

# Transforming Forest Landscape Governance in the Lower Ogoou? - Lower Nyanga Landscape Corridor

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10729

**Countries**

Gabon

**Project Name**

Transforming Forest Landscape Governance in the Lower Ogoou? - Lower  
Nyanga Landscape Corridor

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

12/13/2021

**Review completed by PM**

5/13/2022

**Program Manager**

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy

**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

**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

- General comment: Please use "Congo IP" rather than CBSL to describe the Congo Impact Program. Thanks.
- Several tables and annexes do not fit the right format in the portal and are not readable or printable. Please, correct (table 6, table 7, Annex A on the result framework, Annex E on the budget).

**Part I. Project information:**

- The project was not submitted on 10/27/2020, but on 12/13/2021. Please, correct.
- Whatever the submission date was, the expected implementation start cannot be 11/02/2020. You need to anticipate the time for the technical clearance, quality control, and the 4-week Council consultation period. Please, correct.
- Completion date: Please, insert a completion date (72 months after the project start).
- Agency fees: Please insert the amount of GEF Agency fees: \$518,464.

**Table A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS:** The mention of BD1.5 is wrong.

- Objectives/Programs: please, select ?IP SFM Congo?
- Focal Area Outcomes: Please, select ?Promoting effective coordination for sustainable forest management?.

Agency Response

**UNDP - 29Mar22:**

All instances of ?CBSL? have been changed in prodoc and CEO ER to ?Congo IP?  
The format of tables and annexes has been adjusted.

**Part I. Project information**

The submission date has been corrected  
The expected start of implementation has been corrected to 08 July 2022  
The expected completion date has been corrected to 08 July 2028  
The agency fee has been inserted

**Table A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS**

The requested changes have been made in the CEO ER

**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

**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

- We take note of the changes and the given justification. Our responses are made on the result framework.

**General comment**

- Several comments below are due to discrepancies between the information made available in the portal and the prodoc. It seems that the prodoc is much more elaborated than the information in the portal. Thanks to make the information coherent between the different documents (portal, prodoc, Request for CEO endorsement).

- Because of the baseline scenario, the incremental reasoning, and cofinancing partners, we suggest well focusing the project framework, results and activities at the landscape level. Most of activities at national level should be covered by cofinancing. Please, confirm.

- In the current version of the text, it stays difficult to estimate the value for money for each output. We need to understand the expected results and the associated activities. Please, include the list of activities (1.1.1, 1.1.2, etc.) under each output, as it is in general the case in project documents we review. This information seems available in the prodoc, but is not reflected in the text in the portal. To be revised.

### **Component 1**

- Output 1.1: We are not clearly seeing the inclusion of ecosystem services, nature, to not say natural capital, in land-use planning systems: either you can clearly include these aspects in the output 1.1 and its associated activities. You can also take benefit of the opportunities offered by the Congo IP and connect with the cross-cutting project on this subject, as it is one theme of collaboration within the IP.

### **Component 2**

- At the time of discussions with the government of Gabon, we understood there was an interest to develop environmental monitoring activities, including water quality, mercury detection, in connection with eventual gold artisanal mining. Can you confirm these activities are included? (they are included in the prodoc, but absent in the text included in the portal).

- Output 2.3: Yes for monitoring activities developed by communities and inclusive conservation.

### **Component 3**

#### Output 3.2

- The intention of this output seems disconnected to the expected global environment benefits targeted by this project (core indicator 1, core indicator 4, and core indicator 6) and not aligned with the framework advanced in the annex 13. We expect more emphasis on forests, forest landscapes, IPLC, management, and governance.

- We do not agree with a too important focus on fisheries, capacities and organizational activities that are going into too many directions with a strong risk of dispersion. Please, revise.

- We would like to better understand the expected results and the nature of activities financed under this output. Please, provide a clear list of activities that will be financed.

- The GEF financed activities under this output seem stand alone as we did not find information about the role of cofinancing. We are not sure that the level of project financing can make a difference on this subject.
- What means ?a plan endorsed by the Ramsar site??
- We would like to understand the governance framework involved in the Ramsar management plan. Who is accountable for the implementation and evaluation of the plans that are considered?
- You notably mentioned a Ramsar jurisdiction which is not clear to us. Please clarify.
- Output 3.3 on community forests: We recommend a focus on these activities rather those under the output 3.2. A focus on community forests is more relevant to the Congo IP.
- Output 3.4: a focus on ecotourism is potentially welcome. However, please explain the strategy, the concerned stakeholders, and the list of activities.

#### **Component 4**

- Output 4.3. and 4.4 are particularly welcome.
- If possible, it will be appreciated to develop further the potential work with 1) the regional coordination project (on land-use planning methods, the inclusion of ecosystem services in land-use planning instruments, the inclusion of IPLC, FPIC, gender issues, tourism, private sector, safeguards, etc.) and 2) eventually neighboring countries and other Congo IP projects (Republic of Congo? Equatorial Guinea? Cameroon?)

#### **Agency Response**

##### **UNDP - 29Mar22:**

As explained in more detail below, additional information from the Prodoc has been integrated in the CEO ER and the portal, notably providing more detail on activities. Prodoc, CEO ER and portal are now consistent.

The project as a whole is primarily focused at the landscape level, as even national-level activities aim to create a supportive or ?enabling? environment for critically important landscape-level conservation outcomes. More specifically, the national-level Component 1 seeks to ensure that integrated and landscape level approaches are adopted in land use planning and implementation; these approaches are not only suggested, but encouraged and supported through capacity development to render them effective in practice. The Components 1 (national focus) and 2 (landscape focus) are thus complementary, not disconnected from each other.

Additionally, GEF financing for outputs and activities under Component 1 amounts to only \$1.5m, compared to \$16.5m of project co-financing from the Government.

Each component is now introduced with a specific Outcome as well as a short summary of the outputs included in the component, and each project output now includes a list of the activities that will be carried out to develop/produce the Output (this previously was included only in the Prodoc). These additions should help to better understand the project's anticipated results.

This information has been drawn from materials already available in the Prodoc.

## **Component 1**

An introductory section is now included for each component (as mentioned above), including its main *goal* (outcome) as well as *narrative summaries* of their rationale and content, along with the interconnectedness between the 4 different components.

