Scaling up integrated landscape re-Greening and livelihood diversification best practices along the Great Green Wall belt of Ethiopia (SILAGLID)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID
11458
Countries
Ethiopia
Project Name
Scaling up integrated landscape re-Greening and livelihood diversification best practices along the Great Green Wall belt of Ethiopia (SILAGLID)
Agencies
UNEP
Date received by PM
6/20/2025
Review completed by PM
1/8/2026
Program Manager
Ulrich Apel
Focal Area
Multi Focal Area
Project Type
FSP

CEO

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review:

- Please insert agency ID, if applicable.

Second review:

- Inserted.

Cleared

Agency Response

August 28,2025

Agency ID 242804

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

2. Project Summary.
a) 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 outcomes?
b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?
c) [If a child project under a program] Does the project summary include adequate and substantive link with the parent program goal and approach?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes. However, please revise accordingly after revising core indicators.

Second review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

August 28,2025

?Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management?, was selected for tracking of the 40,000 hectares of natural forests and other critical ecosystems put under participatory and sustainable management practices to enhance biodiversity conservation and emission reduction (Output 3.1). However, the SILAGLID project will not target formally registered protected areas or create any new protected areas. Rather, SILAGLID will support sustainable land management by improving practices to reduce the degradation of exiting natural forests in the four districts (sub-indicator 4.3: Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems). Although these forests are not formally registered protected areas, but they are nonetheless protected under Ethiopian law. In the Ethiopian context, protected areas refer to only to national parks or reserves, which SILAGLID will not target. Target areas will be selected in participatory manner during project implementation, with communities organized to manage them through participatory forest management (PFM), from open access to more regulated access, and from only government management to decentralized management system.

3. Project Description Overview
a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?
b) [If a child project under a program] Is there a project Theory of Change that is aligned and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?
c) 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?
d) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?
e) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?
f) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review:

- Please elaborate on how output 1.3 will promote alignment with the National Drought Plan or other drought related policies.

Second review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
August 28,2025

Thank you for the comment. Output 1.3 has been updated to clarify its alignment with Ethiopia?s National Drought Plan and related drought policies. The revised text highlights how the project will integrate drought risk reduction, preparedness and coordinated response into natural resource management systems by strengthening inter-sectoral coordination, developing drought-responsive NRM guidelines, and promoting financing models that support long-term drought resilience. These efforts will help translate the objectives of the Drought Response Plan into actionable tools, institutional arrangements, and sustainable financing pathways tailored to Ethiopia?s drylands.

4. Project Outline
A. Project Rationale
a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?
b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?

c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

5 B. Project Description
5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?
b) [If a child project under a program] Is the Theory of change aligned with and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?
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? [If a child project under a program] Does the description include how the alternative aligns with and contributes to the overall program goal and approach?
d) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?
e) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?
f) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?
g) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?
h) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this FSP/MSP)?
i) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?
j) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and description/s?
k) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?
l) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?
m) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? [If a child project under an integrated program] Are the specific levers of transformation identified and described? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project
a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional,

national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?
b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?
c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).
d) [If a child project under an integrated program] Does the framework for coordination and collaboration demonstrate consistency with overall ambition of the program for transformative change?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

5.3 Core indicators
a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)? [If a child project under a program] Is the choice of core indicators consistent with those prioritized under the parent program?
b) Are the project?s targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable? Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review:

- The project must have a significant target under CI 4.3 or 4.5 because it is a child project under the GGWI, which has the overall vision of achieving sustainable land management in the GGW region.

- The CI 1 for BD is uncomplete: the name and codes of the PA should be included in the core indicator table, as well as the METT score

Second review: Partly Addressed.

- The explanation provided is noted. Still, there is no value presented under core indicator 1 at CEO endorsement. Do you mean that these 40,000 ha have been shifted to 4.3 ? If so, however, what happened to the 62,000 ha indicated at PIF stage?

Third review: Addressed & clarified

Cleared

Agency Response

October 10, 2025
The target of 62,000 ha at PIF stage still applies at CEO Endorsement stage. However, the distribution of all Core Indicator targets have been confirmed and updated in the Core Indicator worksheet and revised in CEO ER, in line with discussions and consultations with experts and the

emerging realities on the ground. As noted previously, Core Indicator 1 cannot be used to track restoration in the targeted areas, because the areas targeted are communal state forest and not formally registered protected areas (with WDPA ID), nor will any new formally registered protected areas be created under the project. Rather, the project will enhance the management regime of these forest lands through participatory forest management. Therefore, Core Indicators were further aligned as follows:
? Conserving and sustainably using biodiversity: Core Indicator 4 has been selected to track progress under this theme (40,000 ha)
o The sub-indicator selected has been revised to Indicator 4.1 Areas of landscape under improved management to benefit biodiversity
o At the first CEO ER submission (June 2025), Indicator 4.3 was selected, but EFD has clarified 4.1 is more appropriate as it aligns better with the overarching goal of enhancing biodiversity, which also aligns with the project?s selected GEF Focal Areas.
o The enhanced management of these 40,000 ha will be done on natural forest, not agricultural land (productive systems) as previously indicated. The objective is specifically participatory management for the benefit of biodiversity/carbon sequestration.

? Restoration: For tracking of restoration (22,000 ha), Core Indicator 3 was selected. This will include:
o 2,000 ha under agroforestry: tracked under Indicator 3.1: ?Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration?.
o 20,000 ha of restoration: tracked under Indicator 3.2: ?Area of forest and forest land under restoration?.

August 28,2025

?Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices? was selected as for tracking of the 40,000 hectares of natural forests and other critical ecosystems put under participatory and sustainable management practices to enhance biodiversity conservation and emission reduction (Output 3.1). ?Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management? was not selected because the sub-indicators require information on formally registered protected areas. However, the SILAGLID project will not target formally registered protected areas or create any new protected areas. Rather, SILAGLID will support sustainable land management by improving practices to reduce the degradation of exiting natural forests in the four districts (sub-indicator 4.3: Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems). Although these forests are not formally registered protected areas, but they are nonetheless protected under Ethiopian law. In the Ethiopian context, protected areas refer to only to national parks or reserves, which SILAGLID will not target. Target areas will be selected in participatory manner during project implementation, with communities organized to manage them through participatory forest management (PFM), from open access to more regulated access, and from only government management to decentralized management system.
The CI 1 for BD was therefore not completed because the project will not be targeting formally registered protected areas that could provide data to complete the core indicator as well as the METT score.

5.4 Risks
a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?
b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?
c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review:

- Please include explanation of risks, not only the mitigation measures.

Second review: Addressed. Please also address the following: While the ESS rating is low, the rating of the Environmental and Social risk category is Moderate. Please ensure these two ratings are aligned as per guidance in the GEF Risk Appetite (GEF/C.66/13).

Third review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

October 10, 2025

The ESS rating and Environmental and Social risk category have been aligned across the documents.

August 28,2025

The table has been updated to include an explanation of risks alongside potential mitigation measures. These updates were made in line with revisions to the Appendix 15: Safeguards Risk Identification Form (SRIF).

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

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

6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy? b) [If a child project under an integrated program] Is the project adequately aligned with the program objective in the GEF-8 programming directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request First review: Yes.

Agency Response

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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review:

- Please elaborate on alignment with national drought plan and/or drought related policies.

Second review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

August 28,2025

Thank you for the comment. The section on alignment with national and regional priorities has been updated to elaborate on SILAGLID?s consistency with Ethiopia?s National Drought Response Plan (DRP), revised in 2022, as well as Ethiopia?s Dryland Restoration Strategy (2022) and Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), which is in its fifth phase of implementation (PSNP5).

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

7 D. Policy Requirements
7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review:

- Reviewer could not locate the gender action plan. There is no link provided in the project document.

- Please also upload a public version of the prodoc that can be circulated to GEF Council.

Second review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

August 28,2025

The gender action plan and the CEO Endorsement Request documents have been uploaded in the Document section of the portal.

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Second review: The attached Stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) identifies a few NGOs and CSOs. While the project includes some details in table 4, the SEP does not elaborate on the potential roles of these important stakeholders to achieve project objective or provide information on any other local community groups to be engaged. At this stage, it is expected that the project should provide more information than just stating that the role ? TBD during stakeholder consultations?. Please elaborate further on these important stakeholder?s potential roles related to project components and outputs and clarify targeted measures and plans to engage and consult these in project implementation.

Please also see comments on Annex F (SRIF) further below regarding consistency.

Third review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

October 10, 2025

Thank you for highlighting this gap. The SEP has been updated to elaborate on the potential roles of CSOs and community groups in the project implementation.

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request First review: Yes.

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: 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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request First review: Yes.

Agency Response

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request First review: Yes.

Agency Response

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response
8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)
a) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
8.3 Source of Funds
Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?
Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?
e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Second review:

- Public investment is investment mobilized normally. Please request the agency to revise where it is classified as ?recurrent expenditures? to ?investment mobilized?.

- In-kind is ?recurrent expenditure? normally. Please request the agency to revise where it is classified as ?investment mobilized? to ?recurrent expenditures?.

- Please revise the source of co-financing for the ?Beneficiaries? to ?Recipient Country Government?.

- Please spell of IGO in the cofinancing table. Also revise the in-kind to cash per letter of evidence.

Third review: Not all comments provided on September 12th were addressed:

a. Public investment is investment mobilized normally. Please request the agency to revise where it is classified as ?recurrent expenditures? to ?investment mobilized?.

b. In-kind is ?recurrent expenditure? normally. Please request the agency to revise where it is classified as ?investment mobilized? to ?recurrent expenditures?.

c. Please revise the source of co-financing for the ?Beneficiaries? to ?Recipient Country Government?.

d. Please spell of IGO in the cofinancing table. Also revise the in-kind to cash per letter of evidence.

12/11/2025: Agency has confirmed that they made the changes as requested.

Agency Response

December 10, 2025

Thank you for your feedback. We confirm that all proposed edits and changes have been addressed as follows:

? Public investment classifications updated to ?investment mobilized?.
? In-kind contributions revised to ?recurrent expenditures?.
? Source of co-financing for Beneficiaries updated to ?Recipient Country Government?.
? Co-financing table corrected: spelling of IGO fixed and in-kind revised to cash per letter of evidence.

October 10, 2025

The ?Sources of Co-financing? column for project beneficiary regions has been corrected to ?Recipient Country Government?. Further, all other co-financing types and amounts are in line with partner/stakeholder expectations and available co-financing sources.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) If ? and only if - this is a global or regional project for which not all country-based interventions were known at PIF stage and, therefore, not all LOEs provided:
Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework
8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?
b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)
c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?
d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?
e)[If a regional/global coordination child project under an integrated program] Does the results framework reflect the program-wide result framework, inclusive of results from child projects and specific to the regional/global coordination child project? [If a country child project under an integrated program] Is the child project result framework inclusive of program-wide metrics monitored across child project by the Regional/Global Child project?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes. However, please revise accordingly after revising the core indicators.

Second review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

August 28,2025
This is well noted. Please refer to the responses to comments on Core Indicators in the preceding sections of this document.

Annex E: Project map and coordinates
8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Documentation and Rating
8.8 Have the relevant safeguard documents been uploaded to the GEF Portal? Has the safeguards rating been provided and filled out in the ER field below the risk table?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: Yes.

Second review:

UNEP attached the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) and an overall ESS risk is classified as moderate. However, the Environmental and Social risk classification in page 62 said ?Low? risk. SRIF said other plans such as Biodiversity Management plan, Indigenous Peoples plan can be developed as a stand-alone or be part of the umbrella ESMP. However, the plan for development of these documents is not clear in the CEO Endorsement. Ethiopia is also one of the countries listed on the WBG FY26 List of Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations.

In addition, Ethiopia has Indigenous Peoples/Sub Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities (SSAHUTLCs), notably pastoral and agro pastoral groups such as the Afar and Somali, and ethnic minorities in several regions including Gulina (Afar Region), Metema and Chilga (Amhara Region), and Raya Azebo (Tigray Region).

Because GGW activities are landscape restoration in drylands, they often overlap with areas used by such groups. For any new GGW project, the presence of these communities must be confirmed through early screening and social assessment. Potential positive and adverse impacts include:

1. Changes in land use (e.g., area closures, tree planting, exclosures) can restrict access to grazing corridors, water points, fuelwood, wild foods, and other customary resources;

2. If tenure is unclear or only statutory titles are recognized, communities with customary/usufruct rights may be excluded or face de facto loss of access.

3. Elite capture of benefits, affordability barriers for the poorest, insufficient targeting of women, youth, and the most vulnerable unless specific inclusion measures are designed and resourced;

4. Projects may inadvertently undermine cultural practices tied to land and resource use, or affect cultural heritage, unless cultural mapping and chance find procedures are in place;

5. In contexts with existing inter communal tensions, border disputes, or resource scarcity, introducing area closures or altering water access can exacerbate conflict if not co designed with all users and accompanied by grievance mechanisms and conflict sensitivity measures; and

6. If contractors or external workers are involved, there are typical risks of SEA/SH, communicable diseases, and safety hazards; mitigation requires codes of conduct, GBV action plans, and proportionate oversight.

- Please make the Environmental and Social risk classification in page 62 consistent with SRIF attached.

- Please also ensure the presence of these communities and potential risks associated with conflict situations must be confirmed through social assessment, identify potential adverse impacts of the project, and prepare appropriate risk management plan with a clear budget and timeline.

Third review: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
October 10, 2025

Potential positive and adverse impacts on indigenous Peoples/SSAHUTLCs

? **Changes in land use:**

The concern regarding potential impacts to pastoral and agropastoral communities are well noted. However, it should be noted that for several reasons, SSAHUTLCs in the target areas will not be negatively affected.

Local people are at the centre of the project?s objective, not only the forests themselves. The objective is to transform the management system from open access to more regulated access and increase accountability of management of forest land. In addition, the scale of the project is relevant in terms of its potential impact on specific groups. The targeted districts are very large and their population sparsely distributed. Given the scale of the project, and the distribution of interventions across four districts, the interventions will be in relatively small area of each targeted woreda. Within these areas, livestock movement will not be totally restricted, although there will be partial restrictions to reduce the negative impacts of free and unregulated grazing.

Any restrictions in land use will be mitigated, and the restricted areas will eventually provide benefits to communities, for example in terms of feed for their livestock. Community members will be organized into structures such as cooperatives to counter the restrictions.

? **Elite capture**

Existing legal documents, including proclamations (Cooperative Proclamation of 2016, and Community Watershed Proclamation 2020) established a system for recruitment, auditing, reporting, and encourages transparency and accountability to avoid the issue of elite capture. Following these proclamations, the project will enable communities to work with existing institutions to implement measures to minimize marginalization, including establishing bylaws. At community level, elite capture will be avoided by community organisation into cooperatives. Through cooperatives, all members of target communities will be part of decision-making process. There is already a well-established system for organising communities into cooperatives and the proclamations are already being enforced on the ground. These community organisation structures are already popular.

? **Cultural practices**

In the context of the implementation areas, there are no specific cultural practices that will be negatively affected. Existing cultural practices of target communities will be even more positively supported through enhancing their livelihood security through strengthening traditional practices such as pastoralism. Existing cultural practices will be positively integrated, rather than negatively affected.

? **Communal tensions, border disputes, or resource scarcity:**

There are existing mechanisms that are already in place that will mitigate these risks, including the aforementioned proclamations and an existing ESMF developed under the REDD+ and approved by the UNCCD. The plan can also be implemented in the target areas.

? **External workers:**

There is no foreseen risk of external workers coming into the project area, as all the interventions will be implemented by target communities themselves.

? **Environmental and Social risk classification**

The environmental and social risk classification on p 62 as been revised in line with the SRIF.

- Please also ensure the presence of these communities and potential risks associated with conflict situations must be confirmed through social assessment, identify potential

All of the above points have been reflected in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Annex G: GEF Budget template

8.9 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?

b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

First review: Comments on the budget.

- Please make budget less consultant heavy and invest more in field implementation of output 2.1 and component 3. These are all straightforward activities that do not justify substantial consultant input.

Second review: Initial comment on consultant input has been addressed. Further, please address:

- The formatting of the budget table in the CEO Approval Request Portal view, which is the document circulated to Council for review has no lines, so it is not possible to follow between the budget lines and the figures. Further, the figures are without commas. Please amend.

- There are several budget lines that are repetitive ? please unify. (see one example below)

Consultancy coordinate and develop the modules training packages on NRM governance tailored to the different stakeholder groups (GoE staff, CSOs, traditional authorities, etc) in collaboration with the Coordination Support team established under Activity 1.1.1. (Output 1.2)	36000	36000	36000	PENHA
Consultancy to coordinate and develop the modules training packages on NRM governance tailored to the different stakeholder groups (GoE staff, CSOs, traditional authorities, etc) in collaboration with the Coordination Support team established under Activity 1.1.1. (Output 1.2)	36000	36000	36000	PENHA

- Please identify consultant ?IC?

International Consultants	IC to 1) develop a participatory assessment work, including tools, and 2) conduct stakeholder engagement for participatory assessment, with support from PMU, M&E officer and co-financing, 3) deliver the analysis and capacity assessment report, including a capacity development plan with priority areas for training, TA and institutional strengthening, and project implementation (30 days, 600 USD daily rate) under Output 1.2.	15600	15600	15600	PENHA

- TOR?s are not included in the Project Document ? please amend.

- Please harmonize the position ?District-level Project Officer? in TORs with ?District Coordinator? in the budget table.

Third review: Not fully addressed.

a. Previous comment not addressed: ?The formatting of the budget table in the CEO Approval Request Portal view, which is the document circulated to Council for review (see attached pdf file ? pages 70 onwards) has no lines, so it is not possible to follow between the budget lines and the figures ? also the USD values entered into the budget have no commas for the thousands place (e.g., 100000 instead of 100,000). Please ask the Agency to amend.?

b. Previous comment not addressed: ?There are some budget lines that are repetitive (see example below) ? please ask the Agency to remove repeated lines.?

c. Previous comment only partially addressed: ?TORs are not included in the Project Document ? please ask the Agency to amend.?

Thank you for including a link to the TORs in the ProDoc. Please note that the TORs should be pasted directly into the ProDoc appendix.

d. According to the budget table, the majority of the Project Coordinator cost will be charged to the technical component budget:

However, after reviewing the TOR for the Coordinator, there do not appear to be any responsibilities that are related to technical work. This role should therefore be charged only to PMC. If the Project Coordinator is envisioned to deliver technical work under the components,

that responsibility must be clear in the TOR, with tasks clearly defined and linked back to the project technical component outputs. Please revise accordingly.

e. Over 45% of the entire GEF financed budget is proposed to be charged to project personnel (staff and consultants). Typically, GEF projects outside of Enabling Activities spend less than 1/3 of they budget on personnel. For instance, having four District Coordinators on top of one Project Coordinator amounts for $756,000. Please ask the Agency to --for instance-- have a more reasonable number of coordinators and/or seek reducing the number / cost of personnel to a third of the total budget.

Forth review (12/11/2025): Not adequately addressed.

•The personnel share of 44% includes contractual services- Individual, consultants, and staff cost, out of which consultants and staff costs only indeed accounts for 31% of the project budget:

Row Labels	Sum of Total (USDeq.)		Sum of Total (USDeq.)		
Contractual Services – Company	160,500		160,500	4%	
Contractual Services – Individual	562,750		562,750	13%	
Goods	1,194,898		1,194,898	27%	
International Consultants	15,600		15,600	0%	
Local Consultants	306,750		306,750	7%	
Office Supplies	19,607		19,607	0%	
Other Operating Costs	20,000		20,000	0%	
Salary and benefits / Staff costs	1,048,800		1,048,800	24%	**44%**
Sub-contract to executing partner/ entity	37,600		37,600	1%	
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	663,315		663,315	15%	
Travel	407,336		407,336	9%	
Grand Total	**4,437,156**		4,437,156		

We don't see an attempt to reduce the total personnel costs (contractual services- Individual, consultants, and staff cost) and our previous comments to consolidate the Project Coordinator and four District Coordinators was not addressed. Please note also that Staff costs is biggest share at 24% with 8 positions while contractual services-individual and consultants, despite the many more positions (23) actually accounts for 20% of the project budget.

Total personnel costs including Contractual services ? Individual, consultants, and staff costs still accounted for 44% of the total project budget as follows:

Row Labels	Sum of Total (USDeq.)		Sum of Total (USDeq.)		
Contractual Services – Company	160,500		160,500	4%	
Contractual Services – Individual	562,750		562,750	13%	
Goods	1,194,898		1,194,898	27%	
International Consultants	15,600		15,600	0%	
Local Consultants	306,750		306,750	7%	
Office Supplies	19,607		19,607	0%	
Other Operating Costs	20,000		20,000	0%	
Salary and benefits / Staff costs	1,048,800		1,048,800	24%	**44%**
Sub-contract to executing partner/ entity	37,600		37,600	1%	
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	663,315		663,315	15%	
Travel	407,336		407,336	9%	
Grand Total	**4,437,156**		4,437,156		

We have seen some overlapping tasks among these contractual services- Individual, consultants, and staff positions such as coordinate and develop training packages, facilitate and organize workshops, meetings, KM and communication, and M&E.

Please consolidate these personnel positions among the three categories - contractual services- Individual, consultants, and staff - and further reduce the total personnel costs to around 30% of the project budget.

12/18/2025: Not adequately addressed. Staff and consultants costs still constitute 43% of the budget. Please revise down to approximately 30% maximum and ensure adequate allocation to field activities.

12/21/2025: Adequately addressed in the revised version of the budget (see response below and revised budget).

01/05/2026: Please address new issues in revised budget:

a) The totals in the budget table do not add up as follows:

Row Labels	Sum of Total (USDeq.)		Sum of Total (USDeq.)	
Contractual Services – Company	142,500		142,500	4%
Contractual Services – Individual	91,000		91,000	2%
Goods	1,310,338		1,310,338	33%
Grants/ Sub-grants	-		-	0%
Office Supplies	19,607		19,607	0%
Other Operating Costs	20,000		20,000	1%
Revolving funds/ Seed funds / Equity	-		-	0%
Salary and benefits / Staff costs	298,800		298,800	8%
Sub-contract to executing partner/ entity	959,500		959,500	24%
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	720,375		720,375	18%
Travel	407,336		407,336	10%
Vehicles				
Works				
Grand Total	**3,969,456**		3,969,456	
Grand Total per budget table			**4,437,156**	
Difference			467,700	

b) the following yellow-highlighted three items do not qualify as goods, please select the appropriate categories:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Appendix G: Indicative Project Budget Template										
2			Component (USDeq.)							Total	Responsible Entity
3			Compone	Compone	Compone	Compone	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC		(Executing Entity receiving
4	Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Compone nt 1	Compone nt 2	Compone nt 3	Compone nt 4	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC	Total (USDeq.	funds from the GEF Agency)[1]
5	Works	n/a									
6	Goods	Goods and equipment for field demonstrations and ii) starter kits for nature-based alternative livelihoods, to be determined by PMU and project Steering Committee based on consultancy results conducted under 2.1.1.		85,000			85,000			85,000	EFD
7	Goods	CBNRM manuals and toolkits (lump sum), and other knowledge and stakeholder engagement products necessary under Outputs 2.1 and 2.2., as determined by EE		10,000			10,000			10,000	EFD
8	Goods	Goods (lump sum per district) for CBEs and cooperatives for value-add creation, such as harvesting, processing, packaging and quality testing machinery etc		308,254			308,254			308,254	EFD
9	Goods	Capacitate community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) groups including training and awareness campaigns on participatory forest management; Develop and implement integrated forest management plans that incorporate biodiversity conservation targets, emission reduction strategies, and sustainable resource use practices in support of local livelihood, informed by spatial data and community input. (Output 3.1)			131,000		131,000			131,000	EFD
10	Goods	Identify, implement and monitor integrated landscape restoration practices tailored to the specific degradation types and site conditions (Output 3.2)			389,024		389,024			389,024	EFD
11	Goods	Implement and monitor agro-forestry practices on smallholder farmers and pastoral community's land holdings (Output 3.3)			304,060		304,060			304,060	EFD
12	Goods	Training materials, visual aids, and quick-reference guides in local languages and English for all user groups under components 2 and 3, as well as graphic design, translation and distribution of knowledge products, inter alia policy briefs, posters, etc under Output 4.3				25,000	25,000			25,000	CIFOR
13	Goods	Data collection goods (tablets, chargers, etc) for project monitoring				40,000	40,000			40,000	CIFOR
14	Goods	IT equipment for the PMU (lumpsum)					-		18,000	18,000	PENHA
15	Vehicles	n/a									
16	Grants/ Sub-grants	n/a									-
17	Revolving funds/ Seed funds / Equity	n/a									-
18	Sub-contract to executing partner/ entity	Establish and operationalise a cross-sectoral coordination mechanism; Implement and monitor inclusive capacity, knowledge and skills in natural resources management planning at all levels. (Output 1.1 and 1.2)	38,000				38,000			38,000	EFD

Agency Response

January 07, 2026

a) Budget Table Totals

We acknowledge the discrepancy between the totals in the budget table and the grand total. We have reviewed and corrected the calculations to ensure consistency across all tables. The updated total now aligns with the overall budget figure.

b) Categorization of Items

We appreciate your observation regarding the three yellow-highlighted items. After review, we agree that these do not qualify as ?Goods.? We have reclassified them under ?sub-contract to executing agency?.

The revised budget table and categorization have been updated accordingly.

December 19, 2025

The project budget has been revised to ensure alignment with the proposed activities and outputs. A significant portion of resources is now clearly earmarked for on-the-ground implementation, community and beneficiary engagement, and knowledge management. We have streamlined consultancy costs by removing several consultant positions and reallocating those funds to activities directly supporting project objectives. The district coordinator roles have been eliminated, with resources redirected to field-level activities. Additionally,

international consultancy positions have been removed to further align the budget toward delivering tangible project outputs.

December 18, 2025
The budget has been revised to consolidate personnel positions and staff as far as possible, and to reduce the overall percentage of these categories of the total budget. This includes merging budget lines wherever possible and shifting lines to other categories.

With respect to district-level coordination, the roles in question are not permanent government staff positions and therefore do not constitute GEF-funded government salaries. Rather, these project-specific coordination functions will be delivered through time-bound individual subcontracts managed directly by EFD, established solely for the duration of the project and renewed annually based on performance. The District Coordinator role is strictly project-specific and has been created because there is an existing gap within EFD that would severely limit effective implementation of the project. The capacity is not currently available, so cannot be funded through co-finance. Moreover, the four coordinators cannot be merged into one position because the districts are very far apart and this would radically increase travel and other transaction costs. The role of the local-level coordinators has now been shifted to the sub-contracting component to ensure that it can be coordinated internally by EFD.

December 10, 2025
Thank you for your comments. We confirm the following updates have been made:
? The budget table has been formatted and figures amended accordingly.
? The duplicate budgetlines have been merged.
? The TORs for the project staff have been pasted into the Project Document.
? The cost allocation for project staff and consultants is maintained at 30%, in line with other GEF projects.
? The role of the Project Coordinator has been revised to reflect technical roles and responsibilities.
? The role of the District Coordinators remains a key aspect of the project, as there is currently no institutional capacity or coordination mechanism in place?this gap is what the project seeks to address.

October 10, 2025

Thank you for highlighting these issues. The ToRs have now been included in the Project Document under Appendix 5e: ToR for key project staff. Terminology has been corrected in the ToR as requested as per the budget table. In the budget, repetitive lines have been removed where needed and the acronym ?IC? spelled out.

August 28,2025
The budget under Output 2.1 and Component 3 has been revised to reduce the substantial consultant input. EFD and other key stakeholders have confirmed that there is sufficient in-house capacity to undertake the work required under these interventions, and the budget has therefore been reallocated more towards in-field implementation of the outputs.

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes
8.10 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.
b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.
c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation

Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

First review: No. Please address comments made in this review. (Note that this review is only a technical review, a full consolidated review will be provided after adjusting the core indicators and the budget).

Second review: No. Please address comments made in this consolidated review.

Third review: No. Please address the two remaining items in line with comments in the boxes that are not yet cleared: co-financing and budget.

Forth review (12/11/2025): No. Please address comments on the budget, which is still not acceptable.

Fifth review: (12/18/2025): No. Comments on the budget have not been adequately addressed.

Sixth review (12/21/2025): Comments on the budget have been addressed. requesting final OP check.

Final review: (01/08/2026): The project is recommended for CEO eondorsement.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	**7/18/2025**	
Additional Review (as necessary)	**9/15/2025**	
Additional Review (as necessary)	**11/19/2025**	
Additional Review (as necessary)	**12/11/2025**	
Additional Review (as necessary)	**12/18/2025**	