

# Sustainable Forest and Forest Land Management in Viet Nam?s Ba River Basin Landscape

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10539

**Countries**

Viet Nam

**Project Name**

Sustainable Forest and Forest Land Management in Viet Nam?s Ba River  
Basin Landscape

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

2/9/2022

**Review completed by PM**

8/30/2022

**Program Manager**

Jurgis Sapijanskas

**Focal Area**

Multi Focal Area

**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

JS 2/28/2022- Cleared, identical to PIF.

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

JS 6/2/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 2/28/2022- Outcome 3 and output 3.1 have been significantly modified, with most notably the removal of the substantial policy work that was planned at PIF stage. The modification is justified by the consideration that "*revision of policy framework under Forestry Law 2017 and revision of circulars and/or regulations was outside the scope of the project, rather the real need was to improve knowledge of forest managers to implement existing legislation and regulations*".

However, barrier 2 still states that implementation of the 2017 forest law "*has been hindered by a lack of regulations/guidelines to guide forest owners. Gaps in particular include: (i) the lack of elaboration of the role of forest rangers in special-use forests and protection forest management boards, particularly their potential transformation into a specialized forest protection force; (ii) absence of detailed guidance to forest managers on planning and implementation of SFM. Guidance on how to incorporate biodiversity conservation priorities, as well as enforcement mechanisms, have not yet been developed*". Likewise, table 1 still states that the baseline scenario includes "*Weaknesses in subordinate regulations and guidance [that] limit enforcement of SFM planning and site-based law enforcement responses to forest offences*."

Furthermore, the policy work announced in the PIF went beyond the policy framework under Forestry Law 2017. It included the specific policy and regulatory needs related to the implementation of the 2017 Law on Planning, to the implementation of LDN, and to the development of guidance for the integrated implementation of biodiversity and forestry laws, building on the wider policy work under the Biodiversity Law carried out by the GEF-6 biosphere project executed by MONRE.

Finally, the national-level policy work of outcome 3.1, which was presented as a key motivation for the project by proponents, was a key element that led to the clearance of PIF. As pointed out in reviews of first versions the PIF, the project is otherwise very small in scale with weak plans for replication and/or upscaling.

Please include in the project, as planned at PIF stage, a meaningful feedback from project results in the Ba river landscape to national policy. The corresponding output should be specific on the policy increment it will provide.

## Agency Response

### UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

Thank you for this comment. The team revised the barrier and the project description to ensure consistency.

#### Response to Policy-related work comment:

FYI, since the approval of the PIF, in terms of the Forestry law, the Government has progressed towards improving its implementation through revision of different decrees and guidelines, in particular, relating to (i) implementation and enforcement capacity building of forest owners in operationalizing the development and implementation of SFM plans and PFES application; (ii) implementation of national forestry planning and programming; etc. In terms of the Planning Act, guidelines for planning process for integration of biodiversity and SFM considerations into master planning (including its integration at the sectoral and provincial levels) process is currently under development by MARD and provinces and expected to be finalized in 2022.

In terms of policy, given the narrow and limited scope of the project (including the focus at the provincial level), and agreement that the project will focus on (i) testing and validating specific regulations/guidelines related to the Forest and Planning Acts of 2017 and (ii) capacity building of forest managers and Forest Protection Management Boards to implement SFM plans and its monitoring.

However, in the case of (i) above, the specific work in relation to policy is not treated as a separate Output (as in the case of Output 3.1 in PIF), but integrated within a number of relevant Outputs in the GEFCEO ER so as to build a clear linkage with specific on-the-ground/thematic activities and the testing of specific regulations/guidelines related to policy work as reflected in the following outputs:

Output 1.2: Feedback to midway review and readjustment for 2026-2030 planning cycle in terms of effectiveness of integration of forest/biodiversity outcomes into provincial master planning based on Decision 502/2020 issued by Prime Minister approving tasks/contents for developing the Phu Yen provincial master planning and Decision 1015/2020 issued by the Prime Minister for developing the Gia Lai provincial master planning

Output 1.3: Developing and testing technical guidelines on monitoring forest/landscape change in relation to effectiveness SFM planning and implementation (Circular 28/2018 and Circular 33/2018 related to Forestry Act)

Output 1.4: Review of monitoring, surveillance and enforcement systems (relating to Decree 01/2019 regulating forest rangers and specialized forest protection force) to provide recommendations for improved training, empowerment of forest rangers, capacity and enhanced support required to improve quality and performance of monitoring that could be applied nationwide by Forest Protection and Special Use Forest Management Boards

Output 2.4: Review to identify capacity need for PA, forest management Boards and local community on biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest management and capacity and skills need to engage local community in forest management more effectively, in particular to address requirements defined through Decrees 156/2018 and 83/2020 of Forest Act. (

Output 2.7: Recommendations for improved more effective linkage of PFES fund investments with conservation outcomes in accordance with Decree 99/2010 that provides the national mandate/policy for requiring users of forest environmental services to make payments to suppliers of these services and over 20 legal instruments, such as Decrees, Prime Minister Decisions and Circulars have been subsequently issued in support

Output 3.1 will facilitate forest owners and management boards in the project provinces to implement SFM plans on basis of Circular 28/2018

#### Feedback to National and Provincial Level Policy:

- In terms of meaningful feedback to the national and provincial level, this will specifically include the recommendations and dialogue based on Outputs described above, based on which the preparation and promotion of a replication, scaling-up and long-term sustainability strategy/plan, keeping in the mind that the actual reform in terms of policy, regulations and guidelines that are made at national political level might be beyond the scope of the project. The preparation of the strategy/plan will entail an in-depth analysis of financial options for sustaining the policy dialogue and reform. The preparation of the replication, scaling-up and long-term sustainability strategy/plan will be complemented and supported by the following specific actions based on outcomes of outputs described earlier, namely: (i) Development of guidance documents that addresses current constraints and gaps among forest managers and management boards in implementation of existing policies and legislation (including in particular in relation to SFM, integration of biodiversity conservation outcomes in forest and provincial level planning and sectoral and provincial/national coordination and monitoring and evaluation; (ii) development of policy notes for dissemination and discussion with key policy makers at national and provincial level to promote provincial and forest master planning change; (iii) review and dialogue of effectiveness of implementation of existing policies and decisions to identify key constraints and weaknesses in order to encourage revisions and updates; (iv) VNForestry and MARD

testing and refining guidelines for monitoring of SFM implementation, in particular to assess changes in forest condition that will be developed and promoted nationally; (v) development of a technical manual for forest managers on planning, implementation and monitoring of SFM plans that integrate biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, sustainable resource use, and co-management; (vi) institutionalization of training within the Institute of Forest Ecology and Environment (IFEE) of the Vietnam National University of Forestry (VNUF) that is affiliated to MARD; and (vii) an in-depth analysis of long-term financial options.

