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## An Inclusive Approach for Harnessing Marine Ecosystem Services and Transforming to Sustainable Blue Economy in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (HESBERSGA)

### Basic Information

**GEF ID**

11050

**Countries**

Regional (Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen)

**Project Title**

An Inclusive Approach for Harnessing Marine Ecosystem Services and Transforming to Sustainable Blue Economy in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (HESBERSGA)

**GEF Agency(ies)**

UNEP

**Agency ID**

**GEF Focal Area(s)**

International Waters

**Program Manager**

Leah Karrer

# 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

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes, the project is eligible under IW funding. However, please explain the focus of this project, indicate fisheries will be addressed separately in future project, and note plans to collaborate.

### Agency's Comments Agency response 21.10.2022

This has now been added in the text under baseline Projects of the PIF.

## 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

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes.

### Agency's Comments

### 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

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes. During PPG please: 1) clarify Component 3 so that clear if addressing financing, governance and/or management measures; and 2) indicate that 1% of funding will go toward IWLEARN.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. Please address the following comments.

#### *Objective*

IPO & PD: The objective as presented in the IPO is clear; however in the Project Description (PD), it is less clear. The first paragraph in the PD highlights carbon emissions yet the project components, outcomes and outputs are not related to climate change. Further, the second paragraph under PD highlights ports and emergency procedures, yet these aspects are also not reflected in the project components, outcomes and outputs.

In addition the fourth paragraph in the PD lists items the SAP will consider, including hot spot priorities in the NAPs and mapping capacity building, which are not noted in the IPO or component-specific PD.

#### *Component 1:*

Indicative Project Overview table (IPO): Outcome 1.1 needs to reflect the TDA. Please add “based on analysis of situation” or similar. Output 1.1.1, which is updating the TDA, needs to be clear that it will examine not only the ecological, but also the economic, sociocultural, and governance situation. Output 1.1.3 needs to clearly state that the SAP will be signed by at least one relevant minister per country.

Project Description section (PD): The description of Component 1 needs to reflect the points in the table, including the emerging issues.

#### *Component 2:*

IPO & PD: It is unclear how the frameworks and action plans are distinct from the SAP. The PD notes “this component will strengthen regional coordination” which is the purpose of the SAP. The PD also notes efforts to work with countries. If the difference is that Component 1 is regional while Component 2 is focused on the national scale, then that needs to be stated. Please clarify. If this component is meant to be regional, then it needs to be clear how the proposed activities are different from SAP development. The outcomes and outputs need to be revised accordingly.

IPO: From the Outcome 2.1 statement it seems this component is focused on measures to ensure healthy ecosystems while pursuing economic development. Outputs 2.1.3, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 pursue measures related to pollution, MPAs and ICZM/MSP. Output 2.1.2 is a specific assessment of SBEs. Why is the focus on businesses instead of examining the broader context of national ecological, economic, sociocultural and governance aspects? Is the intent to only focus the project on SBEs in which case that needs to be clear and other aspects unrelated to SBEs removed (e.g. MPAs, ecological connectivity).

Given the importance of climate change as noted in the Project Rationale section, why aren't climate change measures included?

Can the national accounting system (NAS) be moved to after the measures so that the framework first focuses on sustainability measures and then incorporated ecosystem services into NAS? Otherwise odd to first have national accounting noting before noting any actual management efforts.

PD: The text needs to be edited to be consistent with the IPO. For example, the text notes this component will build monitoring capacity, yet this aspect is not in the IPO and seems more appropriate for other components, particularly Component 4. The IPO also notes accounting, pollution and an assessment, which are not mentioned in the PD text.

### *Component 3*

IPO: Similar to the first comment on Component 2, this component, which includes "...regional roadmap...", seems duplicative with the SAP in Component 1. And if Component 2 is developing national plans, then this Component 3 ("national...action plans") is duplicative. Please clarify the intent of Component 3, Outcome 3.1 and Output 3.1.1 and Output 3.1.2 so that they are not duplicative with Components 1 or 2. One possibility is to focus Component 3 around Outcome 3.2 public and private sector partnerships, incentives for investments, and innovative financing, which are reflected in outputs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. and move Outcome 3.1.1 and Outputs 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 into Component 2 if national or into Component 1 if regional.