In Component 1, the goal is now made explicit and highlights a focus on natural capital accounting in the context of land use planning. The narrative introduction now elaborates on the aim of creating good 'enabling conditions' at both national and sub-national levels for effective conservation of forest landscapes, specifically through consideration of the economics of biodiversity (including natural capital), the range of values that may be attributed to nature by different stakeholders and rights holders, the importance of adopting rights-based approaches, and the value (not to say need) of adopting integrated (multi sectoral) approaches and 'systems thinking' in land use planning, which in turn needs to be based on reliable current information about ecosystems and their services (cf. environmental monitoring) in order to ensure that decisions/actions are well grounded and sustainability ensured.

Output 1.1. already mentions interventions for developing professional capacities, such as workshops, will be focused on approaches and methodologies in integrated land use planning and area-based conservation, including natural capital accounting, integrated watershed management, and monitoring for environmental change as well as for sector compliance. Furthermore, an indicative series of workshops has been suggested under Activity 1.1.1, including focal topics such as integrated watershed management, natural capital accounting and ecosystem accounting, environmental and social impact assessments, etc.

Finally, linkages are now made more explicit with complementary Output 4.3, which aims to enhance regional collaboration and mutual learning with the other Congo IP child projects. The following section has been added to Output 1.1: 'The project will also benefit from collaborations across the Congo IP by connecting with other child projects in implementation of these activities, aiming to raise awareness and enhance proficiencies in key topics including ecosystem services, nature and natural capital, and land use planning systems. Such coordination and collaboration will allow the project to build on others' experiences as well as to share experiences (such coordination is further introduced/explained under the project's Output 4.3).'

## **Component 2**

Yes, all of these environmental monitoring activities are included, specifically under Output 2.2. *Environmental monitoring by public administrations and other relevant partners*. The full list of environmental monitoring activities is the following:

- 2.2.1. Monitoring forest concessions' environmental and social compliance
- 2.2.2. Monitoring artisanal gold mining, including in vicinity of Waka NP
- 2.2.3. Hydrological monitoring in Ramsar site and Ikobey River watershed
- 2.2.4. Environment contaminant monitoring, including mercury detection

- 2.2.5. Assessing peatland extent in Bas Ogoou? Ramsar site and beyond

Environmental monitoring undertaken by local communities is a central feature of this project as it is deemed to be extremely important both for *effective monitoring* as well as for *raising awareness* about conservation and sustainability along with building on (leveraging) *local traditional and indigenous knowledge* about forest biodiversity and ecosystem services in the project landscape.

### Component 3

The main intent of this output was to focus on *livelihoods and well-being* of the Indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) residing in and/or dependent on forests biodiversity in the project landscape. Strikingly, it became apparent from the first field mission during the Project Preparation Grant phase of project development that livelihoods consistently depended on forest resources *writ large*, including artisanal fisheries ? given the widespread occurrence of streams, rivers and water bodies embedded in the highly forested region, serving dual functions of transport and source of food.

However, in order to properly recall and maintain the project?s central purpose of conserving forest landscapes in context of global biodiversity loss and especially climate change ? best served with tight focus on *conservation of forest biodiversity* and *sustainable forest management* ? (former) Outputs 3.2 and 3.3 are now merged.

The (former) Outputs 3.2 and 3.3 are now merged and numbered as Output 3.2, with the focus being on ?community forests? and other aspects of community-driven uses and the *de facto* conservation of forest landscape resources. This merging re-centers the project?s livelihoods outputs in the overarching framework of ?integrated forest landscape management? while maintaining both ecological and social dimensions. Additionally, the output focused on community engagement with forest resources (cf. community forestry) capitalizes on the social mechanisms such as cooperatives already present in the target area that initially were focused on community-based artisanal fisheries, but now seeks to adapt and strengthen these social mechanisms and apply them to livelihood opportunities now arising in the community forestry sector across the project landscape.

In the revised plan, the activities specifically to be financed under the ?community forests? livelihoods output are the following:

- Support and strengthen existing community mechanisms for the sustainable use of natural resources in the forest landscape, such as cooperatives and community associations, ensuring appropriate compliance with SES
- Replicate such social structures in new geographic areas and communities, i.e. where community forestry will be further developed and strengthened through the project
- Explore where and how community forests may overlap with ICCAs (also known as *territories of life*) to maximize their convergence and the benefits that can be derived for local development and forest landscape conservation
- Demarcate existing and potential community forests in participatory ways
- Develop and/or strengthen management plans for community forests
- Strengthen product value chains in community forests (NTFPs)

Although the apparently stand-alone (former) Output 3.2 that focused on artisanal fisheries-related livelihoods has now been substantially diminished in significance, now merged/subsumed under the new Output 3.2 focused on community forestry, it is still noteworthy that the community mechanisms such as local cooperatives and associations

that were needed to ensure the development of a vibrant and resilient private sector benefited over the past decade from financial and technical support from both OELO and TNC, and endorsed by national government through MEF. Such community-level social institutions will be further scaled up and strengthened through the project, i.e. they will be applied to a broader range of community-based private sector initiatives and value chains across the project area's forest landscape.

In the revised project, the main element that remains from (former) Output 3.2 is the building and strengthening of community social structures such as cooperatives and associations, through organizational capacity development, awareness/mobilization, and skills training (workshops) that aim to enhance the benefits that can be derived from NTFPs and associated value chains deriving from the forest landscape. In this way, financial inputs are deemed to be sufficient to make substantial difference in the project landscape with special attention to be given to selected communities.

The 'community-based management plan' referenced in this question refers to a particular natural resource management plan that is both recognized and supported by the Ramsar Site's management authorities; this has been conveyed to the project development team in form of personal communication, while designing this project.

The Bas Ogoou' Ramsar Site's management authority is the Ministry of Forests, Environment and Climate Change, MEF, and its administration is overseen by the Directorate General of Environment and Nature Protection, DGEPN. The DGEPN has delegated authority for regular administration to a site administrator.

From the Ramsar site (translated): 'The [Ramsar] wetland will be administered by the Directorate General of Environment and Nature Protection under the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and Nature Protection, through the National Authority and Ramsar Focal Point. This management will be done in collaboration with WWF Gabon and other national and international NGOs.' (online source: [https://rsis.ramsar.org/RISapp/files/RISrep/GA1851RISformer\\_160316.pdf](https://rsis.ramsar.org/RISapp/files/RISrep/GA1851RISformer_160316.pdf)).

