

Collaborative platform for African nature-based tourism enterprises, conservation areas and local communities – a response to COVID-19

Basic Information

GEF ID

10625

Countries

Regional

Project Title

Collaborative platform for African nature-based tourism enterprises, conservation areas and local communities – a response to COVID-19

GEF Agency(ies)

WWF-US

Agency ID

WWF-US: G0035

GEF Focal Area(s)

Biodiversity

Program Manager

Hannah Fairbank

PIF

Part I – Project Informatic

Focal area elements

1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Yes. BD-1-1 Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through biodiversity mainstreaming in priority sectors.

Cleared

Agency Response

Indicative project/program description summary

2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

While the overall structure of the project is adequate, the description of the components, outcomes and outputs could be made easier to understand by avoiding terms and expressions that are not widely used outside of the Conservation Community. The description of what is being proposed should be made in such a way that is easy to understand, SPECIALLY by the potential users and beneficiaries of the outputs of the project.

Objective. Please make the objective clearer and easier to understand. The objective is meant to be very tangible and unequivocal. If the objective is to facilitate access of funding opportunities to nature-based tourism enterprises, conservation areas and beneficiary communities, please say so.

Outcome 1.1. 1.1 If the outcome is an "*An online data clearing house*" how are marginalized local communities will have access to it in places where there is no access to internet?

Output 1.1.1. a) Remove the word "prospective" (the project should provide actual not potentials); b) Create a separate output for "COVID-19 emergency relief and stimulus packages (opportunities?) available to help address these impacts profiled".

Output 1.1.2. Not sure what the following means "*for the nature-based tourism sector-community interface is designed, developed, populated, hosted and maintained*". Use easier to understand language that is more in line with the language of the Outcome. Make it simple and easier to understand for everybody. Please consider that the MSP will be posted at the GEF web site and thus, in the public domain. In the text, determine (as appropriate) the name of the institutions that will host and maintain the web site (and for how long).

Outcome 2.1. Replace the word "streamlined" for one that is easier to understand to all the readers of the MSP, including the members of the local communities.

Output 2.1. What are "*collaborative forums*"? Please be specific. What forums?

Output 2.1.2. Same as above with "*Targeted facilitation support*".

Output 2.1.3 What does it mean to "*leverage*" in the context of identifying new finding opportunities to help further augment existing COVID-19"?

Output 3.1.1. What does this mean? 3.1.1 *Analysis of nature-based tourism and conservation dependencies and development of convincing case for investments in nature-based tourism and conservation as part of economic relief and stimulus packages?* Please use easier to understand language. Not sure what the output really is.

Output 3.1.2 What "shocks" ? In "*anticipation of ongoing and future shocks*"

7-6-20

Cleared

Agency Response

7-01-20

Noted. Language has been adjusted accordingly throughout the PIF, including in table B.

Objective wording revised to read “To facilitate access to COVID-19 crisis funding by nature-based tourism enterprises, conservation areas and beneficiary communities in southern and eastern Africa”.

In-country partners, such as national level CBNRM Networks (e.g. KWCA, NACSO, Zambia CBNRM Forum, Mozambique CBNRM Network), and some smaller, less-developed national-level networks in Botswana, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe and, if needed, local on-the-ground conservation partner offices (TNC, WCS, CI, IUCN) will be mobilized and will receive resources for on the ground outreach and consultation and to support data collection on financial needs as part of Component 2. At the sub-national level, these national level players would work with individual conservancies with less capacity or Conservancy Associations within country. At the regional level identified partners (Maliasili, working deeply in both Eastern and Southern Africa) and Resource Africa (focused on Southern Africa) work at the ground level with marginalized communities.

Removed “prospective” and added Output 1.1.2 on COVID-19 emergency relief and stimulus packages available to help address impacts are profiled

Output 1.1.2 (now 1.1.3) wording revised to read “An online COVID-19 data clearinghouse (architecture; hardware; software development; data management; data analysis; hosting; online technical support” is designed, developed, populated and maintained”.

The Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) has been identified as the host institution for the data clearinghouse (footnote 11). The Centre, owned by a group of SADC and EAC member states, has been operating for approximately 40 years, demonstrating ownership and sustainability. Initially, the data clearinghouse would be hosted during the lifetime of the GEF project. If the data continues to be of use to stakeholders, the clearinghouse could be maintained through service provision agreements.

Outcome 2.1. language revised to read “Improved communications, cooperation and collaboration between funding institutions/ donors/potential donors and nature-based tourism businesses and beneficiary communities leads to the growth and well targeted distribution of COVID-19 emergency relief and stimulus packages”.

