

# Sustainable land management and restoration of productive landscapes in river basins for the implementation of national targets of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in Panama

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10588

**Countries**

Panama

**Project Name**

Sustainable land management and restoration of productive landscapes in river basins for the implementation of national targets of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in Panama

**Agencies**

FAO

**Date received by PM**

3/29/2021

**Review completed by PM**

5/14/2021

**Program Manager**

Pascal Martinez

**Focal Area**

Land Degradation

**Project Type**

MSP

**PIF**   
**CEO Endorsement**

**Part I ? Project Information**

**Focal area elements**

**1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required

**Project description summary**

**2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required

**3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required

**Co-financing**

**4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required

**GEF Resource Availability**

**5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required

**Project Preparation Grant**

**6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

The sum of the amount spent and committed is slightly higher than the available budget. Please correct.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021**

Noted. Please see the correction of the table on page 118 of the PRODOC

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: GCP /PAN/006/GFF			
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)</i>		
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent To date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>

5011 Budget & Operations Services	2,381.00	2,381.00	0.00
5578 Letter of Agreement CATHALAC	18,900.00	18,900.00	0.00
5650 Budget Contracts (other contracts)	8,300.00	8,300.00	0.00
5543 National Consultants	14,345.00	14,345.00	0.00
5685 National Trips	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
5023 Workshops	4,074.00	0.00	4,074.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,000.00</b>	<b>43,926.00</b>	<b>6,074.00</b>

**Core indicators**

**7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E?  
Do they remain realistic?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**April 21, 2021:**

There aren't significant changes from the PIF. Cleared.

Agency Response **May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Part II ? Project Justification**

**1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response  
**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**2. Is there an elaboration on how the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects were derived?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

1. Considering the project specific focus on LDN, please elaborate further on the national strategy for LDN establishing links with the activities and geographies of the project.
2. In addition to the existing legislative framework, national plans and specific projects, the institutional framework to implement LDN and SLM is unclear. Please clarify who is responsible for what, including at local level.
3. When using acronyms for the first time, particularly those specific to the country such as MIDA and IDIAP, please write the full names.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

**Question 1:** Please see page 26, baseline scenario, information about LDN strategy called National Action Program (NAP) to Fight Drought and Desertification in Panama (2014-2022).

In compliance with the guidelines of the United Nations Convention to Fight Drought and Desertification, Panama launched the National Action Program (NAP) to Fight Drought and Desertification in Panama (2014-2022), which defined 5 priority approaches:

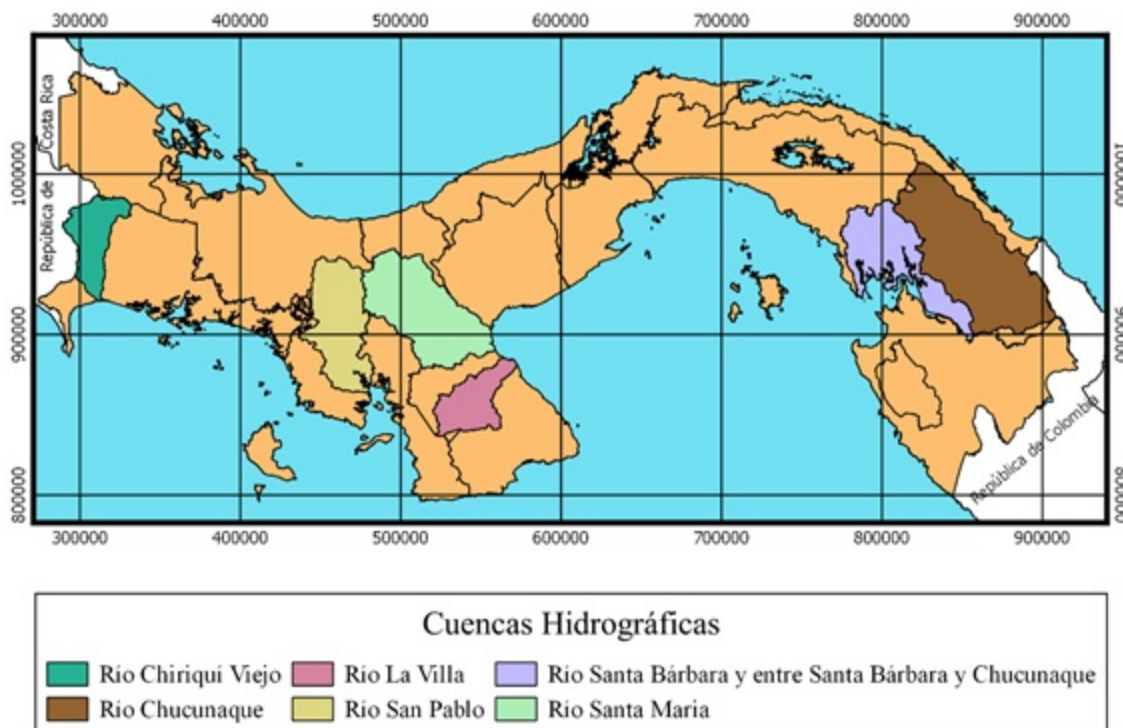
- ? Maintain or improve the balance of ecosystem services, which means protecting the earth's natural capital represented by natural resource reserves and guaranteeing the flows of goods and services of high social, economic and environmental value;
- ? Maintain or increase productivity to improve food security and ensure that future degradation (losses) was counteracted with positive actions planned elsewhere (gain)
- ? Increase the resilience of the land and the people who depend on it;
- ? Seek synergies with other social, economic and environmental objectives; and
- ? Strengthen responsible and inclusive governance of land.

The NAP made a diagnosis of the state of the land in the country, identifying 4 critical areas that presented the most serious conditions of droughts and soil degradation: Cerro Punta (Chiriqu? Viejo river basin), Arco Seco (La Villa river basin), the Sabana Central Verag?ense (basin of the Santa Mar?a river) and the Comarca Ng?be Bugl?. These areas comprise an area of 20,787.57 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of over half a million people.