As 'community management plans' that have been developed endogenously, i.e. by local communities themselves, it is the communities who are primarily responsible for their implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. However, also being situated in areas within the Ramsar site, the site authorities also have direct interest in these resource management plans and, within the bounds of national legislation, they too are accountable to national-level government bodies to ensure that no harm is done to forest biodiversity (including ecosystem services) through the application of the community management plans; and the site authorities must equally ensure that all necessary environmental monitoring is in place, in collaboration (or coordination) with resident communities themselves.

In terms of legal jurisdiction, the Ramsar site's highest level management authority is MEF, while its administration is overseen by the DGEPN under MEF and put in practice by the designated site administrator. In terms of spatial jurisdiction (i.e., boundaries), the original geographic scope of the Ramsar site may be found on the Ramsar website. Notably, though, the Ramsar global website indicates that no management plan has been developed, whereas in reality a plan has recently been drafted, including an enlarged geographic coverage for the Ramsar site, and this is now pending approval. The geographic bounds shown in the drafted management plan are included in the Annex 3, and it is these modified bounds that constitute the basis for the cover area indicated in the prodoc and CEO ER since any improved (more sustainable) landscape-level management in the Ramsar site that may arise from the project's interventions would affect this larger geographic area.



The project has now been redesigned accordingly, as described above.

More information is now drawn over from the prodoc into the CEO ER. In addition, the introductory section for Output 3.3 has been expanded and includes description of potential private sector partners that could contribute to project implementation. An overview of proposed activities and sub-activities for ecotourism business and skills development ventures is now included in the CEO ER, and additional detail remains available in the prodoc.

#### **Component 4**

Agreed regarding their importance. Output 4.3 focused on coordination of this project with Congo IP and its other child projects is now further strengthened.

The description of the original activity included in Output 4.3 has been expanded and now includes the following further clarification: ?These exchanges may be in-person or with hybrid format, depending on needs and opportunities; but minimally should bring people together from across several Congo IP projects to learn from collective experiences in overlapping goals and areas of work.?

Additionally, two activities have been added (these are listed in the CEO ER, and described further in the prodoc): Communication and coordination with the Congo IP regional project (Activity 4.3.1), and Communication and coordination with the Congo IP national projects (Activity 4.3.2)

**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

**December 21, 2021**

Yes. Changes are explained.

Agency Response

**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

**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

- We take note of the proposed breakdown. However, see comments in the item 2 on the result framework. Without a clear formulation of activities and expected results, we have difficulties to appreciate the value for money and the cost-effectiveness of the proposed approach. To be explained.

Agency Response

**UNDP 29Mar22:**

This has now been further clarified in the CEO ER by inclusion of specific project activities (output by output) as well as component-level narrative summaries before introducing of the outputs and their activities in all four of the project's components.

**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

**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

Agency Response

**Core indicators**

**7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E? Do they remain realistic?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 14, 2022**

Addressed.

**April 4, 2022**

Based on the revised targets under the core indicators, we understand that the project aims the following targets:

- 175,959 ha of protected areas under better management effectiveness with the national parks of Waka and Mont Birougou (CI 1.2),
- 1,912,755 ha of terrestrial landscapes, out of protected areas, with better management to benefit biodiversity corresponding to the Bas Ogoou? Ramsar site, the Mont Birougou Ramsar sites, as well as 8 community forests (4.1),
- 188,121 ha of terrestrial landscapes under SLM in eight forest concessions (4.3).

All these management modes should improve the carbon balance with 24.6 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

In term of beneficiaries, the project targets 336,219 people (166,211 male and 170,008 females, mostly agricultural and forest dependent people), including 5,000 indigenous people, as the Babongo, Barimba and Bagama people.

Please, confirm and check that the information is coherent between the portal, the request for CEO endorsement, and the prodoc.

For instance, in the prodoc, three protected areas (2 NP and 1 Ramsar site) are considered under the core indicator 1.2, with METT scores; 300,977 ha are considered under better practices. Please, make information consistent.

.

**December 21, 2021**

- Indicator 1.2: please explain how you reach a target of 2,069,531 ha. It seems there is a wrong interpretation of this indicator. This core indicator 1.2 should cover the terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness in this project. You should provide the METT score for each protected area covered under the core indicator 1.2.

- The name of Akula National Park is mentioned in the table of indicators (but not in the prodoc). We do not know this National Park, and the number of ha seems very high. Please, clarify.

- In the Request for CEO endorsement, we see the Bas Ogoou Ramsar site, 1,425,793 ha, is considered as a IUCN category II (national park). Same comment for the Monts

Birougou Ramsar site, 536,800 ha. This is probably the source of concern about the high targets under the Core Indicator 1.2. A Ramsar site cannot be compared or assimilated to a National Park. The Ramsar site is a label, but not a strong protection. To be revised. Please, make the information coherent between the Request for CEO endorsement and the portal.

- However, we are seeing outputs and activities to improve biodiversity management at the landscape level. We are not clearly seeing activities to improve the management of protected areas. It seems that indicator 4.2 would be more appropriate to reflect the activities undertaken in this project. To be confirmed.

### Agency Response

#### **UNDP 11 April 2022:**

175,959 ha of protected areas under better management - Correct.

1,912,755 ha of terrestrial landscapes - Correct. Note, however, that this figure excludes the section of the Monts Birougou Ramsar site that also is classified as a national park, as that area has already been counted under the core indicator 1.2. Additionally, a portion of the community forests supported under this project are situated within a Ramsar site and therefore these also are not included in above total area estimate (in order to not double count).

188,121 ha of terrestrial landscapes - Correct total figure, but for 10 forest concessions. Note, however, that the forest concessions that are situated within a Ramsar site already counted under the core indicator 4.1 are excluded from this figure.

24.6 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e - Correct.

beneficiaries - Correct total figure, but 166,211 women and 170,008 men.

5,000 indigenous people - Correct.

We have checked that the information is coherent across documents and portal.

No. of protected areas - 2 national parks are considered under the Core Indicator 1.2. For consistency and clarity, the Bas Ogoou? Ramsar Site has now been removed from mandatory Indicator 2 in the PRF of the prodoc; we also changed name of ?Monts Birougou? from National Park to Ramsar site (note: METT score applied to both).

In regard to Indicator 3 (with total figure of 300,977 ha), this applies to total area of community forests and forest concessions that will be supported/strengthened under the project. The total figure is correct. The apparent difference noted in the CEO ER?s Core

Indicator Worksheet arises from the fact that Core Indicator 4 not being equivalent to Indicator 3 in the PRF of the prodoc; the ways that figures overlap and differ are already presented as notes, provided in a smaller font, in the Core Indicator Worksheet (specifically in cells within sub-Indicator 4.1 and sub-Indicator 4.3 on pp. 101-102 in the CEO ER).