Output 3.2.1 incentives seem focused on pollution. The project is also addressing MPAs, ICZM/MSP and possibly climate change so these aspects need to be included.

Output 3.2.2 is focused on strengthening capacities – is that capacity building? If so, that would seem appropriate for Component 4.

### *Component 4*

Please ensure IWLEARN is allocated 1% of the budget.

PD: The knowledge management aspects are only focused on SBE products, tools and support services. The project is addressing other aspects. Please expand.

### *Overall*

In short, it seems that Component 1 is TDA & SAP/regional plans; Component 2 is national plans and coordination; Component 3 is private sector engagement, including innovative financing; and Component 4 is knowledge management, communication, and M&E. If not, please edit for clarity and consistency.

## **Agency's Comments**

### **Agency response 21.10.2022**

The above have been addressed in the Indicative Project overview table

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

## Secretariat's Comments

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. The implications of the project activities for women and efforts to engage women in the project are not discussed. There only is reference to the initial analysis in Component 1 examining gender mainstreaming as an emerging issue.

The knowledge management explanation is rather limited. There is no clear description of "c) how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments, lessons, and experiences in the country/region". Please elaborate further on key lessons and experiences in the country and region from five listed projects.

Monitoring and evaluation is noted as part of Component 4, but plans are not explained. Please elaborate.

Please prepare and upload a short gender analysis / assessment as a supporting document.

The new PIF template provides a separate component dedicated to funds allocated to M&E. It seems the agency included activities related to M&E in Component 4. We would kindly request the agency to provide financial information on M&E as a separate component and add the information on the expected outputs and outcomes.

## Agency's Comments

### Agency response 21.10.2022

Considering that a comprehensive gender analysis is not available for the specific SBE sectors and activities foreseen under this project at this time, such data will be gathered and assessed with our partners and participating countries during the project preparation phase (PPG) to build a baseline initial gender assessment and ensure more gender-sensitive contributions throughout the project. A specific Gender Action Plan (GAP) (with clear timelines, responsible parties, indicators, and budget allocations) will be developed during the preparation of the full project proposal. The GAP will ensure that project results are achieved with gender-sensitive targets, and that environmental benefits are distributed inclusively across the project activities.

**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**

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes, the components are adequately funded.

**Agency's Comments****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**

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

**Agency's Comments****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**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. From the stakeholder annex it seems only OFPs and other government contacts were consulted, not the private sector and CSOs. Further, how the various stakeholders will be engaged in the project was not articulated. Also please provide a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations.

### **Agency's Comments**

#### **Agency response 21.10.2022**

A table has been added under the respective section on stakeholder involvement.

One of the main conclusions of consultations and motivation by participating countries and partners for the development of the proposed HEBSBERGA project is the critical need for targeted and in-depth assessments of the different SBE sectors and the involvement of end users, such as for the private sector, in them.

## **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**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. Please see previous comments under question #3. These points need to be considered in revising the Theory of Change diagram to reflect the IPO and PD.

**Agency's Comments****Agency response 21.10.2022**

Theory of change diagram revised

**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**

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

**Agency's Comments****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**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. The institutional setting is not described beyond identifying PERSGA as the executing partner. It would be expected that the governments from each country would be directly engaged. Please clarify and elaborate on roles and responsibilities. Coordination plans with other GEF projects also need to be described if there are any.

#### **Agency's Comments**

**Agency response 21.10.2022**

Institutional setting now revised

**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**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. The MPA estimates are clear although will need clarification during PPG. Given the geographic focus is the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, Indicator 7 Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management should have a value as well as indicators 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3.

The explanation of the methodological approach notes that fisheries will be moved to more sustainable levels yet this is not indicated in the project activities and in fact is anticipated as a separate project. Pollution, however, is expected to be addressed. Therefore, reduced levels of hazardous chemicals and/or plastic pollution should be considered and noted in the indicators and subindicators.

#### **Agency's Comments**

##### **Agency response 21.10.2022**

The comment has been well noted on MPAs.

