

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Project ID:	11122
Project Name:	Ecosystem Restoration Global Coordination Project
Countr(ies):	Global
Implementing Agency:	CI

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I. Overview

A. Description

Project name

Ecosystem Restoration Global Coordination Project

Country

Global

GEF ID

11122

Implementing Agency

CI

Executing Entity

Trust Fund

GET

Project Type

FSP

PIR Submission

9/12/2025

Fiscal Year , PIR Number

FY 2025 , 1st PIR

Objective

To scale Global Environmental Benefits through coordinated governance of the GEF-8 Ecosystem Restoration Integrated Program and targeted support to 20 innovative country child projects in catalyzing transformational shifts in ecosystem restoration.

B. Ratings and Disbursements

Implementation Progress

Satisfactory

Development Objective

Satisfactory

Overall risk

Low Risk

Project Financing

19,413,000.00

Cumulative Disbursement

2,148,843.00

C. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval

3/22/2024

Agency Approval

3/22/2024

Implementation Start 3/23/2024	First Disbursement 4/30/2024
Expected MTR 10/1/2027	Actual MTR
Expected Completion 3/31/2031	Actual Completion

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Progress: Information on progress and outcomes of project implementation activities

The GCP made significant progress in the delivery of outputs and activities planned for the year. The GCP team was completed in Q1 and constitutes a Project Lead, an M&E Specialist, an Enabling Conditions Specialist, Knowledge & Comms Specialist, Spatial specialist and GESI & Safeguards specialist. In addition, the GCP is coordinating and getting technical input from several specialists on finance, policy and restoration to assist with project design.

On capacity building, the GCP collaborated with partners UNDP, WRI, FAO, ANR Alliance and CSF on several activities:

- A workshop was held between CI and WRI to gather inputs to update the existing diagnostic tool to identify restoration opportunities and barriers. The tool expansion and update include assessment of incentives, policies and GESI considerations.
- UNDP is conducting desk reviews of country child projects which includes a revision of national policies, priorities and programs related to restoration to inform the development of their capacity building program on restoration action planning and financial plans. In addition, UNDP is carrying out semi-structured interviews with country child projects to further understand the projects objectives and national context to better tailor the capacity development offerings. A preliminary analysis from the desk reviews revealed that Latin American countries (Brazil, Peru, Haiti) exhibit a strong focus on scaling existing institutional frameworks for ecosystem restoration rather than creating new ones. African nations emphasize the integration of carbon credits and livelihoods. This insight, together with the information gathered from the semi-structured interviews will inform how the design of country-specific capacity-building interventions.
- In collaboration with the GCP, UNDP is also developing a Local Open Online Course (LOOC) on ecosystem restoration that will be made available via their Learning for Nature platform and ERIP Portal. Nine learning modules have been drafted and are currently under revision by CI experts. The modules cover the following topics: Ecosystem Restoration, Assessment of Opportunities, Legal and Policy Aspects, Strategic Planning, GESI, Implementation, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Financing, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), and Capacity Building. The target audience for this training are restoration practitioners. A needs assessment survey to identify learning needs and gaps on ecosystem restoration was sent to the GEF Agencies to share with their country child projects, partners and civil society. The survey will inform the development of additional learning offerings or updates to the current ones being developed.
- The GCP is coordinating with FAO the following trainings: NEXT and Standards of Practice for Ecosystem Restoration. The GCP has reviewed the training proposal on the NEXT, which will be offered to the country child projects to estimate GHG emissions for Core Indicator 6. The training on Standards of Practice is currently being developed by FAO with SER and a number of restoration experts from other organizations. This training will be offered to the 20 countries in FY26.
- An agreement with the Conservation Strategy Fund (CSF) was signed to develop the restoration calculator to estimate the return of investment and costs associated with different restoration approaches and ecosystems. A kick-off meeting to initiate the work has been held between the GCP and CSF. Next steps include data collection and country engagement to inform the development of the tool.
- A training certificate on Assisted Natural Regeneration is being developed for this program in collaboration with the ANR Alliance. Designed to fill a key gap in practical and theoretical knowledge, the program includes an eight-week online course followed by an advanced Ambassador level focused on leadership and communication. Certified participants will

be equipped to lead ANR projects, engage communities, and integrate ANR into national and regional restoration strategies. The program emphasizes diverse perspectives, traditional knowledge, and inclusive participation to strengthen ecosystem and community resilience.