In summary, the Core Indicator #1 focused on terrestrial PAs refers to 2 National Parks (Waka and Monts Birougou), with a total coverage of 175,959 hectares, and Core Indicator #4 focused on landscapes outside of PAs under improved practices refers to 2 Ramsar sites (Bas Ogoou? and Monts Birougou) along with community forests (8) and forest concessions (10) that will be supported through the project, amounting to a total coverage of 2,100,876 hectares.

#### **UNDP 29Mar22:**

The target of 2,069,531 ha is based on the sum of the coverage areas of three sites: Bas Ogoou Ramsar Site, Monts Birougou Ramsar Site, and Waka National Park. (The Birougou National Park overlaps with the Ramsar site with same name, and therefore it was not included in order to not double-count the coverage area.)

METT scores were provided for all four of the sites (the Monts Birougou NP and Ramsar Site were scored jointly, i.e. same score applied to each), all of which are terrestrial protected areas.

However, with lower levels of legal protection offered by Ramsar sites (compared to the national parks), they could equally be considered under the core indicator 4.1; we have therefore revised the project documents accordingly, as this seems to be the preferred (recommended) option, based on our review of the comments/ review/ feedback received.

Akula NP is not mentioned in the project documents.

As requested, we have moved the 2 Ramsar sites over to the core indicator 4.1, landscapes under improved management. The indicators are adjusted accordingly; but with the cover area for Monts Birougou Ramsar Site (under core indicator 4.1) excluding the section of the Ramsar Site that also falls under Monts Birougou National Park (core indicator 1.2) ? in order to avoid double-counting geographic areas. The same approach is needed when community forests and forest concessions are overlapping with Ramsar sites; both may be present, but their cover area should not be double-counted. More detailed information (explanation) is available in the core indicator table.

The project will be partnering with national park authorities in both Waka NP and Monts Birougou NP; these therefore are included under core indicator 1.2. These two national parks? management will be improved through formal and informal trainings as well as through *in situ* joint activity including environmental monitoring and partnering with local consultative management teams (co-management, CCGL) as requested by ANPN during the PPG phase.

Conversely, focus in the larger Ramsar site regions will be on improving landscape-level management of biodiversity, therefore these areas are now brought under core indicator 4.1, alongside the community forests also included here.

Forest concessions remain under core indicator 4.3. The total cover area indicated in the core indicator table, however, is also reduced; so as to not double count the area of those forest concessions that are situated within the Bas Ogoou? Ramsar Site.

## **Part II ? Project Justification**

**1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes. We acknowledge the elaboration of problems and barriers and the proposed pathways. We included comments in the item 2 related to the result framework on activities that do not fit the proposed reasoning (Theory of Change).

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

Agency Response

**3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

No. See item 2 in the part I.

#### Agency Response

**UNDP 29Mar22:**

See responses to the comment #2 above. Several project elements have been re-designed accordingly, most notably (i) the merging of two outputs under Component 3 in order to better reflect the Congo IP's primary focus on forest landscapes, (ii) a strengthened output on community ecotourism, (iii) better developed coordination and collaboration with the Congo IP regional project and other child projects, (iv) associated re-budgeting of some project outputs and associated activities, and (v) adjustments in the table of core indicators as recommended.

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

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

- You can remove the reference to GEF7 programming strategies.

- Please refer to the Congo IP and its strategic framework to justify and explain this project (if you do this work, you will also better understand some comments about the result framework and why some results are more welcome than other).

To be revised.

#### Agency Response

**UNDP 29Mar22:**

Reference to GEF7 programming strategies has been deleted.

The table included in Section 1c. Child Project already highlights the Congo IP's main components and program outcomes, and matches these with the project's contributions to the Congo IP outcomes and the Gabon project's targets.

An additional table has also been added to the CEO ER to highlight the extent of thematic convergence between this and other child projects under the Congo IP.

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

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

#### Agency Response

**6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2022**

Addressed.

**April 4, 2022**

See item 7., Part I.

**December 21, 2021**

What is expected in this section is a justification of the proposed targets under the different core indicators: they should reflect the Global Environment Benefits.

- Please explain and justify how you will reach the proposed targets under the core indicators 1.2 (2,069,531 ha of protected areas under improved management effectiveness), 4.1 (300,977 ha of terrestrial landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity), and 6.1 (24,635,710 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e sequestered or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector). See Part I, item 7 on the indicators.

#### Agency Response

**UNDP 29Mar22:**

The core indicators have been revised as outlined above; primarily by relocating the Ramsar Sites from indicator 1.2 to the indicator 4.1.

Now the core indicator 1.2 is comprised of two national parks (Waka NP and Monts Birougou NP), core indicator 4.1 is comprised of 8 community forests and 2 Ramsar sites (Bas Ogoou? RS and Monts Birougou RS), and core indicator 4.3 is comprised of 10 forest concessions. These are shown in the core indicator table in the CEO ER and in Annex 17 of the prodoc; and the basis for these figures is explained as notes under the table.

Core indicator 6.1 is based on the targeted community forests, which are landscapes that will come under improved management that benefits biodiversity (core indicator 4.1), and areas exhibiting sustainable land management, i.e. forest concessions (core indicator 4.3); as described in greater detail in the prodoc Annex 17. Notably, some of the community forests and the forest concessions targeted by the project also fall within the Ramsar sites or in vicinity of national parks, however only areas covered specifically by the afore-mentioned forests are included for the GHG calculations.



**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

**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

Yes in the prodoc.

- To be improved in the portal.

Agency Response

**UNDP 29Mar22:**

This is in the Prodoc and the CEO ER and will now also be uploaded in 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

**December 21, 2021**

Yes. See annex 3.

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

**December 21, 2021**

Yes in the prodoc.

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  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes. See annex 8, notably the chapter 3 on stakeholder engagement activities undertaken  
in December 2020.

Agency Response  
Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

**Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender  
differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so,  
does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators  
and expected results?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes. See 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  
**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

- The intention is there, as the private sector is often mentioned. However, concrete examples would be welcome.

Agency Response

**?UNDP 29Mar22:**

?Considering the significance/value of integrating private sector interests with project aims of sustainability and conservation in the project area's forest landscapes, more detail is provided here in regard to Activity 3.2.6, with three representative value chains that the project may support in the landscape ? though each community must collectively decide on prioritized products and forms of engagement with the project. All three fall within the wildlife economy that Gabon is seeking to prioritize, both flora and fauna.?