Refer Barrier Section (Pages 9-11) and Alternate Strategy (Section 3 Pages 16-17) and Project Description (Pages 21-37) in GEFCEO ER in terms of the policy related work (testing and validation of regulations/guidelines, etc.). Please refer to following Outputs in GEF CEO ER for details:

Output 1.2: Feedback to midway review and readjustment for 2026-2030 planning cycle in terms of effectiveness of integration of forest/biodiversity outcomes into provincial master planning based on Decision 502/2020 issued by Prime Minister approving tasks/contents for developing the Phu Yen provincial master planning and Decision 1015/2020 issued by the Prime Minister for developing the Gia Lai provincial master planning (Page 22)

Output 1.3: Developing and testing technical guidelines on monitoring forest/landscape change in relation to effectiveness SFM planning and implementation (Circular 28/2018 and Circular 33/2018 related to Forestry Act) (Pages 22-23)

Output 1.4: Review of monitoring, surveillance and enforcement systems (relating to Decree 01/2019 regulating forest rangers and specialized forest protection force) to provide recommendations for improved training, empowerment of forest rangers, capacity and enhanced support required to improve quality and performance of monitoring that could be applied nationwide by Forest Protection and Special Use Forest Management Boards (Pages 23-24)

Output 2.4: Review to identify capacity need for PA, forest management Boards and local community on biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest management and capacity and skills need to engage local community in forest management more effectively, in particular to address requirements defined through Decrees 156/2018 and 83/2020 of Forest Act. (Pages 26-27)

Output 2.7: Recommendations for improved more effective linkage of PFES fund investments with conservation outcomes in accordance with Decree 99/2010 that provides the national mandate/policy for requiring users of forest environmental services to make payments to suppliers of these services and over 20 legal instruments, such as Decrees, Prime Minister Decisions and Circulars have been subsequently issued in support (page 29)

Output 3.1 will facilitate forest owners and management boards in the project provinces to implement SFM plans on basis of Circular 28/2018 (Pages 29-30)

Reference feedback to national and provincial policy refer GEF CEO ER Section 7 ?Innovation, Sustainability and Scaling Up? (Pages 36-38)

#### Feedback to National and Provincial Level Policy

Refer Output 3.2 (Page 32) and Section 7 ?Innovation, Sustainability and Scaling Up? (Pages 36-38).

**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

JS 7/2/2022 - Cleared. We note that KfW co-funding has not been secured at this stage but that co-financing reaches a 8.5:1 ratio already. Please report the KfW co-funding with underlying evidence at the next possible occasion.

JS 6/1/2022:

1- Cleared.

2- Contrary to what is announced in the response, the portal entry does not show KfW in table C and we failed to locate the supporting evidence for KfW co-financing with this submission. Please correct:

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)	Evidence
Recipient Country Government	Forest Inventory and Planning Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee – Gia Lai Province	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	15,272,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee – Gia Lai Province	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee – Gia Lai Province	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	861,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee --Phu Yen Province	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee --Phu Yen Province	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,100,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee --Phu Yen Province	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00	
<b>Total Co-Financing(\$)</b>				<b>22,733,000.00</b>	

JS 2/28/2022- We note co-financing is at a similar level as anticipated at PIF stage.

1- Two co-financing sources have not been tagged for investment mobilized vs. recurrent expenditures. Please correct:

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)	Evidence
Recipient Country Government	Forest Inventory and Planning Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee – Gia Lai Province	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	15,272,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee – Gia Lai Province	Grant		2,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee – Gia Lai Province	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	861,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee –Phu Yen Province	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee –Phu Yen Province	Grant		2,100,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Provincial People's Committee –Phu Yen Province	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00	
<b>Total Co-Financing(\$)</b>				<b>22,733,000.00</b>	

2- As we understand it, the \$2,000,000 and \$2,100,000 grants from Provincial People's Committees are actually KfW funding. Please thus report this co-finance in table C as stemming from the donor agency KfW and provide adequate supporting evidence (please refer to paragraphs 6 and 7 of the guidelines on co-financing for the list of possible supporting evidence and necessary elements: [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF\\_FI\\_GN\\_01\\_Cofinancing\\_Guidelines\\_2018.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_FI_GN_01_Cofinancing_Guidelines_2018.pdf)).

### Agency Response UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

1 The changes have been made to the co-financing table and also corrected in the portal entry. One entry for KfW for a total of \$4,100,000 is entered in the revised co-financing table.

2 On supporting document, the 2 projects with KfW are in the final appraisal stage. Please find attached the evidence of the discussion between KfW and the Provincial People's Committee of Phu Yen and Gia Lai Provinces. It is anticipated that both projects will be approved in 2022 (Please refer attached letters from the People's Committees of Phu Yen and Gia Lai (Attachment A and B to this report).

Please include evidence for co-financing for the project with this form.

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Cofinancing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Government	Forest Inventory and Planning Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	In-Kind	Recurrent expenditure	1,000,000
Government	Provincial People's Committee – Gia Lai Province	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	15,272,000
		In-Kind	Recurrent expenditure	861,000
<b>Donor Agency</b>	<b>KfW Development Bank</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Investment mobilized</b>	<b>4,100,000</b>
Government	Provincial People's Committee –Phu Yen Province	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,000,000
		In-Kind	Recurrent expenditure	500,000
<b>Total Co-financing</b>				<b>22,733,000</b>

**UNDP Response, July 2, 2022**

Adjusted to actual co-financing currently committed to the project which is a 17% decrease from PIF stage. However, 2 project to be funded by KfW in the 2 project provinces are expected to be operational in late 2022 will add another USD 4.1 million to co-financing, bringing the total co-financing amount to USD 22,733,000 (and slightly above the PIF target). The KfW co-financing cannot be added at this stage as they are currently not operational and the KfW requested to hold the co- financing until these 2 project become operational. Please refer to pages 5 & 9 of the Annex 20 Co-financing letters, ProDoc

**GEF Resource Availability**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request JS 2/28/2022- 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

JS 9/30/2022 - Cleared.

JS 9/29/2022 - Please correct the PPG spending report to ensure alignment with the eligible expenditures specified in the project and program cycle guidelines:([https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF\\_Guidelines\\_Project\\_Program\\_Cycle\\_Policy\\_20200731.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_Guidelines_Project_Program_Cycle_Policy_20200731.pdf)). In particular, unspecified Miscellaneous Expenses is not an eligible expenditure under PPG .

JS 8/13/2022 - 3- Please provide more details in PPG spending report. At a minimum, please break down the lump sum into main categories.

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Project preparations grant to finalize the Project document for project, "Sustainable Forest and Forest Land Management in Viet Nam's Ba River basin landscape"	100,000	72,445	27,555
Total	100,000	72,445	27,555

## Agency Response

UNDP Response 17 August 2022

The detailed PPG expenditure breakdown is provided in the resubmission. Below is the screenshot of breakdown that is included in the resubmission.