On knowledge management and communications outputs and activities, the GCP made the following progress:

- Ahoy Studios was hired in October 2024 to develop the program's website. The website is live at www.ecosystemrestoration.org and will have full features including a member's area, information by country, a learning center and the project's grievance mechanism in the next months. The company also designed the [branding](#) and visual identity of the program, including the logo, icons and templates for reports and presentations.
- The GCP finalized its communication strategy and began implementing it through events such as the UNCCD COP16 in Saudi Arabia in December 2024, where a successful side event, Scaling Up Ecosystem Restoration: People-Centered Restoration - Advancing Ecosystem Resilience and Socio-Economic Benefits, was organized and effectively promoted through CI and CI-GEF LinkedIn accounts, partner communications via email, and CI internal communication channels. The event highlighted the transformative potential of the ERIP, supporting equity, inclusion, and integration with other GEF programs. Panelists emphasized the urgency of restoration in combating desertification, achieving land degradation neutrality, and supporting biodiversity and socio-economic benefits.
- The knowledge management strategy was been developed, and it defines knowledge as a broad concept, including information, practices, and innovations through three pillars: information management, knowledge exchange, and learning opportunities, each designed to facilitate access to resources, foster interaction among stakeholders, and offer specialized training on restoration topics. The ERIP website will serve as a learning portal with country-specific data, a resource library, an interactive map, forums, and an event calendar, while a restricted area will provide access to non-public documents for program participants. The portal will feature a Learning Center where all ERIP training offerings will be listed and easily accessible. It will provide direct links to external platforms, including to the training developed by UNDP, making it simple for users to find and enroll in courses. This setup ensures that all training opportunities are consolidated in one place, functioning like a catalogue.
- The GCP identified two Communities of Practice to generate learning opportunities for the country child projects: Assisted Natural Regeneration and Freshwater. The CoP on Assisted Natural Regeneration will be led by the ANR Alliance while the CoP on Freshwater will be led by the Freshwater Challenge. Terms of Reference have been developed and reviewed by the GCP for both CoPs.

On monitoring and safeguards outputs and activities, the GCP made the following progress:

- The Terms of Reference to update Trends.Earth were developed, and the contractor Kartoza is preparing an estimate to potentially carry out the work. The update of the tool will include integrating indicators to support restoration monitoring.
- The GCP held two strategic meetings with the FAO-FERM platform to explore potential synergies and interoperability with [Trends.Earth](#) for spatial monitoring. The Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM) already incorporates GEF Core indicators required by the ERIP. In parallel, the GCP is evaluating the potential integration of Trends.Earth with CIERA ([CIERA Video Overview](#)). In addition, a guide on how to collect spatial data and site attributes for the program is being finalized and will be shared with the country child projects.
- The GCP M&E system was finalized and integrated into ActivityInfo (an information management software) and Power BI dashboards were developed to visualize indicator progress. The GCP team is using the M&E system to report indicator progress on a quarterly basis.
- The program M&E framework was developed and shared with the Project Steering Committee for feedback. The M&E framework includes information on the ERIP Core Indicators and Program-level Indicators, Data Collection and Analysis, Reporting and Evaluation, and Roles and Responsibilities. As part of the M&E framework, Annex 2 contains specific guidance on each Core and Program-level indicator. Program-level indicators incorporate GESI considerations to ensure mainstreaming of gender and social inclusion.
- Safeguards were actively implemented, including stakeholder engagement with diverse groups, gender mainstreaming in all project strategies, and the rollout of a grievance mechanism accessible via email (globalcoordination-feedback@conservation.org) and CI's Ethics hotline.

On governance outputs and activities, the GCP made the following progress:

- The Program Steering Committee (PSC) was established, and the GCP chaired three meetings in the reporting period. The governance framework of the program was finalized and approved by the PSC, and nominations for the Restoration Advisory Panel (RAP) are ongoing.

B. Challenges: Information on challenges of project implementation activities

Negotiations and definition of the scope of work took longer than anticipated with partner WRI impacting the timeline for starting several project activities. In addition, further delays with project activities of Outcome 1.1 were experienced due to staffing changes within WRI. However, WRI is actively working to overcome the initial delay and aim to be back on track by the end of the year. To accomplish this, WRI has increased their internal capacity by hiring a new staff member, who has taken over the project's daily operations. They are also exploring ways to leverage AI and consultants to support document reviews and other preliminary steps and are tapping into WRI's network of subject matter experts to expedite delivery.

