



Participatory restoration to improve ecosystem service provision and connectivity at the landscape scale in Colombia

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11679

Countries

Colombia

Project Name

Participatory restoration to improve ecosystem service provision and connectivity at the landscape scale in Colombia

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

9/19/2024

Review completed by PM

9/23/2024

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Project Type

FSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?

b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No, this project could be eligible for funding as a majority LD project rather than BD. With full flexibility, countries are welcome to use STAR resources across the Rio conventions. We encourage countries to program based on the activities planned rather than the source of funds.

We note that this would also bring the project in line with the LoE.

b. Please include the agency ID as applicable.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

a. We agree entirely. This is an eminently LD driven project and the intended split in terms of coal area relevance is 70/30 LD/BD. This is substantiated by the letter of endorsement (pending revision of total balance available in STAR) and by the proposal itself as noted by the review, including the GEB description and Core Indicators. Last not least, restoration, the core of this project, fits primarily under LD.

In that regard we thank GEF Sec for the guidance on how to reflect this properly in the finance tables in the portal. We have done the necessary edits to show the source of funds from STAR balances on

one hand and the programming of funds for the project on the other in the respective tables making use of the full flexibility.

b. An agency ID is assigned to the project at the time of internalization. UNEP's GEF coordination office advises to use the GEF ID until then to identify the project.

2. Project Summary

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No, please include the key results such as the core indicators.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

Outcomes and core indicators have been included.

3 Indicative Project Overview

3.1 a) Is the project objective presented as a concise statement and clear?

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No.

a. Yes.

b.

As noted above, this project is better suited to be mostly LD rather than BD, for GEF support biodiversity focused restoration typically needs to be highly targeted restoration focused on

restoring natural habitats. LD projects can support restoration of production lands. The types of restoration activities planned are not clear from the PIF. While participatory approaches are welcome, the project needs to provide more information about the universe of options that the project will work from.

Outcome 1.1 - This outcome is basically a repeat of the component while the outputs are trying to cover a lot each. It would be good to tease those out into outcomes for clarity and to give adequate attention to their substantial topics.

Component 2 - Again, this would benefit from consolidating the components and outcomes to be able to expand on the outputs more.

The Output word choice is confusing. Sometimes "demonstration landscapes" are referred to and sometimes just landscapes. If they are all the same thing, it would probably be clearer to just referred to landscapes and explain the demonstration approach in the body of the text. Otherwise, please explain the relationship among these different areas.

Some of these outputs are trying to cover too much. 2.1.1 and 2.2.1 seem to cover the aspect planning and the participatory processes needed for them. It will be important that while the plans are participatory, they are based in good science (such as key corridors for connectivity among PAs) and feasibility.

It would be good to reword 2.1.2 and 2.2.2 and potentially break them up. These sound more like outcomes. It would be good to expand on the actual support given for the doing of the work and how for implementation, beyond training and monitoring. The language could focus the people as the actors. It sounds like the same monitoring is listed here and 3.1.1.

The project design focuses on participatory approaches, which is fine; however, the participation of communities and smallholders seems to be more on a basis of "willingness" to participate. During PPG, the agency should explore community-led restoration approaches, where local stakeholder play a more active role and can bring in innovation and traditional knowledge.

10/21/2024: Follow-up comment:

"Information gathering" is an activity that we would expect to be done during PPG stage and not during the project implementation. Please revise outputs 2.1.1 and 2.2.1 in a way that it is clear what is done during PPG and what is done during implementation.

10/28/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

25. October 2024

We agree that the term 'information gathered' in the two mentioned project outputs might cause some confusion, because some items could be interpreted as activities in PPG. **During PPG**, information will be gathered for project preparation: closer definition of exact sites, assessment of the baseline for land use history, gather suitable techniques. Also during PPG, goals, targets and overall strategies for restoration will be established in a participatory manner with identified stakeholders. **During project execution**, to deliver outputs 2.1.1 and 2.2.1, additional information generation and continuous updating is needed as a fundamental element to sustain the landscape restoration implementation process. This includes engaging local communities (land users) for incremental interventions, identifying their expectation and knowledge on the sites and further assessing cost/benefit. This will be complemented with technical information on the site (GIS, soil/water/vegetation analysis) to ensure the science basis of the restoration plans. Outputs 2.1.1 and 2.2.1, and their description in the PIF text, have been revised accordingly and 'information gathered' has been replaced with the term 'participatory knowledge base development' to avoid ambiguities between PPG and implementation stages. In the revised PIF these sections have been highlighted for ease of reference.