Now the CEO ER also includes more detail about each of the following (brought over from the Prodoc, where this was already included) in Output 3.2:

- Non-timber forest product (NTFP): Honey
- Non-timber forest product (NTFP): Wild spinach (or African jointfir, *Gnetum africanum*)
- Artisanal fisheries and their ancillary products

In Output 3.3 focused on ecotourism (this also is a sector that builds on locally available forest landscape resources, though of a different nature from ?natural resources? and hence included in a separate output), an additional explanatory paragraph is now included, along with more information about the activities.

A table of potential business partners is now included in the Prodoc.

Support for local business development also takes place in the form of capacity building workshops ? including skills training and developing/strengthening of community mechanisms, e.g. cooperatives and associations ? specifically in the activities 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. Enabling environments for these also are integrated (mainstreamed) in several elements of both Component 1 and Component 2.

**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

**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

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  
**December 21, 2021**

- The institutional arrangements ("supported NIM") have been approved by GPU management.
- The coordination with CAFI, AFD, TNC, and UNDP activities is explained.
- There is a strong ownership from the government (DGEPN/MEF).

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  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

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  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

Agency Response  
**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  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

Agency Response  
**Benefits**

**Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes. The project aims to first conserve high biodiversity, high carbon stock landscapes in the considered landscape, and second to strengthen livelihood opportunities for socioeconomic benefits or IPLC.

Agency Response  
**Annexes**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**April 14, 2022**

Addressed.

**April 4, 2022**

- We take note that no vehicle will be purchased with the GEF grant. However there are \$100,000 planned under the output 2.2, activity 3 for equipment for monitoring water and fisheries. The note 72200 mentions "vehicle". Please, clarify.

- Several positions are planned in the budget. The CTA will be covered by resources from the four components. The BD advisor will be covered by the component 2. The community engagement and Safeguards officer will be covered by the component 4, as well as the M&E Officer. We take note that several positions (Project Director, Project Manager, Administrative & Financial officer) will be covered by the government. We checked the terms of reference for each position. No objection on the proposed breakdown. Cleared.

### **Budget**

- The Budget presented under the Annex 2 is not aligned with the page format. Please, adjust.

- In anticipation of the quality control, we recommend to use budget lines and items we can understand. Without further details, some expenses and amounts are difficult to understand/accept:

- \$102,800 of ?travel and other related operational costs for monitoring??

- \$33,789 of travel associated of MTR and TE?

- \$46,524 of travel costs related to ESIA

- \$250,000 of travel costs for field missions?

- \$60,000 of travel costs for Ramsar sites authorities for monitoring?

- Please, clarify if the GEF grant is used for car rentals or purchases. Please, describe the fleet of vehicles made available by the cofinancing.

- The annex 7 provides the terms of reference of main positions financed by the GEF project. We agreed on the logic to cover these positions under the technical components.

### **UNDP checklist**

- Please, note that the audit is not signed.

- Can you clarify what exactly means that +50% of Net Financial Misstatement, NFM?

### **Agency Response**

#### **UNDP 11 April 2022:**

We confirm that no vehicles will be purchased with project funds. We have confirmed that no budget note accidentally mentions ?vehicle purchase?.

Budget:

- a) The budget has been reformatted to fit the page format

Detail has been added to budget notes, and some adjustments have been made as explained below.

b) The activity 2.2.3 on hydrological monitoring is high priority for government and local communities alike, as rivers and lakes can be greatly impacted by forest-based operations including timber extraction, such as through soil erosion and bringing potentially significant negative impacts on human and wildlife health. Monitoring water flow, water quality, and sediment loads etc. is required, but government's financial and resources are limited, specifically in the targeted Ramsar site; this activity aims to fill the gap by providing operational costs including travel costs, enabling hydrological monitoring as part of the broader suite of environmental monitoring under Output 2.2. Furthermore, considering longer-term sustainability, the project purposely emphasizes supporting the development/strengthening of community associations and collaborative monitoring of natural resources by government with communities. Yet, these operational costs are now nonetheless reduced by around half, with savings applied to international contracts for activities 2.1.4, 2.2.1 and 2.2.5 all under the same Component 2.

c) The in-country travel costs associated with MTR and TE are actually only \$9,789. The additional amount noted in budget note 26 is for other travel costs associated with regular (on-going) M&E by PMU and delegated parties, including supervision and learning missions (USD \$24,000) which is only \$4000 per annum for all of the supervisory travels by PMU across the large landscape, including spot checks aiming to ensure that all sub-contracted activities (with national and international NGOs, etc.), community-based initiatives and government-led interventions are proceeding as anticipated.

d) These travel costs are not associated only with developing the ESIA, but also implementing the Stakeholder Engagement Plan including community level consultations and as necessary also FPIC processes, e.g. in context of developing / implementing the Livelihoods Action Plan under ESMF. Not all FPIC responses and other forms of community engagement that may be helpful or even necessary can be entirely predicted at the outset of a project; but to ensure the project itself doesn't become the main driving force of interventions, and rather a means to the development outcomes sought, sufficient financial resources must be set aside to enable not only the activities of ESIA and related LAP etc., particularly if the project aims to be responsive to needs and emerging/evolving situations.

This being a budget line for travel funds under Component 4, it may also be applied to

Output 4.3 (coordination with other child project of the Congo IP) and Output 4.4 (gender mainstreaming and social inclusion). The annual budget amount is only up to \$8,000 per annum, including support for in-country travel costs for ESIA, LAP and other elements of the ESMF/ESMP, and planned/unplanned FPIC needs.

e) The cost of "travel" under Component 1 relates to the "comprehensive" activity that has been entitled "Learning-by-doing: in situ operations," which is one of the most important ways adopted by this project to enhance capacities of the government's environmental services (i.e., not only knowledge but also practical skills that can only be learned through joint action, on site). For more detail about Activity 1.1.3, see p. 60 in the prodoc where it is noted that this activity "aims to enable additional value-add stemming from experience-based "teaching and learning" perspective (or learning-by-doing)."

This learning activity (i.e. learning-by-doing with field missions in collaboration with PMU and consultants) complements the other 3 activities under Output 1.1, namely organizing a series of workshops, review of PA management plans, and development of topic briefs and practical sector guidelines.