Challenges with establishing agreements with UNDP and FAO: although an agreement with UNDP has been established, this has taken much longer than expected. The agreement with FAO still hasn't been established, and we are still working on finding alternatives to fund activities that FAO will lead. These challenges are related to the different nature and flexibility, or lack of UN and non-UN organizations grant agreements.

Potential delays in the start dates of country child projects—due to fund disbursements and local recruitment processes—may impact the timing and quality of needs assessments aimed at identifying countries' learning priorities and gaps. This, in turn, could affect the design of capacity-building programs and technical assistance.

C. Stakeholder Engagement

The GCP is actively fostering alignment and collaboration with key global initiatives and partners to maximize impact, create synergies, and avoid duplication. This includes close coordination with the GEF and other Integrated Programs, as well as contributions to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The GCP participated in a GEF-led technical workshop in Panama in October 2024 to explore interoperability across Integrated Programs and future collaboration opportunities. The GCP also participated in events hosted by other GEF IPs, including the Critical Biomes IP and Global Wildlife Program to exchange knowledge and identify synergies or collaboration opportunities.

Regular engagement continues with the UN Decade to explore joint workstreams on private sector engagement through the Restoration Business Initiative and the identification of knowledge products to co-develop through the different Task Forces. Participation in high-level forums such as the UNCCD COP16 in Saudi Arabia in December 2024 has further strengthened cross-initiative dialogue and visibility of the program. The GCP organized a side event to profile the ERIP during the COP and participated in the Water Summit led by the government of France and the King of Saudi Arabia engaging with WWF, TNC and IUCN to discuss synergies on freshwater restoration. The GCP also participated in the CBD COP16 in Cali, Colombia in October 2024 to support policy efforts and understand how to amplify restoration in the CBD.

In addition to multilateral engagement, the GCP is exploring collaborations with the private sector. Meetings have been held with the Carbon Disclosure Project, Suzano, Accenture and South Pole to explore partnerships to promote and scale restoration. CI also partnered with Microsoft, Esri, Threshold World, and universities including Utah and Maryland to develop an AI tool, called CIERA, to identify restoration areas—an effort that won Microsoft's Hackathon competition.

Meetings have been held with NGOs such as the Global EverGreening Alliance and Eden to explore opportunities to scale restoration efforts. The team also maintains ongoing contact with organizations such as the ANR Alliance and the Freshwater Challenge to support and co-create Communities of Practice (CoPs).

A key insight during this year is that decision-making in a large, multi-partner initiative takes time. With numerous organizations involved—each with their own internal procedures, priorities, and governance structures—building consensus and reaching decisions requires careful coordination and adequate lead time. The lesson learned has been to anticipate slower decision-making in complex collaborations and plan accordingly, ensuring key decisions are initiated early to avoid bottlenecks.

D. Gender Equality

a) All activities anticipated by the GMP were implemented? Yes/No Why?

Yes, most activities planned for this year were implemented, below a description:

- **Identify and engage a Community of Practice on gender**
The GCP has started engaging with Mrinalini Rai, Director of Women4Biodiversity, who also leads the Restor Her Rights initiative and serves on the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration Board. This engagement has created an opportunity to explore integrating gender in the UN Decade’s Task Force on Best Practices instead of creating a new CoP on gender.
- **Mainstreaming GESI across GCP Strategies**
GESI considerations have been fully integrated into GCP strategies, including communication, knowledge management and learning, monitoring and evaluation (for both GCP and ERIP). GESI guidance was also provided to inform the development of the private sector engagement strategy.
- **Country-Level Safeguards Plans revision**
Country-specific Environmental and Social Management Frameworks (ESMFs), Gender Action Plans (GAPs), Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPPs), Stakeholder Engagement Plans (SEPs), and Accountability and Grievance Mechanisms (AGMs) have been collected and reviewed. [A capacity needs assessment](#) was conducted to identify priority areas for training and technical support.
- **Training on GESI mainstreaming**
A start-up training on GESI mainstreaming was delivered to the GCP team in November 2024, followed by a dedicated training on the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism in February 2025.
- **Collaboration with partners: UNDP and WRI**
Guidance on GESI considerations was shared with UNDP for the development of the capacity building on the Restoration Action Planning and LOOC on ecosystem restoration. Preliminary feedback on the WRI diagnostic tool was shared.
- **Integration of GESI in Technical Guidance**
Tailored guidance was provided to embed GESI considerations into training materials and terms of reference for the Communities of Practice (CoP) on Assisted Natural Regeneration and Freshwater, the training syllabus for Climate and Adaptation, and terms of reference of the Restoration Calculator.
- **GESI Working Group**
The Terms of Reference for the GESI Working Group have been drafted. The working group will provide a platform to collaborate, foster cross-country learning and provide technical support to the Gender Equality, Social Inclusion and Safeguards specialists working in the 20 countries of the ERIP.