The LDN Strategy (2019-2030) focuses on the three pillars of land neutrality, which are avoiding, reducing and reversing land degradation and integrates NAP in all its parts. This strategy defines an approach based on five cohesive objectives with the focal areas of the NAP:

- (i) By 2030, increase the forest cover by 26%;
- (ii) (ii) By 2025 reduce the conversion of 18,000 ha of forests into stubble and shrubs and / or agricultural soils;
- (iii) (iii) by 2030 increase the productivity of 62,000 hectares of agricultural land and 12,000 hectares of scrubland and grasslands with decreasing productivity and with early stages of deterioration; (iv)
- (iv) By 2020, improve coordination between the different institutions, civil society, unions, and promote participatory mechanisms, and
- (v) (v) By 2020, improve the existing legal framework that helps strengthen the NDT program. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the performance of the last 2 goals, keeping them in force in the following years.

The NDT manages the synergies and collaboration on sustainable land management in the critical areas identified by the NAP, and extends the actions to the eastern part of the country (Darien region). The approach priorities are focused on 4 priority areas (comprising several basins) as shown in the following image, among them, the 3 areas of implementation of the Project: Chiriqu? Viejo river basin (area No.1), river basin La Villa (area No.2) and the Santa Mar?a river basin (area No.3), as shown in the image below.



The project will develop activities that support the goals of the LDN to strengthen its implementation in the territories of the selected basins:

- a. Forest coverage of 500 ha will be increased through the recovery of gallery forests and agroforestry systems with coffee (Chiriqui Viejo river basin and Santa María river basin).
- b. The productivity of the land will be increased by converting 4,600 ha from traditional livestock systems to silvopastoral systems with climate-smart livestock techniques in the basins of the 3 basins (Chiriqui Viejo, Santa María and La Villa).
- c. It will contribute to improve the productivity of 400 ha with traditional agriculture to systems with climate-smart agriculture.
- d. Improve inter-institutional coordination between MiAMBIENTE / Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) / Institute of Agricultural Innovation of Panama (IDIAP) / Banco de Desarrollo Agropecuario-BDA) to promote environmentally sustainable land uses.
- e. It will strengthen the legal framework at the national level of the NDT with the elaboration of the land law that incorporates the principles of the NDT, and at the local level, it will integrate the guidelines of the NDT into plans and projects of land use.



**Question 2:** Information about LDN Strategy included into the baseline scenario, and other relevant programs associate with its compliment was included on page 28 of the PRODOC.

NDT strategy. Ministry of the Environment (MiAmbiente) is responsible for leading the activities to achieve the goals of LDN at the national and local levels. To this end, it will reinforce synergies with programs already established such as the Alianza Por el Mill?n, the ProCuenca Program, the Wildlife Water and Protected Areas Fund, etc.

Alliance for the Million. It is a public-private pact that aims to reforest one million hectares in 20 years. It is structured in 2 components: restoring gallery forests on degraded lands and commercial reforestation. This initiative is led by the Ministry of the Environment (MiAmbiente), the Association for the Conservation of Nature (ANCON), the National Association of Reforesters of Panama (ANARAP) and the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA). It is supported by 26 corporate partners (including banks and large corporations), 22 institutional partners (public entities and private organizations, including NGOs) and 3 media, making it the most widely supported public-private initiative in the country.

**Question 3:** Included into page 8. MIDA (Ministry of Agriculture) and IDIAP (Institute of Agricultural Innovation)

**3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**April 21, 2021:**

1. In Component 1, please clarify what "goal 5" is referring to.
2. The output 1.1.1 seems to be only focused on improving local governance of water resources. Will this scope be broad enough to ensure the harmonization between all the sectors involved? Please clarify.
3. Some details from the Prodoc are not necessary in the Portal such as the "Table 2. Infrastructure of the Agro-Environmental Information System" and baseline elements (from "According to the Technical Guide"... until "reaching its final goal by 2030"). Please focus on the description of the concrete activities of the outputs and of the outcomes and remove the unnecessary parts.
4. The numbering of the outcome "Integration of LDN, SLM and CSA in the land use planning of the selected basins" and its outputs are different in the Table B and in the alternative scenario. Same for the outcome "LDN Indicator monitoring system established". Please correct.
5. It is unclear what are the proposed activities under the output "1.2.1 National baseline and LDN targets (land productivity, land cover and organic soil carbon concentration)

validated and reported through SINIA."? Its description looks more as a part of the baseline scenario. Please clarify.

6. Are "The project will implement climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices" and the description of what is CSA part of the outcome 1.3.2? Please explain and, again, ensure the information provided under the alternative scenario is brief description of outputs, expected outcomes and components of the project. This applies for all the text under the alternative scenario section.

7. To achieve the outcome 3.1, we learn that new investment opportunities will be identified such as the GCF but the LDN fund is not mentioned. Please explain why.

8. Under the outcome 3.1, the long description of the existing carbon footprint certification schemes is not relevant for the description of the proposed activities in the Portal. Please remove it.

9. The numbering and the name of the outcome 3.2 is not the same in Table B and under the alternative scenario. Please amend.

10. The final evaluation is not a project output at the same level as the other outputs. It is part of the M&E plan which includes other reporting exercises. Please amend including in table B.

**May 12, 2021:**

1, 2 and 3. Thank you for the clarification and amendment. Cleared.

4. Not addressed. The numbering of the outcome "Integration of LDN, SLM and CSA in the land use planning of the selected basins" and its outputs are still different in the Table B and in the alternative scenario (1.2 in table B and 1.1 in the alternative scenario. Same for the outcome "LDN Indicator monitoring system established" (1.3 in Table B and 1.2 in the alternative scenario). Please correct.

5 and 6. Thank you for the clarification and amendment. Cleared.

7. The comment was referring to the LDN Fund managed by Mirova. Please clarify whether this LDN Fund has been considered or could also be sought during project implementation to scale-up the project impact.

8. Considering the list of certifications has been removed, please adapt the sentence "While a national eco-labeling is being developed (in preparation by the Directorate of Climate Change/MiAmbiente) for small to medium producers, the following certifications for carbon footprint are recommended:".

9. Not addressed. In the Portal, the outcome "Strengthening of organizational capacities for access to markets and certification mechanisms for agricultural products from areas with SLM and restored areas." is still with the numbering 3.1 instead of 3.2.

10. Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

**May 13, 2021:**

4 and 9. Thank you for the amendments. Please adjust accordingly the numbering of the outputs under the outcomes 1.2, 1.3 and 3.2.

**May 14, 2021:**

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

**May 11, 2021**

Question 1: Clarification in page 31-32.

The project will specifically support goal 5: "Improve the existing legal framework that helps to enhance the NDT program", with the preparation of the Draft Law on Soils with the technical legal assistance of FAO (SoiLEX). The development of this law was one of the unfulfilled goals of the project "Support in decision-making for the integration and expansion of Sustainable Land Management (LADA)", which was Panama's first experience on LDN. Therefore, the project will resume the preparation of the soil law as an action to prevent the main threats that affect the soil (fire, logging, overgrazing, production on soils unsuitable for agriculture, urbanization, etc.).

This activity is complementary to the dissemination of the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management (DVGSS). The land law will be a key element to support the LDN Strategy. It will also contribute to protect water sources (National Water Security Plan 2015-2050), to conserve the country's biodiversity in accordance with the provisions of the Biodiversity Strategy and its Action Plan for 2050 and will contribute to reducing the vulnerabilities of soils and crops proposed by the National Climate Change Strategy for 2050.

Question 2:

Please see complementary information about this on page 32.

The project will improve the governance of water and soil in the selected basins using the tools that the Ministry of the Environment and the Government of Panama are implementing at the national level, such as the National Water Security Plan 2015-2050 and the NDT Strategy. Specific actions include the dissemination of the National Water Security Plan on the issues that are key to achieving the project's objectives in the selected basins: (i) guaranteeing water availability for the socioeconomic growth of each region (Goal 2); (ii) preventive risk management (avoid or reduce the risk of droughts, floods, alteration of the hydrological cycle of rivers, etc.) and increase the resilience of people and crops (Goal 3); and (iii) improve water and soil governance through inter-institutional coordination of entities that have the technical, operational, logistical, and

financial capacities, an adequate regulatory framework, and the institutional capacity to do so (Goal 5). The dissemination and information activities also the actions that the NDT promotes at the national level, which are the central objective of the project management at the basin level, such as the restoration of the productive landscape with climate-smart agriculture and livestock techniques and technical of SLM.

These tasks will be carried out in coordination with the basin committees that integrate all institutional actors (public entities with a physical presence in the basin), private sector and civil society, which becomes the public forum for decision-making in the respective basin. These actions support the implementation of Objective 4 of the LDN "By 2020, improve coordination between the different institutions, civil society, unions and promote participatory mechanisms."

Question 3. Table 2 eliminated and explanatory paragraph on page 36 as well. Also, text about technical guide was deleted and text focused on specific actions.

Question 4: Corrected and in line both texts to output from outcome 1.2.

Question 5: LDN target was clarify and project specific proposal of index and tools to measure baseline and LDN contribution are in page 42

The baseline of the LDN goals estimated for 2010, showed the following results:

-The changes in forest cover was only 0.2% of the total area. It is presumed that the changes occurred with the increase in the area of pastures and shrubs (0.1%) and agricultural lands (0.1%), however in this new farmland 75.4% maintained their productivity.

-Regarding soil productivity, 14.5% of forest cover and 22% of agricultural land suffered some degree of productivity loss.

-The areas with the highest soil carbon reserves corresponded to the areas that conserve the greatest forest cover (forest lands in the Atlantic region and Darien National Park).

-The areas with the lowest carbon reserves corresponded to the central region of the country that coincides with the basins of the La Villa and Santa Mar? a rivers.

- The carbon stock values according to the ecosystem were: wetlands (139.6 ton / ha); croplands (126.4 ton / ha), forests (123 ton / ha) and scrub (115 ton / ha).

To measure the changes in land use reported to SINIA, the project will propose the use of the following tools is proposed:

(i) vegetation index that allows measuring the normalized difference through a simple graphic indicator that can be used to analyze remote sensing measurements, often from a space platform, to assess whether the target being observed contains live green vegetation or not; and

(ii) use of the carbon balance tool (EX - ACT) that allows the land accounting of GHG impacts per unit of land expressed in (tCO<sub>2</sub>-e per ha) and also to measure the carbon footprint per unit of land. product.

The use of this tool will help to measure the GHG emissions generated in the agricultural, livestock and forestry subsectors, belonging to the AFOLU sector, and show the changes in soil management and project areas. In order for producer organizations, communities and public officials who will provide assistance to become involved in the importance of these measurements, students from technical schools will be trained in the use of GPS, drones, information management and the use of georeferencing tools for monitoring (hot spots, coverage, etc.) so that changes are recorded and reported to SINIA.

Also, as part of the co-financing, FAO in collaboration with IDIAP, will be developing during 2021 a map of potential carbon sequestration in the soil (Global Soil Organic Carbon Sequestration Potential Map - GSOCseq) . This initiative will benefit Panama to: (i) identify regions, soil types and production systems that have the highest risk of decline and which have the greatest potential to increase SOC stocks, in order to establish priorities for research and policy implementation public, (ii) formulate policies in the adoption of SLM practices that promote SOC sequestration at the national level; (iii) improve technical capacities in sustainable soil management, soil data management, mapping and digital soil models. In addition, in 2021, FAO's training in the use of the EXACT tool will continue, including officials from MiAmbiente and MIDA. All the information collected and processed will feed and strengthen the SINIA.

Also, to contribute to the LDN baseline, the maps of the soil carbon indicators and change in land use, the contribution of data from permanent carbon monitoring plots could be considered. On the ground, carried out and carried out by MiAMBIENTE (REDD + monitoring and forest and carbon inventory), adjusted with the increase in surface parcels served by the project, especially for the soil carbon indicator. With this action, synergies would be established between both IDIAP and MiAMBIENTE projects.

Question 6: Please find specific information about LDN monitoring system in specific watersheds according project alternative scenario in page 42. Text about context and CSA eliminated. Information about CSA practices in output 2.1.1

For the LDN monitoring system in the selected sub-basins, carry out an analysis of the current situation of the pilot areas on site at the beginning of the project and evaluate the changes at the end of its execution. Also, a zoning of the beneficiary farms, to identify whether or not it is on degraded land, water quality sampling to assess its degradation status and carry out a georeferenced overlap of the territorial plans of the pilot areas.

A joint evaluation with the inter-institutional staff, about several tools available to support monitoring exercises, which may be applied, such as: (i) GLEAM for livestock systems; (ii) Application of the IPCC Inventory, to calculate carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from the agricultural, agroforestry, forestry and livestock systems sector; (iii) GPS to generate georeferenced information on the land in terms of delimitation of areas of use, animals, crops, etc; (iv) ODK (Open Data Kit), is an open source application that allows digitally, through cell phones, to generate field forms of georeferenced information; (v) Google Maps / Google Earth very accessible and potentially useful for a comprehensive vision of the location of farms and visualization of georeferenced information taken in the field; (vi) QGIS to perform analysis on the ground combining the capabilities of integrating tabular and cartographic information typical of GIS with remote sensing technologies to perform analyzes derived from drones or satellites; (vii)

Drones equipped with cameras to evaluate difficult-to-access sites that must be evaluated and that georeferenced images are generated through aerial shots that help the user to optimize their analysis and to integrate with other data related to the project area. A periodic (annual) analysis of the vulnerability of land degradation is projected, as well as the monitoring of action plans and initiatives that arise between the different institutions that may have a direct or indirect impact on the pilot areas and the development of monitoring reports (biannual or annual).

Question 7:

There is no budget in the specific Water Security Plan for LDN. There is a list of projects for the management / protection of hydrographic basins, proposed by MiAmbiente, to achieve LDN strategy. Please see page 55 of the PRODOC with the relevant information.

MiAmbiente has budgeted 2 projects for 2022-2024, which will have funds allocated for the NDT issue:

1. Implementation of the Land Degradation Assessment and support for the decision on sustainable land management and application of best practices. It is a continuity project, which was the counterpart of DS-SLM, with investment funds for an amount of:

Year	Local Budget (US\$)
2022	1,250,000
2023	750,000
2024	750,000

2. Sustainable land management and restoration of productive landscapes in hydrographic basins for the implementation of the national goals of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in Panama. It will be a new project, for the counterpart of the project with GEF7. You will have funds in the amount of:

Year	Local Budget (US\$)
2022	500,000
2023	750,000
2024	750,000

In addition, Water Security Plan has programmed, a list of projects for the management / protection of hydrographic basins, proposed by MiAmbiente, the following being the ones most closely linked to the project:

-Updating of watershed management plans (including project watersheds) (US \$ 5.0 million)

-watershed conservation projects that include soil and water conservation and strengthening of watershed committees (US \$ 4.5 million)

-modeling (scenarios) for monitoring changes in forest cover in the main basins of the country (US \$ 0.8 million), and,

MIDA proposed agroecological zoning on which they emphasized in the workshops. (US \$ 2.3 million)

Question 8: Eliminated text on outcome 3.1 regarding carbon footprint certification schemes

Question 9: outcome 3.2 (pag 58) vs table b text checked and changed.

***3.2 Strengthening of organizational capacities for access to markets and certification mechanisms for agricultural products from areas with SLM and restored areas.***

Question 10. Eliminated from table b and from component 4.

**May 12, 2021:**

Question 4: Sorry. Done into the CEO Endorsement.

Question 7:

Yes, Key elements about challenges and investments from MIROVA/UNCCD/ The Global Mechanism will be taken into consideration during project implementation as part of financial proposals on SLM /CSA/CSL Please see page 56 of the PRODOC (output 3.1.1)

For this output, key elements for investment and challenges about LDN investments from UNCCD report ?Unlocking the market from land degradation neutrality? specific to Panama case will be considered. 3 aspects will be part of the analisis for financial proposal on SLM/CSA/CSL: (i) enabling conditions in favour of sustainable land management and land restoration investments (ii) the existing market actors working on

initiatives that combat land degradation (iii) the overall key opportunities and gaps in the nascent LDN market.[1]<sup>1</sup>

Question 8:

Paragraph rephrased and certification mentioned eliminated. Please see page 57 of the PRODOC.

Currently the country is building its own certification system for the Reduce Your Corporate and Product Footprint program (in preparation by the Directorate of Climate Change/MiAmbiente). To achieve this, certification and / or measurement tools have been recommended for different sizes of producers, emphasizing those tools accessible to small producers who could not afford international certification.

Question 9: Sorry. Done into CEO Endorsement.

**May 13**

Addressed

---

[1] Maillard S., Cheung Renee & Bonterra partners. (2016). *Unlocking the market for Land Degradation Neutrality* . September 2020, de Inn pact Sitio web: <https://www.innpact.com/uploads/news/files/MIROVASTUDYUnlocking-the-Market-for-LDNEN.pdf>

**4. Is there further elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

1. To demonstrate the alignment, please clarify the references used for "Objective 1. Support the implementation of sustainable land management to achieve LDN", "Objective DT 1-1", "Goal 2", "Goal DT 2-5", "Objective 1.1", "Objective 2.2"... and ensure the alignment with the Focal Areas objectives used for this project (as they are described in the GEF-7 Programming Directions) is clearly presented.
2. Please note that this project doesn't need to show alignment with the FOLUR Impact Program.

**May 12, 2021:**

---



Thank you for the clarification and amendment. Cleared

## Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

Question 1: Text corrected with LD 1-1 and LD 2-5. Please see page 63

The project is aligned with the focal area Land Degradation as the axis of the project, in its specific objectives LD 1-1 " Maintain or improve the flow of agroecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods through Sustainable Land Management (SLM) " using SLM best practices with targeted agricultural products such as the recovery of 200 ha of landscapes with shade-grown coffee in the highlands, the recovery of at least 300 ha of riparian forests for the protection of water sources, change in the management of grasslands and pastures with the adoption of climate-smart livestock (CSL) techniques; the adoption of sustainable management of traditional agricultural systems to climate-smart agricultural systems (CSA) in key crops of the country such as rice and corn. Project it is also with LD-2-5 "Create enabling environments to support the expansion and integration of SLM and LDN ".Key action will achieve: embedding the LDN tool into the existing planning frameworks and participatory land-use planning to meaningfully involve local governments, local communities and women; providing the technical assistance required to bring bankable projects to the investment; supporting smallholders through special lending and through extension systems; building capacity at all levels required to restore and maintain functional landscapes; developing monitoring and information systems and targeted research on impacts, trade-offs, costs-benefit analysis of restoration, and identifying incremental synergies.

The project will also generate co benefits in climate change, with the implementation of measures to reduce CO2 emissions generated by livestock activities and rice production in the AFOLU sector, support the scope of changes in land use, using the associated tool ?Reduce your water and / or carbon footprint?. In addition, the activities for the protection and conservation of biodiversity that will be carried out by other public and private actors, in the conservation areas located in the basins selected for the implementation of the project, they will contribute to recovering or maintaining essential ecosystem services that demonstrate the environmental quality of the soil and water.

Question 2: The text of FOLUR eliminated.

**5. Is the incremental reasoning, contribution from the baseline, and co-financing clearly elaborated?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Most of the description is a presentation of baseline initiatives and their status and the link with the project activities is not explained. Please indicate clearly how the project will build on and articulate with the identified baseline to meet its objectives.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

### Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

Page 64, information was change clarifying the articulation between project, baseline and cofinancing.

This proposal is based on the existing legal and political framework in Panama related to the environment and land use. In addition, the activities of CSA, SLM and GCI will be supported by investment initiatives and technical assistance in the agricultural and natural resource management sectors that already exist in the country and that were specified in the baseline.

The additional GEF resources are intended to complement the efforts of regional projects by improving the status of livestock and basic grain production systems (rice and corn) in the execution areas, and serve as a model to be replicated in other basins.

Under Component 1 of this proposal, the GEF investment will provide support to create an enabling environment for SLM planning and implementation, as a mechanism to contribute to the achievement of LDN goals 4 and 5. To carry out this component, the GEF investment incorporates a number of technical experts, including a land use planning expert, a soil monitoring expert, and a legal expert; Furthermore, with the contribution of the GEF, land use plans will be drawn up in priority sub-basins and an integrated public access agroclimatic information system will be established. Component 1 will contribute to monitoring CO2 emissions at the farm level and at the national level, information that will be useful for the soil organic carbon mapping that IDIAP will be carrying out with the support of FAO and the baseline for the system of soil quality monitoring that MiAmbiente will be implementing.

Component 2 will complement the phytosanitary and zoosanitary services that MIDA provides to producers in the execution areas in order to facilitate CSA and GCI practices, such as the integrated management of weeds, diseases and pests with techniques of low environmental impact. The support of the private sector (Asociación Nacional de Ganaderos -ANAGAN) to the adoption of best practices in livestock, contained in the Plan for the Environmental Improvement of Livestock in Panama (NAMA Ganadero) will reduce CO2 emissions, promote change of land use from traditional livestock to silvopastoral systems, and will improve animal health, complementing the GCI proposals that the Project will develop.

Under Component 2, the GEF investment will support the implementation, on the ground, of MST. To this end, the GEF contribution will cover the expenses of field officers, experts in climate-smart agriculture and livestock, an expert in land use planning for the preparation of farm plans, and a business specialist to advise on the preparation of farm plans. businesses to access credit. This component has also allocated resources for the development of pilot projects in the field that serve as replicable models in other parts of the same basin or basins in other areas of the country. Work will

be done with MIDA technical assistance teams, training them in the use of better agricultural and livestock practices so that assistance not only in priority areas, but in the rest of the region where each basin is located will have the same productive approach.

The GEF contribution in Component 3 will help to develop protocols and trainings with producers and the public sector to put into practice the Reduce your Footprint Program (water and products) implemented by the Ministry of the Environment. This Program is part of the country's commitments in Panama's First Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), approved in March 2021. GEF resources will support the hiring of specialists in Carbon footprint (experts to prepare livestock and rice protocol), Carbon footprint certification measurement and Water footprint certification measurement, development of workshops and training events, as well as the production and reproduction of illustrative material on the subject of reducing the footprint of carbon and water footprint in production processes.

Component 4 will establish an M&E system to measure progress and impacts and disseminate lessons learned. For this purpose, the GEF investment will essentially support the contribution of the M&E and Communication Expert, the development of the Final Evaluation, as well as the exchange visits to the demonstration sites. Likewise, it will support the integration of a gender approach in all activities, complementing the efforts of MIDA and MiAmbiente to integrate the gender issue in the processes of productive land use.

**6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

In the first paragraph, the breakdown of the areas doesn't match with the total of 5,500 hectares (1,500 hectares under improved practices are missing in the description). Please clarify.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the complement. Cleared.

Agency Response

Pag 65. Hectares updated. 5,500 in total. The detail of the changes below:

The implementation of these practices includes: (i) the recovery of 500 ha in degraded areas with the recovery of 200 ha of landscapes with shade-grown coffee in the highlands and the recovery of at least 300 ha of riparian forests for the protection of water sources; (ii) change in the management of grasslands and pastures in 4,600 ha with the adoption of climate-smart livestock (GCI) techniques; (iii) change in the management of 400 ha with the adoption the sustainable management of traditional agricultural systems to climate-smart agricultural systems (CSA) in key crops of the country such as rice and corn

**7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Project Map and Coordinates**

**Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**May 4, 2020:**

The maps of the three selected basins are provided. Cleared.

During the PPG phase, please provide the map of the project implementation areas.

**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

Point taken. No response required

**Child Project**

**If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

**Agency Response May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Stakeholders**

**Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase?  
Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the  
implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of  
engagement, and dissemination of information?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

**April 22, 2021:**

The stakeholders consultation and their expected engagement is briefly presented in 2 tables. Nevertheless, there is no summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, and how information will be disseminated. Please complete the description with this missing information.

**May 12, 2021:**

The description says "The participation of key stakeholders has been indicated in the description of the Project Results and Outputs earlier in this document ". Nevertheless we don't find in the Portal such "description of the Project Results and Outputs earlier in this document". Please clarify where the mentioned participation of key stakeholders can be found.

**May 13, 2021:**

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared

**Agency Response**

**May 11, 2021:**

Please find missing information on page 74.

During the preparation, multiple public actors were consulted, from river basin committees, producer organizations and women's groups, which although most of them were virtual, a very wide audience was achieved. The specialists who prepared the studies for each component made direct consultations with producers, women's groups, producer organizations, field officials and managers of the entities involved. In the case of the international experts, they were accompanied by national specialists, including personnel from the Water Security Directorate who accompanied the entire preparation of Component 2, which is the axis of the execution in the field.

### ***Stakeholder engagement plan***

The participation of key stakeholders has been indicated in the description of the Project Results and Outputs earlier in this document and is summarized in the Project Implementation Arrangements section. The project will ensure strong stakeholder participation during its execution. Outcome 1.1 sustains that the implementation of LDN will require multi-stakeholder participation and cross-sector planning, a process that will be facilitated by the basin committees. In addition, the project safeguards establish measures to avoid adverse effects on vulnerable groups due to Project activities.

Outcome 2.1 involves the participation of stakeholders in decision-making to integrate the good practices of SLM, CSA and climate-smart livestock practices in the field (Outputs 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 ) highlighting the need to promote a multi-stakeholder process that identifies the needs and opportunities related to the rehabilitation of agricultural and livestock lands and the participatory formulation of land use planning instruments with producer organizations, cooperatives, technicians and specialists of MIDA and MiAmbiente incorporating the gender approach.

The participatory process will also be an essential part of Component 3, including banks and the private sector (producer companies) to measure the carbon footprint and the water footprint of key products in each of the selected basins (Output 3.1.3), as well as integrating certification schemes for companies or producers that have reduced their carbon footprint to facilitate their access to carbon markets and national banks (Product 3.1.1).

The decision-making mechanism of the project is reflected in Section 6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination. The Project Steering Committee is integrated by representatives of the Government and FAO; In addition, a Technical Committee with broad participation of all interested parties, including the private sector and NGO representatives, has been proposed to discuss the technical aspects of the annual operating plans and the progress of the project's execution.

A preliminary stakeholder engagement plan is detailed below, which will be further discussed and updated at the start of the project.

**Table 5. Preliminary stakeholders engagement plan**

Event	Participants	Execution period	Objective
Dissemination Activities	Basin committees	Previous to inception workshop	Dissemination of information of the project
Inception workshop	Asociations, producers organizations, women organizations, cooperative, basin committees, government professionals of MiAmbiente, MIDA, IDIAP, BDA,CATHALAC, CONAGUA, etc.	3 month after the first disbusment	Define and validate methodologies to be used during Project implementation, M&E and evaluation. Confirm institutional roles of project stakeholders. Define local and national focal poits for project implementation. Defin a participatory consultation and complain mechanism for project beneficiaries.

SLM anual forum	Associations, producers organizations, women organizations, cooperative, basin committees, government professionals of MiAmbiente, MIDA, IDIAP, BDA, CATHALAC, CONAGUA and other entities, agricultural and livestock institutes students	Antes de finalizar cada año de ejecución del proyecto  Before the end/ year of Project execution	Share experiences, advances and knowledge about SLM, CSA and CSL and their contribution to LDN  This forum also help to identify weaknesses to be strengthened and increase the effectiveness of the Project. It will be a public forum.
Final workshop	Co executing partners, technical officials from MiAmbiente, MIDA, IDIAP, CONAGUA, Farmer's organizations, cooperatives, women's associations, students benefiting from the project, community leaders, NGOs, etc.	3 months before Project closure	Disseminate the Project Results and discuss the lesson learned for future projects. Share success stories with and within beneficiary organizations and the other stakeholders in the national livestock sector, etc., which will be inputs for the project closure report.
Event to share the results of the final evaluation.	Officials from MiAmbiente, MIDA, CATHALAC, FAO, IDIAP	At the end of the financial execution of the project.	Share the results of the final evaluation, consult with co-executing partners and identify weaknesses and strengths at the institutional and operational level (local and national). Share experiences.
Publication of the final evaluation	MiAmbiente, FAO	After the end of the project	Public disclosure The final evaluation, approved by FAO, will be published on FAO and MiAmbiente Disclosure Portal.

May 12, 2021:

Sentence eliminated, due to the inclusion of specific information about stakeholder engagement in each component into this section.

#### Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

**Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

Yes, the description is completed by a Gender Action Plan uploaded in the Portal.

Cleared.

**Agency Response May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Private Sector Engagement**

**If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

**April 22, 2021:**

No, the description is very limited (2.5 lines) and refers to a project component involving banks. Please describe under the appropriate section the private sector engagement which should not be limited to bank lines, associated programs and credit lines.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

**Agency Response**

**May 11, 2021:**

Noted. Please see new text added to private sector in page 78 of the PRODOC.

The project will work with products organized in cooperatives, associations and producer organizations (men and female) with legal status and operate as private companies. It is planned to work with producers who within these groups have:

- Farms with a size not greater than 50 ha in livestock activity considering that between 65% and 85% of the farms their average size is less than 20 ha.
- Farms of up to 15 in agricultural activity.
- Farms smaller than 5 ha that qualify in the category of family farming.

Some of the Farmer's associations are: Cooperativa de Producción Campesinos Unidos Quebrada el Ciprian (producción de porotos), Asociación de Productores de Leche de Santa María, Organización Campesina Mujer Rural Santa Rita de Casia (producción de maíz), Asociación de Mujeres Rurales Emanuel (Asoc. de Productores Agropecuarios Unidos del Potrero), Asociación Chitrana de Productores, Exportadores y Comercializadores de Café y Otros Rogelio Rodríguez, Asociación de Productores Agropecuarios Agroforestal La Puente, Asociación de Productores Orgánicos del Distrito de Santa Fe (APOSOF), APRE (Asociación de Productores de Renacimiento) (producción de café), GORACE (Grupo Orgánico de Productores Cerropunteños) (hortalizas) APCE (Asociación de Productores y Cultivos Exportables), etc.

A second group of private actors correspond to producer cooperatives that operate with administrative, operational and managerial systems of private management, with the benefit that many cooperatives finance the activities of their members, an important



factor to expand the adoption of SLM practices more beyond project financing. Some of the cooperatives are: COPREN, R.L. (Cooperativa de Productores de Renacimiento (producci?n de caf?)), CACSA, R.L. (Cooperativa de Servicios M?ltiples y Financieros, San Antonio R.L.), COOLECHE (Cooperativa de Lecheros, R.L.), Cooperativa Suelo F?rtil, S.A., Cooperativa de Producci?n Campesinos Unidos Quebrada el Ciprian (producci?n de porotos), Cooperativa S/M Uni?n Agr?cola, R.L. (producci?n y comercializaci?n de ma?z), etc.

A third group of private actors represented by financial institutions such as public bank (Banco de Desarrollo Agropecuario, Banco Nacional) and private banks (Global Bank, Credicoorp Bank, Multicredit Bank). The project will support the preparation of farm plans (Component 2, Output 2.1.3) converting them into bankable businesses through the technical assistance of specialists in strategic planning and financial experts (Component 3, Output 3.1.1) to Increase the number of producers who adopt the SLM, CSA and CSL practices that the project will develop as pilots experiences.

#### **Risks to Achieving Project Objectives**

**Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

In the proposal, the risk and opportunity analysis related to the COVID-19 pandemic is not presented. Nevertheless, the pandemic can affect important elements of the project. A risk and opportunity analysis needs to be undertaken at this stage. In particular, relatively important public co-financing is expected for this project, notably as investment mobilized. Can this co-financing be affected by the current pandemic? Please complete the risk analysis and consider possible opportunities this project can provide to enhance the resilience of the beneficiaries against possible future pandemics (it can be a specific section after the risk table). Should be considered both short term needs such as risk mitigation or longer-term actions such as ?green recovery? and resilience building strategies and actions.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

Text included as a new moderated risk.

The Project preparation stage was affected by mobility restrictions that Panama put into effect in 2020 and until the first quarter of 2021 to avoid COVID-19 infections. The

main effect was to carry out the activities of consultation and discussion of topics virtually, but they were largely participatory. Another mitigation mechanism was the inclusion of joint teams of a foreign specialist with national specialist to develop project component to guarantee strengthen national capacity, guaranteeing also, country vision in all the proposals.

Another effect was the reduction of funds for project stakeholders in 2020, due to the need to address the health crisis. Nevertheless, this did not affect the project in 2020, due to stakeholders funds were not required during project formulation phase.

To prevent the risk of not having cofinancing funds at the beginning of the project, MiAmbiente programmed in the national budget US \$ 500,000 for the first year. It is not expected significant budget cutting backs in stakeholder cofinancing funds for COVID-19, since the country has initiated an aggressive vaccination program to prevent new outbreaks and maintains alerts of possible sources of contagion, including a biosecurity plan for the visitor entry to the country. In the future, if some other confinement take place at national level, it will be possible to consider to combine virtual workshops and trainings, in order to avoid project delays due to pandemic issues.

The project could provide possible opportunities to improve the resilience of the beneficiaries against possible future pandemics, by creating conditions of resilience of people and their crops with the use of better productive practices and the conservation and protection of water sources in the execution areas. These actions are carried out by the Ministry of the Environment through the Directorate of Climate Change, one of the project's stakeholders.

#### **Coordination**

**Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

We note from the budget that FAO will undertake executing function using 2.2% of the budget. Please justify.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the justification. In addition, please attach the project budget table under Annex E of the project description in the Portal.

**May 13, 2021:**

Thank you for attaching the budget in the Annex E. Following GEF project budget template, please add and fill out a last column titled "Responsible Entity (Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency)".

**May 14, 2021:**

Thank you for the complement. Cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021.**

FAO will only keep budget to manage the inputs of the evaluations (oversight of evaluations is on Agency fees in line with Guidelines to PCC policy). The rest of the budget will be handled by an executing partner.

May 12, 2021:

Project budget include into annex E. Also, an excel copy was uploaded as an annex of the roadmap sections (documents).

May 13.

Addressed.

**Consistency with National Priorities**

**Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11,2021:**

No response required.

**Knowledge Management**

**Is the proposed ?Knowledge Management Approach? for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

The description refer to component 4 but the timeline associated with the key deliverables is unclear. Please indicate under the knowledge management section the key deliverables and their respective timeline.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for providing the table 6. Nevertheless the Knowledge Management Approach should also be budgeted including the cost of the deliverables. Please complete accordingly.

**May 13, 2021:**

We don't find the same items related to the knowledge management approach in the project budget. Please indicate the cost of the key deliverables and the total budget of the KM approach in the relevant section of the project description (completing the table 6). Also, please translate in English the title of the columns in table 6.

**May 14, 2021:**

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

A preliminary proposal for Knowledge management activities was included in page 88.

Preliminary proposal to develop the Knowledge Management Approach activities (according to the Project Work Plan (Annex H).

**Table 6. Knowledge Management Approach activities**

Actividades	Programaci?n propuesta	Contenido
Preparation / design of the communication strategy	First-second quarter of the first year of execution	Identification of the target population, nature of the information, means of dissemination (virtual, radio, written), scope of the information to be communicated, content by type of audience, material to be disseminated, etc.

Preparation and organization of information for disclosure)	Materials will be produced quarterly and disseminated with the support of the project team, the MIDA and MiAmbiente field staff, and the watershed committees.	Information for dissemination and the ways to do it (texts, graphics, maps, tables, posters, comics, etc.) and the selection of dissemination materials according to the type of audience (businessmen, students, officials, producers, women, young people , etc.
Training workshops for producers, women and youth	During the entire project execution period. Once the preparation begins, the team of each component will schedule their training activities	Workshops for technical training including support in the field by the Field Schools and specialized personnel of the project to support components 1, 2 and 3.
Training workshops for officials on the Reduce your Footprint Program (water and products)	Third - fourth quarter of the first year of execution.	Technical capacities of institutions to adopt carbon footprint and water footprint calculation tools for at least 2 key products strengthened (protocol developed for livestock and rice).
Dissemination of lessons learned in virtual sites of MIDA, MiAmbiente, FAO, etc.	Third quarter of the final year of execution	Systematization, publication and dissemination of the lessons learned to support the expansion of LDN at the national level

May 12,2021:

Included a new table linking budget and KM key activities of the project on page 89,

**May 13**

Addressed. Table 6 updated

Preliminary proposal to develop the Knowledge Management Approach activities (according to the Project Work Plan (Annex H).

**Table 6: Key KM deliverable with budget associated**

Key KM deliverables	Expected dates	Estimated budget
---------------------	----------------	------------------

<p><b>Communication strategy and campaign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Target stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> <li>- Identification and share of technical information</li> <li>- Appropriated means of dissemination (virtual, radio, brochures, policy briefs),</li> <li>- scope of the information to be communicated, content by type of audience, material to be disseminated, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>First-second quarter of the first year of execution</p>	<p>20,000 (communication campaign)</p>
<p><b>Dissemination of brochures, best practices and lesson learn of at least 5 key aspects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Synthesis of knowledge about national and local LDN,</li> <li>- Best practices and lesson learned about SLM/CSA and CSL and - Reduce your footprint program with LDN perspective</li> <li>- Systematization of lessons learned about LDN implementation at the subnational level</li> <li>- Linking LDN and production certification with reduce your footprint program (water and products)</li> </ul>	<p>Second semester of years 1, 2, 3 of the project execution</p>	<p>10,500 (printing and advertise materials)</p> <p>12,000 (communication expert)</p>
<p><b>Total</b></p>		<p><b>42,500 USD</b></p>

**Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**April 22, 2021:**

Yes, the complete Environmental and Social Risk Identification ? Screening is uploaded in the Portal. Cleared.

Agency Response **May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**April 22, 2021:**

In the provided table, the "Steering Committee Meetings" item doesn't have any information. Please clarify.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response  
**May 11, 2021:**

Text included in page 91.

This committee will meet annually and will make decisions about the annual work plans, the definition of budgets and the making of agreements on adjustments, corrections and reorientation in the development of the project, depending on the scope of objectives, goals, indicators and investments. Ministry of Environment will leads this committee.

**Benefits**

**Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
**April 22, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Annexes**

**Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Project Results Framework**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**GEF Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.



Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Council comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**STAP comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Convention Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**CSOs comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Status of PPG utilization**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Please see the comment above.

**May 12, 2021:**

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

Point taken. please see answer to question 6 about annex C.

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 21, 2021:**

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**May 11, 2021:**

No response required.

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Is CEO endorsement recommended? (applies only to projects and child projects)**

## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

**April 22, 2021:**

Not yet. Please address the comments raised above.

**May 12, 2021:**

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments.

**May 13, 2021:**

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments. In addition, Please note in the beginning of the project description in the Portal that the time between the "Expected Implementation Start" and the "Expected Completion Date" is 2 years while the project duration is 36 months. Please correct the "Expected Completion Date".

**May 24, 2021:**

Not yet. Please address the following comments.

1- On budget:

i. Whereas in the budget table it is explained that the Project coordinator and Admin Assistant will also work for the project's components (as such, part of their salary is charged to the component instead of PMC), it was not possible to find out TORs that support this assertion. As far as one can see, there is enough allocation from co-financing resources (represented in cash) allocated to PMC ? please consider using GEF and co-financing funds allocated to PMC to cover the costs associated with the project's execution instead of ?as in this case? using the project's components to cover the salary of the Project Coordinator

ii. Apparently the Finance Specialist (who by definition is part of the project's staff) will also play a role as ?Business plan specialist?, reason why he/she is charged to the project components and PMC. In absence of TOR's (we couldn't find them), this position should be charged to PMC

iii. ?Miscellaneous? has to be eliminated or charged to the co-financing portion of the PMC

2- On Gender: It is well noted that the agency has attached a gender action plan. The submission refers to a ?The gender and youth analysis? but we cannot locate it nor is it referenced and accessible in the section on gender in the portal. Please provide the gender analysis and clearly reference this in the section on gender in the portal.

**June 1st, 2021:**

Thank you for addressing the remaining comments. The project is now recommended for CEO Approval.

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>4/22/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/12/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/13/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/24/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>6/1/2021</b>	

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**