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: 100,000			
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)</i>		
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent To date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>
Project preparations grant to finalize the Project document for project, "Sustainable Forest and Forest Land Management in VietNam's Ba River basin landscape"			
71200 International Consultants	42,250	44,204	(1,954)
71300 Local Consultants	33,400	39,105	(5,705)
71600 Travel	8,000	7,636	364
72500 Supplies	1,000	-	1,000
74500 Miscellaneous Expenses	3,000	626	2,374
75700 Training, Workshops, and Conferences	12,350	7,787	4,563
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>99,358</b>	<b>642</b>

## 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

JS 7/22/2022 - Cleared.

JS 1/6/2022-

2- Cleared, thank you.

1- Thank you, but:

1a- We failed to locate "Annex I". Please provide it.

1b- the assumptions listed under table F for the estimation of climate mitigation benefits do not seem consistent with the targets on core indicator 4.4 in the results framework. If forest loss avoidance is anticipated as a result of the project (core indicator 4.4), the corresponding mitigation benefits should be captured. Currently, only some forest restoration and improvement in degradation level are accounted for. Please ensure

consistency between the mitigation calculations and other core indicators, and revise the assumptions and EX-ACT calculations accordingly.

3- Thank you but the portal entry and the Results Framework are not consistent with one another on core indicator 4.

In table F in the portal entry, there are 74,485 ha reported on CI4, including 56,658 ha on 4.1 (Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity) and 17,827 ha under 4.3 (Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems).

In the Results Framework, while the total is the same on CI4, the breakdown is 17,827 ha under 4.1 and 56,658 ha under 4.4.

3a- Please revise to ensure consistency within and between all documents.

3b- For hectares reported under core indicator 4.4, please explain under table F how the target was derived. We note that a business as usual scenario of 9.25% loss of forest cover over a 8 year period is used, However, please clarify (i) on what period this rate is used (only direct effects should be measured, i.e. the period should correspond to when the project is anticipated to have direct impact on deforestation, which is thus smaller than total project implementation time), (ii) on which total surface area this rate is used, and (iii) justify that this total surface area meets on or more of the HCV criteria. All surface area impacted by the project but that is not meeting the HCV criteria should be reported under 4.1 or 4.3, not 4.4. Please see the guidance on core indicator 4.4: [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Results\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Results_Guidelines.pdf)

JS 2/28/2022-

1- Core indicator 6:

1a. Please include under table F the assumptions used for the GHG mitigation calculations (or at least a cross-reference to annex 14b).

1b. The GEF does not support afforestation. Please confirm the project will support reforestation and not afforestation and remove the word afforestation in annex 14b.

2- Please include under table F the assumptions used to set a target of 3,000 people under indicator 11.

3- Given the projected planned activities on HCVF, please consider adding a target core indicator 4.4 (HCVF avoided loss) or explain why it is not considered possible. Please note that the results framework include a target of 56,658 ha on 4.4 but it is unclear if it is indeed 56,658 ha of avoided HCV forest loss. If there is indeed a target on core indicator 4.4 please clarify how it was set, in particular noting the HCVF criteria and the need for baseline deforestation estimates, and how it will monitored.

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

### 1. Core Indicator 6:

1a. Assumptions for GHG mitigation provided under Table F for CI 6. For detailed listed of assumptions please refer to Annex I.

1b. Changed from afforestation to reforestation to accurately reflect the planned activities.

### 2. Core Indicator 11:

Community based forest management, tourism related enterprises, NTFP?(Output 2.4): 1,000 people directly benefiting from community forest management and from small grants for households and production/cooperative groups to do livelihood initiatives

Livelihoods for women (Output 2.5): 500 women directly benefit from small grants for households and production/cooperative groups to do livelihood initiatives

Capacity development activities: 1,500 people directly benefit from technical trainings

Please refer Table E notes (page 6)

### 3. Core Indicator 4:

Thank you for this comment. This was an error that has been corrected to appropriately reflect the indicator (CI 4.4) in the Results Framework. The extent covered is within the Forest Protection Units that will entail the integration of conservation outcomes as part of the proposed SFM planning that is required by the Forestry Law. The SFM Plans will include specific targets for biodiversity conservation, avoidance of forest loss, and improved management training for forest owners, improved budgetary allocations and monitoring. These forests are in the Central Highlands and are known of being of high conservation value (as has been described in Section 1a of the GEF CEOER. Although there are no detail deforestation figures for the specific project sites, the Central Highlands has shown a 9.25% loss of forest cover over a 8 year period (refer Section on Root Causes, Threats and Impacts). Under Output 1.2, the project will support mapping of the Bar River basin forest cover that will provide the baseline information in terms of each forest unit within the basin, while Output 1.3 will help establish and build capacity for monitoring and assessing forest cover and resource changes.

Please refer Table E notes (page 6) and Annexes A and F for these changes.

UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:

1a. Revised Annex I is provided.

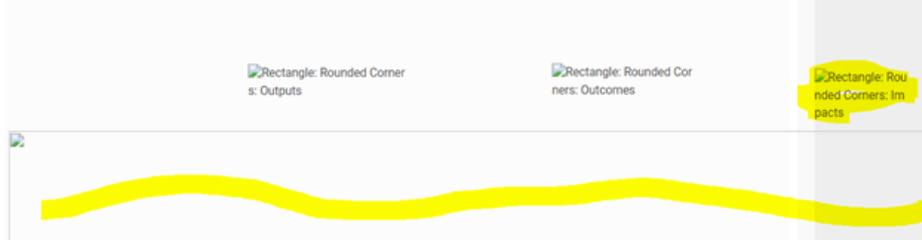
1b. GHG estimates, assumptions are now updated and consistent with the ha and core indicators. Please refer to Table E and Annexes F and I of GEF CEO ER to see these changes, which are highlighted in green.

3a. Refer Table E and Annexes A and F of GEF CEO ER

3b. Refer Table E and Annex F of GEF CEO ER



To achieve this objective the project will utilize 3 strategies (Project Components) with intervention pathways described in the theory of change diagram in Figure 2 below. The Components (GEF project alternative) will aim to remove the barriers to accomplishing the long-term solution (see Fig. 1). The details of the suggested Theory of Change are shown in Figure 2.



JS 2/28/2022- Cleared.

### Agency Response

UNDP Response 17 August 2022

Corrected in the portal

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

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 7/22/2022 - Cleared.

JS 6/1/2022

1- Cleared.

2- Thank you but the paragraph has not been removed from the portal entry in this submission. Please correct.