While in the original budget there were two main parts to this budget line (including both (i) travel costs for field missions directly related to implementation of project activities and associated in situ (on-the-job) learning, and (ii) additional travel and operational costs for the decentralized offices of environmental services, including DGEPN), this has now been revised downward, by half; by removing the second of the above elements. The total for this budget line is now lowered to \$125,000.

Therefore, in current budget, in any one year at most \$25,000 has been assigned for travel costs for field missions, including participants from PMU and project hired specialists along with implementing partners (e.g., MEF, DGEPN, PAs, etc.) and IPLCs "field missions specifically for enhancing knowledge and capacities through joint "learning-by-doing". Deeper understanding and appreciation by senior government officials/partners regarding the value and indeed need to adopt more integrated and landscape-level approaches in forest conservation and sustainable use are anticipated through this activity and other affiliated activities under Output 1.1.

The amount reduced under this travel budget line has been redistributed within the same Component 1, across several line items including consultants (increasing the number of days for two consultants, 1 national and 1 international); contractual services for planning and implementing workshops; and meetings, workshops and outreach that will be organized by the PMU " see the budget notes 1 through 4.

f) Travel costs for Ramsar site authorities under the project's Output 3.2 in support of community-led resource management options in forest landscapes through income diversification and enhanced value chains has been reduced from 60k to 40k, and also



further explained in budget note 17.

g) The GEF grant may be used for some car rentals if other vehicles belonging to DGEPN or other departments or agencies affiliated with MEF are not available, or sometimes if several vehicles are required simultaneously, e.g. when larger expert groups must travel together. In some circumstances, boats also are needed to access some remote villages which are situated along the forest's waterways; and although the Ramsar Site's boat need not be hired by the project, petrol costs for this mode of travel is substantially higher than for transport by land vehicle.

No vehicle will be purchased by the project.

UNDP Checklist:

The signed audit checklist has been uploaded into the portal. It also explains the observation of net financial misstatement which mostly related to advances to project partners that had not been justified in time. This issue has meanwhile been resolved and the respective partners been instructed to avoid this problem in the future.

#### **UNDP 29Mar22:**

The budget has been reformatted to fit the page format

Detail has been added to budget notes, and some adjustments have been made as explained below.

The activity 2.2.3 on hydrological monitoring is high priority for government and local communities alike, as rivers and lakes can be greatly impacted by forest-based operations including timber extraction, such as through soil erosion and bringing potentially significant negative impacts on human and wildlife health. Monitoring water flow, water quality, and sediment loads etc. is required, but government's financial and resources are limited, specifically in the targeted Ramsar site; this activity aims to fill the gap by providing operational costs including travel costs, enabling hydrological monitoring as part of the broader suite of environmental monitoring under Output 2.2. Furthermore, considering longer-term sustainability, the project purposely emphasizes supporting the development/strengthening of community associations and collaborative monitoring of natural resources by government with communities. Thus, being more than just travel *per se*, the highlighted costs are deemed justified. Yet, these operational costs are now nonetheless reduced by around half, with savings now applied to international contracts for activities 2.1.4, 2.2.1 and 2.2.5 all under the same Component 2.

The in-country travel costs associated with MTR and TE are actually only \$9,789. The additional amount noted in budget note 26 is for other travel costs associated with regular (on-going) M&E by PMU and delegated parties, including supervision and learning missions (USD \$24,000) which is only \$4000 per annum for all of the supervisory travels by PMU across the large landscape, including spot checks aiming to ensure that all sub-contracted activities (with national and international NGOs, etc.),

community-based initiatives and government-led interventions are proceeding as anticipated.

These travel costs are not associated only with developing the ESIA, but also implementing the Stakeholder Engagement Plan including community consultations and as necessary also FPIC processes, e.g. in context of developing / implementing the Livelihoods Action Plan under ESMF. Not all FPIC responses and other forms of community engagement that may be helpful or even necessary can be entirely predicted at the outset of a project; but to ensure the project itself doesn't become the main driving force of interventions, and rather a means to the development outcomes sought, sufficient financial resources must be set aside to enable not only the activities of ESIA and related LAP etc., particularly if the project aims to be responsive to needs and emerging/evolving situations.

This being a budget line for travel funds under Component 4, it may also be applied to Output 4.3 (coordination with other child project of the Congo IP) and Output 4.4 (gender mainstreaming and social inclusion). The annual budget amount is only up to \$8,000 per annum, including support for in-country travel costs for ESIA, LAP and other elements of the ESMF/ESMP, and planned/unplanned FPIC needs.

The cost of travel under Component 1 relates to the comprehensive activity that has been entitled Learning-by-doing: in situ operations, which is one of the most important ways adopted by this project to enhance capacities of the government's environmental services (i.e., not only knowledge but also practical skills that can only be learned through joint action, on site). For more detail about Activity 1.1.3, see p. 60 in the prodoc where it is noted that this activity aims to enable additional value-add stemming from experience-based teaching and learning perspective (or learning-by-doing).

This learning activity (i.e. learning-by-doing with field missions in collaboration with PMU and consultants) complements the other 3 activities under Output 1.1, namely organizing a series of workshops, review of PA management plans, and development of topic briefs and practical sector guidelines.

Budget note 5 provides further breakdown of the total mentioned here, in two parts:

- Travel costs for field missions directly related to implementation of project activities and associated in situ (on-the-job) learning
- Other travel and operational costs for decentralized offices of environmental services, including DGEPN

In current budget, in any one year at most only \$20 - \$25,000 has been assigned to either travel costs for field missions with participants from PMU and project hired specialists along with implementing partners (e.g., MEF, DGEPN, PAs, etc.) and IPLCs specifically for advancing purposes to enhance knowledge and capacities through joint learning-by-doing, or operational costs (including travel for field operations) for the largely under-funded decentralized offices of environmental services such as forestry offices at provincial and sub-provincial levels and field offices of the Ramsar sites with their broad range of operational responsibilities. Deeper understanding and appreciation by senior government officials/partners regarding the value and indeed need to adopt more integrated and landscape-level approaches in forest conservation and sustainable use are anticipated through this activity and other affiliated activities under Output 1.1.

Travel costs for Ramsar site authorities under the project's Output 3.2 in support of community-led resource management options in forest landscapes through income diversification and enhanced value chains has been reduced from 60k to 40k, and also further explained in budget note 17.

The GEF may be used for some car rentals if other vehicles belonging to DGEPN or other departments or agencies affiliated with MEF are not available, or sometimes if several vehicles are required simultaneously, e.g. when larger expert groups must travel together. In some circumstances, boats also are needed to access some remote villages which are situated along the forest's waterways; and although the Ramsar Site's boat need not be hired by the project, petrol costs for this mode of travel is substantially higher than for transport by land vehicle.  
No vehicle will be purchased by the project.