14 October 2024

Indeed, we see a much closer fit to be mostly LD than BD and the intended programming as described above would be 70/30 LD/BD. In fact, it could be even heavier on LD given that is where 'restoration' finds its best fit. However, we would not want to diminish the important BD benefits that are also to be derived as described in the proposal.

We have better explained the different restoration options included in landscape restoration approach in the text and in relevant footnotes.

For more clarity, we have consolidated outcomes and better specified outputs in both components 1 and 2 by including additional outcomes and teasing out outputs as suggested by the review.

> We simplified the short running title of the component 1.

? > We split the original outcome 1.1 in two, one on capacities (now outcome 1.1; with two outputs, covering community capacities and institutional capacities for landscape restoration) and one on strengthening of governance (now outcome 1.2, with two outputs, covering socio-institutional agreements and legal and fiscal guidelines).

? > The outcomes of component 2 have been reworded, making them more people-focused. These outcomes are complementary and mutually reinforcing (landscape restoration and livelihood strengthening, through productive restoration) which has been clarified in the text.

? > As suggested by the review, we have separated the original outputs under outcomes 2.1 and 2.2, to better reflect the different support to the key steps in restoration plans (information

gathering/research, participatory formulation of plans, implementation of plans by local communities)

- ? >The terms landscape restoration and demonstration landscapes have been explained in the executive summary, in the body text and in footnotes on first mention. To avoid confusion, we also added an additional footnote in the indicative project overview.
- ? > To avoid possible confusion with monitoring activities in Component 3, we have deleted reference to community monitoring in Component 2.

During PPG, we will explore community-led restoration approaches, where local stakeholders play an active role and can bring in innovation and traditional knowledge

3.2 Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation included within the project components and appropriately funded?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No.

On gender, please provide some information how the agency will ensure that gender is accounted for in project design and what are some of the particular challenges women face in the context of this project - just a few sentences are necessary.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

Additional description has been included in the project rationale/current situation and in project description/ToC.

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

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

c) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for FSPs or 10% for MSPs? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No.

a. No, the resources devoted to component 3 are substantial and the activities don't appear commensurate.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

Considering the rather large amount involved, we are relocating 1 million USD from component 3 to component 2.

That being said, the budget has been planned in close coordination and approved by the Government of Colombia. Component 3 is crucial for scaling the work from the demonstration landscapes to the prioritized strategies and to ensure that this project will actually be the engine behind the national restoration strategy, rather than just a locally focused project. Experience shows that projects oftentimes lack enough resources in their final stages to move from demonstration to escalation. In this case this would entail providing the country with a more solid basis to take the lessons from the pilots to a higher level in support of the National Restoration Strategy's implementation.

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key contextual drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective?

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

9/19/2024

No.

a.

Definition of restoration - From the beginning it is important to be clear what type(s) of restoration are going to be supported by this project, natural habitats or productive areas? It would also help to articulate the goals of this restoration more specifically than integrity.

Scale - It would be helpful to be clear about how the landscapes, territories, etc.

Prioritization - It's good that the project will focus on already identified prioritized areas. It would help to have some information on the factors considered in that prioritization strategy (aka why are those priorities). In addition, when describing the selected areas it would help to have explanation of factors like "population characteristics" as it's unclear what that means.

- What is meant by valuable biodiversity areas?

- What does validation mean in this context?

- What is agricultural reconversion?