JS 2/28/2022-

1- Several parts of the baseline have not been updated since PIF stage. It includes the provincial plans and associated budgets, and the KfW funding, which are yet used as co-finance, but also to JICA, EU, and the GEF-funded *Mainstreaming Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation Objectives into Socio-Economic Development Planning and Management of Biosphere Reserve in Viet Nam*:

In support of Decision 297, Gia Lai province (which falls within the Central Highlands region) is developing a forest protection plan covering the period 2021-2030, with an expected budget of VND 2,591 billion (US\$113 million), of which VND 278.5 billion is from local sources (provincial government) and 2.313 billion (US\$101 million) is from central government. This funding is emerging from

Further, Gia Lai Provincial People's Committee is expected to approve a plan, with a total budget of US\$21.56 million, for forest management organizations and households in the province, under which districts will develop annual plans for forest allocations, beginning with the Ba River basin, Phu Yen Province is developing and will implement a Provincial Forest Protection and Development Plan with an overall budget of about US\$9.5 million, of which about US\$0.9 million is from local sources and US\$8.4 million comes from

livelihood development. In the case of KfW 9, titled "Rehabilitation and sustainable forest management in Central and Northern Viet Nam", Phu Yen province will receive support from 2021-2027, with budget for the province of €5,935,173 (US\$6.6 million). Project components include: (1) Improving management of special use forests and national parks; (2) Improving management of protection forests and community forests; (3) Implementing environmental education measures.

Please revise. In doing so, please provide a more detailed describing of the provincial and KfW baseline project(s) as they are used as co-finance and the GEF increment on this activities needs to be more clearly outlined. Please note that currently the baseline only mentions on-going/future KfW support in the Phu Yen Province when the co-financing from Gai Lai also include \$2,000,000 of KfW funding.

2- Please remove the last paragraph of this section on the "identified 5 principles of post 2020 Global Biodiversity framework". The added-value is unclear, to our knowledge they are no such "principles" within the draft post 2020 GBF and the framework has not yet been agreed.

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

1. The baseline section relating to JICA, EU and GEF project is now updated along with additional information on the two KfW projects. Please refer GEFCEO ER (Baseline Section) on pages 13 and 14.
2. As suggested, the text is removed.

#### UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:

This is a GEF Portal issue, which should be now corrected.

**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

JS 7/2/2022 - Cleared

JS 6/1/2022

A- Please correct the typo in the portal entry (repetition):

uptake and replication of best practices across the Ba River basin and across Viet Nam. To achieve the above, would require the preparation of a concrete upscaling, replication and long-term sustainability strategy/plan that would be based in particular on supporting the update of existing policies, Decrees, Circulars and guidelines following review of: The intent of this Output, is to also support the update of existing policies, Decrees, Circulars and guidelines based on review of (i) the role of forest rangers in special-use forests and protection forest management boards as defined by Decree

All the rest is cleared, thank you.

JS 2/28/2022-

1- Please correct the incomplete sentence in the opening paragraph:

The long-term goal of the project is to establish a comprehensive and integrated landscape planning and management framework to mainstream land and natural resource management and biodiversity conservation objectives into forest management and sub-national and sector socio-economic development and community resource management within key biodiversity landscapes in the Ba River basin. Its objective is to operationalize integrated landscape management of forested landscapes to generate multiple benefits including. The project will be implemented over a 4-year period based on the following principles:

2- Training and capacity building: for all trainings and capacity building planned in the project, please clarify the trainees (number and stakeholder categories) and anticipated trainers, and the strategy put in place to institutionalize / replicate the training beyond the project's lifetime. Please notably:

2.a. (output 1.3) clarify in the portal entry how the training and capacity-building on enhanced spatial tools and effective data collection, verification, monitoring and management, and benefits of conservation-planning will be institutionalized and replicated.

2b: (output 1.4) Same question as for output 1.3 on the training on monitoring, surveillance and enforcement planned under 1.4.

2c: Please also clarify how the trainings (output 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3), which all include training on monitoring and/or enforcement, differ (content, targeted trainees, anticipated trainer).

3- livelihood interventions:

3a - The link between livelihood interventions and environmental benefits is not automatic (see e.g. Roe, Dilys, et al. "Are alternative livelihood projects effective at reducing local threats to specified elements of biodiversity and/or improving or maintaining the conservation status of those elements?." Environmental Evidence 4.1 (2015): 22; or the USAID analysis [https://rmportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway/projects/closed-global-projects/measuring-impact/mi-project-resources/integrating-livelihood-and-conservation-goals-a-retrospective-analysis-of-world-bank-projects/at\\_download/file?subsite=biodiversityconservation-gateway](https://rmportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway/projects/closed-global-projects/measuring-impact/mi-project-resources/integrating-livelihood-and-conservation-goals-a-retrospective-analysis-of-world-bank-projects/at_download/file?subsite=biodiversityconservation-gateway)). Please thus clarify the strategy or criteria that will be put in place to ensure that the GEF incremental funding on the livelihood interventions of outputs 2.4 and 2.5 does contribute to the generation of global environmental benefits.

3b: the CER states that the project will deliver small grants for the livelihood interventions but the corresponding financial amount is not clearly identified in the budget and the delivery mechanism is not explained. Please clarify the budget, how these grants will be delivered in practice to ensure transparency, fairness and adequate fiduciary standards (what partner on the ground? Competitive process?).

4- Output 2.5: Please clarify why the gender analysis related to livelihoods was not carried out during PPG.

5- output 2.6: Please note that several assessments of the PFES mechanism already exist (e.g., *Tr?dal, Leif Tore, P?l Olav Vedeld, and J?n Geir P?tursson. "Analyzing the transformations of forest PES in Vietnam: Implications for REDD+." Forest Policy and Economics 62 (2016): 109-11; CIFOR's infobrief No. 222, 2018, DOI: 10.17528/cifor/006958*) and it is unclear how what is proposed would respond to the main limitations already identified. In particular, clarify how the project will contribute to better link financial incentives to the actual delivery of environmental benefits: how will it introduce performance-based payments in practice? Will it use the enhanced monitoring systems developed under component 1?

6- See comment on outcome 3 and output 3.1 in the second comment box of this review sheet.

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

1. This paragraph has been updated. Please refer to Section 3) of GEF CEO ER (page 16).
2. In terms of 2a (Output 1.3) and 2b (Output 1.4) all Forest Management Units (FMUs) are required to undertake annual planning for management of the forest, including monitoring the forest condition, enforcing regulations and reporting to provincial Forest Protection Department and DARD. The GEF project is aimed at supporting the FMUs (and their staff) to build capacity, tools and procedures to improve planning, management, monitoring and enforcement. In this regard the project intends to train around 80 provincial/district forestry staff and forest. The project will work with MARDs? Forestry University of Vietnam (FUV) and recruit a national consultant/institution to support in the development of curriculum, training materials and deliver on the training. The intent is use this opportunity for the training of trainers within FUV and using the training curriculum and training materials developed under the project to help institutionalize the training within FUV to promote its use in other provinces within the country. For 2a and 2b please refer to Outputs 1.3 and 1.4 of GEF CEO ER (pages 22-23).