- The signed **audit checklist** has been uploaded.
- As explained in the checklist, "Most of the misstatement was linked to outstanding NEX advances. The outstanding NEX advances have meanwhile been recovered. The Country Office has also addressed a correspondence to the partner with guidelines to follow for remedial action and to ensure that this problem does not occur again in the future."

#### **Project Results Framework**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

Agency Response  
**GEF Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response  
**Council comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**April 4, 2022**

Addressed.

**December 21, 2021**

No. There were comments at PFD level (Congo IP, GEFID 10208) applicable to Gabon. Please, provide responses to the applicable comments. See especially comments from US (about logging) and Norway (about land-use planning).

## Agency Response

### **UNDP 29Mar22:**

Those comments received at PFD that specifically relate to Gabon have been addressed (see below). These responses are additional to those provided by UNEP at PFD level.

Response to US comment:

We can assure the Council that the project will not support any logging of primary forest. The project will strengthen oversight of the Government of Gabon over existing forest concessions, especially with a view to reducing the impacts of timber harvesting in previously logged (secondary) forests, and it will also support the sustainable management of community forests with a focus on non-wood forest products and the sustainable management of regenerating (secondary) forests.

Response to Norway-Denmark comment:

As already highlighted by UNEP in response to the Council comments at PFD level, the project will establish contact with the CAFI representative in the country and identify potential synergies and overlaps and address these accordingly. This will especially include to closely coordinate land use planning elements with CAFI to avoid duplication or conflicting advice. Regular coordination meetings between this project and CAFI, facilitated by the Ministry of Forests, Environment and Climate Change (MEF) will ensure that the two initiatives are fully aligned and complementary and that any duplication of effort is avoided.

### **STAP comments**

## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 4, 2022**

Yes. Comprehensive responses are provided.

**December 21, 2021**

No. Please respond to the STAP comments applicable to Gabon.

## Agency Response

### **UNDP 29Mar22:**

STAP comments received at PFD level (22 May 2019) have been addressed in Annex B to the CEO ER.

### **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

**December 21, 2021**

Yes

Agency Response

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**December 21, 2021**

Yes.

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

**Agency Response ? 29 April 2022**

1. Table D has been corrected (CEO ER Table D).

Although the changes could be reflected and explained in the CEO ER, please note that GEF Portal doesn't allow us to reflect the situation correctly - WB cannot be selected as GEF Agency (only option is UNDP), also the explanatory notes under the Table D cannot be entered to the Portal.

CEO ER:











**D. TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), COUNTRY(IES), FOCAL AREA AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS**

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country Name/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)	
					GEF Project Financing (a)	Agency Fee (b)
UNDP	GEF TF	Gabon	Biodiversity	IP SFM Congo	2,771,189	176,885
WB	GEF TF	Gabon	Biodiversity	IP SFM Congo		72,522
UNDP	GEF TF	Gabon	Climate Change	IP SFM Congo	803,243	72,292
UNDP	GEF TF	Gabon	Land Degradation	IP SFM Congo	803,243	72,292
UNDP	GEF TF	Gabon	Multifocal Area	IP SFM Congo	2,188,838	196,995
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>6,566,513</b>	<b>590,986</b>

The project was transferred from World Bank to UNDP during the PPG phase, with World Bank retaining \$72,522 of the total fee. UNDP's fee was reduced by the same amount to a total fee of \$518,464.

Portal:

### D. Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds ⓘ

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds ⓘ	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total(\$)		
UNDP	GET	Gabon	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,771,189.00	176,885.00	2,948,074.00	 	
UNDP	GET	Gabon	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	803,243.00	72,292.00	875,535.00	 	
UNDP	GET	Gabon	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	803,243.00	72,292.00	875,535.00	 	
UNDP	GET	Gabon	Multi Focal Area	IP SFM Congo Set-Aside	2,188,838.00	196,995.00	2,385,833.00	 	
UNDP	GET	Gabon	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation		72,522.00	72,522.00	 	
<a href="#">+ Add New</a>					<b>Total Grant Resources(\$)</b>	<b>6,566,513.00</b>	<b>590,986.00</b>	<b>7,157,499.00</b>	

2. The co-financing information has been corrected as requested (CEO ER Table C)

3. Core Indicators:

a. Annex F in the CEO ER includes GEF 7 Core Indicator 1, focused on improvements of management effectiveness (METT scores) in two national parks, Waka and Monts Birougou. The baseline METT scores and total areas (ha) of these national parks are now included in both Annex F (see above) and the Project Results Framework (PRF) of the project document (see the project's Indicator 2) (in which total areas are now also mentioned, in hectares, though the main focus of the indicator remains the METT score, i.e. management effectiveness)

b. This note refers to the PRF Indicator 3 on p. 128 of the prodoc); the figures included here are the total areas of all the community forests and the forest concessions that are being targeted in the project, and as such these figures are correct. On the other hand, the figures provided as part of the GEF 7 Core Indicators (noting especially core sub-indicators 4.1 and 4.3) are smaller ? but this is not a mistake, as has been explained in the note under PRF Indicator 3, which also points to more detailed explanations in Annex F in the CEO ER. In short, because there is overlap between the national parks, Ramsar sites, community forests and forest concessions, only unaccounted remaining lands are included in each subsequent indicator, as we move down through the core indicators in Annex F ? first looking to the two national parks (Indicator 1.2), then the Ramsar sites and community forests (Indicator 4.1), and then the forest concessions (Indicator 4.3). If we did not only look to not-yet-accounted areas, due to the overlapping classifications we would then be double-counting certain areas, leading to inflated (inaccurate) estimates of project impact.

c. This has been revised as requested

4. Details on the PPG use of funds have been provided (CEO ER Annex C).

5. Budget table:

a. Under UNDP's Full support to National Implementation Modality (NIM), an AWP will be approved jointly between UNDP and the IP (Government). Based on this AWP, UNDP would then conduct the procurements, contracting and direct payments.