Biodiversity benefits - It would be helpful to have some more information on how biodiversity is expected to benefit from the project. For example, it appears that a number of the proposed sites are in or bordering KBAs. It would be good to highlight this.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

Definition of restoration: we had included the definition of landscape restoration and productive restoration (agricultural reconversion) in the Project Outline and have now included it also in the body text, on first mention. "Ecological integrity" is a key indicator used by Colombia in its National Restoration Strategy, both for the prioritization of areas to be restored as well as the goal of restoration. We have made clearer reference to this feature in Project objective as mentioned in the Executive Summary

Scale - We have specified the different scales where the project is being implemented (demonstration landscapes and prioritized territories), among others in Project outline - section demonstration landscapes and prioritized territories.

Prioritization - Reference has been made to the prioritization criteria in ENR (Project outline, section on Current Environmental Situation)

Population characteristics and valuable biodiversity areas have been specified (Project outline - section demonstration landscapes and prioritized territories)

Wording for validation has been changed for better understanding (Project description)

Biodiversity benefits - We included more reference to biodiversity and protected areas in the current situation and how the restoration in the prioritized territories can support their integrity and management. Most of this is in Annex C.

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

a) Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

b) Does it ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?

d) are the relevant stakeholders and their roles adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

9/19/2024

No.

c. No, it would be good to discuss how this builds on 4849 as well as the agrosilvopastoral project that worked in some of the same areas.

In particular, the latter focused on making credit available to farmers and technical assistance. Their results found that they didn't need to pay the full cost of the transition, but that access to credit was a major barrier. Given that revolving loan programs can help stretch limited GEF resources, has this approach been considered?

d. No. Please include some more information about the groups included in the consultations. Also, please include something on the anticipated roles of these different groups. The PIF states that the concept of the project was discussed within the Ministry of Environment and that the regional meetings included representations of indigenous peoples and local communities. It also mentions that a group of national and local institution participated in a workshop in Bogot?. Please ask agency to provide more details on these groups and institutions, and further elaborate on their expected roles and details on plans to engage them during project development.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

c. The project did consider 4849 but had not found much basis to build on (see pg 21) "While some experiences could be included in the participatory restoration project, the present project does not focus on fresh-water ecosystem restoration and Zapatososa is not part of ENR's priority territories".

The GEF supported Agrosilvopastoral project (GEF ID 3574. closed in 2019) focused on mainstreaming biodiversity in sustainable animal husbandry. It has now been listed under past projects funded by GEF that have relevant lessons to be applied in the current project. This particular project had the lower Magdalena valley as one of its intervention areas. While it did not target restoration, it did target avoiding land degradation through good agricultural practices that can be applied in the demonstration landscapes of the current project. In the Participatory Restoration project have not considered blended financing (credit access) at this stage, because the landscape restoration activities as such need proof of concept before their profitability for farmers can be shown. However, in Comp 1 financing mechanisms can emerge among the fiscal and legal incentives foreseen.

d. Please note that a detailed list of categories of stakeholders (and where possible, names of institutions and organizations) and their possible role in the project are presented in Annex H. We have made more clear reference to this annex in the section on Stakeholder Engagement. We have also added as Annex K, the list of participants in the Bogot? workshop.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

a) Is there a concise theory of change that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the expected causal pathways, and the key assumptions underlying these?

b) Are the key outputs of each component defined (where possible)?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No.

b. This project will require behavior change on a large scale by many people. Please include more information on the potential types of support that will be provided to farmers and community members in the target landscapes. It is also unclear if the areas restored will be targeted, contiguous, or scattered across the landscape. How will the project ensure impact of the restoration if scattered?

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

We have updated the graphical and narrative description of the Theory of Change with the new outcomes and the more detailed description of outputs, as presented in the Project Outline and the Project Description. We have also included additional wording in the description of the ToC to better explain the support provided.

We have improved description of Component 2, making clear that the demonstration landscapes are areas that will be fully restored by applying a landscape restoration approach, and not scattered over the prioritized territories. We have also improved explanation of Components 1 and 3, that this experience will be scaled to the territorial level through an enabling environment of good governance and knowledge management and communication (advocacy). We have also included some of this wording in the ToC description.

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No, it would be good to include how this project builds upon investments being made by the Colombian government.

Minor writing issues (no response needed):

- Unclear what "tensors" means.
- "Installed" sounds like for equipment. Perhaps use build/created/supported instead.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

Added paragraph on public investments in "coordination with other projects"

We changed the words `tensor` and `installed`.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

a) Is the institutional setting, including potential executing partners, outlined and a rationale provided?

b) Comments to proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception).

c) is there a description of potential coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area

d) are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No. In Colombia, we would expect that this project is executed by a national entity. The Magdalena project used SGP as a delivery mechanism for small grants which made sense.

a. Executing arrangements are not fully clear. While FAO is listed as executing agency (and mentioned in the LoE), the PIF states that UNEP will have execution functions as well. This may not be an effective IA/EA arrangement.

We are concerned about the institutional arrangements proposed. GEF support is meant to build national capacity. While we understand that FAO is not playing a dual role here, it is still a large UN agency which runs counter to national capacity. Much more explanation for this approach is needed.

Specifically - GEF policies, further explained in the Guidelines on Project and Program Cycle, require that the separation of implementation functions performed by GEF Agencies and execution functions performed by Project Executing Entities is a key feature of the governance of the GEF Partnership and an important aspect of the GEF Minimum Fiduciary Standards.?

See

https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_Guidelines_Project_Program_Cycle_Policy_20200731.pdf. (pages 44-45)

At PIF stage, Agency (?dual?) execution should not be included in the Agency's proposal. Once the Agency has sufficiently progressed in project preparation and if it anticipates a need for Agency execution, the Agency should submit full information and justification for a request for policy exception. This request should come well before submission for CEO Endorsement to give the Agency time to adjust arrangements if not accepted.

b. The OFP letter discusses FAO execution but does not include UNEP execution. We have not cleared the executing arrangements.

c. Project 4849 has closed and submitted a TE. Please ensure that these projects are actually active.

10/21/2024: The proposed implementation/execution arrangement, as requested by the OFP, requires further discussion before CEO endorsement. Please acknowledge the following notes in the response box below and inform the OFP accordingly:

(1) this is an exceptional arrangement and GEF approval at the PIF stage shall not constitute a precedent for future projects, and

(2) we reserve the right to discuss implementation arrangement during PPG and may enter different arrangements at CEO endorsement stage.

10/28/2024: Comments on the Implementation arrangements have been acknowledged and the way forward agreed upon.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

25. October 2024

(1) This is well noted.

(2) This is noted as well. We look forward to the discussion on implementation arrangements with GEF Secretariat during the PPG phase.

14 October 2024

a. The choice of FAO as the executing agency for the project, particularly in conjunction with UNEP as the implementing agency, and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development as the National Responsible Authority is supported by several key points.

Institutional arrangements: The GoC's letter of endorsement explicitly requests UNEP to be the Implementing Agency for the project and FAO its Executing Agency. The GoC's rationale for supporting this collaborative arrangement rests on harnessing the combined technical expertise both agencies bring through their extensive global portfolios and their leading role in the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, as well as their vast experience in the country with thematically relevant initiatives.

The GoC further highlights the operational expediency and flexibility this arrangement will bring in securing the active engagement of a wide variety of national, sub-national and local partners whose direct involvement is embedded in the project's steering and decision-making bodies - as listed in Annex H.

Such entities include, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development as the leader of this initiative and guardian of the National Restoration Strategy, playing a crucial role in project planning and coordination with counterpart agencies, such as, but not limited to: (i) the Rural Development Agency (ADR), (ii) the National Land Agency (ANT), (iii) the Territorial Renewal Agency (ART), (iv) the National Aquaculture and Fisheries Authority (AUNAP), (v) the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA), and (vi) the Colombian Corporation for Agricultural Research (Agrosavia), in addition to the Municipal and Departmental Authorities responsible for territorial planning, water management, conservation areas, and restoration activities, as well as associated NGOs, community based organizations and research institutes operating in the project areas.

Building and capitalizing on local, sub-national and national capacities: Project negotiations to date have centered heavily on multi-partner and institutional engagement at various levels. To this end, the project's management, oversight and decision-making structures will be developed to confer specific roles, responsibilities and accountability to a diverse group of critical counterparts, whose engagement and contributions will be further refined in the PPG.

This will not only ensure that relevant contextual knowledge and technical expertise are fed into project implementation, but that the required coordination and capacities of these varying actors are collectively articulated towards fulfilling agreed upon objectives. While capacities exist, greater effort is required in establishing or activating the mechanisms needed to deliver the functional collaboration and practical coordination among these entities. This is also the rationale behind the UNEP, FAO collaboration as a key feature of the project and a means to optimize and effectively harness existing institutional strengths and develop corresponding capacities towards common goals.

b. UNEP will not play a role in execution (project management). It is rather in a position to play a role in technical support/backstopping. Hence to avoid confusion we have removed the mention of an executing role in the PIF.

c. Potential coordination and cooperation with other initiatives is assessed according to their status. For past or recently closed projects, the emphasis is of course on making the most of lessons learned. Please refer to response to 4.2 as well.

5.4 a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)?

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/19/2024

No.

a. If this project remains a BD majority BD project, we would expect to see higher results.

Indicator 4.4 - This focuses on forest loss avoided. Please explain how this will be done and the high biodiversity value of the forests.

It's unclear how CI 3 measures connectivity. We agree that it's important and welcome attempts to measure and track this, but it's not clear how this is done by the CI.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

a. As mentioned above this is not a BD majority but by far an LD majority project and therefore the targets are considered commensurate and attainable.

Upon careful reconsideration, we should not have included CI 4.4 and have added the respective hectares to 4.3 which is more in line with the proposed activities.

We agree with the review about connectivity measurement under CI3. Although it is important, it is not necessarily part of this CI. Hence, we have eliminated the reference here and will address connectivity during the PPG phase and where to locate its assessment in the project.

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

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

5.6 RISKS

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category?

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No.

a. Please make sure that the text on these accurately reflects the areas where this project will work.

Climate - This should be specific to the areas of the project and how the project can be designed to account for the impacts of climate change.

Under risk table, please provide explanation of the overall risk rating.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

The risk table has been revised adding the specifications requested by the review including detail for Climate and the explanation for the overall rating.

5.7 Qualitative assessment

a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?

b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?

c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No, see other questions.

10/21/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

All other comments have been responded.

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

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with focal area and integrated program strategies and objectives, and/or adaptation priorities?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

See above.

While the alignment with focal area objective LD-2 is correct, the amount that is allocated towards LD-2 is very small (\$565,000), which does not reflect the project objective and component design. The project design indicates that approximately 2/3 of the total resources address objective LD-2, which is landscape restoration. The OFP LoE allocated \$14 million (63% of the requested resources) to LD, which seems much more appropriate.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

Fully agree, please refer to the response above on the same subject that explains the focal area split and has been meanwhile resolved in bilateral consultation with GEF Sec.

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No. Please include information on alignment with the LDN targets and NBSAP (understanding that the NBSAP is under revision). Please be specific.

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

The requested information on alignment with the LDN targets and NBSAP has been added.

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments

9/27/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations, provided?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

See above.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

Responded above.

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Yes.

10/21/2024: Please make sure that the financing requested in the financing tables does not exceed the endorsed amounts as per OFP letter.

Please clarify if a revised letter has been uploaded?

10/28/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

25. October 2024

We have checked the figures again and the financing requested in the financing tables is identical to and does not exceed the endorsed amounts as per OFP letter.

A revised OFP letter has been uploaded.

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's CommentsN/A

Agency's Comments

8.2 Is the PPG requested within the allowable cap (per size of project)? If requested, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Yes.

10/21/2024:

Please make sure that the financing requested in the PPG financing table is in line with the endorsed amounts as per OFP letter.

10/28/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

25. October 2024

The financing requested in the PPG financing table is identical to the endorsed amounts as per OFP letter.

Please note that to be in line with the OFP letter, the amounts per focal area in the PPG financing table reflect the STAR balances available per focal area.

Conversely, if the use of funds as in the project with a 70/30 LD/BD split should be reflected in the PPG table, it would not tally with the OFP letter.

8.3 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?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

Annex B: Endorsements

8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country? (ies) GEF OFP and has the OFP at the time of PIF submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat's Comments

9/27/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/27/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/27/2024

No, the amounts should match the Source of funds from STAR.

10/21/ 2024: Please make sure that the financing requested in the financing tables does not exceed the endorsed amounts as per OFP letter.

Please clarify if an updated OFP endorsement letter has been uploaded to the portal?

10/28/2024: Addressed. New OFP letter uploaded.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

25. October 2024

The financing requested in the financing tables does not exceed the endorsed amounts as per OFP letter.

An updated OFP endorsement letter has been uploaded to the portal.

14 October 2024

The respective corrections have been made in a revised OFP endorsement letter.

8.5 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project to be submitted?

Secretariat's Comments N/A

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Project Location

8.6 Is there preliminary georeferenced information and a map of the project's intended location?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.7 If there are safeguard screening documents or other ESS documents prepared, have these been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No, we note that the project's overall ESS risk is classified as moderate, and UNEP attached the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF). SRIF said that "[a] rigorous environmental and social assessments should be undertaken upon identifications of specific sites. Engage the IPLC (Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities) in free prior informed consent manner while

identifying the alternative sources of improved livelihoods and other project activities.? However, it is not clear what are the plans during the project preparation stage.

- Please provide a plan to conduct an environmental and social assessment and develop an environmental and social risk management plan during the PPG stage.

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- 10/21/2024: Addressed.

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

The project will indeed conduct an environmental and social assessment during PPG. A reference to this has been included under component 4. The specialists at UNEP have cleared the safeguard checklist and indicated that an assessment must be carried out upon identification of specific sites?. While the concept stage of the project cycle indicates the assessment to be carried out, a full plan will be part of preparation activities as more binding engagement and commitments with local partners for the project will only be developed during that stage. Thus the detailed plan for this assessment will be part of the PPG implementation workplan and budget and carried out with a clearer definition of collaboration with local partners, IPLC and minorities applying the guidance from the Safeguard specialists and in accordance with the agency?s and GEF standards and guidance at that instance. Detailed templates from the partners exist and will be applied with the benefit of the detail emanating from PPG assessments on-site including fpic process.

Annex E: Rio Markers

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

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

No, does this project have actions meant to benefit specific threatened species? Is there PES involved?

10/21/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

14 October 2024

There are no actions specifically targeting threatened species.

PES and other conservation finance mechanisms will be considered in the incentives of Component 1.

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) 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 to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

9.1 Is the PIF and PPG (if requested) recommended for technical clearance?

Secretariat's Comments

9/23/2024

Not at this time. Please revise and resubmit. The GEF Secretariat is available for discussion if needed.

10/21/2024: Please address outstanding comments and acknowledge additional comments to be considered by the agency at the time of CEO endorsement below.

10/28/2024: Yes. Program Manager recommends CEO clearance.

Agency's Comments

25. October 2024

All outstanding comments for the PIF stage have been addressed and additional comments to be considered at the time of CEO endorsement have been acknowledged.

14 October 2024

Thank you for the clarifications provided in bilateral consultation. All comments have been addressed and the PIF edited accordingly.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO Endorsement/ Approval

Secretariat's Comments

Regarding the proposed implementation/execution arrangement:

- (1) the proposed arrangement is considered exceptional and GEF approval at the PIF stage shall not constitute a precedent for future projects, and
- (2) GEFSEC reserves the right to discuss implementation arrangement during PPG and may enter different arrangements at CEO endorsement stage.

Agency's Comments

25. October 2024

The comments regarding implementation/execution arrangements have been noted. A response is provided above under 5.3.

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	9/23/2024	
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/21/2024	

PIF Review

Agency Response

Additional Review (as necessary)	10/28/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	
Additional Review (as necessary)	