In terms of 2c (Output 2.1) forest owners need to monitor and report on their HCVFs. AS explained under Outputs 1.3 and 1.4, the same procedures will be followed in development of curriculum, training materials and undertaking the training in coordination with MARD's FUV and institutionalize the training via promotion of TOTs and replication of training in other provinces as well. At least 60 provincial/district forestry staff, and rangers, PA staff, forest owners and community members will attend training or having their capacity improved on monitoring.

In terms of Output 2.2, PAs and Protection Forest FMUs need to assess and then plan appropriate measures to manage and reduce threats, improve recovery of threatened species, biodiversity and threatened habitat. The project will provide technical support include training to ensure that relevant stakeholders in the project landscape have capacity and skills to do necessary assessment and evaluation and plan to improve management and recovery of threatened species and habitats. Training curriculum will be developed and training material prepared, printed as standard capacity building material that will be used in the 2 provinces to train staff on biodiversity survey techniques and key/flagship species monitoring and mapping. As discussed in the previous outputs professional trainers will be hired to provide training for PA's conservation staff, FMU's staff and involved communities. At least 30 provincial/district forestry staff, and ranger, PA staff, forest owners and community members will attend training or having their capacity improved on biodiversity survey techniques and key/flagship species monitoring. The training will be institutionalized within MARD's FUV as discussed earlier

In terms of Output 2.3 improving PA management capacity is a national priority. The project will provide technical support, including training on using new and effective tool such as the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) for Biodiversity Conservation to ensure that PA's staff and local community have capacity and skills to effectively manage the existing protected areas and high biodiversity areas within the Ba River basin. Curriculum will be developed, training material prepared and training conducted in the 2 provinces and later institutionalized through MARD's FUV. At least 30 provincial/district forestry staff, and ranger. PA's staff, staff of forest owners and community members will attend training on using SMART tool for conservation. Please refer to Outcome 2, Outputs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) of GEF CEOER (Pages 23-26).

### 3. Livelihood Interventions:

3a: See Outputs 2.4 and 2.5 in GEF CEO ER (pages 26-28) that provides (now substantially updated) criteria for selection of communes and activities to ensure links to GEBs. Please refer to 3a. The criteria for GEF incremental funding is presented under Output 2.4 (and relevant to 2.5) in GEF CEO ER pages 26-28).

3b: The reference to "small grants" in Output 2.5 was a mistake which has now been removed. While provision for small grants to communities might be desirable, the capacity at the provincial level is limited to oversee it. To deliver on the community livelihood activities, the project will work through a reputed institution (NGO or firm) with proven track record (and selected through UNDP's competitive procurement process) to work with local communities to implement this activity. Please refer to Output 2.5 (reference to "small grants" removed (page 28)

4. Output 2.5: In addition to the gender analysis carried out for the project (Annex 10), a livelihood assessment was also carried out (Annex 18), the latter providing information on labor division between men and women related to specific livelihoods. The intent at project implementation under Output 2.5 is to undertake a deeper analysis at the commune levels (as it might vary depending on the specific communities, types of livelihoods and other social conditions in terms of (i) access to, and control of livelihood assets of men and women (related to land, credit, etc.); (ii) nature of livelihood strategies employed by men and women (agriculture,

fisheries, grazing, etc.); (iii) livelihood outcomes/benefits that might be specific to men and women; (iv) specific local institutions that might be appropriate to support livelihoods (e.g. Women's Unions, Farmer Unions, Agricultural Extension centers, credit programs, training available, etc. and (v) external factors affect vulnerability of livelihood activities by men and women, e.g. shocks, trends, seasonality, weather and climate risks, ?; (vi) opportunities and challenges of men and women in livelihood activities; (vii) participation of men and women in decision making at different authority levels involved in livelihood activities. Detailed gender analysis related to livelihoods in the project implementation period will serve as a solid foundation to develop appropriate livelihood interventions and design tailor-made technical trainings to support livelihood development at the commune levels for both men and women.

5. Output 2.6. The project recognizes that the payment for forest ecosystem services (PFES) program that is deployed in Ba River basin, has been not very effective in its application on the ground in that there is insufficient monitoring to properly link provision of ecosystem services with payments to communities in the absence of monitoring protocols and capacity among the community and forest managers. The project is aimed at providing tools and training to improve planning and monitoring of forest and the introduction of SFM plans and its monitoring that will be further strengthened by ensuring capacity and skills to ensure compliance with PFES policy and guidelines, improving clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities for PFES implementation and its management and monitoring as well as improved PFES fund management and distribution, ensure livelihood programs supported by PFES are linked conservation actions etc. To support this the project aims to improve forest inventory and data on forest area and quality; simplifying cumbersome administrative procedures for PFES implementation and financial; evaluating potential for combining PFES with other forestry and economic support programs to direct adequate levels of funding for forest protection; improving and promoting more safer, quick and transparent processes of transfer of PFES funds to households and communities through e-payment through service providers (banks, post office or Viettel) and investigating options for combining direct cash payments alongside non-monetary benefits to improve uptake, etc.
6. Output 3.1 Please refer response to GEF Review Question 1 regarding Output 3.1 above

**UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:**

This is a GEF Portal issue, which should be now corrected.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 7/22/2022 - Cleared.

JS 6/2/2022- Please accept apologies for the typo in the previous comment. The request should have read remove the development on BD-2-6 *Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species through the prevention, control and management of Invasive Alien Species (IAS)*, as this project does not deal with IAS in a way that is aligned with the GEF-7 BD strategy.

However, please include back an elaboration on the alignment with BD-2-7 *Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability*,

effective management and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate, with which the project is aligned.

JS 2/28/2022- Please remove reference to BD 2-6 Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate.

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

Reference to BD 2-7 is now removed from GEF CEO ER Table 1 and Section 4 (page 33).

#### UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:

As requested, BD 2-6 is removed, and BD 2-7 is added back in the CER. Please refer to Table A and page 34 for description.

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

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 6/2/2022 - Cleared.

JS 2/28/2022- The elaboration is very generic in this section of the portal entry but well complemented by table 1.

1- Please elaborate (here or in the table 1 "Global Biodiversity Benefits") on the contribution of co-financing, in particular of the KfW investments. The elaboration should make clearer the GEF increment above co-financing, and clarify the role of co-financing on the livelihood interventions.

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

This section has been updated to provide GEBs from the GEF investment and the co-financing, the latter mainly from KfW financing. Please refer Section 5 of GEFCEO ER (Page 33-34)

**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

JS 6/2/2022 - Cleared.

JS 2/28/2022- Please see previous comment box.

## 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

JS 8/4/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 7/22/2022 - Thank you but the stakeholder engagement plan (annex 7) referred to in the response is the original one (dating from February) and not the updated one with further information on the institutionalization of training and furthermore information on key players, measures for their engagement etc. Please provided the updated annex that was announced in May.

JS 6/2/2022

1- Thank you, but we failed to locate the updated stakeholder engagement plan (annex 7) announced in the response. Please provide it in the next submission.

