

Strengthening capacities in the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use sector of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to enhance transparency and tracking of the Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement.

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10734

Countries

Congo DR

Project Name

Strengthening capacities in the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use sector of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to enhance transparency and tracking of the Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement.

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

10/29/2021

Review completed by PM

Program Manager

Pascal Martinez

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

MSP

PIF **CEO Endorsement**

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

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

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 15, 2021:**

Yes. But please complete the Table A adding the following text under "Focal Area Outcomes": "Foster enabling conditions for mainstreaming mitigation concerns into sustainable development strategies through capacity building initiative for transparency".

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted, done

Project description summary

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 15, 2021:

1. The indicator 1 is missing in table B (the list begins with indicator 2). We should find indicator(s) related to the national methodological process established and the institutional arrangements. Please complete as needed.
2. Please clarify the recognized methodology to assess the indicators 2 and 4 ("Degree of increase of institutional capacity..." with scales of 1-4 and 1-10).

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. Indicator 1 corresponds to the objective-level indicator. This has been made explicit. An additional indicator (Indicator 4) has been added as requested.
2. It is suggested to use the methodology outlined in the Programming Directions for the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency. For Indicator 2: to evaluate the institutional capacity to carry out activities related to transparency, a scale of 1 to 4 will be used: Scale 1: There is no specific institution for the ETF; Scale 2: there is a specific institution for the ETF, but with insufficient staff and capacity. It lacks the power or mandate to coordinate ETF activities; Scale 3: the specific institution dedicated to transparency has a permanent staff unit and a certain degree of capacity for the ETF. It has the faculty or mandate, but the ETF is not integrated into the national planning or budget; Scale 4: The specific institution(s) dedicated to transparency has a permanent staff unit and a certain degree of capacity for the

ETF. It also has the power or clear mandate to coordinate the ETF, and these activities are integrated into the national planning and budget.

For Indicator 5 (former Indicator 4), the methodology presented in Annex 3 of the Programming Directions would be followed. It contains ten guidelines on qualifications for the quality assessment of an MRV system.

These mentions, already presented in Annex A, have been further added as footnotes in Table B.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

Co-financing

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 15, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

GEF Resource Availability

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 15, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response
Project Preparation Grant

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 15, 2021:

The breakdown of the committed amount across the different PPG activities is not detailed (all the budget items are at 0 cost and only the total committed amount is mentioned). Please complete the table specifying which amount is committed for each PPG budget item.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response
Noted, a detailed breakdown of PPG activities/commitments was included.

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 15, 2021:

The number of beneficiaries is unchanged from the PIF (102). Nevertheless, we learn in Table B that 150 people are expected to be trained under component 1, 140 people under component 2 and 30 people under component 3. Shouldn't these people be considered as beneficiaries of the project? Please clarify.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the adjustment. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted with thanks. The Core Indicator target (320 people, at least 160 women) has been adjusted.

Part II ? Project Justification

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 16, 2021:

1. Paragraph 10 says the LULUCF sector is responsible for over 80% while in table in table 2 it is 91.4%. In the TOC it is 86%. Please clarify why those numbers are so different and ensure the information provided is consistent throughout the project description.

2. We understand the highest importance of the AFOLU sector but we note energy (power generation), transport (as an independent sector), waste and industry are now included in the revised NDC. Please consider including these sectors in the project, even to a lesser extent (it could be at coordination level and in the development of guidelines, tools...). It is particularly relevant for the energy sector which is the second largest contributor to the GHG emissions and its contribution is expected to increase in the coming years.

3. This section is essentially a copy-paste from the PIF and largely focused on the general context of environmental degradation. While this is useful and we understand that the problems to address didn't change since the PIF elaboration, we expect at this stage an analysis of the situation focused on specific matters relevant to the specific CBIT objectives and related requirements (potentially description of the institutional weaknesses, regulatory and policy gaps, missing technical human capacities and tools, lack of data, guidelines and templates, inclusion of relevant actors including at local level...). Please elaborate further so that we can justify and link the project activities to the identified problems, root causes and barriers.

