

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Indigenous Agricultural Genetic Diversity in Hubei

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

9873

Countries

China

Project Name

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Indigenous Agricultural Genetic Diversity in Hubei

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

3/29/2019

Review completed by PM

12/10/2019

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

MSP

CEO Approval Request

Project Consistency

1. Is the project aligned with the relevant GEF strategic objectives and results framework?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

2. Is the project structure/ design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

3. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

4. Does the project sufficiently indicate the drivers of global environmental degradation, issues of sustainability, market transformation, scaling, and innovation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

5. Is the project designed with sound incremental reasoning?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

6. Are the components in Table B sound and sufficiently clear and appropriate to achieve project objectives and the GEBs?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

7. Are socio-economic aspects, including relevant gender elements, indigenous people, and CSOs considered?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

8. Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes. However, section 7 on cost effectiveness has not been completed in the portal. Please complete.

06/07/2019 UA:

Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

UNDP, 4 April 2019

The following text has been added to Section 7

The project strategy is predicated on strengthening an enabling environment that encourages conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity through market-based and non-market-based incentive mechanisms. Incentivizing increased participation by farmers, agricultural associations and enterprises into agrobiodiversity management is a cost-effective and sustainable approach that facilitates increased protection of GRFA varieties and delivers sustainable livelihood benefits to local communities.

With respect to cost efficiency, GEF funds are allocated for capacity building activities aimed at strengthening capacities at the institutional level, delivering pragmatic knowledge to local farmers, agricultural associations and enterprises and facilitating more participatory approaches towards agrobiodiversity management. This is considered a cost-efficient investment, by contributing to foundational capacities for sustainable protection of GRFA varieties. Efficiency gains are integrated into the project through collaborating with the other child projects on technical advisory, knowledge management, aggregated reporting, etc. Several cost-effective considerations are also incorporated into the design of the project activities. For instance, local service providers, including agricultural associations and cooperatives, research institutions and consultants, are envisaged to carry out many of the community level activities. Field interventions are designed as demonstrations that can be replicated and scaled up in the same target landscapes and in other areas in the province and China.

The total GEF investment of USD 1,509,633 for this project will be complemented by a minimum of USD 11,810,000 in cofinancing from governmental and enterprise sector cofinancing partners, a highly cost-effective ratio of 7.8. Finally, the receipt of GEF resources channeled through a UN agency often facilitates their ability to achieve the necessary political commitment to take difficult decisions on issues such as reforming outdated legislation, prioritizing conservation activities, strengthening intersectoral coordination, and adopting more environmentally friendly practices in related sectors. Overall this represents a very cost-effective investment of GEF funds.

9. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

10. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

11. Are relevant tracking tools completed?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

12. Only for Non-grant Instrument: Has a reflow calendar been presented?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion n/a

Agency Response

13. Is the project coordinated with other related initiatives and national/regional plans in the country or in the region?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Not fully. Section 8 is not completed in the portal. This section would also be the appropriate place to describe how the project is coordinated with other child projects of the program and how it aligns with program objectives and contributes to program impact.

06/07/2019 UA:

Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

UNDP, 4 April 2019

The following text and tables have been added to Section 8

This project is one of five child projects under the GEF-financed PRC-GEF Partnership Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development (C-SAP) (GEF Program ID 9768). This programmatic approach will support coordinated knowledge management and cross-fertilization between individual child projects, coordinated by the national child project on invasive alien species and the national C-SAP Program Steering Committee. During project preparation, a coordinated approach was taken towards the development of individual child projects, which benefited the detailed design of this project. Coordination included two program-level coordination workshops, the deployment of a team of national specialists providing inputs across all UNDP projects under the coordination of a lead national and international consultants, coordinated design of child project results frameworks based on a harmonized program-level results framework, and development of linkages between common activities and knowledge sharing opportunities.

The underlying core theme across the child projects in the C-SAP program is integrated and participatory management of agroecological ecosystems. The program and project designs are predicated on demonstrating integrated and participatory approaches and strengthening the enabling environments for upscaling and sustaining these approaches. Joint-capacity building opportunities with the other child projects will be promoted throughout the program implementation phase, sharing experiences and lessons learned on a program level knowledge management platform, benefitting from common technical advisory services, as well as domestic and international partnerships.

During implementation, the project will benefit from the programmatic approach as monitoring and evaluation will be closely coordinated through the C-SAP program, namely the national IAS project (C-SAP2) which will work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs in coordinating program management, and the national agrobiodiversity project (C-SAP1) and climate-smart grasslands project (C-SAP5) which will jointly be coordinating program level knowledge management. The project components will contribute towards the C-SAP programmatic outcomes as shown in Project Document *Table 5*, copied below. Program coordination is further detailed in *Section V of the Project Document* for the C-SAP2 national IAS child project.