2- Cleared, thank you.

JS 2/28/2022-

1- Sustainability and replication of training / capacity building: Please see comments 3 and 4 on the alternative scenario. Please provide clearer plans to both institutionalize and replicate/upscale the training / capacity building the project will develop to ensure these efforts will be sustained beyond the project's lifetime and beyond the project's targeted boundaries. The budget shows a strong reliance on consultancy and contracted companies and the stakeholder engagement plan does not identify the institutions that would directly internalize or carry over the project's training / capacity building. The project could for example leverage existing extension services and/or target governmental agencies at a higher hierarchical level to this end (e.g. training of trainers).

2- Scaling-up: Plans to replicate within the Ba River Basin are well noted, but please see comment on outcome 3 and output 3.1 in the second comment box of this review sheet. The national policy output included in the approved PIF and removed in the CER was a key element for up-scaling of this otherwise very small scale project. Please reintroduce it and elaborate more precisely in this section on how the project will influence national policy.

Please note that the elaboration on scaling-up still includes "targeted policy and regulatory improvements will strengthen prevention and enforcement of forest offences across Viet Nam" that was present at PIF stage, when we understand policy and regulatory improvements have been removed from the project.

Agency Response  
UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

1. In terms of sustainability of replication of training/capacity building it is envisaged that the Institute of Forest Ecology and Environment (IFEE) of the Vietnam National University of Forestry (VNUF) that is affiliated with MARD will be directly involved with the training activities of the project. The project will provide technical consultancy support to work closely with IFEE to develop curriculum, training materials and initiate the training with the agreement that the training will be institutionalized within VNUF to enable sustainability and for the replication of training in other provinces. Through this process it is expected to train and upgrade skills of IFEE trainers who will subsequently have capacity to deliver on the training. Please refer to GEF CEO ER Outputs 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 (pages 22-26) and Section 7 (Page 36) and UNDP Project Document Annex 7.

2. As presented in response to Question 1 above regarding Output 3.1 (and supplemented by response to Part I Question 2 earlier in the response matrix), the project's focus on policy-related support is aimed at providing learning and guidance for the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of specific aspects related to SFM, PFES and provision of non-business support from Forest Protection and PA management boards that can be replicated nationally in keeping with the forest and planning policies. Please refer to GEFCEO ER Section 7 (page 36-38)?Innovation, Sustainability and Scaling Up? for adjustment.

**UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:**

This is a GEF Portal issue, which should be now corrected. Annex 7 had been uploaded.

Document Title	Category	Prefix	Classification	Last Modified Date	Published
<a href="#">PIMS 5887 Annex 7 Stakeholder Engagement Plan</a>	Project Document	Annexes/appendices to the project documents	Public	<u>2/9/2022 5:14 PM</u>	
<a href="#">PIMS 5887 Annex 9 PPG Co</a>	Project	Annexes/appendix	Public	2/9/2022 5:13	

**UNDP Response 2 August 2022:**

Annex 7 Stakeholder Engagement Plan dated May is uploaded to the portal.

**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

JS 2/28/2022- 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  
JS 8/4/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 7/22/2022 - Thank you but the stakeholder engagement plan (annex 7) referred to in the response is the original one (dating from February) and not the updated one with further information on the institutionalization of training and furthermore information on key players, measures for their engagement etc. Please provided the updated annex that was announced in May.

JS 6/2/2022

1- Thank you, but we failed to locate the updated stakeholder engagement plan (annex 7) announced in the response. Please provide it with the next resubmission.

2- Cleared.

JS 2/28/2022- We note annex 7 and 9.

1- The stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) remains very generic and, for many stakeholders, only identifies broad categories to engage with. It is in particular the case for CSOs, NGOs, academia, private sector, local communities, or other donor agencies where there is no detailed mapping, no specific analysis of who the key players are and

no plans provided for how the project intends to engage with these specific key players. Please revise and provide a more precise and strategic SEP.

2- Please tick the boxes in the portal entry:

## 2. Stakeholders ⓘ

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Civil Society Organizations ⓘ

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities ⓘ

Private Sector Entities

If none of the above, please explain why:

3- Civil society is tagged as co-financier when no corresponding co-financing is reported in table C. Please correct:

Select what role **civil society will play in the project:**

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

**Co-financier; Yes**

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body; Yes

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain)

Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

1. The SEP has been substantially updated to provide more information on key players, measures for their engagement etc. Please refer to Updated Annex 7 of UNDP Project Document
2. The appropriate boxes are ticked in the GEFCEO ER. Please refer to Section 2 of GEF CEO ER.

**UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:**

**This is a GEF Portal issue, which should be now corrected. Annex 7 had been uploaded.**

Document Title	Category	Prefix	Classification	Last Modified Date	Published
<a href="#">PIMS 5887 Annex 7 Stakeholder Engagement Plan</a>	Project Document	Annexes/appendices to the project documents	Public	2/9/2022 5:14 PM	
<a href="#">PIMS 5887 Annex 9 PPG Co</a>	Project	Annexes/appendix	Public	2/9/2022 5:13	

#### 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

JS 2/28/2022- Cleared. We note annex 10.

#### 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

JS 6/2/2022 - Cleared.

JS 2/28/2022- This section remains very generic at CER stage. Please see comment on the stakeholder engagement plan and refine the analysis of private sector stakeholders to be engaged by the project. For instance, if the project is indeed to pilot the expansion of PFES to the sectors of "industrial producers", tourism, or aquaculture as suggested in output 2.7, what are the key actors to engage in the process.

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

This section has been substantially revised to provide discussion of the role of the private sector. Please refer to Section 4 of the GEF CEO ER and Annex 7 (SEP) of UNDP Project Document.

## **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

JS 2/28/2022- Cleared. We note the COVID and climate risks analyses provided as annexes 16 and 17.

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

JS 2/28/2022- Cleared, noting the additional provided in the ProDoc, section VII.

Agency Response

**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

JS 2/28/2022- 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

JS 2/28/2022- Cleared, noting that the workplan in annex 3 provides a timeline for the deliverables.

## 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

JS 6/2/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 2/28/2022- We note the project is rated as High/substantial risk and a Social and Environmental Screening Template is provided as annex 4.

1- The Risk register of the CER mentions that a Indigenous People framework was prepared but we failed to locate it. Please upload it with the next submission.

2- Likewise, we failed to locate the Ethnic Minorities Planning Framework (announced as annex 11), the grievance redress mechanism for the project (announced Section 6.2 of Annex 10 but annex 10 is the gender plan with no section 6.2), the ESMF (announced as annex 10). Please provide these documents upon resubmission.