4. Paragraph 15 seems to focus on "Several barriers to the development of a coherent adaptation program" while the description should be focused on what is lacking to implement the transparency (on mitigation and adaptation), not the development of an adaptation program. Please amend accordingly.

January 14, 2022:

1, 2, 3 and 4. Thank you for addressing the comments. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. Noted with thanks. 'Over 80%' referred to LULUCF without agriculture in 2018, while '91.4%' referred to LULUCF in 2010. The figures have been clarified and updated throughout with the latest data from the AFOLU annex to the 1st BUR (working document made available following the initial submission) and revised NDC. In 2018 (latest data available), the AFOLU sector did represent about 86% of DRC's emissions.

2. Thank you for this suggestion, which was discussed accordingly with the Government. At this stage, the preferred approach would be to keep the original approach validated in the PIF and focus on the AFOLU sector both to adequately address the needs of this key sector and to avoid scattering limited resources over too many sectors and activities. [BM(1)]

3. This section has been revised to better reflect the latest information available as well as gaps and barriers identified through the consultation process conducted during the PPG phase. Please note that, given the complexity of the national context, impossibility to conduct international mission during the PPG phase and with the validation of the Government of DRC, several specific capacity-building assessments (Activities 1.2.1, 1.2.5, 2.2.1) will be conducted during project implementation and form the basis of training programmes (Activities 1.2.3, 1.2.6 etc.) that will be exactly fitted to each institution's needs.

4. Noted, this has been corrected.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 16, 2021:

1. With coordination mechanisms already in place, the capacity-building activities in the context of the development of the NFMS, the REDD+ readiness and the reporting activities under the UNFCCC, the baseline appears already very rich and complete. Nevertheless we learn that the ongoing processes will not allow to bridge all identified capacity gaps and what is lacking is not clear. Please describe precisely all of these capacity gaps in the previous section 1. This is important to clarify there is no duplication of efforts but complementarity.

2. Please clarify what 'DDD' stands for. For the first time it appears in paragraph 24 it is not specified.

January 14, 2022:

1 and 2. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. The Barriers section has been revised as suggested, and specific baseline information is provided as required in the description of each outputs in the Alternative scenario section. With regards to ETF obligations for the AFOLU sector, the proposed CBIT project adopts an integrated approach and no significant gap is anticipated to remain after project termination. However, the scope of the project may not allow to implement Tier-3 and, in some instances, even Tier-2 approaches for some AFOLU sub-sector. A conscious choice ? recommended by the team of the global CBIT-AFOLU project and approved by the Government of DRC ? has been made to focus on a learning-by-doing approach and invest in the training of national stakeholders to implement lower-tier methods with a view to produce sustainable capacity-building outcomes while fulfilling ETF requirements, rather than bringing international expertise to implement higher-tier methods that would not benefit DRC in the mid-term. However, the project will create enabling conditions to implement higher-tier methods in the future. For instance, Activity 2.3.8 plans to conduct a review of available country-specific emission factors for relevant land conversions, assess the main gaps in land conversion emission factors in the national context and identify a selection of such missing country-specific emission factors that would have a strong potential in terms of enhanced accuracy relative to global IPCC emission factors. This selection can then be used by future initiatives to conduct studies and derive these emission factors ? as this will be beyond the scope of the proposed project.