**PROJECT DOCUMENT TABLE 5: PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS
TOWARDS C-SAP PROGRAM RESULTS**

C-SAP Program Components / outcomes / indicators	C-SAP4 Project contributions to C-SAP program level results. Components / outcomes / indicators
Program Objective: Support the implementation of the <i>Sustainable Development Goals</i> and China's <i>National Plan for Sustainable Development of Agriculture (2015-2030)</i> by a) piloting and scaling up effective policy and investment measures to mainstream <i>in-situ</i> conservation and sustainable use of globally important genetic resources for food and agriculture (GRFA), b) improving the prevention, control and management of invasive alien species (IAS), c) conserving and enhancing carbon stock and promoting evidence-based and climate-smart conservation of grassland ecosystems, and d) collaborative innovation in climate change and biodiversity from the aspects of policy, mechanism, knowledge sharing and partnerships	
C-SAP Component 1: Strengthened enabling environment	C-SAP4 Component 1: Enhanced provincial policy and regulatory framework C-SAP4 Outcome 1: Provincial framework for in-situ agrobiodiversity conservation enhanced by strengthened enabling policies, regulations and strategies and improved inter-sectoral and cross-sectoral coordination

Outcome 1.1: Strengthened policy, regulatory and strategic frameworks and cross-sectoral coordination at national and provincial levels support a) in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, and b) the control of threats posed by IAS to sustainable agricultural development, and c) evidence-based and climate-smart conservation and management of grassland ecosystems

Indicator 1.1: Development of a comprehensive framework of policies, regulations and strategies across sectors which have addressed barriers and gaps identified in baseline assessments

Indicator 1.1: Strengthened policy, regulatory and strategic frameworks at provincial level support in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, as indicated by (a) a provincial *Agrobiodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*, a complement to the provincial *Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*; (b) provincial GRFA implementation framework; and (c) county GRFA implementation frameworks for Yunyang, Danjiangkou and Xishui counties

End target: (a) Approved by DARA; (b) Approved by DARA and submitted to the Provincial Government for approval; (c) Approved by county agriculture bureaus

Outcome 1.2: Strengthened cross-sectoral coordination results in more effective approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and grasslands, including for improved control and management of IAS threats

Indicator 1.2: i) The establishment of a strategic plan and coordination mechanism for IAS prevention, control and management at national and provincial level, leading to improved response times and increased engagement in IAS management by relevant sectors.

ii) The establishment of inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms for the in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA in target provinces and their use by a range of sectoral agencies to support in-situ agrobiodiversity conservation.

iii) The establishment of a cross-sectoral coordination mechanism for the management and sustainable use of grassland ecosystems and its use by a range of sectoral agencies to improve management efficiency, increasing the resilience of grassland ecosystems to climate change

Indicator 1.2: Strengthened intersectoral and cross-sectoral cooperation leads to more effective approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, including improved control and management of IAS threats, as indicated by number of coordination mechanisms at (a) provincial level and (b) county level.

End target: (a) One provincial coordination committee, with charter approved by DARA

(b) Three county coordination committees, with charters approved by county agriculture bureaus

<p>Outcome 1.3: Increased government financing for in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and grassland ecosystem, including for the prevention, control and management of IAS threats</p> <p>Indicator 1.3: National and provincial budget allocations</p>	<p>Indicator 1.3: Prioritized appropriation of government financing, as indicated by increased allocation of eco-compensation funds in the Danjiangkou Reservoir area for sustainable use and conservation of GRFA</p> <p>End target: CNY 2 million of eco-compensation funds allocated for agrobiodiversity conservation in the final year of project implementation or earmarked for the year following project closure</p>
<p>C-SAP Component 2: Incentive mechanisms</p>	<p>C-SAP4 Component 2: Demonstration of sustainable incentive mechanisms for in-situ conservation and use of agrobiodiversity</p> <p>C-SAP4 Outcome 2: Market- and non-market-based incentive mechanisms established and demonstrated in the Danjiangkou Reservoir area and Dabie Mountains area to increase conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and enable long-term livelihood benefits for local farmers</p>
<p>Outcome 2.1: Sustainable conservation and management approaches established which improve the in-situ sustainable use and conservation of GRFA and deliver social, financial and livelihood benefits to farmers in parallel</p> <p>Indicator 2.1: i) 15% increase in income of farming and herder households in target agricultural and pastoral landscapes attributed to their engagement in conservation and use of GRFA and/or green livestock development and sustainable grassland management.</p> <p>ii) The establishment of at least three successful business partnerships between farmers and commercial marketing outlets in five target provinces which are based on the production, processing and sale of agrobiodiversity products.</p> <p>iii) Eco-compensation schemes established and providing financial and social recognition to farmers and herders of their contribution to the conservation of GRFA and the sustainable management of grassland ecosystems.</p> <p>iv) 40% increase in the coverage of traditional varieties (in hectares, or number per hectare) in target agricultural landscapes</p>	<p>Indicator Obj-1: Area of landscapes under participatory conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity</p> <p><i>(GEF Core Sub-Indicator 4.3)</i></p> <p><i>(UNDP IRRF 1.4.1: Natural resources that are managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access and benefit-sharing regime: (g) other)</i></p> <p>End target:</p> <p>15,500 ha</p>

Indicator 2.1:

Sustainable livelihood benefits to farmers generated through incentivized in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, as indicated by the number of farmer households engaged in GRFA varieties in the demonstration landscapes for (a) rouge rice, (b) Wudang Tao tea and (c) black goat

End target:

Additional 40 households engaged in rouge rice, 20 households engaged in Wudang Tao tea and 30 households engaged in black goat

Indicator 2.2: Expanded non-market incentives through improved access to genetic resources, as indicated by (a) number of community seed banks established for rouge rice; (b) number of nurseries established for Wudang Tao tea; (c) number of annual livestock competitions for black goat mainstreamed into local extension offerings

End target:

(a) 1

(b) 1

(c) 1

	<p>Indicator 2.3: Expanded GRFA market incentives and strengthened marketing capacities, as indicated by (a) number of new product certification marketing tools for the target GRFA varieties; and (b) number of new partnerships established</p> <p>End target:</p> <p>(a) 2</p> <p>(b) 2</p>
<p>Outcome 2.2: Effective participatory approaches for the prevention, control and management of IAS impacts on GRFA developed and tested in target agricultural landscapes</p> <p>Indicator 2.2: i) The involvement of at least 40% of farmers and all relevant extension agencies in the identification, monitoring and removal of IAS and in habitat restoration at target landscapes.</p> <p>ii) No new IAS establishments, at least 60% reduction in the area affected by IAS and demonstrated IAS threat reduction to target GRFA in target agricultural landscapes (<i>indicators to be developed for impact of IAS threat reduction on target GRFA</i>)</p>	<p>No contributions by the C-SAP4 project.</p>
<p>Outcome 2.3: Community-based grassland management approach (including sound biodiversity and IAS management practices) and evidence-based payments for ecosystem services (PES) policy scheme with credible monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) system tested in selected provinces and ready for national scale up</p>	<p>No contributions by the C-SAP4 project.</p>
<p>C-SAP Component 3: Institutional capacity strengthening</p>	<p>C-SAP4 Component 3: Mainstreaming of approaches and strengthened institutional capacity</p> <p>C-SAP4 Outcome 3: Demonstrated approaches mainstreamed and capacities strengthened to facilitate upscaling of incentivized conservation and sustainable use of GRFA</p>

Outcome 3.1: : Increased effectiveness of participatory approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and sustainable management of grassland ecosystems

Indicator 3.1: i) At least 40% of households led by women and 20% of teenagers actively engaged in the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA in target agricultural landscapes, and at least 50% of households led by women actively engaged in climate-smart grassland management in target pastoral landscapes.

ii) Increase in the management and technical capacity of stakeholders related to conservation and sustainable use of GRFA and sustainable management of grassland ecosystems.

iii) Effective prevention, early detection, rapid response and management of IAS in agroecosystems (*measured by relevant items of the GEF IAS Tracking Tool*)

Indicator Obj-2: Number of direct project beneficiaries, measured based on:

(a) Cumulative total of the following:

(b) Number of people living in the communities within the demonstration landscapes (50% women)

(c) Number of institutional staff members having strengthened capacities with regard to in-situ conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity (30% women)

(*GEF Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as a co-benefit of GEF investment*)

End target:

(a) 4,856 (2,392 women; 2,464 men)

(b) 4,676 (2,338 women; 2,338 men)

(c) 180 (54 women; 126 men)

Indicator 3.3: Level of mainstreaming incentive-based approaches of in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, as indicated by having incentivized approaches for in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA included in the work program for DARA

End target: Approved work program included in the 14th 5-year plan for DARA

Outcome 3.2: Strengthened institutional capacity of relevant public sector agencies within target sites, and of lead national institutions, for the in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, for the management of IAS impacts on agrobiodiversity, and for evidence-based and climate-smart grassland management practices

Indicator 3.2: i) Capacity assessments at the beginning, middle and end of the program; ii) Counties within target agricultural landscapes have established IAS management institutions

Indicator 3.1: Strengthened institutional capacity of the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DARA) for in the in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, as indicated by capacity development scorecard

End Target:

87%

Indicator 3.2: Degree of upscaling of participatory approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, as indicated by (a) number of participatory landscape assessments completed beyond the demonstration landscapes using the best practice guideline developed in Component 2; (b) hectares under in-situ conservation and sustainable use of GRFA replicated beyond the demonstration landscapes (excluding protected areas); (c) number of additional GRFA varieties having eco-certification in the province

End target:

(a) 2

(b) 5,000 ha

(c) 10

C-SAP Component 4: Program Coordination, Knowledge Management

C-SAP4 Component 4: Knowledge management and monitoring & evaluation

C-SAP4 Outcome 4: Knowledge, attitudes and practices, and knowledge management structures enhanced to broaden participation in the conservation and sustainable use of GRFA

<p>Outcome 4.1: Improved understanding among decision makers, the general public and key stakeholder groups on the value of GRFA and importance of in-situ conservation, and evidence-based policy making for climate-smart grassland management, and increased access by all groups to information</p> <p>Indicator 4.1: Knowledge, Attitude and Practices surveys to be conducted at beginning, middle and end of projects</p>	<p>Indicator 4.1: Improved understanding among key stakeholder groups on the value of GRFA and the importance of in-situ conservation, as indicated by results of knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP) surveys (disaggregated by women and youth), among the following stakeholder groups: (a) Provincial governmental stakeholders; (b) Local governmental stakeholders; (c) Farmers; (d) Agricultural associations and enterprises</p> <p>End target (provisional): (a) Increase of at least 20% percentage points; (b) Increase of at least 30% percentage points; (c) Increase of at least 50% percentage points; (d) Increase of at least 20% percentage points</p>
<p>Outcome 4.2: Monitoring and evaluation demonstrates efficient use of program funds, rationalization of national, provincial and local level inputs, and sharing of information, resources and expertise between projects, along with on-going exchange of lessons and best practices</p>	<p>Indicator 4.2: Adoption of participatory knowledge management systems, as indicated by (a) the number of GRFA varieties described on the provincial agrobiodiversity database, and (b) number of lessons learned, case studies and other posts submitted on the C-SAP program knowledge and communication platform</p> <p>End target:</p> <p>(a) 10</p> <p>(b) 50</p>
<p>Outcome 4.3: Effective coordination of program activities across national and provincial stakeholders and GEF agencies</p>	<p>Same as for Indicator 4.2.</p>

The project strategy has a strong emphasis on building upon baseline activities implemented by project partners, as well as on establishing new and strengthening existing partnerships to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved. One of the advantages of the programmatic approach of the C-SAP program is the benefit of partnerships across the child projects. MARA, as the lead implementing partner for the C-SAP program, will support program level coordination through the C-SAP Program Coordination Office in Beijing and the Program Steering Committee. The national IAS project (C-SAP2) will maintain a Program Coordination, Monitoring

and Evaluation Secretariat supported by a full-time M&E/Coordination Officer, who will help coordinate program reporting and M&E activities. The national agrobiodiversity project (C-SAP1) and the climate smart agriculture project (C-SAP4) will jointly help coordinate program level knowledge management, including management of the C-SAP program website and knowledge platform. As the lead GEF agency for the program, UNDP will provide guidance to the implementing partners on strategic, technical and administrative issues throughout the implementation timeframe, through their country office and the regional technical advisor based at the Asia-Pacific regional hub.

Some of the key related initiatives where partnerships will be fostered are listed below

Intersection of related initiatives with project outputs

Other Initiatives	Main Partner(s)	Other Partners	Intersections with project outputs
PRC-GEF Partnership Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development (C-SAP)	MARA, UNDP	FAO, World Bank	All outputs; see details in Error! Reference source not found.
PRC-GEF China's Protected Area System Reform (C-PAR) program	MEE, MNR, UNDP	Provincial Governments, Conservation International	Outputs 4.1, 4.2
Crop Germplasm Resources Protection	MARA	Hubei DARA	Outputs 2.2, 2.4, 3.1, 4.2, 4.3
National 13th 5-year plan on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Animal Genetic Resources	MARA	Hubei DARA	Outputs 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 4.2, 4.3
Hubei Province 13th 5-year plan (2016-2020)	Hubei Provincial Government	Provincial agencies	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2
Danjiangkou Reservoir area programs, e.g., eco-compensation program (key ecological function zone)	Central Government	Hubei Provincial Government, counties in the Danjiangkou Reservoir area	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

Other Initiatives	Main Partner(s)	Other Partners	Intersections with project outputs
Eco-Agriculture Plan of Han River Eco-Economy Zone	Hubei DARA	Hubei Development and Reform Commission	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2
Management of Ecological Public-Welfare Forests in Hubei Province	Hubei Dept of Natural Resources	Hubei DARA	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2
Hubei's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP)	Hubei Provincial Government	Dept of Ecology and Environment, other provincial agencies	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 4.3
Priority Protection of Yangtze River through ecological agriculture, part of the Yangtze River Economic Belt program	Central Government	Hubei Provincial Government	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2
Beautiful Countryside Development	Hubei Provincial Government	DARA, Dept of Urban and Rural Construction, Dept of Transportation	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2
Study and Demonstration Project on Protection and Use of Technology of Agricultural Wild Plants, a long-term scientific research project	MARA, China Agricultural University, CAAS	Hubei DARA	Outputs 2.2, 3.1, 4.2, 4.3
Three Foods, One Indication Initiative	Hubei DARA, Hubei Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision	Farmers, Private Sectors	Outputs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.3, 4.2, 4.3
Implementation Plan for the Demonstration Zones Construction of Standardized Production for Agricultural Products	Hubei DARA	Local government	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2
Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)	MARA, FAO	Hubei DARA	Outputs 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3
Agrobiodiversity Index program	Bioversity International	CAAS	Outputs 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 4.2, 4.3

The project will cooperate with other GEF-6 programs in China, including the China's Protected Area System Reform (C-PAR) program, implemented by UNDP, led by Ministry of Ecology and environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources, the People's Republic of China and jointly implemented by provincial governments and Conservation International. There are potential synergies with respect to knowledge management and program coordination, as well as participating in the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that will be held in China in 2020.

At the national level, the project will coordinate with the *Crop Germplasm Resources Protection* program financed by the Chinese government and run by MARA to protect crop genetic diversity. The proposed project will coordinate with this initiative, drawing on available information on agricultural genetic resources in Hubei, building on research and survey techniques, sharing best practices for establishing community seed banks and nurseries and participatory incentive-based approaches. In cooperation with the Animal Husbandry Division of the Hubei DARA and MARA, the project will also coordinate with the implementation of the 13th 5-Year Plan on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Animal Genetic Resources, including best practices in improved breeding techniques and other approaches for enhancing protection of germplasm resources.

Assisted by the GRFA Coordination Committee, the project will coordinate with the implementation of the Hubei 13th 5-Year Plan, e.g., in the development of the agrobiodiversity strategy and action plan, integrating GRFA approaches into the 14th 5-year plan for DARA.

Two of the three project demonstration landscapes are located in the Danjiangkou Reservoir area. There are several ongoing programs being implemented in this region of the province, including the eco-compensation scheme and the Eco-Agriculture Plan of the Han River Eco-Economy Zone.

There are also coordination opportunities with the research/academic sector, including with *Study and Demonstration Project on Protection and Use of Technology of Agricultural Wild Plants*, a long-term scientific research project organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and jointly implemented by China Agricultural University and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS). The project will also collaborate with Hubei based research institutions, on specific research initiatives focused on GRFA varieties, delivering training to institutional and production level stakeholders, and on knowledge-sharing.

Coordination with the project of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The two Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (NIAHS) in Hubei Province are both associated with varieties of tea. The project will promote synergies with the Wudang Tao tea activities under Component 2, e.g., through knowledge transfer exchange visits, and other GRFA varieties and systems will be advocated for inclusion under the NIAHS program, further protection traditional production approaches and garnering national and international recognition and partnership opportunities.

One of the main comparative advantages of UNDP-GEF's global outreach is the extensive networks of multilateral agencies, inter-governmental bodies, public and private research institutions, academia, civil society, and the private sector. The project will leverage off this institutional capacity through working with regional and international partners, facilitating collaborative partnerships that will help sustain the project results after GEF funding ceases. There are potential collaborative synergies with Bioversity International, an international research organization having a 30-year national level partnership with CAAS, e.g., in the application of the Agrobiodiversity Index, a long-term monitoring tool developed by Bioversity International to help guide governments, investors and enterprises in making decisions that ensure food systems are more diverse and sustainable.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

15. Does the project have description of knowledge management plan?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

Resource Availability

16. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04/02/2019 UA:

Yes.

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion n/a

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion n/a

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion n/a

Agency Response

Secretariat Recommendation

17. Is the MSP being recommended for approval?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

07/03/2019 UA: Program manager comment at CEO endorsement stage:

The following remaining issues need to be addressed:

1. Executing Partner and type needs to be entered in Part I of the portal template. Further, in the text in Section Institutional arrangements and coordination: The Hubei Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is referred to a "implementing Partner", which should be corrected to "Executing partner".

2. Implementing / executing arrangements require clarification:

Section: Institutional arrangements and coordination: It is stated that if “*consensus cannot be reached within the PSC, final decision rest with UNDP Program Manager*”. This arrangement does not in line with the distinction between implementing and executing functions as stated in the GEF Guidelines for project and program cycle. Specifically, if through a UNDP representative the Implementing Agency is the one that ultimately take management decisions (which is an executing function) if the consensus cannot be reached within the Project Board, it will be a conflict of interest whenever the same Agency will perform implementing functions such a supervising the project.

Further, it is stated that "the Project Manager cannot participate in the PSC", which requires clarification why the project Manager cannot participate in the body that is "*responsible for making by consensus, management decisions when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendations for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project plans and revisions, and addressing any project level grievances*".

08/14/2019 UA: Please address GEF PO comments:

1. Table A: Focal Area Outcomes is not filled in – please ask the agency to fill out this field.

2. There are some sections in the ProDoc that show executing activities that could be performed by UNDP, who is the Implementing Agency. In these sections the Agency has to remove the possibility of a UNDP staff to fill out some of the key positions for the execution of the project.

3. When reviewing the budget, we found that out of the \$1,509,663 GEF grant, the Agency charged \$245,400 for ‘Contractual Services of the Implementing Partner’ (see section IX. Financial Planning Management of the ProDoc). These contractual services are read as "*Project Manager salary adjusted with a cost of living adjustment of 5% per year and Project Assistant/Finance Officer salary adjusted with a cost of living adjustment of 5%*". Salaries for Project Manager and Project assistant / Finance Officer are to be paid from the Project Management Cost (PMC), not from the project components. These charges have to be removed from the budget and charged to the PMC. Consequently, with additional \$245,400 (16% of the GEF Financing), the components would have more activities that presumably would contribute to generate additional GEBs.

09/24/2019 UA: Clarification requests made in the review of 08/14/2019 have been responded to. However, with regard to issue (3) we note that still \$150,850 are budgeted for the Technical Project Manager and Project assistant / Finance Officer as part of project components funding and not under the Project Management Cost (PMC). Please clarify why this amount cannot be covered by the co-financing part of the PMC, which is \$1,122,000 in grant funding.

10/28/2019 UA:

Thank you for the response dated October 14, 2019. The GEF guidelines on Project and Program Cycle Policy, page 36-37, paragraph 5, state that: "Execution functions are financed through Project Management Costs (PMC), which are funded partly by the GEF funding and partly by the counterpart funding of the beneficiary government or other co-financing resources." We would therefore like to reiterate the need of covering all project staff costs and the activities associated with the execution of the project with the PMC using both –the GEF portion and the co-financing.

12/02/2019 UA: The outstanding issue has been resolved. However, the project document still includes a budget line for payment of direct project costs out of the GEF grant. Please remove.

12/10/2019 UA: Budget revised. Program Manager recommends project for CEO endorsement.

Agency Response

UNDP response, 22 July 2019

1. Please note UNDP has no access to the fields of Part I of the portal template. UNDP is requesting Help Desk to make the changes and copy the PM.

2. 2.1 The wording has been changed to “if consensus cannot be reached within the PSC, final decision shall rest with UNDP Resident Representative” (ProDoc paragraph 210, page 79; CEO ER page 26)

In this connection, it should be noted that situations where the PSC cannot reach agreement through consensus would be rare and have not occurred under the Chinese GEF projects to date.

It should also be noted that leaving the final decision for a PSC dispute with the UNDP Resident Representative is standard practice for UNDP projects and is done to ensure no unnecessary delays in project implementation.

2.2 The Project Manager will provide secretariat duties for the PSC. Hence the Project Manager will participate in each of the PSC meetings during the project’s lifetime.

The description of the role and responsibilities of the Project Manager in Section VIII (Governance and Management Arrangements) of the ProDoc (paragraph 219, page 81) has been amended with the following entry:

- “Perform Secretariat duties for the PSC”.

UNDP response, 25 August 2019

1. Table A: Focal Area Outcomes has been filled out as requested.

2. Section VIII of the Project Document (Governance and Management Arrangements) and Section A.6 of the CEO ER (Institutional Arrangement and Coordination) have been modified to fit the new GEF7 ProDoc template and to emphasize UNDP’s role as GEF Implementing Agency. The updated ProDoc reads as follows; *UNDP is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of this project. This includes oversight of project execution to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with agreed standards and provisions. UNDP is responsible for delivering GEF project cycle management services comprising project approval and start-up, project supervision and oversight, and project completion and evaluation. UNDP is responsible for the Project Assurance role of the Project Steering Committee.*

In summary, any text that could be interpreted as UNDP performing execution functions for the project has been removed.

3. Based on experience on other GEF-financed projects in China, it is imperative that the Technical Project Manager and Project Assistant/Finance Officer be full-time, dedicated positions. In order to ensure cost-effective delivery of global environmental benefits, the Technical Project Manager and Project Assistant/Finance Officer will have direct involvement with the implementation of the project.

These positions will be recruited by government using government contracts. Salary estimates used for budget calculations are in line with China and Hubei's labor market (USD 2,200 gross salary per month for the Technical Project Manager and USD 1,500 gross salary per month for the Project Assistant/Finance Officer). Thus, reducing the assigned budget for these positions will likely diminish the probabilities of securing suitable candidates. Also note that office space and cost of utilities will be absorbed by government agencies as co-financing for the project.

Regarding the budget distribution for these positions, the amount of Technical Project Manager and Project Assistant/Finance Officer costs allocated to Components 1-4 totals USD 150,850, of which 72.5% corresponds to the Technical Project Manager and 27.5% to the Project Assistant/finance officer; The balance of USD 94,550 is allocated under project management costs of which 38.6% corresponds to the Technical Project Manager position and 61.4% to the Project Assistant/finance officer. In order to emphasize the critical role that the Project Assistant/Finance Officer plays in supporting M&E efforts, as shown in the ToR, the 27.6% (USD 41,500) previously allocated to technical components 1-3 for this position have been re-allocated under component 4 only.

These are absolutely critical positions. Our experience has taught us that it is essential for project managers to have a high degree of technical competency for ensuring the successful implementation of the project. As the TOR highlight, the Technical Project Manager will be recruited as a technical specialist in natural resource management, preferably with experience and specialist knowledge in agrobiodiversity, as well as a proven track record in project management. Apart from project management tasks, the Technical Project Manager, with constant support from the Project Assistant/Finance Officer, will provide substantive technical contributions to the project, including provision of technical inputs into particular activities and outputs, being responsible for production of elements of technical outputs, provision of technical advocacy among key stakeholders, assisting local government units and service providers in design and implementation of project interventions, assuring quality of technical consultants' ToRs and deliverables as well as reports and M&E milestones.

If these positions did not provide the services described above, local consultants would need to be recruited, which would be more expensive to maintain and would diminish project coherence, as the project budget cannot support full-time local consultants to fulfill these roles.

UNDP response, 14 October 2019

Thank you for your comment.

After additional consultations with the Executing Entity, the Biodiversity Project Management Office and the GEF OFP, government has requested to adjust table C of the CEO Endorsement Request in light of the new GEF co-financing guidelines and to reflect in-kind co-financing in the amount of USD 1,200,000 to be invested in PMCs including office space, office supplies, equipment, utilities and the work that will be done by government staff related to this project management, among other.

Per government's guidelines, the grant co-financing committed through co-financing letters will be invested in substantive contributions to the technical components of the project as described in Section IX of the ProDoc. Including, but not limited to: the establishment and operationalization of one provincial and three county level GRFA Coordination Committees; the establishment of policy working groups to develop the agrobiodiversity strategy and action plan and other relevant policies; the development, operationalization of national and provincial level GRFA implementation frameworks; the integration of incentivized GRFA approaches into the 5-year work program of the Hubei; the establishment of three Landscape partnership working groups (i.e. farmers, members of agricultural associations and enterprises, local government staff members, representatives from social organizations); the establishment of nurseries and community seed banks; the development and organization of multiple technical training courses and knowledge transfer exchange; the revision of eco-compensation and other non-market incentive mechanisms for facilitating increased participation in conservation and sustainable use of GRFA, including direct payments for growing GRFA varieties; the upscaling of sustainable agrobiodiversity project demonstrations in larger landscapes; the implementation of the project's M&E plan; among other complementary government led initiatives at the national, provincial and county levels.

UNDP response, 8 November 2019

Thank you for your comment. After discussing this issue again with the Executing Entity and the Biodiversity Project Management Office, it was decided to merge the Project Manager and Project Assistant/Finance Officer positions into one single Project Coordinator position. The cost of this position has been fully allocated to component 4 under the project management costs budget line. For your information, administrative support will be provided when/if needed by the Biodiversity Project Management Office staff as co-financing

Please note that Section VIII 'Governance and Management Arrangements', budget, budget notes and Annex C of the ProDoc, and Section A.6 'Institutional Arrangement and Coordination' of the CEO endorsement request have been adjusted to reflect this change and all edits have been highlighted in green for ease of reference.

UNDP Response, 2 December 2019

The direct project cost budget line has been removed in the Total Budget and Work Plan, Section X. of the ProDoc. The costs earlier indicated under DPCs have been allocated under Miscellaneous Expenses (Atlas Code 74500) in the Project Management Cost section of the budget; this line item includes expenses associated with telephone, internet and other project management office related expenses, as indicated in Budget Note No. 30.

Any mention to DPC or project support services has been deleted (i.e. acronym section page 4; and, budget note 31 page 90, as well as the DPC Letter of Agreement from Annex O).

02/07/2020 Council Member Canada comments shared with UNDP via e-mail

UNDP response to Council Member Canada comments, 11 March 2020

Canada does not recommend approval for this project unless the following criteria below are adequately addressed:

This project is almost identical to proposed GEF project ID 9875 “Participatory in situ Conservation and Sustainable Use of Agrobiodiversity in Hainan”, even to the identification of the project Components. The main difference appears to be application to a different Chinese province. Therefore, all of the comments expressed in the earlier comments on project ID 9875 also apply to project ID 9873, with the respective differences having been considered.

UNDP Response, 9 March 2020:

The project strategies are similar on the Hainan and Hubei projects, but the geographic and cultural context is quite different in the two provinces. Geographically, Hainan is an island located in the southern part of China in the tropical zone, with agrobiodiversity characteristic of isolated islands. Hubei, on the other hand, is in the sub-tropical zone of central, mainland China. Hubei has an agricultural history spanning more than 6,000 years, whereas Hainan has a much lower population density and shorter agricultural history. The results from the Hubei project will contribute to efforts aimed at agrobiodiversity conservation in more intensively developed regions of the country, whereas the Hainan project will provide a model for conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in less impacted areas.

The relevant adjustments made to the Hainan project document, as described above, have also been incorporated into the project document for the Hubei project.

Most of the socioeconomic factors described in the Development Challenge section go well beyond the reach of conservation of indigenous genetic diversity and traditional production practices. The project’s explanations are not convincing concerning how direct payments and other paid incentives for growing “GRFA” varieties and rewards for maintaining diversity (“eco-compensation”) could be sustained, much less scaled up, over the long term. The project promotes a “landscape” approach, but fails to take into account the fact that farmers make their decisions at the individual farm level – this should be taken into account

UNDP Response, 9 March 2020:

The landscape approach requires multi-stakeholder collaboration; however, it is recognized that farmers make decisions at the individual farm level. Farmers and farmer organizations will be invited to be members of the landscape working groups, so that both on-farm and off-farm issues are discussed and integrated into the landscape strategies. The low-value grant mechanisms under Outputs 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 will be open to individual farmers as well as farmer organizations, for on-farm improvements as well as market development and other capacity building activities. Apart from intervening with eco-compensation appropriation, other non-market incentives will be facilitated for individual farmers through the project, e.g., improved access to good quality seed and breeding stock, improved knowledge and access to credit for growing GRFA varieties, and added value on-farm (for instance, improved soil fertility, improved approaches, etc.).

The benefits of local varieties and races seem to be overstated in the project proposal, and the opportunity to integrate any beneficial genetic traits into highly productive varieties and races through plant and animal breeding is not addressed. Use of traditional knowledge in breeding new varieties and races is already

mainstreamed. The project misses opportunities to work in partnership, such as the opportunity to strengthen the existing database on local agricultural varieties could prove useful.

UNDP Response, 9 March 2020:

Regarding highly productive varieties and races, the project proposes two approaches, for Tao tea and black goat respectively. For the Tao tea, a nursery will be built to introduce this wild species and to promote its leaf production by plant grafting and other breeding techniques. For the black goat, technical assistance will be provided to local stakeholders and breeding competitions organized improve diversity.

Promoting traditional knowledge is an important aspect of the project, as conservation of agrobiodiversity is very much dependent upon preserving traditional farming systems. The landscape partnership groups established under Output 2.1 will provide practical platforms for sharing traditional knowledge. Resources are allocated under Output 2.1 for delivering training on traditional knowledge. And, traditional knowledge will be captured through the participatory GRFA landscape assessments. The low-value grant mechanisms implemented under Outputs 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 will provide local farmers and farmer organizations opportunities to showcase and build upon their traditional knowledge.

With respect to the existing database on local agricultural varieties, a separate output (4.3) is designed to strengthen the provincial GRFA database, in partnership with the Hubei DARA. The indicative plans for the database include providing additional information on diversity status and coverage of GRFA varieties and market information, broadening usage of the system among both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

This project is almost identical to proposed GEF project ID 9875 “Participatory in situ Conservation and Sustainable Use of Agrobiodiversity in Hainan”, even to the identification of the project Components. The main difference appears to be application to a different Chinese province. Therefore, all of the comments expressed in the earlier comments on project ID 9875 also apply to project ID 9873, with the respective differences having been considered.

UNDP Response, 9 March 2020:

The relevant adjustments made to the Hainan project document, as described above, have also been incorporated into the project document for the Hubei project.

The proposal claims that the project will increase the diversity status of rouge rice, Wudang Tao tea and black goat but does not explain how that diversity would be measured.

UNDP Response, 9 March 2020:

Rouge Rice: Rouge rice is an old variety of rice (*Oryza sativa* L.), first mentioned in a great Chinese novel “A Dream in Red Mansions” published about 270 years ago. However, this variety has essentially disappeared since 1970 in mainland China. In 2006, an agricultural survey recorded that rouge rice still survives in Western Hubei Province at a mountain village with an area less than 15 ha.

The proposed project is expected to increase the biodiversity by following ways: 1) 100 ha rouge rice will be planted in situ to conserve the gene pool of this endangered variety; 2) 33 ha fenced seed base will be built in the village to provide original seeds to local farmers as well as the national and provincial seed banks; and 3) rouge rice will be transplanted from high elevations (approx. 1,800 m above sea) to lower altitudes to extend the suitable habitats.

Rouge rice diversity will be measured in the following ways: 1) total plantation area of the variety (size of gene pool); 2) production of original seeds to seed banks (preserving levels of gene diversity); and 3) measurement of the production, quality, and gene variation of rouge rice transfer to the lower mountains.

Wudang Tao tea: Wudang Tao tea is not from the tea family (*Theaceae*), but a species of wild shrub (*Eurya alata Kobuski*) endemic to a section of the Wudang Mountains covering an area about 1,200 ha. Before the tea was introduced to the Wudangshan region, Tao tea was collected and consumed by ancient Taoists about 400 years ago. However, with recent tourist developments, more and more people visit the Wudangshan region, triggering a higher demand of Tao tea, which has resulted in a high pressure on the local wild resources. Therefore, artificial plantation is needed to reduce collecting leaves from nature.

The proposed project is expected to increase the biodiversity of Tao tea by following ways: 1) building a Tao tea nursery for studying and producing seedlings for local farmers; 2) supporting a demonstration plantation, built on a least 50 ha of a Tao tea plantation by linking with the government project “shift farmland to forest”, thereby improving natural regeneration and protecting the wild species.

Tao tea diversity will be measured in the following ways: 1) total number of seedlings from the nursery via vegetative reproduction (replacing seedlings from the wild); 2) improvement of the population features of Tao tea in its natural habitats, in term of species richness, abundance, density, etc.; and 3) checking the variation of the cultured samples to determine if a stable variety could be set.

Black goat: In Central China, black goat is mainly formed by self-breeding, group feeding and long-term directional selecting. The varieties of black goat include dusty goat, brown goat, grey goat and Macheng black goat. In 2000, the Macheng black goat passed the identification by the national livestock and poultry genetic resources committee and was recognized in the category of national livestock and poultry genetic resources. However, the variety is facing several threats such as cross breeding from other goat varieties and degradation of genetic sources.

The proposed project is expected to increase the biodiversity of the black goat by providing technical assistance to local stakeholders for the following: 1) improving breeding procedures to keep the purification of the black goat gene; 2) creating a sustainable ecological mode, e.g., integrating goat waste treatment and crop plantation thereby promoting the goat breeding in the region; 3) improving the utilization of this indigenous variety by cross breeding of other goats.

The diversity of black goat will be measured in the following ways: 1) number of pure black goat in the breeding events; 2) total number of black goat bred in the demonstration landscape; 3) quality and production of mutton from cross bred goat (e.g., black goat with brown goat).

The ways in which diversity will be measured have been added to the narrative description of Output 2.1 in the project document (see page number 40 of the ProDoc).

Please also note that UNDP took this opportunity to update the ProDoc to the new March 2020 ProDoc template.

Review Dates

1SMSP CEO Approval

Response to Secretariat comments

First Review		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

Recommendations

18. Is the MSP being recommended for approval?

04/02/2019 UA:

No. Please address review comments.

Further, please address Council and STAP comments that were made on the PFD. All child projects need to address those comments as applicable. Please note that the MSP will be circulated to Council for a 4-week review, so the responses need to be included into the CEO ER in the portal.

06/07/2019 UA:

No. The following remaining issues need to be addressed:

1. Executing Partner and type needs to be entered in Part I of the portal template. Further, in the text in Section Institutional arrangements and coordination: The Hubei Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is referred to a "implementing Partner", which should be corrected to "Executing partner".

2. Implementing / executing arrangements require clarification:

Section: Institutional arrangements and coordination: It is stated that if "*consensus cannot be reached within the PSC, final decision rest with UNDP Program Manager*". This arrangement does not in line with the distinction between implementing and executing functions as stated in the GEF Guidelines for project and program cycle. Specifically, if through a UNDP representative the Implementing Agency is the one that ultimately take management decisions (which is an executing function) if the consensus cannot be reached within the Project Board, it will be a conflict of interest whenever the same Agency will perform implementing functions such a supervising the project.

Further, it is stated that "the Project Manager cannot participate in the PSC", which requires clarification why the project Manager cannot participate in the body that is "*responsible for making by consensus, management decisions when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendations for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project plans and revisions, and addressing any project level grievances*".

09/24/2019: Project returned to agency for additional clarification.

12/02/2019 UA: The outstanding issue has been resolved. However, the project document still includes a budget line for payment of direct project costs out of the GEF grant. Please remove.

12/10/2019 UA: Budget revised. Program Manager recommends project for CEO endorsement.