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

The Social and Environmental Risk Management Package is currently under internal review by the UNDP's safeguards team and the draft version for these files are included in the resubmission. Also please note that the Annex number have changes as follows:

Annex 8. Social and Environmental Risk Management Package. The package include:

- a. Draft Environmental Social Management Framework (ESMF)
- b. Draft Ethnic Minority Planning Framework (EMPF)
- c. Draft Process Framework

## 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

JS 6/2/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 2/28/2022-

1- Indicator 9 "Status of key species diversity in existing and proposed PAs" is unclear. Is the idea to measure species richness in a wide range of families? If so, please :

- confirm that such comprehensive surveys are already routinely carried out in the target sites, there is already enough past data to estimate the natural variation and sampling error for this indicator, and evidence that this indicator would be able to measure any impact from the project over only 4 years;

- reformulate the name of the indicator to reflect what it will measure;

-remove the assumptions related to *population* monitoring as this would involve only presence/absence not abundance data.

Agency Response

**UNDP Response, 26 May 2022**

In terms of Indicator 9 the intent is to monitor the key species diversity in a range of taxa. The indicator is thus changed to reflect this:  
?Status of native species diversity in selected taxa?

The current baseline was developed in 2020/2021 as part of the requirement under Decree No. 06/2019 Management of endangered, precious and rare species of forest fauna and flora, with the requirement that it be undertaken within a period of 5 years (which likely be 2025/2026 before the closure of the GEF project)

Reference of ?population monitoring? removed from Monitoring Plan and replaced by presence/absence of key species/taxa

Please refer to Indicator 9 in Annex A (PRF) of GEF CEOER and Section VI ?Monitoring and Evaluation? in particular Table on Monitoring Plan in UNDP Project Document

**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

JS 6/2/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 2/28/2022- Please be more specific on the socio-economic benefits in this section, as the project has specific targets on income increase and will directly contribute to income diversification.

Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

The socio-economic benefits are further elaborated. Please refer to Refer Section 10 of GEF CEO ER (Page 60-61).

**Annexes**

**Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 8/26/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 8/13/2022

1-According to the Budget, UNDP is carrying out some executing functions when the Checklist states that this project will follow the NIM Modality, there is no letter of support signed by the OFP for execution by the Agency, and the Institutional arrangements do not mention any execution by the Agency. Please correct the budget or consult the GEF Secretariat if there are indeed plans for some project execution by UNDP.

ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (US\$eq.)						Total (US\$eq.)	Responsible Entity (Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		
Local Consultants	Local consultants - \$107,520(a) To conduct training of forest managers on integrating conservation and SFM outcomes in forest plans and management – 120 days at \$192/day = \$23,040 (Output 3.1)(b) To document and support development of best practices and establishment of website and social media platforms – 3 national consultants – 175 days total at \$192/day = \$33,600 (Output 3.2)(c) Gender safeguard consultant – 60 days at \$192/day = \$11,520 (Output 3.3)(d) Preparation of targeted ESMIP, IPP, SESA and Targeted ESIA – 115 days at \$192/day = \$22,080 (Output 3.3)(e) Monitoring and evaluation support – 20 days at \$192/day = \$3,840 (Output 3.4)(f) Consultant for inception, MTR and TE – 70 days at \$192/day = \$13,440 (Output 3.4)				-	17,280		17,280	UNDP
Travel	Travel – \$52,385 - Travel covers national consultants to visit PMUs and PAs in relation to implementation of communication, training of forest managers, monitoring, gender and safeguard oversight and MTR and TE evaluations					22,385		22,385	UNDP

2- Mid-term and Terminal Evaluation must be charged to M&E. Please correct the budget:

ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (US\$eq.)						Total (US\$eq.)	Responsible Entity (Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		
International Consultants	International Consultants - \$39,000(a) Development of communication and knowledge sharing best practices – 20 days at \$600/day = \$12,000 (Output 3.2)(b) Mid-term (15 days) and terminal evaluations (15 days) at \$600/day = \$18,000 (Output 3.4)(c) Establishment of monitoring framework for project monitoring – 15 days at \$600/day - \$9,000 (Output 3.4)			12,000	12,000			12,000	MARD

JS 2/28/2022-The audit template submitted with this endorsement request has been reviewed and cleared from a technical and programmatic perspective. The financial, operational, and policy due diligence may reveal issues that may still need to be addressed by UNDP.

1- budget : only \$80,915 is planned to cover part of the PMU staff cost. Please confirm that the rest of the cost associated with the PMU are covered by co-finance.

Agency Response

UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

This is confirmed by the executing entity.

Agency Response

**UNDP Response 17 August 2022**

1-In the ?Responsible Entity? column, only line items where UNDP is listed as ?Responsible Entity? are for M&E consultants, and the audit services. This is to ensure that project-level monitoring and evaluation are conducted in compliance with the UNDP requirement as per established policies and procedures including compliance with GEF-specific M&E requirements, and ensure independent and impartial, UNDP will responsible for hiring of independent MTR and TE consultants (or companies) instead of Executing Entity. For Audit, per UNDP rules, financial audit must be conducted in accordance with UNDP Audit policies and Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) procedures for projects under NIM modality. These apply to all UNDP offices that transfer cash to non-UN implementing partners for implementation of UNDP development projects. An independent financial auditor (or company) is engaged to carry out the financial audit of the project. It is not the project executing agency. Other than these items, UNDP will not be involved in any execution of the project. ?Travel? is moved to MARD as the responsible entity. Please see screenshot below where the changes are highlighted in orange.

Local Consultants	Local consultants - \$17,280 (a) Monitoring and evaluation support - 20 days at \$192/day = \$3,840 (Output 3.4)(f) Consultant for inception, MTR and TE - 70 days at \$192/day = \$13,440 (Output 3.4)							-	17,280		17,280	UNDP
International Consultants	International Consultants - \$27,000(a) Mid-term (15 days) and terminal evaluations (15 days) at \$600/day = \$18,000 (Output 3.4)(b) Establishment of monitoring framework for project monitoring - 15 days at \$600/day - \$9,000 (Output 3.4)							-	27,000		27,000	UNDP
Other Operating Costs	Professional services - \$23,000 - Project Assurance Activity (Micro assessment, audits, spot checks) at \$5,750/year							-		23,000	23,000	UNDP
Travel	Travel - \$22,385 - Travel covers national consultants to visit PMUs and PAs in relation to implementation of communication, training of forest managers, monitoring, gender and safeguard oversight and MTR and TE evaluations								22,385		22,385	MARD

2-The was an error in the budget notes. The issue is not because of the IC budget allocations entries in the component columns. To clarify, \$12,000 allocation for the KM and Communications is under Component 3 and \$27,000 for IC completing M&E (i.e. MTR, TE and establishing monitoring framework) activities is under the M&E column. These are clarified in the revised table by correcting the error in the budget notes. There are no changes on the budget allocations as a result of these revisions. Please see screenshot below where the changes are highlighted in orange.

