

# Strengthening Coordinated Approaches to Reduce Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Threats to Globally Significant Agrobiodiversity and Agroecosystems in China (R-IAST)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

9874

**Countries**

China

**Project Name**

Strengthening Coordinated Approaches to Reduce Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Threats to Globally Significant Agrobiodiversity and Agroecosystems in China (R-IAST)

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

4/9/2019

**Review completed by PM**

12/10/2019

**Program Manager**

Ulrich Apel

**Focal Area**

Biodiversity

**Project Type**

FSP

**PIF**

**CEO Endorsement**

Project Design and Financing

1. If there are any changes from that presented in the PIF, have justifications been provided?

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

Yes. The project is part of a program PFD - changes to the original concept have been justified.

## **Response to Secretariat comments**

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

#### **Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

Not fully. While the overall design is appropriate, the project needs a better focus on the primary objective of GEF funding, which is to create GEBs. Component 3 of the project is in line with this objective, however, this component needs to be reinforced and should be the focus of GEF grant funding. Other components appear to be designed with a focus on managing IAS as a national development issue, which should be mainly covered by co-funding.

To further illustrate my point: The Conceptional Model (figure 1) in the project document nicely describes the "Ecosystem Protection Targets" - these should be the target areas for GEF support and the design refined accordingly in order to achieve benefits for agro-biodiversity, agro-ecosystems of global importance, and for resilient communities in those locations.

06/07/2019 UA:

Addressed.

Cleared

## **Response to Secretariat comments**

**UNDP, 13 May 2019**

Thank you for your comment, it has made us further reflect on the need to emphasize the intrinsic rationale of the project components and clarify how and why the proposed budget distribution for the project components helps catalyze Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs).

The project's primary objective is to reduce the threat from Invasive Alien Species (IAS) to biodiversity in China, including globally important species represented by traditional varieties and Genetic Resources from Food and Agriculture (GRFA) within China's agroecosystems. By improving the IAS prevention, control and management in China, the threat to China's national and globally important biodiversity will be reduced, as outlined in the Conceptional Model (ProDoc Figure 1) and the Theory of Change (ProDoc Figure 2). Each of the project's components and outputs, are designed to provide substantial benefits to agrobiodiversity of global importance in the productive landscape (please see response to comment #6 below).

Based on the above, and after additional consultations with government and key stakeholders, the project considers that it has struck the right balance in using project co-financing and GEF funding in each component, whereby GEF financing is used in a targeted way to ensure that the GEBs are maximized.

Furthermore, please note that, under component 1, National and Provincial IAS Strategic Action Plans (output 1.3) and the underlying sector plans (output 1.4) will provide for focused IAS Management of the agroecosystems within China, which vastly exceeds the 35,000-ha project target area. And while the focus of the NSAP/PSAPs are to decrease the threat from IAS in the productive landscape, GEBs will also be achieved as fields with traditional varieties and GRFA are part of the mosaic of small holdings, which constitutes much of the agroecosystems in rural China (please see response to comment # 6 below).

As mentioned above, farming plots with traditional varieties are scattered throughout the productive landscape, and so are local conservation areas, like the wild rice reserve in Wenchan. However, being small and localized it becomes unfeasible and ineffective to target IAS Management towards local conservation areas alone. Thus, ensuring a broad scale IAS landscape management is a more viable and effective option. Also, the project development of guidelines (and their use) will play a key role in reducing the threat from IAS to agroecosystems, and the biodiversity within them, including biodiversity of global importance. In this regard, it should be noted that the developed guidelines (output 1.2) are not aimed at the two-project identified agricultural landscapes only, their scope is national and as such they are expected to support IAS threat reduction nationwide.

Additionally, the development of the IAS Buffer Zone guidelines, which specifically will target IAS risk reduction through IAS management in protected areas buffer zones, key ecological functioning zones and other conservation areas, is targeted at providing additional protection to important biodiversity and habitats beyond the demonstration sites.

Component 2 is also conceived to support the achievement of national and GEBs, as it will capacitate 12,000 Government staff in improved prevention, control and management of IAS. The Government staff will, through their day to day work, facilitate on-the ground implementation of the project's core concepts and approaches (component 1) within and beyond the geographical focus of the project. Also, the port related trainings will likewise be provided to customs officials at a large subset of ports, providing important support towards halting IAS from entering China through the nation's coastal ports. This halting, or minimization, of IAS entering China is of critical value for reducing the threat from IAS to its national and globally important biodiversity, as well as the country's economy and livelihoods.