The following activities experienced delays:

- A dedicated gender page has been developed for the ERIP website to highlight the program’s commitment to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). The content for this page was carefully crafted by a GESI specialist to ensure it reflects inclusive principles and aligns with ERIP’s broader objectives. The technical development of the page has been completed on the website’s backend, and it is scheduled to go live during the second phase of the website launch in July 2025. This activity will be completed by August 2025.

b) Did the project face any challenges to implementing GMP as initially proposed? Please describe the challenges in case there were any.

In May, the GESI and Safeguards Senior Manager, stepped down from the role, prompting the GCP to relaunch the recruitment process to fill the position. The recruitment process is underway.

- c) As compared to the original GMP, was any adaptive management applied to promote meaningful participation of women and advance towards other gender sensitive targets?

Adaptive management has not yet been applied during the first year of the Global Coordination Project (GCP), as efforts have primarily focused on planning activities. These include reviewing country Prodocs to assess capacity gaps and needs, initiating engagement with potential partners for collaboration on GESI and safeguards, and integrating GESI considerations into the GCP's strategic frameworks and project indicators. Additionally, implementation of the country child projects has not yet commenced.

- d) Did the project team/stakeholders observe any unintended outcomes (positive or negative) related to gender equality, that are difficult to capture in a quantitative way during this period of time? For example women are more active in decision-making processes in the project, or public servants are more interested and open to advance gender outcomes, men or women are more reluctant to participate in the project activities, or other similar situations.

The Project Steering Committee has an active participation of women in decision-making processes. Capacity building activities and other engagements with countries have not started since country child projects are establishing their PMUs and have not started implementation of their projects yet.

- e) Considering all the above, what are the recommendations for next FY to continue advancing towards gender sensitive targets?

A key focus will be on continuing to build bridges between Women4Biodiversity, REFACOF, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, with the goal of assessing the relevance and feasibility of joining the Task Force on Best Practices. Through this approach, the GCP seeks to use existing platforms to promote gender and social inclusion into restoration efforts, while ensuring that actions remain grounded, collaborative, and achievable within the program's objectives and aligned with broader networks and initiatives. In addition, the GCP will work on developing a strategy or approach to launch the GESI Working Group to strengthen coordination and knowledge sharing among the 20 country focal points on safeguards and GESI. Training on accountability and grievance mechanisms has been identified as a need, particularly with a focus on integrating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) prevention and response measures.

E. Knowledge Management

The knowledge management strategy for the program has been developed and the GCP has identified the main knowledge events, their audience, goal, duration and modality: Technical assistance terminology. The team has also started collecting existing knowledge products such as guidelines, best practices, and scientific publications to upload later to the ERIP website. The GCP is also using Monday.com to plan and track all knowledge events.

Knowledge products developed by the GCP during this reporting year and disseminated to stakeholders include:

- M&E framework shared via email on the 29 of January 2025 with the Steering Committee members and on March 11, 2025, with the South Africa project and on April 24, 2025, with the Mexico project.
- Branding guidelines shared via email with nearly 100 stakeholders in April 2025, including representatives from GEF agencies who were asked to forward this to country focal points in 20 countries, as well as partners and contacts interested in receiving information about ERIP.
- ERIP factsheet for the private sector was developed as a key outreach product to be shared during the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 2 to 13 December 2024. A total of 100 printed copies were produced and distributed at the venue to engage stakeholders and raise awareness of ERIP's objectives and private sector engagement opportunities.
- ERIP factsheet provides comprehensive information about the Ecosystem Restoration Integrated Program and was developed as a key communication tool to support awareness and stakeholder engagement. A total of 100 printed copies were distributed at the UNCCD COP16 to inform participants about the program's objectives, components, and expected impacts.

The GCP is also working alongside partners in the development of the following KM products:

- Capacity building program on multistakeholder mechanisms in collaboration with UNDP
- Diagnostic tool to identify restoration opportunities and barriers in collaboration with WRI
- Capacity building program on restoration action planning in collaboration with UNDP
- LOOC on ecosystem restoration in collaboration with UNDP

- Guidance on Payment for Ecosystem Services for Restoration in collaboration with CI experts
- Restoration calculator in collaboration with CSF
- Guidelines for reporting spatial data - GCP

ERIP Annual Conference

Preparations for the ERIP first Annual Conference, scheduled for September 1-4, 2025, in Siem Reap, Cambodia, are underway. The agenda features plenary sessions, country presentations, breakout discussions and a field visit to three restoration sites within Phnom Kulen National Park. The conference is designed to foster deep and meaningful knowledge exchange across the 20 participating countries. Key themes include restoration approaches, policy, finance, private sector engagement, gender and social inclusion and monitoring. To ensure full participation, interpretation services will be provided throughout the conference, including the field visit. Engagement with multiple stakeholders to coordinate and organize the conference are being held including UNDP and CI-Cambodia who are supporting the field trip organization and logistics.

Project institutional arrangements:

The GCP established a multi-tiered governance structure comprising a Program Steering Committee (PSC), Technical Project Task Force (TPTF), and Restoration Advisory Panel (RAP). These bodies ensure inclusive decision-making, technical guidance, and stakeholder engagement across the 20 country child projects. The terms of reference for the governance framework were shared with the PSC members to collect feedback and approved by the PSC. One of the recommendations of the PSC members was to also include government representatives on a rotational basis. Currently, the PSC has 3 government representatives (Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar). The PSC operates on a consensus model, with majority voting as a fallback. The GCP team acts as the PSC Secretariat, chairing the meetings and ensuring transparency through documented minutes. In addition, to ensure country alignment with the program's goals, the GCP developed a M&E framework with indicators and reporting mechanisms that are shared and presented in bilateral meetings with countries.

Capacity building:

A workshop was held with partners to exchange experiences designing and delivering training programs, identify lessons learned and establish best practices for creating impactful and inclusive training opportunities. Discussions included mapping both planned and existing training programs,

identifying challenges and opportunities and developing a cohesive training roadmap aligned with the goals of the program. Additionally, the workshop fostered connections and collaboration among partners. The meeting included expert-led presentations on available training programs and an exchange on optimizing training format and delivery to increase participation and program impact.

Key discussion points from the workshop:

Training Format & Accessibility: Presenters highlighted the importance of ensuring a mix of live and recorded sessions to accommodate global participants. Training must remain accessible across different time zones and internet connectivity levels.

Avoiding Overload: Presenters discussed the importance of scheduling training modules effectively to prevent participant fatigue.

Engagement Strategies: Interactive activities, case studies, and Q&A sessions were recommended to enhance participant engagement. Participants discussed the need for regionally relevant case studies.

Target Audience Alignment: Presenters discussed the importance of ensuring content is tailored to the target audiences.

Regarding assessing countries needs and interests on training, the GCP will streamline consultations through existing governance bodies like the TPTF and PSC, rather than launching new processes to avoid engagement fatigue.

III: Minor Amendments

CONTEXT	
Result Framework	Indicator 4.1.2: M&E Plan approved by the PSC and updated annually. The PSC does not approve PIR reports, please see the ToR of the program's governance framework
Components and Cost	
Institutional And Implementation Arrangements	
Financial Management	
Implementation Schedule	
Executing Entity	
Executing Entity Category	
Minor Project Objective Change	
Safeguards	The original scope of the grievance mechanism outlined in the Prodoc was revised to focus exclusively on collecting and managing grievances related to the Global Coordination Project. It no longer encompasses grievances arising from the country child projects. This adjustment was made following a recommendation during the project's Inception Workshop. The rationale was that each GEF Agency is independently responsible for addressing grievances related to its respective country child projects, in accordance with its own procedures and guidelines.
Risk Analysis	The project risks have been updated to fit the GEF Risk Appetite Framework. Please see section on Risks.
Increase of GEF Financing up to 5%	
Co-Financing	
Location of Project Activity	
others	

IV: Geographic Coordinates of Project Activities

V. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category
M and E Document

Title
20250612_FY25 PIR_11122_ERIP GCP