Regarding the values for indicator 9 on reducing hazardous chemicals/plastic pollution, these have not been able to be added at this stage but will be elaborated during PPG.

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

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

### **5.6 RISKS**

- a) Are climate risks and other main risks relevant to the project described and addressed within the project concept design?
- b) Are the key risks that might affect the project preparation and implementation phases identified and adequately rated?
- 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

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(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

### Agency's Comments

#### 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

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes, although the project plans require clarification as noted in earlier comments.

### Agency's Comments

#### 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

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

### Agency's Comments

**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

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

### Agency's Comments

**7 D. Policy Requirements**

**7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?**

### Secretariat's Comments

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. The relevant stakeholders need to be identified, including from the private sector, and an explanation needs to be provided as to how they will be engaged in the project.

### Agency's Comments

**Agency response 21.10.2022**

Now revised

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

7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during EIP development, including dates of these consultations, provided:

### Secretariat's Comments

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. Please provide a list of was consulted and when.

### Agency's Comments

Agency response 21.10.2022

Addressed in table

## 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 NA

Agency's Comments

Focal Area allocation?

**Secretariat's Comments**

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

**Agency's Comments**

**LDCF under the principle of equitable access?**

**Secretariat's Comments**

**Agency's Comments**

**SCCF A (SIDS)?**

**Secretariat's Comments**

**Agency's Comments**

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

**Secretariat's Comments**

**Agency's Comments**

**Focal Area Set Aside?**

**Secretariat's Comments****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**

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

**Agency's Comments**

**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**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. The co-financing from the IDA/World Bank project "Program on Sustainable Fisheries Development" addresses fisheries, which is not part of this project. Fisheries is deliberately not in this project because it will be addressed by FAO. Other sources of funding will need to be identified during PPG to ensure commitment and sufficient resources.

**Agency's Comments**

**Agency response 21.10.2022**

Addressed

## **Annex B: Endorsements**

**8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country's(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**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). LOEs are missing from Saudia Arabia, Somalia, Jordan and Yemen

### **Agency's Comments**

**Agency response 21.10.2022**

LOEs received and in the portal

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

### **Secretariat's Comments**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. LOEs are missing from Saudia Arabia, Somalia, Jordan and Yemen

### **Agency's Comments**

**Agency response 21.10.2022**

LOEs received and in the portal

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

**Secretariat's Comments**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). The rest of the LOEs need to be provided.

**Agency's Comments**

**Agency response 21.10.2022**

LOEs received and in the portal

**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 NA

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**

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes.

### **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**

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Not provided.

### **Agency's Comments**

**Agency response 21.10.2022**

The UNEP SRIF is uploaded in the portal

## **Annex E: Rio Markers**

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

**Secretariat's Comments NA**

**Agency's Comments**

## **Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet**

### **8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?**

**Secretariat's Comments**

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). Yes

**Agency's Comments**

## **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 Comments NA

## Agency's Comments

### 9 GEFSEC Decision

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

##### Secretariat's Comments

(Karrer, Oct 21, 2022). Yes.

(Karrer, Sept 27, 2022). No. The above comments need to be addressed.

##### Agency's Comments

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

##### Secretariat's Comments

##### Agency's Comments

Agency response 27.10.2022

Regarding Indicator 5 we would like to make the following amendment:

Indicator #5 in the last version of the PIF indicates 81M ha of marine habitat will be improved for biodiversity outside of MPAs

Indicator #5 in the last version of the PIF indicates 9 million ha of marine habitat will be improved for biodiversity outside of MPAs. For indicator #5, the amendment is: the area of marine habitat that will be improved for biodiversity outside MPAs is estimated as 1,500,000 Hectares (1.5 million)

An extra step in our calculation is reference to only the most endangered areas which would reduce the figure to below 10,000 sqkm, or 1,000,000 ha.

This estimate is based on the fact that total area of key habitats (coral reefs, mangrove, seagrass) is around 18,000 km<sup>2</sup>, of which around 15-17% already included in MPAs, leaving around 15,000 Km<sup>2</sup> outside MPAs.

## Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	9/27/2022	10/21/2022
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/21/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		