As requested, component 3 has been reinforced as it is indeed pivotal for the project. This component will bring together project outputs from other project components (1 and 2). The IAS management plans for Wenchang City and Bishan District include specific sections related to the project's two agricultural landscapes (output 3.4), which in turn will be aligned with the two Provincial IAS Strategy and Action Plans (output 1.3) and the provincial departmental plans (output 1.4). These management plans will also take into account the different guidelines (output 1.2) and methodologies (output 2.1) developed under the project.

Component 3 will also bring the project capacity building work into play via on the ground implementation activities in the project's agricultural landscapes, highlighting how sector coordination, holistic planning and the use of appropriate IAS Management techniques can generate national and GEBs while generating important additional economic and livelihood benefits (please see response to comment # 3 below).

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

### **Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

Please refer to comments above. In this context, please clarify if component 3 includes investment; it is currently "technical assistance" in Table B. If the component does not have an investment, how will the hectare targets be achieved? Do local communities need financial support to implement the activities?

06/07/2019 UA:

Addressed.

Cleared

### **Response to Secretariat comments**

**UNDP, 13 May 2019**

**UNDP response 9 May 2019**

The project's approach towards meeting project objectives fully utilize the available co-financing and incremental GEF financing. GEF financing is strategically used to maximize the project's GEBs (please see response to comment #2 above).

Component 3 has been listed as "technical assistance" (TA) as most of the component's outputs are TA in nature, and Government investments (co-financed) are in the form of incentives and agricultural inputs and complement the TA approach of the component.

Please note that Output 3.1 relates to training of local farmers, and while output 3.2 focuses on the implementation of IAS prevention, control and management these activities are done in a small area (60 ha) and the sites will act as demonstration areas for farmers to learn and understand the effects of the project's promoted solutions. Output 3.3 is aimed at documenting the status of IAS encroachment in Wenchang and Bishan as well as evaluating the impact this encroachment has on among other biodiversity/ecosystems, economy and livelihoods.

For output 3.4, which includes the development of management plans, as well as implementation of IAS management in the two-project targeted agricultural landscapes, technical support will be provided to farmers, government staff and other stakeholders on how to implement the various IAS Management techniques promoted by the project. It should be noted that for the management plan implementation (activity 3.4.2), many of the interventions are of no cost. For instance, local farmers are already engaged in active management of weeds in their fields including IAS. However, the project promotes a range of no cost solutions, interalia, timing of spraying and the usage of low chemical spraying, substituting local spraying practices reducing spraying cost and minimizing the environmental impact from excessive chemical usage.

Initiatives which are new to the farmers, and not part of their current practices, such as the use of biological agents and using new crop-plants as vegetative replacement on IAS infested lands, will rely on cost benefit incentives in form of increased income earnings from the land, resulting from project interventions. For

instance, it has been shown that the cost of using biological agents against alligator weed is approximately 6-8 RMB/mu while the average increase in production equates to 120 RMB/mu. Additionally, local governments (co-finance) will deliver agricultural inputs to farmers, such as seeds and seedlings for vegetative replacement in areas suffering from IAS encroachment, and they will also provide subsidies to farmers towards the use of biological agents.

It should also be mentioned that costs related to rapid response and early engagement in IAS eradication will be part of the Government co-financing.

Finally, another relevant aspect to highlight is that in China villagers come together to do common work. It is expected that this traditional way of working will be one of the mechanisms towards ensuring the implementation of IAS management across the project geography.

**4. 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 CEO Endorsement** Yes

**Response to Secretariat comments**

**5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement** Yes

**Response to Secretariat comments**

**6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement**

Please clarify why 35,000 ha of IAS management sites have been entered under core indicator 4.3 instead of 4.1?

06/07/2019 UA:

Has been clarified as per response below.

Cleared

## Response to Secretariat comments

UNDP, 13 May 2019

The GEF core indicator 4.3 *Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems* was selected because of the strategic approach adopted by the project, which sees the productive landscape and the agroecosystem at large as being the most suitable frame for holistically and effectively addressing the IAS threat to national and global important biodiversity.

It is argued that by focusing on the productive landscape and the agroecosystem as such, project interventions will positively affect and protect crop species found within the productive landscape, including traditional varieties and GRFA while also encompassing key ecological zones and conservation areas.

Furthermore, agricultural lands in rural China generally consist of a patchwork of small individual land plots, where each household has a subset of plots, which, when combined, often are smaller than 1/3 ha (5 mu). While there are ongoing processes within rural China for farmers to combine land plots into more homogeneous tracks of land where single crops are grown, these lands are also relatively small and seldom exceed 1-2 ha (15-30 mu). Due to this land-use dynamic traditional varieties and GRFAs are spread throughout the village's farmlands, which makes targeted IAS Management interventions difficult. Even where larger areas are identified, targeted interventions focusing on these sites are not effective unless the broader landscape is included in the IAS Management measures. If focus is only placed on the areas containing traditional varieties, and their immediate surroundings, the IAS threat will remain unchallenged in the surrounding landscape outside the area of intervention and would be a constant source of recolonization.

**7. Only for Non-Grant Instrument: Has a reflow calendar been presented?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement** n/a

## Response to Secretariat comments

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

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement** Yes

## Response to Secretariat comments

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

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement** Yes

**Response to Secretariat comments**

10. Does the project have descriptions of a knowledge management plan?

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement** Yes

**Response to Secretariat comments**

Agency Responses

11. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments at the PIF stage from:

**GEFSEC**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement** Yes

**Response to Secretariat comments**

**STAP**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement** Yes



## Response to Secretariat comments

### GEF Council

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

Please check if the Council comments on the parent PFD have any relevance for this child project.

06/07/2019: no relevant comments received at PFD stage.

## Response to Secretariat comments

UNDP, 13 May 2019

No relevant comments on the parent PFD related to this child project have been received.

### Convention Secretariat

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement none received

## Response to Secretariat comments

Recommendation

12. Is CEO endorsement recommended?

## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

No. please address comments.

06/07/2019 UA:

No. The following remaining issues need to be addressed:

1. Executing Partner and type needs to be entered correctly in Part I of the portal template, UNDP is currently entered as the executing partner. It is understood that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is the executing partner (not the implementing partner as stated in the text) and that there are other co-executing partners (not co-implementing partners (please clarify).

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*”.

08/15/2019 UA:

The following issues have come up during the clearing process, please address:

1 - 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.

2 - When reviewing the budget, we found that out of the \$2,789,908 GEF grant, the Agency charged \$399,200 for ‘Contractual Services of the Implementing Partner’ (see section IX. Financial Planning Management of the ProDoc). These contractual services are read as “Project Manager for engaging support of high-level stakeholders, coordinating all consultancy and service contract inputs and overall implementation of Outputs under Component 1, but with a specific focus on output 1.2 and 1.3”. Salaries for Project Manager and Project assistant / Finance Officer are to be paid from the Project Management Cost (PMC), not from the project components – we need further clarification why the Project Manager needs additional funds to perform tasks that presumably have to be carried-out by the Program

Manager. These charges have to be removed from the budget and charged to the PMC. Consequently, with additional \$399,200 (14.3% of the GEF Financing), the components would have more activities that presumably would contribute to generate additional GEBs.

3 - On a related issue regarding the budget: there is a budget line for Local Consultants that amounts for \$294,750 (10.5% of the GEF Financing). The way the budget / footnotes are presented make difficult to understand whether the local consultants are hired for a specific task or on a regular basis. Please clarify.

09/24/2019 UA:

Thank you for the explanations. On issue (2) above, while we understand that the Technical Project Manager and the Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer are absolutely critical positions, we note that still \$218,600 of GEF grant funding of the project components is budgeted for "Contractual Services of the Implementing Partner" i.e. "Project Manager for engaging support..." In line with comments made in the previous review of 08/15/2019, we do not understand why this amount cannot be covered by the co-financing part of the PMC, which is \$934,807 in grant resources as per Table B and C of the endorsement request.

10/28/2019 UA:

Thank you for the response dated October 11, 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 issue has been resolved as per Agency response below. However, the project document still includes a budget line for payment of "direct project costs". Please remove.

12/10/2019 UA: Has been removed from the budget. Program Manager recommends project for CEO endorsement.

## **Response to Secretariat comments**

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. 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 35)

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, 17 September 2019**

1. 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 reflect the 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.

2.

2.1. 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. The Salary estimates used in the current version of the Project Documentation, for budget calculations, are in line with labor market in the capital of China (Beijing) (USD 2,900 gross salary per month for the Technical Project Manager and USD 2,200 gross salary per month for the Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer and the Program Coordinator respectively). This constitutes a reduction of USD 600 and USD 400 per month for the TPM and PA respectively compared to the earlier version of the budget. Thus, reducing the assigned budget for these positions even further 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 PMO positions, the amount of Technical Project Manager, Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer and the Program Coordinator costs allocated to Components 1-4 totals USD 337,800, of which 44,6% corresponds to the Technical Project Manager, 21,2% to the Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer and 33,9 % to the Program Coordinator; The balance of USD 100,200 is allocated under project management costs of which 23,2% corresponds to the Technical Project Manager position, 59,3% to the Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer and 17,6 % to the Program Coordinator. In order to emphasize the critical role that the Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer plays in supporting M&E efforts, as shown in the ToR, the 32,5% (USD 72,600) previously allocated to technical components for this position have been re-allocated under component 4 only.

From a Project implementing perspective the Technical Project Manager and the Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer 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 revised TOR indicate, the Technical Project Manager will be recruited as a technical specialist in natural resource management, preferably with experience and knowledge in IAS management, 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/Project Finance/Procurement Officer, will provide substantive contributions to the technical components of 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. Based on experience on other GEF-financed projects in China, it is imperative that the Technical Project Manager and Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer be full-time, dedicated positions. In order to ensure cost-effective delivery of global environmental benefits, the Technical Project Manager and Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer will have direct involvement with the implementation of the project.

If these positions did not provide such services, 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.

2.2. A similar rationale is valid for the C-SAP Program Coordinator, who will, like the IAS Technical Project Manager and Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer, have multiple programmatic coordination responsibilities which are expected to be highly technical in their scope. In contrast to the IAS Technical Project Manager and Project Assistant/Project Finance/Procurement Officer, who will work exclusively with the IAS project (PIMS 5821), the C-SAP Program Coordinator will oversee the entire program (PIMS 5820, PIMS 5821, PIMS 5822, PIMS 5823 and PIMS 5824). The C-SAP Program Coordinator will also work on program matters supporting program technical alignment, monitor program training and demonstration activities under the program and together with the program's projects prepare and disseminate news, lessons learned and success stories, as well as coordinate the C-SAP 2 (IAS) project's knowledge management work with all C-SAP child projects. The program coordinator will further assist in developing government memos and briefs etc. related to the program and to make visible the program's successes on various media. The Program Coordinator will also support the projects M&E Specialist in the program's monitoring and evaluation work. And although the financing for the C-SAP Program Coordinator position derives entirely from the PIMS 5821 budget, based on a Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs decision, there is no overlap in the functions between the IAS PMO staff and the C-SAP Program Coordinator.

3. The Local Consultants are to be hired under the project by the project's Development Partners MARA, MEE/FECO, and GACC/CAIQ and will be external technical experts. The contracts will be long-term/part-time assignments, focusing on specific project outputs (under different components). For instance, the MARA contracted Agricultural sector IAS policy specialist will provide support for output 1.2 and output 2.1. In a similar way, the MARA contracted Agricultural sector IAS planning specialist will provide support for output 1.3, 1.4 and output 3.2. Retaining consultants long-term provide for accountability, continuity and coherence between the technical work to be delivered over the different outputs and components. Few short-term consultancies such as the mid-term review and final evaluation consultants are, however, also planned for.

Additional information:

With regard to the current version's revisions to the budget, the following budget changes to the PMO staff cost has been made:

- TPM cost decreased from 3,500 to 2,900 USD
- PA cost decreased from 2,600 to 2,200 USD
- PC cost decreased from 2,600 to 2,200 USD

The decrease in the fund allocations to the TPM, PA and PC freed up 84,000 USD, which was redistributed as follows:

Increase in number of MARA implemented stakeholder workshops (45,000 USD) under the following outputs:

- 1.3.2. Prepare the National IAS Management strategy and action plan (IAS NSAP 2020-2030)
- 1.3.3. Prepare Provincial IAS Management Strategy and Action Plan (IAS PSAP 2022-2030) for Hainan and Chongqing
- 3.4.1 Formulate IAS Management plans for Wenchang city and Bishan district
- 4.1.5. Organize publicity and awareness events at national, provincial and local levels

Fund allocation for output 4.1.6 Organize a full day IAS side event at the Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) increased (10,000 USD)

Fund allocation for MARA best practice learning and knowledge sharing exchange mission under output 4.1.7 increased (10,000 USD).

13 PMO mission travels included under the Project Management Cost (13,000 USD)

Miscellaneous cost for MARA under the different component changed increased (6,000 USD)

The changes to the budget is reflected in the project's budget tables, as well as in the budget notes, in the Project Document and CEO Request where relevant.

UNDP response, 11 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 1,100,000 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. Please note that the only project position to be covered through grant co-financing is the M&E specialist (see section VII of the ProDoc).

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 IV, table 10 of the ProDoc. Including, but not limited to: the establishment and operationalization of national, provincial and county level IAS Coordination Groups; the inclusion of biodiversity in the biennial updates of the first priority IAS species and national quarantine pests lists; the establishment of specialized sub-working groups to contribute to the main strategic areas of the IAS NSAP 2021-2030; the development of sectoral/ministerial implementation plans at the national and provincial levels for the IAS NSAP 2021-2030; the operationalization of the IAS early warning system in Hainan; the development and organization of multiple technical training courses; the establishment and distribution of subsidies towards the purchase of biological agents; the establishment and operationalization of an IAS Management Science Base/Public Science Popularization Base in Wenchang and Bishan; the implementation of larger scale removal and eradication activities to upscale the results of project demonstrations; the implementation of the project's M&E plan; among other complementary government led initiatives at the national, provincial and county levels.

With this background, the government maintains that the current grant budget distribution to cover both technical and managerial responsibilities of the PMU positions should be kept.

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 Annexes B and 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, 3 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 all 4 components (all changes to the budget and budget notes are highlighter in yellow).

Any mention to DPC or project support services has been deleted (i.e. acronym section page 4; paragraph 217, DPC references in the budget and related budget notes, as well as the DPC Letter of Agreement from Annex I (b)).

UNDP, 11 March 2020

Kindly note that the comments from Council Member Canada to child projects under the C-SAP Programme did not address this specific child project. Canada's comments were only addressed to child projects 9873 and 9875 (PIMS 5822 and 5823). Thus, no further changes were made to this Project Document or CEO Endorsement Request

**Review Dates**

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
<b>First Review</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief Reasoning for CEO Recommendations**

The project is part of an innovative programmatic approach to mainstream the in-situ conservation of agrobiodiversity across China and reduce key threats to genetic resources important for food and agriculture (#9768: PRC-GEF Partnership Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development). This child project has the objective to strengthen intersectoral coordination mechanisms, approaches and technical capacity for more effective prevention, control and management of invasive alien species (IAS) threats to agrobiodiversity in China. The project will conduct activities in three provinces. The control and reduction of IAS impacts on agroecosystems will be demonstrated in Guizhou and Hainan. Management systems to secure the potential invasion pathways via ports will be demonstrated at Fuzhou port in Fujian. The long-term vision is to ensure that the conservation of China's agrobiodiversity and the sustainable development of China's agricultural sector using local varieties are not threatened by IAS, due to effective prevention, detection, control and management of IAS in China. The project will assist China to reform



and modernize its prevention, control and management of IAS threats. The project will remove the barriers that have persistently hindered IAS management in China by establishing an integrated IAS prevention, management and control system, improving the capacity of key agencies, developing effective techniques for managing IAS threats across agroecosystems, and raising awareness and knowledge of IAS impacts on globally significant agrobiodiversity. The project will support the development of innovative approaches for reducing IAS threats and impacts through partnerships between agencies, rural communities, farmers and agricultural enterprises at the local level. The integrated, multi-sectoral IAS management frameworks and approaches to be developed under the project, including for early detection and rapid response, are innovations for China that will greatly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of IAS prevention, management and control. In terms of global environmental benefits, the project will directly improve land management on 35,000 hectares of agricultural production landscapes.