International Consultants	International Consultants - (a) Development of communication and knowledge sharing best practices - 20 days at \$600/day = \$12,000 (Output 3.2)							12,000	12,000			12,000
International Consultants	International Consultants - \$27,000(a) Mid-term (15 days) and terminal evaluations (15 days) at \$600/day = \$18,000 (Output 3.4)(b) Establishment of monitoring framework for project monitoring - 15 days at \$600/day - \$9,000 (Output 3.4)							-	27,000			27,000

**Project Results Framework**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
 JS 8/26/2022 - Cleared.

JS 8/13/2022- The Results Framework Table is slightly off margins. Please correct:

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

This project will contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goal (s): SDG 15 Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss				
This project will contribute to the following country outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPDI, GPD): Outcome 2 - People in Viet Nam, especially those at risk of being left behind, will benefit from, and contribute to safer and cleaner environment resulting from Viet Nam's effective mitigation and adaptation to climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience building, promotion of circular economy, the provision of clean and renewable energy, and the sustainable management of natural resources.				
	<b>Objective and Outcome Indicators</b> (no more than a total of 20 indicators)	<b>Baseline<sup>[1]</sup></b> <i>Must be determined during PPO phase</i>	<b>Mid-term Target<sup>[2]</sup></b> <i>Expected level of progress before MTR process starts</i>	<b>End of Project Target</b> <i>Expected level when terminal evaluation undertaken</i>
<b>Project Objective:</b>  To conserve forest biodiversity and maintain or improve the flow of ecosystem services through sustainable forest management embedded in a coordinated landscape-level approach across Ba River basin	<b>Mandatory Indicator 1:</b> Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (GEE Core Indicator 1.1)	0	1,000 individuals (500 women)  <i>Note:</i> At least 1,000 individuals, directly benefit through sustainable forest resource management, sustainable use of NTFPs and livelihood improvement approaches (at least 500 women and 500 men beneficiaries, of which at 30% represent IPs)	3,000 individuals (1,500 women)  <i>Note:</i> At least 3,000 individuals, directly benefit through sustainable forest resource management, sustainable use of NTFPs and livelihood improvement approaches (at least 1,500 women and 1,500 men beneficiaries, of which at 30% represent IPs)
	<b>Mandatory Indicator 2:</b> Number of hectares of Terrestrial Protected Area expanded or under improved management effectiveness. Improved management effectiveness measured by improvement in METT in selected PAs, namely, Kon Ka Kinh National Park, Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve, and Krong Rai Nature Reserve.	<i>PA expanded: 0 HA</i> <i>PA brought under improved management: 0 HA</i>  <i>Existing PAs METT baselines:</i> <i>Kon Ka Kinh National Park - 48</i> <i>Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve - 4</i> <i>Krong Rai Nature Reserve - 35</i>	<i>(i) PA expanded: 0 HA</i> <i>(ii) PA brought under improved management: 0 HA</i>  <i>(At least a 10- point average increase in METT scores from baseline)</i> <i>Kon Ka Kinh National Park - 38</i> <i>Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve - 5</i> <i>4</i>	<i>(i) PA expanded: 10,000 HA</i> <i>(ii) PA brought under improved management: 71,106 HA</i>  <i>(At least a 25- point average increase in METT scores from baseline)</i> <i>Kon Ka Kinh National Park - 79</i> <i>Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve - 9</i>

JS 7/22/2022 - Cleared on content.

JS 6/2/2022 -

1- This comment has not been addressed in this resubmission. Please see question remaining question on core indicator 4 in the review comment box related to table F.

2- Cleared, thank you.

JS 2/28/2022-

1- See question on core indicator 4.4 in the comment box related to core indicators. The results framework states that there is a target of 56,658 ha on core indicator 4.4 when table F has 0. If there is indeed a target on core indicator 4.4 please clarify how it was set, in particular noting the HCVF criteria and the need for baseline deforestation estimates, and how it will be monitored. In any cases make sure table F and the results framework are aligned.

2- Please consider adding an indicator to assess the impact of output 2.7 related to incentive mechanisms.

#### Agency Response

##### UNDP Response, 26 May 2022

1. This is clarified above (Number 7 regarding core indicators. Please refer to GEF CEO ER Table E notes, Annex A (PFR) and Annex F (GEF Core Indicator worksheet)
2. A new indicator has been added to cover output 2.7. Please refer to Refer Annex A of GEF CEO ER.

##### UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:

Core Indicator 4.4 does not include any ha. Core Indicator worksheet, the GHG estimates, and applicable text and tables are also revised. Refer Table E and Annexes A F and I of GEF CEO ER

##### Agency Response

##### UNDP Response 17 August 2022

Corrected in the portal

##### GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request JS 2/28/2022- Comments that were not addressed during PPG were included in relevant boxes of this review sheet.

#### Agency Response

##### Agency Response

##### UNDP Response 17 August 2022

Corrected in the portal

##### Council comments

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 8/4/2022 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 7/22/2022 - 1& 2 - Responses to Norway and Germany have still not been updated in the portal entry. They are the same as in the version commented on in February, so that the comments below still need to be addressed. Please correct.

JS 6/2/2022 -

1& 2 - Responses to Norway and Germany do not seem have been updated in the portal entry. Please correct.

JS 2/28/2022-

1- The question from Norway on private sector engagement has not been satisfactorily addressed. The answer remains very generic at CER stage. Please see comment on private sector engagement further up in this review sheet. Please also provide the ESMF and IP framework in the next submission to fully respond to the comment on IPLCs.

2- The comments from Germany has not been adequately addressed. They are not the same as the one from France. The German question relates to the project strategy to ensure financial and institutional sustainability of the multi-stakeholder platforms, integration of biodiversity in planning through spatial-explicit tools, and participatory biodiversity and forest resource monitoring and inventory. Please provide a proper response.

#### Agency Response

##### **UNDP Response, 26 May 2022**

Noted and addressed according to the comments provided in this review sheet.

##### **UNDP Response, 2 July 2022:**

This is a GEF Portal issue, which should be now corrected. Response is uploaded again.

##### **UNDP Response 2 August 2022:**

Responses are revised and uploaded again. Please refer to CEO ER page 49 and pages 79 to 82.

#### **STAP comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request JS 2/28/2022-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 JS 2/28/2022-Cleared.

Agency Response  
**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request JS 2/28/2022-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 NA

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 9/30/2022- Yes the project is recommended for endorsement.

JS 9/29/2022 - Not at this stage. Please address the remaining comment on the PPG expense report and resubmit.

JS 8/13/2022 - Not at this stage. Please address the few remaining comments (PPG spending report, Project justification/formatting issue, Annex/budget, Results framework/formatting issue ) in this review sheet and resubmit.

JS 7/22/2022- Not at this stage. Please address the few remaining comments in this review sheet and resubmit.

JS 6/2/2022- Not at this stage. Please address the few remaining comments in this review sheet and resubmit.

JS 2/28/2022- Not at this stage. Please address the comments in this review sheet and resubmit.

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>2/28/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>6/2/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>7/22/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>8/4/2022</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>8/13/2022</b>	

**CEO Recommendation**

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

More Color