Therefore, the answer is that UNDP will provide support to all budget lines. The cost to UNDP for providing these support services will be charged to budget line 28 (DPC).

b. The CTA has been removed from the budget and been replaced with an International Capacity Building Expert whose role is to build the capacity of the Government counterparts (especially DGEPN, but also other agencies involved in the project) on technical matters relevant to the implementation of the project. The ToR of the Expert has been fully revised to reflect this change in function. The Expert will not be involved in any way in the logistics and management of the project, but will have a purely technical capacity building and advisory function. Given the technical requirements to this function, an international Expert will be required. The intended budget has therefore not been affected. The function is budgeted under GEF budget and divided among the three components for which the Expert will provide capacity building. We would like to emphasize that the Government of Gabon has agreed to fully fund not only the National Project Director, but also the Project Manager and the Project Administrative and Finance Officer, the latter two being full-time project staff with an estimated annual cost of \$ 3,500 per month (total: \$ 252,000) for the Project Manager and \$ 2,400 per month (total: \$ 172,800) for the Administration and Finance Officer, so total cost to the Government of Gabon of \$ 424,800.

6. The email communication between the PM and UNDP as further evidence that the proposed institutional arrangements have been approved by GEFSEC has been uploaded to Portal Roadmap.

**GEF PM Comments from 30 April 2022 (shared via email):**



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**Od:** Jean-Marc Sinnassamy <[jsinnassamy@thegef.org](mailto:jsinnassamy@thegef.org)>  
**Odoslané:** Saturday, April 30, 2022 1:31 AM  
**Komu:** Jana Pangracova <[jana.pangracova@undp.org](mailto:jana.pangracova@undp.org)>  
**Kópia:** Goetz Schroth <[goetz.schroth@undp.org](mailto:goetz.schroth@undp.org)>  
**Predmet:** RE: Gabon 10729 resubmission

Dear Jana, Dear Goetz,  
Thanks for the responses and the clarifications: I am going to discuss with our colleagues from the quality control and will keep you posted.

However, the revised budget in the portal is not aligned and is getting out of the margins.  
I need to send the project back for that.

Please, note that it is also the case of 1) the table 7 (Outline of stakeholder engagement activities), 2) the risk table, 3) the annex A/result framework, 4) the annex B/Responses to project reviews, and then 5) the annex E/project budget table.

Thanks for your understanding,  
Best regards  
JM

### **UNDP response ? 11 May 2022**

The formatting issue of the mentioned tables out of margins has been reviewed by GEF Portal Helpdesk and no problems in Portal have been detected. The technical problem is to be solved internally within GEF.

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**Od:** Wanderson Batista Roldao <[wbatistaroldao@worldbankgroup.org](mailto:wbatistaroldao@worldbankgroup.org)>  
**Odoslané:** Tuesday, May 10, 2022 10:51 PM  
**Komu:** Jana Pangracova <[jana.pangracova@undp.org](mailto:jana.pangracova@undp.org)>; Jean-Marc Sinnassamy <[jsinnassamy@thegef.org](mailto:jsinnassamy@thegef.org)>  
**Predmet:** RE: Gabon 10729 resubmission

Dear Jana,

Thank you for the follow up.

I have verified both projects in the GEF Portal and I am not being able to detect the issues with the formatting, as I can observe all text and tables inside the GEF Portal limits.

I am asking Jean-Marc if he can share more details about the issues he is observing.

Dear @Jean-Marc Sinnassamy,

Is it possible for you to share screenshots of the issues you are seeing. If it suits better, we can schedule a call to go over these and understand the nature of them.

Thank you and regards,  
Wanderson

### **GEFSEC DECISION**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**May 13, 2022**

We acknowledge the efforts made by UNDP to solve the situation. We understand that the tables appear fine at their level. We recommend the project for technical clearance and Council circulation, recommending also that these aspects of laying out be addressed by the IT team.

**April 22, 2022**

**Please, address the following comments from the Quality Control.**

**Please, also remind that the extended request for extension for this project is due on June 13, 2022.**

1. Fee allocated under BD STAR shows difference between child project and the parent PFD of \$72,522 ? please ask the Agency to match the amount to the one approved by Council at PFD stage. We believe that this mistake could have been originated because as this child project was transferred from WB to UNDP, one portion of fee (\$72,522) was kept by WB. However, this fee allocation was recorded by Trustee and should not be reflected (double counted) in the CEO Endorsement request Portal. Please ask the Agency to reinstate the same fee amount in child project's table D as in the PFD's table D.

2. Co-financing (comment provided by Seo-Jeong):

- DGEPN / MEF

- a. Spell out the full ministry name
- b. 35M: change ?Grant? to ?Public Investment?

3. Core Indicators:

a. The target under core indicator 1 needs to be mentioned in results framework in terms of ha (Note from the technical reviewer,: it seems that the Quality Control is making a confusion between the 11 indicators proposed for this project and the numbering of the GEF Core Indicators: the first indicator is about the number of beneficiaries and is different from the core indicator 1 related to Protected Areas).

b. The target under core indicator 4.1 and 4.3 in the results framework is indicated differently in the core indicator table.

c. The results framework in the annex A indicates target on direct beneficiaries 30,000 but the reported target on core indicator table indicates the indirect beneficiaries. Please revise it to reflect the direct beneficiaries.

4. Status of PPG utilization: as requested in the template, please provide

details on expenditure categories for this PPG report.

5. Budget table:

a. Please indicate which budget line item the UNDP CO will be responsible to provide support services for.

b. International Chief Technical Advisor is part of the project's staff ? it is charged to project's components and PMC. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project's execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. Requesting the costs associated with the execution of the project to be covered by the PMC is reasonable ? by so doing, asking the proponents to utilize both portions allocated to PMC (GEF portion and co-financing portion) is also reasonable. As the co-financing portion to PMC is 2.3 million, and considering that the grants portion of co-financing is 36.5 million (95% of the total co-financing) , there is room to cover the costs of the International Chief Technical Advisor from co-financing.

6. Except for one statement in the review sheet provided by the PM [?The institutional arrangements (?support NIM? have been approved by GPU management?], we can't find GPU's Manager's explicit approval of UNDP's performing support services and charged \$215,000 to the project's PMC ? GPU Manager's approval is required in Portal's comment section.

**April 14, 2022**

All points are addressed. The project is recommended for clearance and 4-week Council consultation.

**April 4, 2022**

Thanks for the revised project package. Please see the items 7, Part I (and the related item 6, Part II) and the annex on the budget.

**December 21, 2021**

The project cannot be recommended yet. Please, address the comments above.

**Review Dates**

**Secretariat Comment at  
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to  
Secretariat  
comments**

<b>First Review</b>	<b>12/22/2021</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>4/4/2022</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>4/14/2022</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**