Output 2.1.1 language revised to read “Regular (virtual and in-person) communications with, and discussions between, COVID-19 financial support organizations and the nature-based tourism sector are organized, hosted and maintained”.

Output 2.1.2. language revised to read “Specialist support to help match COVID-19 funding opportunities to affected tourism enterprises and marginalized rural communities is provided”.

Output 2.1.3. language revised to read “New funding sources to further assist nature-based tourism businesses and associated communities address the impacts of COVID-19 are identified and developed”.

Output 3.1.1 (and 3.1.2) moved to C2 to be complementary outputs under new outcome 2.2. "Improved integration of tourism and wildlife sustainable future pathways in investment decisions by Governments and Finance Institutions". Outputs under this outcome include 2.2.1 "Analysis of nature-based tourism and conservation dependencies and development of convincing case for investments in nature-based tourism and conservation as part of economic relief and stimulus packages," and 2.2.2 "Engagement with key financing institutions and donors related to their economic stimulus/investment packages and with policy-makers in relation to Government-led economic stimulus focus."

Co-financing

3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Co-financing in the amount of \$4.5 million with \$ 3.7 million in Investment Mobilized and \$0.8 million in Recurrent Expenditures.

7-10-20

Mava Foundation Grant should be considered investment mobilized and please clarify if this is the same as the BAND foundation as referred in the explanation of Investment Mobilized

Donor Agency	Mava Foundation	Grant	Recurrent expenditures	400,000
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Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

WWF investment mobilised was identified from new support to recovery from COVID-19 impacts on community-driven nature based tourism in conservancies in Namibia, from foundations including BAND Foundation. UNDP investment support was provided through the Lion's Share COVID-19

Cleared

I.

Agency Response

7-10-20

Noted. MAVA Foundation grant changed to investment mobilized and clarified in paragraph below co-financing table. MAVA Foundation and BAND Foundation are different sources. BAND Foundation grants are included under WWF-US investment mobilized grants.

GEF Resource Availability

4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

7-6-20

Cleared

Agency Response

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

To be funded by the BD Set Aside.

Cleared

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

Project Preparation Grant

5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

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6-27-20

PPG is \$50,000 and within the limits for MSPs up to \$50K.

Cleared

Agency Response

Core indicators

6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

7-10-20

Submit estimate only for indicator 11.

Project approach and components are focused around establishing a clearing house mechanism and technical assistance. Since GEF core indicators are designed to capture direct outputs and outcomes of GEF investments using the core indicator 4 is not appropriate for this project.

Cleared

1.

Agency Response

7-10-20

Noted. Core Indicator 4 removed.

Project/Program taxonomy

7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

art II – Project Justification

1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Very clear and tangible baseline scenario.

Cleared

Agency Response

3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

5. Is the incremental / additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

This is a very innovative project that has the potential of being scaled-up. Not clear about the sustainability. Please elaborate on what

7-6-20

Cleared

Agency Response

7-01-20

Sustainability section revised (pg. 15) to include built-in sustainability of project given use of and interface with existing platforms and structures, as well as financial support given to existing operators and communities on-ground. The project will also promote sustainability by fostering the creation of more resilient and sustainable tourism and conservation solutions by encouraging a re-think of the current model. Although the project was developed as a short-term and immediate response to the COVID-19 crisis, given that a large part of the strategy is to work through existing mechanisms and networks, if stakeholders find value in continuing the platform/clearinghouse beyond the lifetime of the GEF project/crisis response, efforts will be made to ensure their continued existence.

Project/Program Map and Coordinates

Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Suggest including Rwanda and Burundi.

7-6-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Agency Response

7-01-20

Rwanda has been included (see revised map). For the time being, Burundi has not been included as it is not considered to have large investment in nature-based tourism.

Stakeholders

Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Cleared

Agency Response

Private Sector Engagement

Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Coordination

Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined?
Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

NA

Agency Response

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed “knowledge management (KM) approach” in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project’s/program’s overall impact and sustainability?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

Cleared

Agency Response

art III – Country Endorsements

Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

N/A

Agency Response

Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects

Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

NA

Agency Response

EFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

6-27-20

No. Please address outstanding issues as described above.