2. ?DDD? stands for Direction du D?veloppement Durable (Sustainable Development Directorate of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development). This has been clarified in the text.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 16, 2021:

Yes, cleared. But please, clarify the gaps and and barriers in the first section of the project description to better justify the needs for proposed outputs and outcomes.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the clearer justification of the proposed activities. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted, Please see the revised gaps and barriers section, as well as responses to previous comments.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 16, 2021:

Partially. Please also consider how the project is aligned with the strengthening of national institutions and with activities to assist with the improvement of transparency over time.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the confirmation. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted, this has been added as suggested.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

Partially. The description remains very general, limited to the list the existing initiatives the project will complement. For each project component, please elaborate further being more specific on how the project activities will build on and articulate with the existing relevant initiatives and their outputs.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted, A table has been added in the incremental cost reasoning section as suggested.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response Noted

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

On the scaling-up potential, please also consider potential articulation/lessons sharing with the global AFOLU and forest projects.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted, this has been added as suggested.

Project Map and Coordinates

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 15, 2021:

There is no specific location as the project interventions are at country level. Cleared.

Agency Response Noted

Child Project

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

Stakeholders

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

1. Partially. We take note of the uploaded stakeholders engagement plan in the section document but we don't find the "Workshop report" in Annex M. In the Prodoc, the Annex M is " Annex M. Draft terms of reference for key project committees & staff". Please clarify where is the workshop report.
2. In any case, please provide in the Portal entry a summary of the consultation process undertaken during the project design phase including, for each meeting or other consultation activity, the involved stakeholders and the main results informing the project design.
3. In the paragraph related to private sector, we learn that "In terms of private sector actor participation in the PIF design..." and "These three groups will remain engaged during PPG and implementation". The PIF design and PPG phase should have ended. Please amend.

January 14, 2022:

- 1 and 2. Thank you for clarifying the consultation process and its results. Cleared.
3. Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. Noted with thanks, there was a mismatch in the numbering of annexes. This has now been corrected, the workshop report can be found in Annex N.
2. A table has been added in Annex I2 (in the Portal as well under the Stakeholders Section) to highlight key findings from the main consultations. Please also note that

the Stakeholder Engagement table in Annex I2 contains an exhaustive list of stakeholders consulted during the PPG phase.

3. Noted with thanks, this was amended

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

The description is very limited and general, with very few additional information added as compared to the PIF. Please elaborate further providing a gender analysis identifying any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project objectives and activities and clarifying how the project will address the finding of the analysis.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for clarifying and pointing out the Annex I3 which plans a gender analysis at project inception. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted with thanks. A Gender Action Plan has been included in Annex I3 (also uploaded in the Portal), which identifies entry points and planned actions to generate specific benefits for women throughout the project. Indeed and as part of the Gender Action Plan, a fully-fledged Gender Analysis will be carried out at project inception to assess the underlying gender dynamics in the AFOLU sector and identify meaningful entry points for gender mainstreaming into the implementation of the ETF in DRC.

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

At PIF stage, it was indicated that "During the project preparation phase, the participation of private sector organizations will be defined, as well as in which project activities these organizations will be involved". In addition, it was also indicated that "the government is implementing the identification and mapping of additional key stakeholders representatives, their key intervention domains and interests, in order to define the decisive incentives that could enable them to better and more participate in the implementation of the NDCs." At CEO Approval stage, the description is very succinct and general and we don't find the expected information as announced at PIF stage. Please elaborate further as expected (including which organization doing what part of project activities more precisely and the results of the government mapping exercise).

January 14, 2022:

Well noted, thank you. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted. The Government was consulted with regards to the comment above. FAO has been advised that a mapping of private stakeholders and their role in the implementation of the NDC is indeed ongoing, with the support of the Belgian cooperation (Enabel). Once the results of this mapping are communicated (around the time of project inception), the stakeholder engagement plan for the proposed project will be amended to reflect these arrangements. A mention has been added in the project document.

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

In the COVID-19 risk analysis, there is no mitigation measures for the risks related to securing co-financing and keeping project-related objectives high on the agenda. Please complete the analysis considering these risks too.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted, further details were included in the risk analysis.

Coordination

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

1. Please clarify the wording "It should be noted that the identified Operational Partner(s) or OP, results to be implemented by the OP" which is not clear.
2. We learn that "budgets to be transferred to the OP are non-binding and may change due to FAO internal partnership and agreement procedures which have not yet been concluded at the time of submission of this funding proposal". Does that mean that possible executing activities not yet identified at this stage could be undertaken by FAO? Please explain what this sentence mean and confirm FAO will not execute any activities of the project unless all identified at this stage and strongly justified and requested by the OFP.
3. Please attach a budget in Annex E following GEF template which includes a column showing the entity responsible for each budget item (Appendix A: Indicative Project Budget Template of the Guidelines on the Project and Program Policy (2020 update) - GEF/C.59/Inf.03 of July 20, 2020).
4. On the contribution from the Implementing Agency with the fees, the description invites to "see Annex J for details". Please clarify where is the Annex J (the Annex J in the Prodoc is about Indigenous Peoples...).

January 14, 2022:

1 and 2. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

3 and 4. Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. Noted with thanks. The wording refers to the execution arrangements in line with FAO's OPIM modality. The Directorate for Sustainable Development (or DDD), as the Operational Partner for this project, will be the executing entity for project interventions as specified in the budget configuration.

2. The sentence means that the OPIM process to finalize the OPIM package ahead of the OPA signature with the OP is yet to be finalized at the time of the initial submission. Indeed, FAO as the implementing agency will not execute any activities of the project unless justified and requested by the OFP in line with GEF requirements.

3. The budget columns showing which entity is in charge of which BLs were unhid and are now included in Annex E as well.

4. Noted with thanks. There was a mismatch in the numbering of annexes. This has now been corrected, a description of the role of FAO as Implementing Agency can be found in Annex K.

Consistency with National Priorities

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response Noted
Knowledge Management

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response Noted
Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

Please provide a signed ESS document.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for providing the signed ESS document. Cleared.

Agency Response Noted, a signed ESS was uploaded to the Portal
Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

The M&E budget is different in the overall project budget (\$51,633) and in the budgeted M&E Plan of the Portal entry (\$72,633 in table 18). Please correct and ensure the information is consistent.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you the correction. Cleared.

Agency Response Noted with thanks, the M&E budget in the portal is now matching the amount indicated in the project budget.

Benefits

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

The Project Results Framework is not in Annex A1 of the Portal entry but in Annex A. Please ensure the right reference for information included in the Portal entry or specify the document where the reference can be found.

January 14, 2022:

We don't see the correction but it is not a critical comment. Cleared.

Agency Response Noted

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

Please note the comments below.

Agency Response Noted

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

In the project result framework, please add the GEF Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment and ensure the target is consistent with the Core indicator section and all the project description.

January 14, 2022:

The name of the number and the name of the GEF core indicator should be made explicit in the Project Result Framework which is not the case. Nevertheless the link between the Indicator 1 of the Project Results Framework and the GEF Core Indicator 11 is made under the "10. benefits" section of the Portal entry. Cleared but we ask the Agency to take this comment into consideration for new projects.

Agency Response Noted. This indicator was already included (objective-level indicator, now numbered ?Indicator 1?); however, the target has been revised as suggested (see response above).

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 17, 2021:

1. Thank you for the TOC. Cleared.
2. We don't see any reference made in the project description on the potential role of DRC as an LDC and the leading role it may play in knowledge management and using the CBIT Global Coordination Platform. Please clarify.

January 14, 2022:

Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. Noted
2. The potential to use the CBIT Global Coordination Platform and play a leading role among several groups of countries is mentioned in Activity 3.1.6. This has been further explained in the output description.

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 15, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response Noted

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 15, 2021:

There is no specific location as the project interventions are at country level. Cleared.

Agency Response Noted

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 17, 2021:

Not yet. Please address the comments raised and highlight in yellow the modified and added text in the project description.

January 14, 2022:

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

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	11/17/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/14/2022	

**Secretariat Comment at
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

**Additional Review
(as necessary)**

**Additional Review
(as necessary)**

**Additional Review
(as necessary)**

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations