

Community-based Integrated Natural Resource Management Project

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

9880

Countries

Fiji

Project Name

Community-based Integrated Natural Resource Management Project

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

5/30/2019

Review completed by PM

10/15/2020

Program Manager

Pascal Martinez

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

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 Request

9 July 2019

There is no significant changes from the proposal at PIF level, except an important increase of the co-financing, from \$13,400,000 to \$30,877,215. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9 July 2019:

Please address the following comments:

1- The project description in the Portal doesn't always correspond to the project components, outcomes and outputs as presented in Table B (different or missing titles, particularly in Component 2). Please ensure these two parts of the proposal (Table B and Project Description under "c. The proposed alternative scenario, GEF focal area strategies, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project") are consistent in the Portal.

2- The catalytic impact, or potential for same is not coming out strongly. How will the community level interventions (plans, capacity building) be up-scaled or lead to greater impact at the sub-national or national levels. We note that there is no national level land use plan and one of the key barriers highlighted is that there is no cohesive and comprehensive plan among the Ministries. It is not clear how the project is addressing this barrier or how the community level plans will be effective at the national scale.

3- In keeping with the LDFA's focus to also improve livelihoods, Table B should also indicate how many farmers will benefit. Data should be dis-aggregated by gender. Are there expectations for improvement in income?

4- Component 1- how are the capacity building and training interventions being institutionalized to ensure continuity after the project ends. Are there any interventions related to curriculum development at agricultural schools, and work with extension officers?

5- As regard to outputs 2.1.2 & 2.2.2, Table B does not adequately reflect the full depth of these outputs in particular the business planning aspects. The connection between the implementation of the business plans and the restoration activities (2100 ha) is not clear. Is it that there is a potential to restore 2100 ha, based on what could potentially be included in the community based business plans OR will the land be restored regardless. Once again, how many farmers will benefit from these activities and the potential improvement in income.

6- LDN as a key aspect of LDFA strategy should come out more strongly in the project documentation, in particular with regard to alignment with the UNCCD. How is the project contributing to Fiji's efforts to potentially set LDN targets?

7- The target of 18,799 ha under Output 2.1.1 is not reflected in the core indicator sheet. Is it already considered to be 47,719 ha for Indicator 4.

8- Annex E- The core indicator worksheet has sub-indicator 2.2 completed (Marine protected areas under improved management effectiveness). Please clarify.

9- The title of the outcome 2.2 in table B doesn't seem to be complete ("resource management" seems to be missing at the end). Please correct.

10- The description of the Global Environmental Benefits (section 5 under the Project description) doesn't correspond to the numbers reported in the Core Indicator table. Please ensure all the numbers are consistent throughout the proposal.

11- The description of the Global Environmental Benefits (section 5 under the Project description) says the project "will contribute to having 47,179 hectares of land under restoration plans". Will this land benefit from restoration or improved management as indicated in the component 2 description?

12- The proposal says FAO will provide technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned. It is unclear whether this intervention includes project activities as described in the proposal. Please confirm that the implementing agency will not act as executing agency.

24 September 2019

1- The project description in the Portal is still unclear and difficult to read: For instance, the output 1.1 is different from the table B. In addition, output 1.1 is followed by output 1.1.2... There is also one paragraph 1.1.2 (under output 1.1) followed by the output 1.1.2. Where in the portal is the section "1.1.1 Institutional context" the description invites to see? Under the "Output 1.1.2", there are the paragraphs 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 and 1.2.3? Are those numbers correct? We see that the project description is a copy-paste from the FAO project document. Please revise all the project description and ensure it is understandable and logic per se and consistent with table B.

2- Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

3- Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

4- Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

5- Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

6- We don't see any reference to LDN and possible target setting in "1.5 Alignment and strategic fit" of the FAO prodoc as indicated. Nevertheless, as the country didn't set LDN targets, the explanation provided is enough for a GEF-6 project. Cleared.

7- Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

8- Thank you for the correction. Cleared.

9- Thank you for the adjustment. Cleared.

10- The description of the Global Environmental Benefits (section 5 under the Project description) still doesn't correspond to the numbers reported in the Core Indicator table (47,719 ha vs 47,779 ha and 2,200 ha vs 2,100 ha). Please ensure all the numbers are consistent throughout the proposal. In addition, please report the GHG emissions avoided under sub-indicator 6.1 (in AFOLU sector) instead of 6.2. Finally, as the project is expected to have an effect on the deforestation (reducing it), please explain why the related GHG emissions mitigation results are not reported and consider the possibility to include them.

11- Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

12- Thank you for the response provided, confirming that FAO will not be acting as the executing agency. Nevertheless, in the budget table, the destination of the funds in the column titled "FAO" remains unclear. Will FAO receive these funds to implement the identified activities (CTA, LoAs and reviews)? Please explain and confirm that, in addition to the fees, FAO will not receive money from the project budget.

22 May 2020

1- The table B is not yet consistent with the project description under the alternative scenario. While the titles of the outputs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 refer to improved capacity in table B, they are indeed plans developed in the project description. In addition, there are many parts in description of the alternative scenario that are not relevant as they relates to the context or the baseline (review of all the different training implemented, text boxes, gender approach, traditional knowledge...). Please focus on the alternative scenario and, again, ensure its consistency with table B.

10-1 The 47,719 hectares under section 5 are informed as land under restoration plans while they are reported in the core indicator table as landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (core indicator 4.3), as we understand it should be. Please clarify accordingly the information provided in section 5.

10-2 There are still GHG emissions avoided reported under sub-indicator 6.2 (outside AFOLU sector) instead of 6.1. Where do these results come from? In addition, the indirect benefits as said to be estimated "after the end of the project" in the annex 13 of the Prodoc whereas it should be after a 20 years period (unless strongly justified). Please explain and adjust as needed.

10-3 The greenhouse gas emission mitigated in Annex E "GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet" is reported in the Terminal Evaluation column. Please report this information in the "Endorsement" column.

10-4 We don't see where the benefit coming from the deforestation avoid is reported and the Ex-ACT table in the Annex 13 shows "0" for this benefit. Please clarify.

12- Thank you for the clarification. Please note the audit has to be covered by the PMC and this should not be implemented with resources managed by FAO. Please adjust accordingly.

13 July 2020

1. Thank you for improving the table B and the description of the alternative scenario as requested. Cleared.

10-1, 10-2. Thank you for clarifying the section 5 and Annex 13 of the Prodoc. Cleared.

10-3. Thank you for the correction. Cleared.

10-4. The response is unclear: The response says the project will reduce deforestation on 1,500 ha but this outcome is not taken into account in the EX-ACT tool (the "2.1 Deforestation item under the Land Use Change table remains empty as mentioned in the previous review). Please consider also the deforestation avoided in the climate benefit result assessment.

12. Thank you for moving the audit cost to the PMC and the clarification. In addition, the two following issues are noted in the budget:

12.1 It appears that the monitoring, mid-term and final review and terminal report are still funded by the project budget while these activities are part of the project management cycle services and as such, should be funded by the Agency fees as per GEF Policy (GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01). Please adjust the budget accordingly and/or justify any request for not applying GEF Policy.

12.2 The budget includes the purchase of 2 motorbikes. Please note that as per GEF policy (GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01), The use of GEF funds to purchase vehicles is strongly discouraged as such costs are normally expected to be borne by co-finance. Any request to use GEF funding to purchase project vehicles must be justified. The Secretariat assesses such requests and decides whether to approve them. Please justify.

25 August 2020:

10-4. This issue has been clarified during a separate call and the response already provided at the end of the review sheet on August 7 is satisfactory. Cleared.

12-1. This issue has been clarified during a separate call but the comment is not addressed in the review sheet. Indeed the agency fees cover the oversee of the project mid-term and final review and terminal report and the reporting itself can indeed be covered by the project budget. Nevertheless, it appears in the project description that these activities are part of the M&E plan and as such, they should be all charged to the Component 3 focused on M&E activities. This is also important to ensure the reporting is independent. Please make clear and arrange the budget accordingly so that the mid-term and final review and terminal report are fully charged to the Component 3.

12-2. Thank you for the justification. Point well taken.

3 September 2020:

Thank you for addressing the remaining comment. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

1. Thank you for your feedback. This has been addressed.

2. The potential for scaling up has been explained further including the catalytic effect of this project in section 2.2 of the Project Document as follows:

The potential for scaling up is high for this project as

- It will lay the ground for large investments through creating CBINRM investment opportunities. The project will support the development of plans over a large areas, which will then be “investment ready”. Indeed, the communities will have:
 - ü Participatory LUP approved by all the key stakeholders
 - ü Strong local institutional structures in charge of natural resources management, such as the YMST.
 - ü Strong capacities developed through replicable models.
 - ü Sustainability strategy put in place through the financial plans linked to the CBINRM plans.

Major investments are already planned in Fiji through programs such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) which will be looking for investment ready communities. During the project preparation phase, it was clear that several projects did not deliver the expected restoration targets as there weren't any investment-ready communities yet. The upcoming projects will be able to invest in the project communities to scale up activities there and outside.

- It will support the line ministries in working together for integrated planning and implementation. Successful activity at the village and district level will then have a catalytic effect on other districts. The district and village plans will be a synthesis of all the other existing plans from the different Ministries. As it is currently happening in the AAD project, planning exercise will involve staff from the different Ministries (Planning, Forest, Agriculture, etc.) working together and

with the communities. Ministries do have significant budget they can use to scale up the planning and implementation exercise once they are convinced this is a successful pathway.

- It will support capacity building which can be replicated. Strong local capacities will be developed through replicable models (i.e. FFS) and in line with the line ministry existing programs, which will stay beyond the project time. The trained staff will be able to use capacity building resources from the ministries to scale up the work in and outside of the target districts.

- It will bring new donors/investors to the CBINRM sector through the forum (cf 2.2.2.1. Support to the investments of other partners in the CBINRM plans) and through the promotion of CBINRM enterprises creating opportunities to scale up.

This projects aims to work in 2 Provinces Ra and Tailevu and 3 Districts: Namena and Dawasamu districts in Tailevu and Nakorotubu district in the Ra Province. It aims to align planning at the District and village/community level in order to show that stronger alignment between the ministerial support at the community, District and Provincial level in planning and activity implementation. The project focuses on these levels and not at the national level. It is testing a bottom up approach showing that strong participatory process at the community level can bring strong results.

3. As indicated in the Core indicator table, it is expected that 3,500 people (1,750 men and 1,750 women) will benefit from the project. This represents the population of the 17 communities on which the project will directly focus its intervention. These communities will benefit from capacity building on a wide range of sustainable natural resources management activities as well as livelihood development opportunities and support for improved natural resources management. This has been added to table B.

There is some expectations for income improvement but it is very difficult to evaluate how much this could be. Therefore the social indicator chosen is about having a diversified source of income allowing for a stronger safety net. Indeed, the socio-economic baseline (annex 8 of the project document) showed that for the moment the population didn't have a strong safety net in case of emergency.

4. During the project development phase, it became clear that a lot of capacity building and activities are happening but that there is a strong lack of coordination between these activities and follow up after the trainings. This create trainees' fatigue and lack of motivation. The different line ministries do have capacity building programs, so the project will support the definition of a coordinated approach to capacity building (1.1.1) as well as a monitoring system for it (1.1.2) in order to improve them.

When there is a need, as indicated in 1.2, the project will develop specific capacity building curricula which can be used after the end of the project by the line Ministries and the Forest Training Center. Ministries' staff will be very involved in the trainings, for example, extension officer will be key to the success of the FFS.

All the capacity building activities will be improving the existing programs which will go on after the end of this project.

5. Table B has been updated to adequately reflect the full depth of outputs 2.1.2 & 2.2.2.

The text has been clarified in Component 2 under 2.2. The project will be supporting the development of CBINRM plans over 21 mataqalis covering a surface of 18,799 ha. Each plan will be linked to a financial/investment plan indicating the level of investment needed and the potential sources of funding to achieve and sustain CBINRM. It is important to note that not all the 18,799 ha of the plans need investment and direct actions, but the CBINRM area should be seen as a whole with activities implemented in a holistic way. The business plans will give more detailed information on what is needed where for each mataqali.

In order to support the shift towards CBINRM and the implementation of the plan, the project will support 3 main activities, which implemented together are expected to have an impact over the 18,799ha. These activities are:

- Inputs providing program for the best community business plans (grants available to support the CBINRM over 2,100 ha). The 2,100 ha comes from the financial resources available for this activity. It is a good number to be complemented by the other activities (cf points below).
- Support to the investments of other partners in the CBINRM plans
- Community-based enterprises linked to the INRM plans strengthened

For the number of beneficiaries and the income improvement potential, it joins the answers to question 3 above.

6. Reference to the LDN and possible target setting has been inserted in 1.5 Alignment and strategic fit. While developing the project document, the team has been in touch with the Pacific focal point for LDN target setting at UNCCD.

7. Yes the target of 18,799 ha under Output 2.1.1 is already considered under the 47,719 ha for Indicator 4. Indeed the 47,719ha represent the planning at the district level while the 18,799 ha are at the Mataqali level (selected mataqali within the district).

8. It was a mistake, this has been taken out.

9. This has been addressed.

10. Numbers have been updated and checked throughout the proposal.

11. The 47,719 ha will have participatory land use plan done, this represents the 3 districts. Within the 3 districts, the largest Mataqalis have been selected for a total of 21 land units (18,799 ha) where restoration activities directly linked to the project will happen through different incentives methodologies (cf question 5). So in general the land under CBINRMLUP will benefit from improved management as all the stakeholders would have agreed on the use of the different parcel of land. And a subset of these ha will be restored.

12. We confirm that FAO will not be acting as the executing agency. The text has been updated in Section 3.1 of the Project Document.

RE 24 Sept:

1. The numbers have been adjusted in all the documents.

10. The numbers have been adjusted to be consistent all along the documents. The GHG numbers have been moved from 6.1 to 6.2. In the first version of the ProDoc, we chose to be conservative in GHG emission calculation only considering the impact that we know the project will have. This didn't include the potential impact on reduced deforestation. We have now included it. We kept the 2,100 ha of direct restoration activities and estimated that 1,500 ha of forest will not be further degraded thanks to the direct activities of the project and 2,000 ha thanks to the indirect activities of the project. This is explained in the EXACT Annex of the Project Document. The total tCO₂eq numbers have been updated accordingly: the direct impact is now 443,019 tCO₂eq and the indirect 1,909,345 tCO₂eq.

12. After consultations, we have updated the budget table (Annex of the Project Document). FAO will execute only the review related activities.

RE 22 May:

a. Table B has been updated accordingly.

b. We have streamlined the alternative scenario section and is consistent with Table B.

10-1 Section 5 has been updated accordingly.

10-2 Section 5 has been updated accordingly. Also, Annex 13 has been updated to clarify that the benefits will be realized after 20 years period (same calculation as the direct benefit).

10-3 Core Indicator Worksheet has been updated accordingly.

10-4 We have included more detail in Annex 13: On top of these 2,100 ha receiving direct support of the project, the project will reduce deforestation on 1,500 ha. These hectares are included as part of the Area of landscapes under improved practices (47,719 ha).

The total of hectares included EXACT are therefore 3,600 ha. These 1,500ha are included in the EXACT worksheet called Management Degradation and the CO₂ eq are included in the Degradation and Management line which has a value of 183,670 tCO₂eq.

12. Audit costs moved to PMC as required. Please note that FAO's policy requires audits to be conducted by one of the following firms: KPMG AG, Deloitte Risk Advisory BV, Ernst and Young and Talal Abu Ghazaleh & Co. Long Term Agreements (LTA) with these firms were signed following the results of the inter-agency tender conducted jointly with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. FAO, and several other UN GEF agencies, has no other option than procuring such services on

behalf of the Executing Agency. Such activity should be managed separately from the Executing Agency to avoid any conflict of interest and to maintain objective assessment which is in line with the Minimum Fiduciary Standards.

RE 7 Aug:

Vehicle: The project will cover a vast landscape and villages are scattered. The road conditions between project areas are difficult with non-paved roads. Long distances will need to be covered to reach the target communities. To ensure the safety of PMU staff, it is of utmost importance to have motorbikes. The government co-financing will cover mobility for government staff, but the project needs to ensure that safe motorbikes are available to the PMU to implement day-to-day project activities. This has been reflected after the M&E budget table.

Also, we have moved the “Annual audit/field monitoring” costs under PMC as requested. An Excel file is also uploaded separately (it was included in the FAO ProDoc (Word)).

RE 25 August 2020: Point 12-1, this has been addressed in the revised budget and oversight function is clarified in the M&E table.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9 July 2019:

As compared to the PIF, the CEO Endorsement Request will provide less area of land brought under community-based integrated natural resource management (18,799 ha instead of 71,500 ha in the PIF) and less area of forests restored (2,100 ha instead of 10,500 ha) while the total investment of the proposal has significantly increased. The cost-effectiveness of the proposal is unclear. Please explain.

24 September 2019

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

The development of the project document has benefitted from the experience of the AAD project, one of the baseline projects, in terms of CBINRM planning in a fully participatory way. The integration of all the different communities and ministries in the planning exercise in order to avoid doing a plan in silo, but on the contrary integrate all the different expectations on the land, has shown to be a successful approach but has a cost which hadn't been anticipated during the PIF definition. The choice of the project development team has been to focus on high quality planning outcome (integrating also a financial planning which is almost always missing and prevent the short and long term implementation of the plans) instead of maximizing the number of hectares covered with little follow up possible.

Similarly, the project document development team has had access to documents prepared for the Green Climate Fund project which collected all the financial information on restoration options in Fiji. The numbers shown in this report were really high, going up to 2,000 USD/ha for reforestation/afforestation. Using this hypothesis, the entire project budget could only cover 1,000 ha of reforestation. It is a high estimate but it also reflects some reality in Fiji. The team has further discussions and made some estimates for the different INRM techniques. The team decided to use a mix of techniques some cheaper than others to be able to provide direct support to 2,100 ha of land: 500 ha of climate smart agriculture technologies, 550 ha agroforestry, 50 ha mangrove replanting, 450 ha SFM, 250 ha Forest plantation/ restoration, 300 ha improved rangeland management (see Annex 13 of the project Document for details). Considering that some major projects, with large investment power, such as the GCF one seems to be coming to Fiji the project should focus on getting the communities ready to receive and implement funding. Indeed this preparedness has been the missing element of the EU project which hasn't been able to reach its restoration target despite large funding.

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 Request

9 July 2019:

Yes, cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10 July 2009:

No, the co-financing provided by the Ministries of Forestry, iTauaki and agriculture is in-kind, while the proposal says it is in grant. We also note that the co-financing of FAO in the PIF was \$3,100,000 of grant and it is now in the CEO Endorsement Request \$500,000 of grant. If it is confirmed that the co-financing from the ministries is all in-kind, there is only \$500,000 of co-financing in grant as compared to 9,100,000 for the PIF approved by Council. If these numbers and kind of co-financing are confirmed, it changes fundamentally the initial project and we can wonder if it is now really doable. Please explain.

24 September 2019

We note the importance and the quality of the Ministries' commitment. Nevertheless, the comment isn't addressed: the co-financing provided by the Ministries of Forestry, iTauaki and agriculture is still in-kind, while the proposal still says it is in grant. The information in the portal must be consistent with the co-financing letters. Please address also the comment regarding FAO's co-financing.

May 22, 2020

This comment is not addressed as the co-financing provided by the Ministry of Forestry and by the Ministry of agriculture still appears as grant in table C. Please correct table C as needed.

July 13, 2020

Thank you for the correction. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

The key for this project to succeed and be up-scaled is the engagement and commitment of the line Ministries: iTauaki Affairs, Forestry and Agriculture mainly. All the 3 Ministries through their letters committed to have their staff participating in the planning and the implementation of the activities as well as to provide inputs (seeds, plants, etc.) for the project. The detail of their commitment is in the baseline section. The fact that the Ministry of Agriculture increased a lot their commitment is a very good sign showing their willingness to be involved in the project and upscale the results.

These Ministries have annual budget and workplan which they say can be influenced by the project, so it is possible that more funds will be coming to the project also in form of grant. The Ministry of Forest launched the 4 Million trees initiative and is fundraising for it. There is a high probability that this will bring additional resources for forest restoration which will be used in the project area following the land use plans.

The project as it is fully doable with the strong commitment of the line ministries as they have showcased it in their co-financing letters.

RE 24 Sept:

The Portal and project document have been updated accordingly.

RE 22 May:

Table C has been updated accordingly.

6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request Not Applicable.

Response to Secretariat comments

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request Not Applicable.

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 Request

10 June 2019:

Yes, cleared.

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 Request

10 July 2019:

Yes. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10 July 2019:

Yes, it is mainly embedded in the the Component 3. Cleared.

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 Request

10 July 2019:

There were no remaining comments. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

Questions	Secretariat Comment	FAO Response to GEFSEC
<p>2. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?</p>	<p>2017-08-31 - Could you please confirm if Fiji has adopted an LDN strategy and if yes provide elements regarding the consistency with the project?</p>	<p>Fiji has not adopted an LDN strategy yet. The country is currently working towards submitting its Expression of Interest for LDN target setting.</p>
<p>3. Does the PIF sufficiently indicate the drivers² of global environmental degradation, issues of sustainability, market transformation, scaling, and innovation?</p>	<p>2017-08-31 No -If data exists, could you please indicate the rate of natural forest loss?</p> <p>- Innovation, sustainability and scaling-up are sufficiently indicated. Could you please elaborate during PPG on the lessons dissemination processes that could participate in the scaling-up?</p>	<p>There is no data available yet. The Ministry of Forests, in the context of REDD+ implementation, is currently working with the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) on gathering data on change in forest cover. This should provide a clear indication on the rate of natural forest loss.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
Questions	Secretariat Comment	FAO Response to GEFSEC

<p>4. Is the project designed with sound incremental reasoning?</p>	<p>2017-08-31 no</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regarding the coordination with the "Ridge to Reef" (R2R) project, could you please expand on the potential articulation and synergy with the current proposal - Please include the R2R project and any other relevant one in the baseline initiatives (in addition to those mentioned as co-financing ones). <p>- More detailed map of the project intervention is required to situate the Navaudra and Tomaniivi-Wabu forest reserves, as well as the mentioned low lands including mangrove zones into Tailevu province.</p> <p>- The project will target at least 60 villages: please provide information on the criteria used to select these villages</p>	<p>The R2R project has been added under the list of baseline initiatives, and an explanation has been added on synergy with the current proposal.</p> <p>At this stage, all directly related projects (forming baseline) has been added under list of baseline initiatives. Other relevant projects have been added under the coordination part. More detailed analyses will be conducted during the PPG to identify any other relevant initiatives.</p> <p>A detailed map has been added under Annex I.</p> <p>Kindly note that the number of villages to be targeted is an indicative (very conservative) figure based on the total number of villages in and around the targeted project sites. A detailed list of criteria will be developed, followed by requisite analyses during the PPG, to identify the individual/specific villages to be targeted under the project.</p>
<p>5. Are the components in Table B sound and sufficiently clear and appropriate to achieve project objectives and the GEBs?</p>	<p>2017-08-21 No</p> <p>-could you please make the component 1 title more explicit to reflect the project objectives?</p>	<p>Noted and corrected.</p>

Component 2:

- the activities to achieve SFM remain vague as "forest protection measures". Please be more specific about the planned activities that will be able to address in a sustainable manner the barriers and root causes of the deforestation and forest degradation.

The planned SFM activities are:

Community- driven forest protection measures- these activities will be carried out by community wardens, through patrolling, to avoid transgressions committed by leasings/concessions (directly related to the root cause- Illegal and unregulated logging through transgressions committed by neighbouring leasings and concessions), in addition to forest fire prevention (apart from prevention of fires getting started inadvertently, will also include creation/maintenance of fire lines, deployment of fire watchers, etc.). Text edited in the document.

Sustainable extraction of timber and NTFPs- this is directly related to the root causes of unregulated logging and unsustainable extraction of NTFPs by local communities. Sustainable extraction/harvesting of timber will include systematic and planned extraction (taking into account regeneration aspects), ensuring low impact logging, etc. Sustainable extraction of NTFPs will be facilitated through ecological assessments (impacts of NTFPs harvest, dynamics under the impacts and management practices that can mitigate negative impacts and promote positive impacts) and market assessments (economic viability of products and potential for diversification). Specific details of recommended practices will be provided after detailed field assessments during the PPG. Text edited in the PIF

Overall, all SFM activities will be through forest management plans integrated into the village level INRM plans. Text added in the PIF.

The causes of degradation of mangroves are not different from the other targeted forests. The socio-economic reasons for failure of mangrove restoration initiatives are usually;

- Lack of adequate involvement/ownership of local communities in the planning and implementation processes (with clear rights and responsibilities). Restoration of mangroves will be part of the landscape level and village level participatory planning processes, and during the PPG, consultations will be held to ensure community ownership and commitment of the processes- mangrove restoration efforts will not commence without clear ownership and commitment through the village level INRM plans.

		- Economic incentives to carry on managing the mangroves beyond the project period. Economic incentives will come from the value chain/enterprise development activities. This would include mud crab value chain development. Based on further analyses during the PPG, this will be confirmed and further products identified. Carbon benefit estimate, calculated through EX-ACT, has been added (the details of the calculation are provided in the Annex of the PIF).
6. Are socio-economic aspects, including relevant gender elements, indigenous people, and CSOs considered?	<p>2017-08-31</p> <p>-In the gender paragraph, the use of the word adequate leave an important place for interpretation. Could you please use a more specific wording?</p> <p>- As hinted in the paragraph on gender (page 12) we expect a full inclusion of gender considerations during the PPG phase.</p> <p>- as mentioned in the stakeholders' part, we expect a full inclusion of indigenous people (local communities) through the PPG and project phase.</p>	<p>Noted and corrected.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

STAP

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10 July 2019:

In the Annex B, the responses to STAP comments are missing. Please complete.

24 September 2019

- Point 1: please indicate where in the project description this comment is addressed.
- Point 2: please indicate where is the analysis of root causes expected by STAP.
- Point 3: Beyond only integrating all the already existing plans, there is still the need to clarify what are the other issues that, linked to land-use planning, actually drive deforestation and how the project activities tackle these issues.
- Point 6: please indicate where in the project description this comment is addressed.
- In addition, please copy the STAP comments in the annex of the project description for ease reference, so that they appear with the agency response (in the current version, only the agency responses can be seen).

22 May 2020

There is no response in the "Response to Secretariat comments" box below. Please complete as needed in the correct box. In addition, we don't understand why the table with 3 columns titles Outcome/Baseline scenario/Alternative scenario is repeated here under the section related to STAP comments. Please focus on and provide only the necessary information to address the comments.

16 July 2020

Thank you for the clarification and complement. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

RE 24 Sept: Here are summaries of the answers provided in the annex of the CEO document. The full answers in the CEO document make reference to the section of the project document.

- Point 1: The answer now indicates where the changes have been made in the text: STAP highlighted that illegal logging can't be fought only with community based training and proper land use planning. This is definitely true when illegal logging is done on a large scale through illegal private companies. We have now updated the language in the document to talk about "unsustainable community harvesting" which is not for commercial use but mainly for subsistence. It is found

in the Project Document (Section 1 – 1.2 The current situation 1.2.1 Main environmental threats) “Unsustainable community harvesting” reflects better the reality in the project areas. It is a threat and a cause of deforestation and degradation but in the project area it is less concerning than clearing of land for agriculture expansion. Land use planning and community training will support the improved sustainable management of land.

The fight against illegal logging is still supported by the project, even if the project focuses on CBNRM. Indeed, forest warden have been appointed to support the Ministry in reporting any illegal logging upon which the Forestry staff will act. But in some cases, law enforcement figures such as the police might not be aware of the policy. As part of the capacity building activities on sustainable forest management, enforcement training for relevant stakeholders/enforcers in Tailevu and Ra will be provided. And the project will ensure that forest wardens are identified and properly trained through the programs offered by FTC in the project areas (cf Output 1.3. “As described above, the FTC offers tailor made trainings which will complement the trainings already offered by the MoA, MoFo and MoFi. They will focus mostly on biodiversity and sustainable forest management. Depending on the needs, the trainings will happen at the FTC in Suva or the Demonstration Farms. Some of these trainings can be geared towards law enforcers and forest warden to fight against illegal logging in the areas where this is an issue.”)

This has been clarified in the text of the full project document in sections indicated above.

- Point 2: As it is now developed in the Project Documents and the answers to STAP, the “Remaining barriers to address the environmental threats” section in the Project Document, highlights what the root causes of land degradation and deforestation are. At the validation workshop, this analysis has been confirmed by the group working on Fiji REDD+ report on drivers of forest degradation and deforestation.

- Point 3: As it is now developed in the Project Documents and the answers to STAP, the clarification of the root causes/drivers of deforestation in the point above should be covering this question as well as it shows that the project will tackle the issue through multiple angles (from planning to implementation and incentive delivery) and at multiple scales for local to district level.

The upcoming report on the driver of deforestation in Fiji from the REDD+ group highlight lack of participation and coordination as the first cause of degradation. It indicates that the lack of coordinated planning is confusing and prevent any type of long term planning and action for sustainability.

Point 6: The answer now details where the answers to STAP questions can be found in the document. This should now be clearer to the reader.

The questions from STAP comments have now been added for ease of reference.

RE 22 May:

a. We have addressed the comments accordingly.

b. The table was copied and pasted for ease of reference in the answer to the STAP comments. However, we now took it out and made a reference to it.

GEF Council

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10 July 2019:

In the Annex B, the responses to Council comments are missing. Please complete.

24 September 2019

Partially:

1- Only the first sentence of the German comment on "Project Description/Component 2.2.1" is addressed.

2- As regard to the German comment on the development and institutionalisation of "Training of Trainers", the agency response doesn't clearly elaborate on which institutions are envisaged and how this institutionalisation is supposed to happen.

3- United States highlighted the risk of lack of market opportunity that was not enough addressed at PIF stage. The response of the agency and the description of the component 2 are unclear on this point.

Please complete accordingly, explain clearly in the response to Council annex (instead of inviting to search the response such as in Component 2 which has 7 pages) and indicate exactly where in the project description the comment is addressed.

22 May 2020

There is no response in the "Response to Secretariat comments" box below. Please complete as needed in the correct box.

16 July 2020

Thank you for the clarification and complement. Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

2 a - German comments on mangroves: Mangroves issues have been more highlighted in the Project Document. Additional text has been added in the answer section as well as in the project document. Specific references to Project Document sections have been made.

2 b- German comments on National Qualification on Resilience: Reference to the newly developed National Qualification on Resilience (Certificate Level 1 to 4) have been made in the trainings proposed by the project under Component 1/ Output 1.2 Training programs / Focused Technical trainings as well as in the FFS section (as trainings on resilience led with the Youth Ministry)

2 c - German comments on Training of Trainers: Additional text has been added in the answer section as well as in the project document. Specific references to Project Document sections have been made.

3 - USA comments: The strategy to address the lack of market opportunity has been better highlighted with a strong focus on value chain development (and reference to precise sections in the text have been added). The most promising value chains will be studied, including analysis of market options locally and beyond. This will reduce the risk of lack of market opportunity. Only the value chain with a strong market will be pursued. During the project preparation phase, stakeholder emphasized that the issues were often more linked to getting the product to the market rather than not having a market.

RE 22 May:

Queries made on 10 July and 24 September 2019 have been addressed in this section.

Convention Secretariat

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request Not Applicable.

Response to Secretariat comments n/a

Recommendation

12. Is CEO endorsement recommended?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10 July 2019:

Thank you for the proposal. Unfortunately, the CEO endorsement is not ready yet to be recommended. Please address the comments above.

24 September 2019

Not yet. Thank you for the clarification and new information provided. Nevertheless, some comments still need more consideration. Please address the comments above.

22 May 2020

Not yet. We don't understand that some comments are not or partially addressed. Please make sure the comments are addressed before resubmitting the proposal. In addition, the project description in the portal contains repeated paragraphs, which limits the clarity of the proposal and make it difficult to read and review (for instance, 4 times the paragraph beginning with "One of the major barriers in ensuring sustainable resource management...!"). Please remove all the non-necessary text, ensure there is no extended repetition in the project description and provide only the concise text that is necessary for the understanding of the proposal.

16 July 2020

Not Yet. Please address the remaining comments.

25 August 2020

Not Yet. Please address the remaining comment.

11 September 2020

Not yet. Thank you for addressing the comments. In addition, considering the current and lasting situation about the Covid-19 crisis, please address this risk under the Risk section adding information on the impacts of COVID-19 on the project and the measures envisioned to mitigate that risk and also, elaborate some consideration in the alternative scenario on how the proposed activities can help the recovery building back better. Thank you very much in advance for your understanding and consideration on that important matter.

17 September 2020

Not yet, the comment about COVID-19 consideration is partially addressed. As requested in the previous comment above, please also elaborate some consideration in the alternative scenario (or under the risk section if you prefer) on how the proposed activities can help the recovery building back better (opportunity analysis).

21 October 2020

Thank you for the additional consideration on COVID-19 situation. Nevertheless, some remaining issues need to be considered before CEO endorsement. Please address the following comments:

1- Whereas the co-financing from the MoA is all in-kind, the proposal still mentions that this co-financing would be both in-kind and grant (see below). Please confirm if this is all in-kind or if part of the co-financing can be considered in grant and ensure the information provided is consistent throughout all the project description. If part of the co-financing is as grant, please note that the letter of co-financing will need to be adjusted accordingly.

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

MoA's work through the Division of Land Resources Planning and Development, the Division of Crop Extension and the Division of Animal Health and Production will form the baseline for activities on climate-smart agriculture, rangeland management and agroforestry. MoA's in-kind and grant contribution will amount to USD 21,690,000 for the project period. These activities are part of the Ministry's regular programme.

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2- There is a difference between the budget table and the table B in the Portal (see below). Please amend the information provided to ensure consistency throughout all the documents.

BUDGET TABLE UPLOADED IN PORTAL	Table B in Portal	Difference
SUBTOTAL Comp 1	293,973	306,802
SUBTOTAL Comp 2	1,468,252	1,536,200
SUBTOTAL Comp 3	246,930	175,499
Project Management Cost (PMC)	110,270	100,924
TOTAL GEF	2,119,425	2,119,425

3- The administrative/finance staff cost is included under both component 3 and PMC. Nevertheless the TOR's in the Project Document do not reflect the contribution of this position to Component 3. Please clarify what the GEF support is paying for with this staff.

Oracle code and description	Unit	No. of units	Unit cost	BUDGET (GEF FINANCING)					Expenditures by year					F&D	MTA
				Component 1	Component 2	Component 2	Component 3	PMC	Total GEF	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4		
				Outcome 1	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3								
5578 Consultants															
Manila Consultant/our Team Support	Days	240	450	16,200	25,800	58,350	7,200		108,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000		108,000
Sub-total International Consultants				16,200	25,800	58,350	7,200		108,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000		108,000
National Project Coordinator	Month	40	2,500	17,700	28,700	65,440	8,000		120,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000		120,000
CI&FFS expert	Month	30	1,870	67,500					67,500	18,870	18,870	18,870	18,870		67,500
Administrative/Finance Assistant	Month	40	1,870				25,300	44,670	90,000	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500		90,000
Provincial Project Coordinator Talawa	Month	40	2,580	14,820	23,870	54,520	6,870		100,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000		100,000
Provincial Project Coordinator Ipa	Month	40	2,580	14,820	23,870	54,520	6,870		100,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000		100,000
Capacity Building M&E expert	Month	6	2,000	5,770	2,877	6,544	800		12,000	12,000					12,000
GIS consultant for Districts/UP	Month	6	1,000		8,000				8,000	8,000					8,000
MMT consultant for the westplatform	Months	12	2,000				24,000		24,000	12,000	12,000				24,000
Sub-total national Consultants				116,710	88,584	181,293	71,482	64,670	619,530	148,370	121,370	119,370	119,370		619,530
5578 Sub-total consultants				132,720	111,472	279,543	78,682	64,670	627,560	176,370	158,370	146,370	146,370		627,560

27 October 2020

Thank you for addressing the last comments. The CEO endorsement is now recommended.

Response to Secretariat comments

RE 22 May:

We have been experiencing a lot of IT issues with the Portal submission, which created confusion. We worked with the IT team to resolve the problem.

RE 7 Aug:

1. Vehicle: The project will cover a vast landscape and villages are scattered. The road conditions between project areas are difficult with non-paved roads. Long distances will need to be covered to reach the target communities. To ensure the safety of PMU staff, it is of utmost importance to have motorbikes. The government co-financing will cover mobility for government staff, but the project needs to ensure that safe motorbikes are available the PMU to implement day-to-day project activities. This has been reflected after the M&E budget table.
2. Budget: We have moved the “Annual audit/field monitoring” costs under PMC as requested. An Excel file is also uploaded separately (it was included in the FAO ProDoc (Word).
3. EXACT: We are using the “management” module in the EXACT tool for 1,500 ha of avoided forests to show a conservative GHG emission impact of the project. Based on our past experience, the project’s contribution will more likely to avoid the early stage of deforestation, i.e. degradation. However, during the implementation, we will monitor carefully on the progress and the status of the forest, and report back to the GEF accordingly.

RE 11 Sept:

Risk table has been updated to reflect COVID-19 related risks and a paragraph has been added to detail these new risks.

RE 17 SEpt

Additional language included in the risk section - Please also consider that this highly delayed GEF 6 project was formulated way before the COVID Outbreak. Meaningful implications to mitigate negative effects from Covid - 19 need to be incorporated in the ToC from early stages of project formulation. Nevertheless, additional language has been provided.

RE 21 Oct:

1. MoA’s contribution is in-kind as per the co-financing letter, thus the relevant text has been updated accordingly.
2. Table B has been updated accordingly. We appreciate this review
3. The administrative/finance staff will provide support in the M&E framework development and monitoring activities by consolidating collected data for the NPC’s review. The ToR in the FAO project document has been updated to reflect the M&E functions of this staff under component 3 " Moniotring Evaluation and knowledge management".

Review Dates

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Response to Secretariat comments

First Review	7/10/2019
Additional Review (as necessary)	9/24/2019
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/22/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	7/17/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	9/17/2020

CEO Recommendation

Brief Reasoning for CEO Recommendations

Context:

Fiji is a large archipelago with diverse landscapes and climate. More than 332 islands are scattered over 1.3 million square kilometers of the South Pacific Ocean. With around 60% of Fiji's land area consisting of forest cover (amounting to approximately 1 million ha), Fiji's forests play an important role in providing valuable ecosystem services and the maintenance of forested landscapes are capable of reducing some of the likely impacts of climate change. Indeed, Fiji is increasingly stricken by devastating climate events.

Deforestation and land degradation in forests and peripheries of forest frontiers are key environmental problems faced by Fiji. The rate of degradation in the forest peripheries, in this context, also refers to loss of vegetation cover in agroecosystems (including rangelands), and the continued loss of productivity in agricultural lands, impacting local livelihoods significantly. Poor practices have contributed to degradation of agricultural lands and their productivity, and the vicious cycle of resource depletion and further land degradation.

Project:

The development goal of the project is to address the negative impacts of forests and land unsustainable management driven by economic development as well as poverty and livelihood demands of local communities. The project aims to achieve this by establishing and pursuing a landscape-based approach to comprehensive planning and management that harmonizes socio-economic development, sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity conservation. The project's interventions will ensure that an enabling environment including increased capacity of communities, proper restoration strategies and adequate financing are put in place so that degraded forests and lands are rehabilitated, and existing protected areas and high conservation value forests are protected.

The project will promote community-based integrated natural resource management at landscape level to reduce land degradation, enhance carbon stocks and strengthen local livelihoods in Ra and Tailevu provinces. The project objective is expected to be met through the following three components: 1: Strengthening local level capacities for Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM); 2: Community-based Integrated Natural Resource Management; and 3: Monitoring, evaluation and lessons dissemination.

Country priorities:

This project is aligned with the strategies developed to reach the goals for sustainable development defined by Fiji at the international, regional and national levels. The strategies are under the overarching Green Growth Framework (GGF) launched in 2014 which serves as the government's blueprint for sustainable development in Fiji and to fulfilling the constitutional right to a clean and healthy environment.

Global Environment Benefits:

The project is expected to deliver the following Global Environment Benefits: 2,100 ha of land restored (including agriculture, forest, grass and mangrove), 45,619 ha of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems and 443,019 tCO₂eq of GHG emissions mitigated (plus an additional 1,909,345 tCO₂eq as indirect benefit). 3,500 stakeholders will benefit from the project with a more diversified income source and improved livelihood.

Innovation, Scaling up, & Sustainability:

The project has been designed to promote community based integrated natural resources management in Fiji. The integration of different ministries at landscape level for planning and field implementation is new in Fiji. The potential for scaling up is considered high as the project will lay the ground for new community-based investment opportunities with the development of "investment ready" plans over large areas while major investments are already planned through programs and partners such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Beyond promoting sustainable practices in natural resources management and planning, the project will also provide extensive capacity building and improve livelihoods which are expected to ensure the sustainability of the project results over time.

Co-financing:

The expected co-financing amount of \$ 30.9 million is provided nearly exclusively as grant from three different Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forest and Ministry Of iTauki Affairs). FAO will complete the co-financing with a grant of \$500,000.