7-10-20

Yes. This PIF is recommended.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	6/27/2020	7/1/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	7/6/2020	7/10/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	7/10/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval

CONTEXT: Tourism has been one of the leading economic casualties of the COVID-19 outbreak. Estimates by the African Union (AU) suggest that the economic impact of COVID-19 on Africa's tourism and travel sector alone may be as much as USD 50 billion - nearly 7 times greater than the 2008 economic crisis. For many southern and eastern African countries, this means a significant loss of funding for their conservation efforts. The impacts of a decimated nature-based tourism industry will have knock-on effects for rural communities and wildlife conservation efforts across the continent. The shutting of borders, grounding of flights and restriction on movement has now left the nature-based tourism sector across the continent hard hit and businesses, communities and individuals without incomes. Many national parks in eastern and southern Africa, as well as the many private reserves and community conserved areas have had to close their doors to both local and international tourists. Without the funding received from guests, the operations of these conservation areas are seriously compromised. The restrictions on travel, especially across provincial/state borders and internationally, may continue for months, and even when the restrictions are ultimately lifted, the nature-based tourism sector will need to deal with the impacts of perceived risks while it endeavours to once again entice the return of visitors to the region. While the prospects for recovery in the nature-based tourism sector in the region are a matter of intense speculation, it is possible, and indeed likely, that it will take years to see a return to levels of economic activity equivalent to 2019.

PROJECT: The objective of this project is to facilitate access to COVID-19 crisis funding for nature-based tourism enterprises, conservation areas and beneficiary communities in southern and eastern Africa. The project has the following components and outcomes: COMPONENT 1: Data clearinghouse. Outcome 1.1: An online data clearing house facilitates access to key information on the social, environmental and economic impacts of COVID-19 on the nature-based tourism sector, and prospective COVID-19 funding resources to address these impacts. Indicated by: Number of users (hits) of the on-line data clearinghouse. COMPONENT 2: Facilitating links between funders, and communities and the nature-based tourism sector. Outcome 2.1. Improved communications, cooperation and collaboration between funding institutions/donors/potential donors and nature-based tourism businesses and beneficiary communities leads to the growth and well targeted distribution of COVID-19 emergency relief and stimulus package). Indicated by a) Number of tourism enterprises and local communities receiving financial support through the efforts of the project; b) Value of additional funding leveraged through the platform to augment existing COVID-19 financial support (target USD >15 million). Outcome 2.2. Improved integration of tourism and wildlife sustainable future pathways in investment decisions by Governments and Finance Institutions. COMPONENT 3: M&E and knowledge management. Outcome

3.1. 3.1 Enhanced knowledge sharing, monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of COVID-19 on nature-based tourism and affected communities. Indicated by a) Number of policy briefs and publications (electronic or paper-based) summarizing the findings and lessons learned on the needs and means to support wildlife-based tourism and local communities affected by COVID-19.

RESULTS: The project is expected to benefit 20,000 people (10,000 males and 10,000 females) accessing more than \$15 million through the platform to augment existing COVID-19 financial support. These local communities are occupying an estimated 8.6 million ha that are expected to see improved management to benefit biodiversity conservation.

INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, SCALE-UP: The project has been developed as a fast-tracked, flexible and effective response to help lessen the severe short-term (2–3 year) economic and social impact of the COVID -19 pandemic on the nature-based tourism sector partners across southern and eastern Africa. The project follows a similar approach to that advocated by the OECD Policy Response to COVID-19. To ensure rapid operationalisation, the project will use well-established systems and tools for platforms, and interface with ongoing government and local communication networks and efforts, ensuring sustainability beyond the project lifetime as these structures will continue after the proposed project is finished. While the concept of a platform to provide data clearing house functions and open access to information is not in and of itself an innovation, the proposed application is novel in its vision of streamlining two-way information flow to more rapidly facilitate links and deal making between those with the most pressing needs and those looking to provide financial support in the COVID relief and recovery phases. The proposed project envisions that the sub-national, national and regional partners would be able to build continuing contributions and participation in the platform in their ongoing programmes. It is also the intent of the platform to stimulate the maximum amount of creativity and innovation in developing collaborative responses to the impacts of COVID-19 on the sector. The project had initially been designed to cover the geographic footprint of sub Saharan Africa, but it is anticipated that demand for financial support may rapidly overwhelm the project capacity. The geographic footprint for the project has thus subsequently been further contained to the eastern and southern African regions only. Even this geographic scale may still prove challenging, considering the information emerging daily from the field about the extent and intensity of socio-economic impacts due to the collapse of the nature-based tourism industry.

CO-FINANCING: Will be provided by the GEF Agency (WWF-US), Donor Agencies (Mava Foundation, UNDP, Department for International Development -DIFID), and CSOs (Fauna and Flora International, Maliasili, Jamma International and WWF Regional Office of Africa)