for the Bahamas Protected Area System make the case for national-level harmonization of user fees for the PA system in the country and different but complementary efforts at various sites across the archipelago under the umbrella of a national framework. The key recommendations from the 2008 Plan and 2017 update to be realized in the project are development of a user fee system that can be extended to all protected areas, and development of a varying rate schedule covering entrance and activity fees, based on the location of each park, visitor demand and staffing requirements. This project intends to actualize this approach at the national level in what may be considered a modular approach in roll-out, targeting these PAs that have significant visitor development potential and have significant conservation and protection value. The intention of the BEST Commission with the GEF contribution is to foster harmonization at the national level but through concrete demonstration of operational application at the PA site level. In section 3.9 of the UNEP ProDoc, the point is made that the research and experience gained through the project would reduce the cost and time needed for future business plan and sustainable finance development at other sites which is beneficial to the entire national protected area system.

Due consideration is given to less profitable parks in the wider schemes of PA management in the country under the national framework from the above-mentioned studies and recommendations, including centralizing of revenue generated so that less profitable parks can receive consistent or sustained annual allocations. Indeed, the Seychelles approach was considered based on the GEF Sec review comments and this project does follow the same methodology with development of a national-level plan followed by site-level interventions. The difference is that The Bahamas has already completed the national-level plan, so GEF funding request is focused on site-level interventions.

The language in the CEO-ER document has been revised in sections A.1 (3), Output 2.2.1 and A.1 (6) as well as in the ProDoc in sections 2.7 and 3.9 to make this clear.

- **Blue Finance** – The work under this initiative has been considered based on the information available on the website at <http://blue-finance.org/>. The products and services that this effort can potentially offer is of relevance to this project as The Bahamas has been identified as a project site for Phase 2 of Blue Finance on Financial and Legal Arrangements. In the PPG phase, there were no discussions with Blue Finance. However, inclusion has been made in the documents (section A.1 (6) of the CEO-ER and 2.8 of the ProDoc) to engage Blue Finance as an international partner. The intention is to extend an invitation to engage the team with responsibility for the Caribbean region to participate as appropriate in providing technical guidance and facilitate innovative mobilization of resources to fund PA management in the country. The BEST Commission is appreciative of the recommendation from the GEF Sec.

- **Renewable Energy** - The adoption of RE in the country is becoming increasingly mainstreamed into the power mix for infrastructure investments and is already well-accepted as standard practice. The project considers that it is not so much a case of 'selling' the concept of utilization of RE to policy makers, but rather to build on the overall goal of enhancing greening and environmental sustainability into operations of the national PA system. Specific reference is made to the co-benefit of reducing exposure of the sensitive natural environment to the possibility of hazardous oil spills (refer to sections A.1 (2), Output 2.4.1 of the CEO-ER and 2.4.2 (Para 44) and 3.3 (Para 123) of the ProDoc on account of frequent transportation of diesel fuel to power generators. Certainly, the project will contribute to the installation of signage and promotion of project interventions on social media that will help create awareness among citizens and visitors alike and promote the vision of the

protected area system in its drive toward more 'green' sustainable options. The project will carefully document the contributions from the RE installations in the reporting of results related to CO2 emissions aversion; this information will also be available to the national stakeholders engaged in the project. Finally, the investments under the project will be used in future replication and scaling up efforts across the national system in the country.

The text in section A.1 (2), Output 2.4.1 of the CEO-ER and sections 3.3 (Para 136) and 3.10 of ProDoc have been adjusted to reflect the clarification provided here.

**- Invasive species – (1) why the selected species was chosen for eradication and the likelihood of success; (2) how the long term sustainability of the management activities is being provided for. Will the community undertake it out of their own interest?** The species selected have been known to be particularly disastrous for indigenous plant communities and dependent fauna. The Australian Pine (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) creates monocultures, causes erosion of beach dune systems, produces allelopathic compounds, and increases hurricane damage. The Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) outcompetes native vegetation to create monocultures, can cause contact dermatitis and inflammation in humans, and fruits can cause paralyzing effects on birds and grazing animals. The Hawaiian inkberry (*Scaevola taccada*) displaces native coastal vegetation and causes dune destabilization. The Paperbark Tree (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) alters the water table, destroys wetland habitat, and displaces native plants and animals. These are the reasons that these species have been targeted in the Bahamas National Invasive Species Strategy (NISS) and control measures are considered of highest importance as outlined in the NBSAP for The Bahamas. The control of IAS is no doubt an intensive and long-term process that requires commitment from many stakeholders, notably those who are in most direct contact and have influence over landscape management, such as BNT. It is for this reason the project intends to assist build the capacity of stakeholders as specified in Component 3 which has 3 outputs related to community engagement. With this investment under the project, it is expected that commitment among stakeholders will be strengthened. It is also expected that national agencies including BEST, BNT, Forestry Unit and Department of Agriculture will continue to support longer-term efforts to enhance likelihood of success. It should be underscored that the project will foster a co-management approach between support agencies and the community, recognizing that engagement in IAS control will likely not be driven solely by revenue generation factors that may otherwise incentivize the process.

The text in section A.1 (1) of the CEO-ER and section 2.4.1 (Para 32) of the ProDoc have been adjusted to reflect the clarification provided here.

**- 3.1.2 - It seems like this is about more than reduced chemical use if the intent is to implement GAP. It may be worth revising the output:** The point is noted, however it is considered in consultation with the local technical experts, that assessment of the nature of utilization of chemical inputs (type, method and frequency of application in term of use efficiency) is contributory to implementing GAPs. The reduction of application of potentially harmful agrochemicals is a recognized longer-term goal in the context of reducing exposure risk to protected areas. In this regard, the Treatment Frequency Index (TFI) is proposed as a measure to assess the chemical input aspect of adherence to GAPs. The TFI is the number of times farmers apply (via spray, or other means of application) chemical inputs on their fields on average over the course of the year. The concept is introduced in the narrative under section 3.3 of the ProDoc and section 3 of the CEO Endorsement Request and is reflected as an indicator in a revised Results Framework (Appendix 4 of the ProDoc). The baseline for the TFI will be determined at the project commencement; the mid-term target anticipates a 12% reduction in TFI and by end of project a 25% reduction in the TFI. It should be noted that the project will also assess the number of farmers that are demonstrating measures that are generally compliant with wider GAP measures key among which will include integrated pest management.

**- Gender - how will the project specifically target women and ensure their participation?** This aspect will be more significantly addressed under component 2, specifically under Output 2.1.1 (see sections A.1 (2) and A.4 of CEO-ER and section 3.7 (Para 181 of the ProDoc) in the establishment of the protected area management advisory boards at two of the protected areas. The project through the partners, will foster gender balance in establishment of these governance bodies whereby it is anticipated that gender considerations will filter through management regimes of protected areas in The Bahamas. The aim will be to encourage increased empowerment among women to step more prominently into the role of protected area management. Existing partner organizations and community-based organizations with strong gender-based agendas will be encouraged to participate in protected area management and support the process, such as the Department of

Gender and Family Affairs, as well as to enable project outcomes to be carried forward in their work. The Department is currently developing a policy on gender equality and equity for endorsement by Cabinet before the end of 2019; the policy contains commitments on increasing participation of women in national development with respect to the environment and sustainable development. It should be noted that access to capacity building opportunities within the project will be designed so as to promote equity.

It is noted on review of the narratives under various sections of the project documentation, this general approach was not clear. The text in section A.4 of the CEO-ER and section 3.7 of the ProDoc have been adjusted accordingly.

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

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

7/8/2019

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**

7/8/2019

Yes.

**Response to Secretariat comments**

**5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

7/8/2019

No, we can't find letters from TNC, Shedd and the Perry Institute.

10/1/2019

Yes. For the letter from TNC, we note that the Bahamas dollar is pegged to the USD at 1:1.

### **Response to Secretariat comments**

**20/08/2019**

These co-financing letters were in fact received. These have now been submitted.

**6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?**

### **Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

7/8/2019

No. While we no longer require tracking tools, there are some issues with the indicators. This project should have a Rio Marker for CCM of 2. Also, there should be a number of beneficiaries recorded in the core indicators.

10/1/2019

Yes. Please note that we hope all GEF supported PAs will include a WDPA ID so that we can manage our data better. Also, depending on advancements in calculating benefits of marine AFOLU, it may be good to include carbon benefits from EX-ACT or similar tools.

### **Response to Secretariat comments**

**20/08/2019**

**This project should have a Rio Marker for CCM of 2:** This has been reflected/checked in Annex F: GEF Project Taxonomy Worksheet

**Also, there should be a number of beneficiaries recorded in the core indicators:** This has been included in the Project Core Indicators under Annex E: GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet of the CEO-ER. The estimated number of direct beneficiaries is 53 female and 52 male for a total 105.

**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

7/8/2019

Yes, the collaboration with the CBF is particularly welcome.

### 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

7/8/2019

Yes.

10/22/2019

No, please include the following indicators in the core indicators and explain or correct the differences on good agricultural practices:

- *10 ha restored at BPNP with engagement of local communities (please include under indicator 3)*
- *90 ha restored at LNP with engagement of local communities (please include under indicator 3)*
- *100 hectares under good agriculture practices (GAP). (please include under indicator 4.3) Please also note that this estimate in results framework differs from the project description, which says "The project anticipates the participation of between 60 and 80 farmers cultivating holdings over an estimated 1,618 hectares".*

12/3/2019

No. BPNP needs its WDPA ID included.



## Response to Secretariat comments

10/29/2019

The acreages Bonefish Pond NP (10 Ha) and Lucayan NP (90 ha) have been included in under Indicator 3.1 in the Core Indicator Worksheet in the CEO Endorsement Request document.

The 100 ha under good agriculture practices on the islands of New Providence and Andros have been included under indicator 4.3 of the Core Indicator Worksheet. It should be noted that the 1,618 hectares refer to the wider production areas on the islands of New Providence and Andros over which the project intends to transfer best practice based on the interventions on the targeted 100 ha. The text under Output 3.1.2 of the ProDoc was adjusted to better reflect this and similarly reflected in the CEO Endorsement Request.

01/13/2020

The WDPA ID for BPNP (315002) is included in Annex E: GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet of the CEO ER.

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

## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

7/8/2019

No, more information on how the project will document and share lessons learned outside of the Bahamas is needed.

10/1/2019

Yes. Thank you for the clarification.

## Response to Secretariat comments

20/08/2019

**How the project will document and share lessons learned outside of the Bahamas:** One of the primary opportunities for sharing of lessons learned will be through the Cartagena Convention Secretariat, particularly within the scope of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Protocol in its meetings of the Contracting Parties (COP) under the Intergovernmental Meetings of the Cartagena Convention. The Bahamas is also in the process of reactivating its Clearing House Mechanism for biodiversity which will provide another opportunity to share lessons learned internationally, particularly with Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF) regional meeting will enable The Bahamas to share project accomplishments and lessons learned with other Caribbean countries.

The text in sections A.8 and C of the CEO-ER and section 6 (Para 212) of the ProDoc have been adjusted to reflect this updated consideration.

#### **Agency Responses**

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

#### **GEFSEC**

##### **Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

7/8/2019

Yes.

##### **Response to Secretariat comments**

#### **STAP**

##### **Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

7/8/2019

Yes.

##### **Response to Secretariat comments**

#### **GEF Council**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

7/8/2019

Yes.

**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**

7/8/2019

Not at this time. Please revise and resubmit.

10/1/2019

No, please address the issues on core indicators as well as budget.

M&E - Financial audit should be in PMC not M&E. Also, the publication of lessons learned should be in the project itself.

PMC - Project staff should be charged to PMC when possible. We note that there is co-financing available that could cover these expenses.

12/16/2019

No, we note that there still considerable project staff charged to project components. There is considerable PMC from both GEF and co-financing resources that could cover the full cost of the project staff.

2/11/2019

Yes, thank you for the revisions and clarifying this information.

### **Response to Secretariat comments**

10/29/2019

**M&E - Financial audit should be in PMC not M&E:** Rectified - the cost of the financial audit has been reallocated to PMC.

**Publication of lessons learned should be in the project itself:** Rectified - the publications of lessons learned has been allocated under budget line 5201: Publications, Translations, Dissemination and reporting costs.

**PMC - Project staff should be charged to PMC when possible. We note that there is co-financing available that could cover these expenses:** The following adjustments have been made:

The National project coordinator's salary has been re-apportioned; 115,000 or 72% has been shifted to PMC. The remaining 45,000 has been split between components 1, 2 and 3. This apportioning represents not only the role in project administration but also the anticipated substantive contribution of the project coordinator to activity implementation. The terms of reference for the national project coordinator has been modified to reflect this (appendix 10 of the UNEP ProDoc). To meet the PMC threshold criteria, adjustments were made in personnel costs were shifted to national consultant lines.

The cost for the Bahamas National Trust wardens that was under budget line 1102 Project Personnel has been moved to budget line 2100 Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for cooperating agencies). It should be noted that the BNT is not a government organization.

On the matter of co-financing: The co-financing that has been committed by partners is intended to support related activities within the respective agencies toward achievement of the project objectives rather than directing resources to cover cash requirements to support the project management unit.

01/13/2020

**No, we note that there still considerable project staff charged to project components. There is considerable PMC from both GEF and co-financing resources that could cover the full cost of the project staff.** As indicated in the previous response, of the \$270,500 that is being charged to the GEF for project personnel, of that \$45,000 or 16.6% is being charged to the project components reflecting the project coordinator’s engagement in specific technical activities, that have been better defined in the revised PC TORs (accompanying the resubmission). The full amount for the Administrative Staff is being covered under PMC while \$115,000 of the PC cost is covered under PMC. Again, while the co-financing that partners have pledged is indeed substantial, these amounts were not envisaged to be used to directly support the costs of the PMU.

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief Reasoning for CEO Recommendations**

We understand that the impacts of Hurricane Dorian may result in the need for revisions to this project to be discussed during Inception. Please focus on global environmental benefits and review the GEF-6 strategy when considering revisions. We also note that rebuilding efforts may present opportunities for GEBs as well. The GEF Sec is available and open for upstream discussions.

The Bahamas are an island country with significant terrestrial, but in particular marine biodiversity. Much of the economy depends on tourism to enjoy the natural resources of the Bahamas. This nature based tourism presents both an opportunity and a danger to conservation. As a part of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, the Bahamas have committed to protecting 20% of near-shore marine waters by 2020. While the Bahamas has received support from other institutions to establish these protected areas, they now to need to ensure that these protected areas are effectively managed and not adversely impacted by activities outside of the protected areas.

The project will seek the strengthened management of marine protected areas in the Bahamas and integrate protected areas into broader landscape planning in order to reduce pressures on ecosystem services and biodiversity from competing resource uses. The project will support integrated natural resource management systems for marine protected areas and adjacent land and seascapes through land use planning for surrounding areas using an integrated natural resource management framework. It will also support effective protected area management through the establishment of advisory boards, management plans, business plans, monitoring and climate smart infrastructure that demonstrates renewable energy technologies. The project will also pilot “adopt a park” activities to engage community organizations in protected area management. The five protected areas included in this project are Key Biodiversity Areas.

Innovation: This project will use protected area infrastructure to demonstrate renewable energy technologies to build knowledge and capacity about renewable energy. Sustainability: RE will help bring down protected area management costs, but also focusing on community support and sustainable finance in business plans will be important. Scaling-up: The adopt-a-park approach will be piloted with the intention scaling up in the Bahamas, but can also provide good lessons for application throughout the Caribbean.

GEBs generated by this project include 688,046 hectares of marine protected areas under improved management and the mitigation of 1052769.6 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq.