

Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in the Day and Mabla Mountains

Basic Information

GEF ID

10874

Countries

Djibouti

Project Title

Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in the Day and Mabla Mountains

GEF Agency(ies)

UNDP

Agency ID

UNDP: 6331

GEF Focal Area(s)

Multi Focal Area

Program Manager

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy

PIF

Part I – Project Informatic

Focal area elements

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

The project is developed under the LD1.1 objective on SLM and the BD2.7 objective on protected areas. It is potentially fine, but need further clarifications:

- The proposal is overall aligned with BD-2-7 but (i) the project`s impact and ambition is very local with no clear strategy to scale up, and (ii) the project`s contribution to PA financial sustainability has to be strengthened.
- The project is potentially welcome under the LD1.1 objective on SLM, but further clarifications are needed on the definition of SLM and the way to implement SLM.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. On BD 2-7. The project design (Component 1, Table B Indicative Project Description Summary and Section 3 Proposed Alternative Scenario) was amended, so it now more clearly includes elements (Outcomes 1.1 & 1.2 and Output 1.1) on the national enabling environment and PA financing sustainability that should once consolidated enable upscaling. In addition, Output 3.5 Replication Strategy and Action Plan developed was added. An expansion of the project to include a further third target area to the north – the Acacia forests of the Doda alluvial plain – was equally considered. Noting that GEF SEC equally commented that resources were scarce, with which we agree,

this idea was considered unrealistic and not pursued. These changes were reflected in relevant sections.

2. On LD 1-1. The project design (Component 2, Table B Indicative Project Description Summary and Section 3 Proposed Alternative Scenario) was amended, so it reduces detail in Table B but provides more detail in Section 3.

Indicative project/program description summary

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

May 18, 2022

Addressed.

April 21, 2022

1. Theory of Change, framework, and reformulation: Thanks for the proposed ToC and the revised framework that seems more realistic with 21 outputs (against 34 in the last submission). However, we invite the GEF Agency to develop the assumptions that are needed to justify the proposed pathways. For instance, the level of national capacities, the country ownership and commitment (with domestic finance at one point for instance) seem recurrent difficulties in NRM projects. Another possible assumption is the level of climate change and risks that will impact the proposed interventions. Lastly, the synergy with other partners seems an imperative for a continuity of action and sustainability. Please, adjust.

2. Comments on the table B:

- Component 2:

- Please, detail the expected activities under the output 2.1 related to the advocacy and behavioral strategy.

- About the output 2.1, during the PPG, please use a broad definition of extension services to find the right partners on the ground (extension services, research center, NGO, farmer organizations, Farmer Field Schools...).

- Output 2.9: "water extraction management emplaced": the formulation is not clear and we are not sure the proposed activities are welcome. You need to put any water management activity in the context of SLM. Please, complete.

September 22, 2021

General comments

The project is designed under four components, including 34 outputs, with a very different level of accuracy. There is obviously a problem of strategic reasoning and formulation.

- We recommend including a Theory of Change.
- We recommend taking inspiration from the OECD glossary on key terms in evaluation and result based management (<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/2754804.pdf>) in view of better formulating the outputs and providing specific, measurable formulation, reflecting the expected results and the value for money.
- You need to propose a more coherent result framework with a lower number of outputs, reformulated, simplified, and move the details to the description of the alternative scenario.

Component 1

- The project's contribution to the financial sustainability of the national PA system or at least the two PA specifically targeted by this project is unclear. Output 1.1 states it will "address" the creation of a central PA agency and PA financing mechanism, but no details are provided and it is unclear how, with the limited funding dedicated to component 1, a PA agency and a financing mechanism would be created. Different section of the PIF also allude to what could be the creation of a PES mechanism (section on sustainability and on private sector) but it is not included in the project itself. Besides, output 1.1 appears to duplicate what is planned under the GEF-6 project GEF ID 9215 *Mitigating Key Sector Pressures on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Further Strengthening the National System of Marine Protected Areas in Djibouti* (UNDP). While this GEF-6 project is focused on MPAs, it is set to conduct an "Assessment of the policy and institutional context for PA financing, and of the financial needs for the national PA system, following UNDP's BIOFIN methodology"; "develop a strategy to mobilize new PA financing"; "operationalize the National Environment Fund or of a substitute mechanism with implementation of one PA finance solution", and "build capacity on PA finance and institutionalization"; which are all relevant beyond MPAs.
- We would welcome a project contribution at the level of the PA system and not just the two targeted PAs. Please make sure than the revised PIF includes an output dedicated to ensuring PA financially sustainability with a clear underlying strategy and tangible results to be further defined during PPG, The PIF should articulates a clear increment on this topic compared to the GEF-6 project and builds synergies with it. If the development of a PES scheme is indeed to be part of the project, please include it explicitly in the design, addressing the four potential threats to PES effectiveness identified by GEF's STAP: <http://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/stap/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Payments-for-Environmental-Services-and-GEF.pdf>
- We take note of the low baseline, but several outputs look like PPG studies or basic assessments. We do not see the starting point, the role of cofinancing, and the added value of the GEF: output 1.1 assessment, output 1.3 monography, 1.4 rapid assessment.
- Output 1.2: "procedures to strengthen enforcement of existing laws are developed and applied with the participation of competent authorities" needs to be explained and reformulated. We do not understand the nature of the work behind and the expected result.
- Output 1.3: the biodiversity monography does not seem to be linked to, let alone acted upon in, any other part of the project. Please

clarify how it would be used in the project or remove.

- Output 1.5: explain the legislative or regulatory anchorage of these PA committees. Multi-stakeholder platforms are potentially welcome, but the enabling environment needs to be clarified, as well as the sustainability aspects, once the project will have closed.
- Output 1.8: the formulation sounds like an addition of activities. To be reformulated.
- Output 1.10: to be reformulated and clarified: are the village committee the same than the PA committees in the output 1.5?

Component 2

- Output 2.1: "project launch and communications, etc" is not an acceptable output. Revise the formulation and the contents.
- Output 2.2: Please, revise the formulation as an output, reflecting the expected result and the nature of activities.
- Output 2.3: "assessment of water extraction and hydrological data" sounds as a baseline activity. To be revised.
- Output 2.4: "Integrated watershed/landscape restoration and management plans" are potentially welcome, but please, revise and simplify the formulation in a concise manner reflecting the expected results; transfer the rest of the text in the description of activities in the text.
- Output 2.5: "technical sheets disseminated" is not an acceptable formulation. Here there is a real concern about the definition of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and the way SLM will be developed on the ground.
- Outputs 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 need to be reconceived and reformulated. We are seeing a list of activities without a logical reasoning and a GEF reasoning (baseline, added value, generation of global environment benefits). All activities related to stoves, stove supplies, fuel efficient biomass stoves are not welcome. These activities seem stand alone, isolated, without a demonstration of the added value, and without a thinking about the sustainability issues. To be revised.
- There seems to be no explicit output related to sustainable or alternative livelihood interventions, when the stakeholder section of the PIF mentions the development of "green income-generating activities". Please clarify if these refer simply to 2.13 - 2.14 (agro-ecological intensification of livestock farming) and 2.15 (community gardens) and explain how they would be sufficient to incentivize a general shift to PA acceptance and sustainable practices.

Output 2.17: Please clarify:

- In the baseline what is the national environment fund, its current status, mandate (notably in relation to PA funding), funding sources and operations?
- In the alternative scenario, what tangible increment the project will bring to the national environment fund.
- Please note that GEFID 9215 *Mitigating Key Sector Pressures on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Further Strengthening the National System of Marine Protected Areas in Djibouti* (UNDP) is already set to "operationalize the National Environment Fund or of a substitute mechanism with implementation of one PA finance solution". Clarify the complementarity and remove potential duplication of activities.

Component 3

Output 3.4: Please clarify the project's plans/strategy to institutionalize the training that will be developed so that they will be

- Output 3.4: Please clarify the project's plans/strategy to institutionalize the training that will be developed so that they will be replicated, upscaled beyond the project lifetime.

Agency Response

UNDP – 12 May 2022

1. A section detailing the key assumptions underpinning project design was added to the PIF (§60).
2. Noting that the activities related to advocacy and behavioural change had been developed in different sections of the PIF in the prior resubmission (responding to GEF SEC comments), the description of Output 2.1 (in the description of the alternative scenario) was now expanded to reflect these and add further details (see §81-82). In line with prior review comments asking for concise outputs, Table B was however not expanded to reflect these activities as well; the addition under the description of the alternative scenario was deemed sufficient.
3. We understand the comments regarding extension services refers to Output 2.5 (not Output 2.1). The comment was added to the description of Output 2.5 in the description of the alternative scenario (§87) and will be heeded during the PPG.
4. Output 2.9 was slightly revised in Table B and in the description of the alternative scenario (§91), to reflect the relevance of the water management measures for SLM – the recovery of perennial vegetation.

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. General comments. A Theory of Change was prepared and added to the PIF, beneath §55. The entire project design was revised in process: threats were summarised, barriers were reformulated, incremental cost analysis were amended, etc. The project framework was amended revised and streamlined, leaving 21 (4+10+5+2) mostly reformulated Outputs, addressing the gaps identified and moving excessive details into the project description as requested.

Component 1

2. PA Agency, PA Finance and Duplication with GEF-6 project GEF ID 9215. The project design was amended, it now more clearly includes new Outcomes 1.1 and 1.2 and the new Output 1.1 on the national enabling environment and PA financing sustainability, indicating that the PA Agency will be created under a new PA umbrella law. Regarding the work towards PA Finance: there is a minor duplication with the GEF-6 project in terms of expected outcomes but i) the GEF-6 project is now not expected to deliver all its stipulated outcomes, and ii) the new project will still build on its achievements and offer continuity: while the GEF-6 project is now expected to only prepare the relevant Law to legally establish the National Environment Fund, and identify potential financing sources, the new project will operationalise the National Environment Fund, and work on enabling revenue generation from new sources to be identified from the ongoing PA finance solution (under baseline project #9215) study and during the PPG, but which might include concessions from private sector companies exploiting natural resources (e.g. water bottling) and increased income from EIAs.
3. Contribution at PA system level. Please see answer #1 under "1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?" and the answer #2 above describing the synergy and increment. This was

in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions; and the answer #2 above describing the synergy and increment. This was reflected in the project description and Incremental Cost Analysis.

4. PES. The notion of PES was removed from the PIF throughout.

5. Output 1.1 (Assessment of the PA legal and regulatory framework) was maintained in a reformulated form in the description of the new Output 1.1, to strengthen the national-level dimension under Component 1, which was requested by GEF SEC.

6. Output 1.2 (Procedures to strengthen enforcement of existing laws are developed and applied with the participation of competent authorities) was removed.

7. Outputs 1.3 (Biodiversity monography) and 1.4 (Rapid biodiversity assessment) were removed.

8. Output 1.5 (Local PA committees). Article 6 of the 2004 PA Law communities are to be closely involved in the management of protected areas ("Les communautés locales sont étroitement associées à la gestion des Aires Protégées"). However, there is no legal basis for formal PA committees (or for participatory management or community management) as yet in Djibouti. Noting that similar committees have been created in related situations, e.g., in past rangeland management interventions, including in the targeted Day Forest. Creating the legal anchorage for PA management committees was therefore added to the reformulated Output 1.1. Sustainability of these PA committees is part of the wider sustainability to be achieved by the project – via the PA Agency and finance generation. The creation of local PA committees was now merged into the landscape management committees under the new Output 2.3.

9. Output 1.8 (PAs equipped to ensure at least basic operations). We do not understand the comment, these are standard items/infrastructure/staffing required for basic PA management, not activities. Maintained in revised form as Output 1.3 and described in detail in the project description.

10. Output 1.10 (Ecoguards and village committees are trained). Yes these committees were the same as those under Output 1.5. Maintained in a revised form as Output 1.4.

Component 2

11. Prior Output 2.1 (Project launch and communications) was reformulated and merged into a new Output 2.1 on the implementation of an advocacy and behavioural change strategy.

12. Output 2.2 (Technical and institutional capacities) was reformulated and expanded into a new Output 2.5, to reflect also the concerns expressed elsewhere on the nature of SLM and required capacity development.

13. Output 2.3 (Assessment of water extraction and hydrological data) was moved as an activity under the new Output 2.9 on water extraction management; there is no baseline assessment and also insufficient time and resources during the PPG, while the data would be useful if not required for watershed planning.

14. Prior Output 2.4 (Integrated watershed/landscape restoration and management plans) was reformulated into the revised Output 2.4, and excessive detail was shifted into the project description.

15. Prior Output 2.5 (Technical sheets disseminated) was removed, yet SLM interventions were further developed in other outputs.

16. Prior Outputs 2.7-2.16. Prior Output 2.16 on stoves was removed. Other outputs were revised and streamlined in the context of the restructuring of the Component 2 outputs. The rationale was further elaborated in the project description and incremental cost analysis, reflecting the Theory of Change.

17. A new umbrella output (Output 2.10 Alternative sustainable livelihood, women empowerment programmes, microfinance platform) was formulated that brings together expanded interventions on livelihood. To better leverage the expected shifts to sustainability, further Outputs were strengthened such on agricultural extension and training, and a behavioural change strategy was added to the revised Output 2.1. We

considered also to separate out the project's Community Benefits & Livelihoods aspects in a separate Component, but this was discarded as it would have removed the mainstreaming of livelihood benefits across several of the Component 2 outputs.

18. Prior Output 2.17. This output on the National Environment Fund was removed, while it was given more overarching importance in the new Output 1.1. A baseline description of the National Environment Fund was added (§32-33, §63), and the increment achieved under this new project more clearly described in the project description and Incremental Cost Analysis. Please see also the related answers #2 and #3 in this response section above.

Component 3

19. Sustainability of trainings. The National Environment Fund was always meant to finance continued trainings and knowledge management, which will assure this continuity once the NEF is fully established legally (GEF-6 project) as well as operational and distributing resources (this new project). This was now added to the reformulated Output 1.1 (see the activities under the project description §75) to lock in this expectation.

Co-financing

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 22, 2022

Addressed at PIF stage. To be confirmed at CEO endorsement.

- The explanation of how investment mobilized was identified is insufficient. Please describe the definition/ approach used to differentiate between "investment mobilized" and "recurrent expenditures". For further details, please refer to the Co-Financing Guidelines (http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Cofinancing_Guidelines.pdf)

C. Indicative sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type

| Sources of Co-financing | Name of Co-financier | Type of Co-financing | Investment Mobilized | Amount(\$) |
|------------------------------|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Recipient Country Government | MEDD | In-kind | Recurent expenditures | 1,800,000.00 |
| Recipient Country Government | MAWFRM&B (Directions (Desage, Forests, Agriculture)) | In-kind | Recurent expenditures | 3,000,000.00 |
| Donor Agency | WFP - Food for Assets | Grant | Investment mobilized | 1,200,000.00 |
| | | | Total Project Cost(\$) | 6,000,000.00 |

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

WFP will allocate resources specifically to support the project, so such investment in the area of topic was foreseen.

- We take note of the relatively low cofinancing, but welcome the cofinancing from the WFP.
- Is there any chance to increase this cofinancing, including from UNDP?

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. The explanation of how the contribution from WFP was categorised as investment mobilized was expanded under PIF Table C.
2. The Government has indicated that under the World Bank / Horn of Africa "Groundwater for Resilience Program", which is under preparation and will work on water mobilization and watershed management in the wider target region, USD 3,000,000 can be considered additional co-financing. The co-financing in PIF Tables A, B and C as well as the project baseline investment description (§68) were amended. UNDP is not in the position to provide any co-financing.

GEF Resource Availability

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes

Agency Response

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes

Agency Response

The LDCs under the principle of equitable access?

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Project Preparation Grant

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

May 18, 2022

Addressed.

April 21, 2022

Please, include the letter mentioned below in the next submission.

September 22, 2021

Yes

There is a decision from UNDP to execute the PPG. We can understand this modality to optimize time and resources management and tight deadlines. However, PPGs are also an opportunity to increase country ownership and capacities. In any case, it should not be an unilateral decision. It should be requested by the country (letter) and reviewed by the GEF Secretariat.

Agency Response

UNDP – 12 May 2022

The GEF OFP Letter requesting that the PPG should be executed by UNDP will be included in this resubmission.

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

The Government requests/agrees that the PPG should be executed by UNDP, and the GEF OFP will submit the required letter to GEF SEC.

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed. To be confirmed at CEO endorsement, as well as the risks of double counting.

September 22, 2021

- Project mentions that it will address Component 3: Area of Land Restored, specifying that "Native mountain forest restored over 100 ha inside each PA" - but this Indicator and target is not included in Core Indicator table. Please include.

- Targets to be confirmed after revision of the result framework.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. The core indicator and tentative target of 2 x 100 ha of forest land restoration had not been added to avoid double counting, because these areas are within the two targeted PAs. However, following the request, the values were now added to the Core Indicators tables in the PIF Annex and the summary in Table F.

2. Please see answer #1 under "1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?". The targets were maintained. An expansion of the project to include a further third target area to the north – the Acacia forests of the Doda alluvial plain – was considered. Noting that GEF SEC equally commented that resources were scarce, with which we agree, this idea was considered unrealistic and not pursued.

Project/Program taxonomy

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes

Agency Response

art II – Project Justification

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

- The PIF notes that security issues has restricted access to the Mabla Mountain Forest and the risk section acknowledges that these still exist. Please clarify whether the situation now enables work to be safely carried out there, including by permanent PA staff.
- Paras 37 and 38 do not present barriers, but rather threats and root causes. Please move them to appropriate section to tighten the barrier analysis.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. Mabla & Security. This risk assessment dated back to when the predecessor PIF was prepared several years ago. The Government confirms the situation has now been resolved, that the insurgency has subsided, and that there are no more risks for either national or international project personnel and visitors. Moreover, the government has invested in local development including schools and there is interest in developing tourism. Work can be safely conducted in the area, including by PA staff. The security issue was therefore removed from the risk description in the risk matrix.
2. Paras 37-38. These were edited and moved into the description of ecosystem health and threats (§9-11).

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

- Please clarify what is the National Environment Fund in the baseline.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

A section was added to the PIF (§32-22) providing the requested information.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed (See item 2, part I though).

September 22, 2021

- Please provide the theory of change (ToC) of the project. While there are diverse ways of presenting a ToC, key issues are to communicate clearly, through a diagram and a narrative, the causal pathways by which interventions are expected to have the desired effect and the justification that these causal pathways are necessary and sufficient. Please refer to STAP's guidance: <https://www.stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/theory-change-primer>

- Please in particular explain in the theory of change why the project's interventions are deemed sufficient to ensure a lasting shift from practices that degrade the environment to the adoption of SLM practices and the acceptance of the PAs. We notably recommend referring to STAP's recent advisory document on behavior change and design a more comprehensive strategy to foster behavior change: <https://www.stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/why-behavioral-change-matters-gef-and-what-do-about-it>

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

A Theory of Change underpinning the project's rationale was prepared and added to the PIF, beneath §55. The entire project design was revised in process: threats were summarised, barriers were reformulated, outcomes and outputs and incremental cost analysis were amended, etc.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

- The proposal can be aligned with LD1.1, but the definition of SLM and the logics of intervention need to be revised.

- The proposal is aligned with BD-2-7 but the project's contribution to PA financial sustainability has to be strengthened.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

Please see the answers and actions taken in reply to the comments above under “2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?”

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

To be revised when a Theory of Change will be available, both to justify the added value of SLM and the added value compared to GEFID 9215 Mitigating Key Sector Pressures on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Further Strengthening the National System of Marine Protected Areas in Djibouti (UNDP).

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

The Incremental Cost Reasoning was significantly revised and expanded in response to this comment here and others in the Review Sheet.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

The scale of the project's impact, as reflected in core indicator targets, is very small compared to the funding request (24,000 ha in total), especially as there is little national-level policy or enabling environment work. Please revise or thoroughly justify the low cost-effectiveness of the proposal. If targets and interventions were to be kept at or around the current scale, please embed in the project's design a stronger replication/up-scaling strategy.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

As indicated in answer #1 under "1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?" and answer #2 under "6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding Guidelines?", this target (24,000 ha) was maintained yet the project design (Component 1, Table B Indicative Project Description Summary and Section 3 Proposed Alternative Scenario) was amended, so it now more clearly includes elements (Outcomes 1.1 & 1.2 and Output 1.1) on the national enabling environment and PA financing sustainability that should once consolidated enable upscaling. In addition, we added Output 3.5 Replication Strategy and Action Plan developed.

An expansion of the project to include a further third target area to the north – the Acacia forests of the Doda alluvial plain – was equally considered. Noting that GEF SEC equally commented that resources were scarce, with which we agree, this idea was considered unrealistic and not pursued.

It is moreover noted that the target area / funding ratio does not seem unreasonably small compared to other recently approved projects, such as for instance GEF ID 10243 Ethiopia: c. 500,000 ha for a USD 20 million IP FOLUR project; or GEF ID 9599 Djibouti: 75,000 ha for a USD 3.3 million IP LD-only project.

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

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

to be revised after revision of the ToC and the result framework, notably on innovation.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

The section on “innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up” was revised and expanded in response to this comment here and others in the Review Sheet.

Project/Program Map and Coordinates

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes, tentative and approximative areas are mapped from a Google Earth map, including geographical coordinates.

To be confirmed at CEO endorsement

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

This comment will be well heeded during the PPG.

Stakeholders

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

- Please provide information in the PIF on the consultations that have been carried out to formulate this PIF.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

A section was added to the PIF (§120-123) providing the requested information.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

Insufficient.

- Some further indicative details should be provided in terms of how the project intends to contributing to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment as indicated, including (i) closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; (ii) improving women's participation and decision-making and (iii) generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

- We understand that gender issues will be improved at PPG, but except the section 3, gender and especially inequality issues are absent of the reasoning, the result framework. To be revised.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. Further elements were added to Section 3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (§125-129) in the PIF.
2. References to gender and women empowerment were added to several Outputs in Table B (Indicative Project Description Summary) and reflected in the Theory of Change.

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

OK at PIF level. to be developed during the PPG

September 22, 2021

-The name of a Water bottling company, active in the area of the Day and Mabla Mountains, is mentioned. However, if we are welcoming the idea of a partnership, there is no details about eventual contacts or mechanisms. Could it be possible to elaborate and clarify the level of discussion, beyond a simple intention?

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

No exchanges have taken place regarding the project with water bottling companies at this stage. However, the government has firm plans to engage the private sector and will mobilise Eau de Tadjoura as well as further water bottling companies active in the target region, to regulate their water extraction and charge fees for land management. Outreach will be initiated by the government during the PPG, when the scope of partnerships will be clarified. Several sections in the PIF were slightly edited (§76, §87, §112, §130, Stakeholder Table).

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

- The list of risks seems quite generic. To be completed under a revised Theory of Change.

-The climate risk assessment is not adequate. Please see STAP guidance on climate risk screening ([link below](#)) and provide at least a basic climate risk screening at PIF stage. At a minimum, at PIF stage, the climate risks should be identified, listed and described. This can include:

a.) Outlining the key aspects of the climate change projections/scenarios at the project location (or as close to it with data available), which are relevant for the type of intervention being financed (e.g. changes in temperatures, rainfalls, increased flooding, sea level rise, saltwater acquirer contamination, increased soil erosion, etc).

b.) Time horizon if feasible/data available (e.g. up to 2050). Please refer to list of examples from STAP guidance.

c.) Listing key potential hazards for the project that are related to the aspects of the climate scenarios listed above (describe how the climate scenarios identified above are likely to affect the project, during 2020-2050).

d.) Describing plans for climate change risk assessment and mitigation measures during PPG.

(<https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/Climate%20Risk%20Screening%20web%20posting.pdf>)

-The COVID analysis is not adequate. Please note that the GEF expects all new PIFs and CEO Endorsements to demonstrate a strategy or action framework for the COVID-19 pandemic. This should include an analysis of emergent “risks” and “opportunities” relative to specific context for the project. Please refer to "Project Design and Review Considerations in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis and the Mitigation of Future Pandemics" (<https://www.thegef.org/documents/project-design-and-review-considerations-response-covid-19-crisis-and-mitigation-future>) and elaborate accordingly in relevant sections of the PIF.

-The Financial risk on PA funding is only addressed from the project’s contribution to cost reduction. Please revise in line with the revisions to the project’s contribution on PA financial sustainability.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

The section on risks was expanded and risks were reviewed to reflect the changes in project design and the underpinning Theory of Change. This includes:

1. Review of all the risks in the Risk Table, as indicated.
2. Climate Risks. A section with further elements was added to PIF Section 5. “Risks” (§144-158) providing the requested information. A climate risk already previously identified in the SESP in Annex was edited in response to the deepened analysis.
3. COVID. A new sub-section with a detailed analysis of COVID-related risks and opportunities was added to the PIF (§131-143) providing the requested information. Risk #8 in the main risk table in this section was edited in response to this analysis.
4. Financial risk on PA funding. The financial risk to project success was expanded in the risk table.

Coordination

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

May 18, 2022

Addressed.

April 21 2022

- Thanks to keep the Audit Checklist in the submission that needs indeed to be present at PIF level.

September 22, 2021

- "Other Executing partner: is missing in the portal, part I, Project information. In the letter of endorsement, it is clearly specified that the project will be executed by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. Please, amend.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Part I: Project Information" with a search icon. The form contains the following fields and values:

| | |
|--|--|
| GEF ID 10874 | Project Type FSP |
| Type of Trust Fund SFT | Project Title Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in the Day and Maba Mountains |
| Country Sobnut | Agency(ies) UNDP |
| Other Executing Partner(s) [Redacted] | Executing Partner Type Government |

Subject: Endorsement for the Full-Size Project "Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in the Day and Maba Mountains"

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Djibouti, I confirm that the above project proposal (a) is in accordance with my government's national priorities and our commitment to the relevant global environmental conventions; and (b) was discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points.

I am pleased to endorse the preparation of the above project proposal with the support of the GEF Agency(ies) listed below. If approved, the project will be prepared and implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. I request the GEF Agency to provide a copy of the project document before it is submitted to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement.

- With the robust GEF/LDCF/UNDP portfolio in the country since the SIP and the NAPA would have expected an short analysis of lessons and best practices, notably on project arrangements and partnerships. See GEFID 3529, 5332, 3408, 10051, 9215, and 9599.

- Please, use the GEF terminology related to Implementing and Executing Agencies.

- We note the execution role proposed for IA. The implementation and execution roles on GEF projects are meant to be separate per policy and guidelines. The GEFSEC will analyze any requests for dual role playing by an agency at the time of CEO endorsement and only approve those cases that it deems warranted on an “exceptional” basis. We strongly encourage the agency to look at third party options as a preferred way forward. We also strongly encourage the agency to discuss any and all options for execution that do not include the government with the GEFSEC early in the PPG phase.

- Please remove references to any dual role to be played by the IA at this PIF stage. While, we may consider such a request, the final decision will be taken at the review of the endorsement of this project. Please, understand that the technical clearance and inclusion of this project in the Work Program does not mean that we are approving this request.

- The Audit checklist is expected at CEO endorsement. It is premature to include it, especially with recommendations related to direct execution.

Agency Response

UNDP – 12 May 2022

Noted. The GEF Checklist prepared and signed in September 2021 will be joined to the resubmission again.

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. The Executing Agency (Ministry for Environment and Sustainable Development, Directorate for Environment and Sustainable Development) was added to the indicated field in the GEF Portal.
2. Several of these projects had already been described in the PIF in the past baseline or future baseline sections, see #3529 in §42, #5332 in §43, #9215 in §63. These were revised to add relevant details, and a few further project descriptions were added to the PIF (the requested #3408 in §41 and #5021 in §41; and the additional #10180 in §65). A short summary of key lessons was added in the Knowledge Management section (§175). The MEDD/UNDP GEF-6 CCM project #10051 Promoting a Better Access to Modern Energy Services through Sustainable Mini-grids and Hybrid Technologies in Djibouti was not considered relevant for the project and not included.
3. GEF terminology regarding the GEF Executing Agency was added to the PIF.
- 4 & 5. The paragraph of concern (§83 in the original PIF) explaining the Government’s request for execution support (i.e., a dual role) by UNDP, was deleted from the PIF.
6. The GEF Audit Checklist in recent submissions had to be included already at PIF stage; we recognize this new request from GEF SEC and will withdraw the GEF Checklist and resubmit an updated version only with the CEO Endorsement Request, after due analysis of options for the implementation arrangements and discussions with GEF SEC.

Consistency with National Priorities

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

May 18, 2022

Addressed.

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

To be accurate (para 171), Djibouti will have access up to a grant of \$91,324 (\$100,000 with the Agency fees) to produce the 2022 report to UNCCD and capacity building activities.

September 22, 2021

- Reference is made to the main strategic plans, including Vision Djibouti 2035 and the NBSAP (2017).
- Several of these plans are relatively old (UNCCD NAP, 2000). This project may be a opportunity to invite Djibouti taking part in GEF financed enabling activities, as those under preparation with UNCCD.
- There is a mention of the Bonn challenge, but as far as we know, Djibouti has not made any pledge to the Bonn Challenge. Please, clarify.
- We understand that there is a national strategy for the Great Green Wall. We would like to get your attention that the development of this project under this strategy may influence the future implementation modes. To be clarified.

Agency Response

UNDP – 12 May 2022

Paragraph 175 was updated in line with these comments.

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

1. The national Implementing Partner (GEF: Executing Agency), the MEDD, is aware of the opportunities to work under GEF Enabling Activities and update in particular the UNCCD NAP, for which it has already requested USD 100,000 in support – which was added to the PIF (§171). The update of the NAP is hence not included in the scope of the here-proposed project.
2. The paragraph of concern (§92 in the original PIF) with the reference to the Bonn Challenge, was deleted from the PIF.
3. Regarding the Great Green Wall: the MEDD is also the national focal point for GGW policy and interventions; integration between the here-proposed project and GGW workstreams is therefore assured. An organigramme was added to the PIF in the Annex, as well as lines explaining this in the Stakeholder table (row MAWFHMR) and in Section 7. “Consistency with National Priorities” (§132). However, the role of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Husbandry and Marine Resources in the project as well as in GGW implementation may need to be strengthened. The PPG will give this due consideration, noting that the primary intervention on the GGW will be implemented under a MEDD/FAO GCF-funded project.

Knowledge Management

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021.

- See comments on the result framework and the component3.

Please, provide information on the following points: 1) how existing lessons informed the project concept and plan, 2) plans to learn from ongoing relevant projects and initiatives, 3) proposed tools and methods for knowledge exchange, learning and collaboration, 4) proposed knowledge outputs to be produced and shared with stakeholders, 5) a discussion on how knowledge and learning will contribute to overall project impact and sustainability, and 6) plans for strategic communications.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

PIF Section 8 "Knowledge Management" was revised and expanded including with a section to reflect better on the lessons from past projects.

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 21, 2022

Addressed.

September 22, 2021

We note that ESS states that there is a risk for the project to lead to physical displacement, including of IPLCs. Please confirm that the project will be designed to ensure that it will not lead to physical displacement.

Agency Response

UNDP - 13 Apr 2022

The Government of Djibouti confirms that this project will be designed and implemented in such a way that it will not lead to physical displacement. Nevertheless, it is a best practice safeguards approach to identify any potential risks, such that these can be appropriately managed (prevented in this case) – the risk was therefore maintained in the PIF.

art III – Country Endorsements

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes

Agency Response

Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

NA

Agency Response

EFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

May 18, 2022

The PIF is recommended for clearance and inclusion in the Work Program.

April 21, 2022

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

September 22, 2021

The PIF cannot be recommended yet. Please address the comments above.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

/iew Dates

PIF Review Agency Response

| | |
|---|------------------|
| First Review | 9/22/2021 |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 4/21/2022 |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | 5/18/2022 |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | |
| Additional Review (as necessary) | |

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval