

Ecosystem Restoration in Northern & Central Savannas of Cote d'Ivoire

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11132

Countries

Cote d'Ivoire

Project Name

Ecosystem Restoration in Northern & Central Savannas of Cote d'Ivoire

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

8/12/2024

Review completed by PM

9/24/2024

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Project Type

FSP

CEO

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

b) Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Not fully.

- Please consider switching the Land Degradation marker from Significant to Principal given restoration is at the core of the project objective.

09/24/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response Thank you, this has been addressed.

2. Project Summary.

a) Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected outcomes?

b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?

c) [If a child project under a program] Does the project summary include adequate and substantive link with the parent program goal and approach?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Not fully.

- Please include the GEBs in the summary, consistent with GEBs targeted in the core indicator table.

09/24/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response Thank you, GEBs have been added to the project summary.

3. Project Description Overview

- a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?**
- b) [If a child project under a program] Is there a project Theory of Change that is aligned and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?**
- c) Are the components, outcomes, and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?**
- d) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?**
- e) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**
- f) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Not fully.

The M&E component has no outcomes, outputs, or budget allocation. However, project component 4 is named Monitoring and Evaluation, Knowledge, and Learning (though there are no outcomes / outputs related to M&E). Please (i) separate M&E from KM (component 4) and (ii) add outcomes / outputs and budget to M&E component (we will review the budget vis-?-vis this table per the resubmission).

09/24/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response M&E component: please see edits as suggested.

4. Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

- a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?**
- b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?**
- c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

5 B. Project Description

5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?

b) [If a child project under a program] Is the Theory of change aligned with and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region? [If a child project under a program] Does the description include how the alternative aligns with and contributes to the overall program goal and approach?

d) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

e) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?

f) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?

g) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?

h) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this FSP/MSP)?

i) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?

j) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and description/s?

k) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

l) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?

m) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? [If a child project under an integrated program] Are the specific levers of transformation identified and described? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Not fully.

On gender:

- Please ensure that in Output 3.2, heads or representatives of women's organization are included in meetings with private entities to capture relevant gender dimensions in financial regulatory frameworks.
- During project implementation, please ensure that the PIRs, the MTE and the TE include a review and reporting of the GAP and relevant gender dimensions of the project.

On results/indicators:

- The project description makes references to 'Core Indicator 1', whereas it seems the reference should be to 'Core Indicator 3'. Please adjust as appropriate. Kindly ensure the values are consistent across the project description and in the Core Indicator entry form, as they seem to differ.

09/24/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

On gender:

- edits have been made in the description of Output 3.2 (page 77 of the prodoc).
- reporting on the GAP and relevant gender aspects is mainstreamed into the standard FAO templates for PIR, MTR and TE. However, an explicit mention has been added in the GAP table and in the M&E annex.

On results/indicators: Thank you, we have checked for consistency.

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project

- a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?**
- b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?**
- c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).**
- d) [If a child project under an integrated program] Does the framework for coordination and collaboration demonstrate consistency with overall ambition of the program for transformative change?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

5.3 Core indicators

- a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)? [If a child project under a program] Is the choice of core indicators consistent with those prioritized under the parent program?**
- b) Are the project's targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable? Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Not fully.

The agency has provided the Ex-ACT calculation sheet and the number of emissions avoided is in line with the ha to be either restored or under improved management. Please address following minor comments:

o Under Core Indicator 6.1. the duration of the accounting is 25?. However, this figure should be changed to 20 years in line with the Ex-ACT tool calculations (i.e. 5 years for the implementation phase plus 15 years for the capitalization phase).

o There are some inconsistencies on the total amount of emissions to be avoided by the project. The correct number is 1,661,165 tCO₂ eq as per the Ex-ACT tool. However, some sections of the CEO endorsement mention slightly different figures, e.g. 1,661,175 or 1,661,000.

- Further, please bring figures for beneficiaries in the text in line with 100,000 people listed in the core indicator table. The text also mentions 200,000 people.

09/24/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response Edits have been made throughout for consistency.

5.4 Risks

- a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?**
- b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?**
- c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Not fully.

- Please adjust the rating under the "Environmental and Social" risk category in line with the ESS risk category. The ratings are not in line as is. Doing so would be in line with the description of the "Environmental and Social" risk category in Annex B of the GEF Risk Appetite document (GEF/C.66/13) stating that: "The rating reported by project under this category is identical to the Overall Safeguards Risk rating provided at PIF, CEO Endorsement, MTR and TE stage."

- Under the Overall Risk category, please provide a summary that helps understand the identified rating.

09/24/2024: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

-Apologies but we are not sure to understand this comment. In the Risk table, the Environmental and Social risk category is rated as moderate, which is in line with the Overall safeguards risk assessment (moderate), as presented in Annex I of the word prodoc / ESS annex uploaded in the Portal (presenting the draft Environmental & Social Management Plan as well as the Risk certification document from FAO ESM Unit).

-An explanation has been added under the "Overall Risk" category

5.5 For NGI Only: Is there a justification of the financial structure and of the use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy?

b) [If a child project under an integrated program] Is the project adequately aligned with the program objective in the GEF-8 programming directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes, as part of the project document.

Cleared

Agency Response

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes, as part of the project document.

Cleared

Agency Response

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes, as part of the project document.

Cleared

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: Is the proposed GEF financing (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

a) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes, however: "General Operating Expenses" is not an eligible category for PPGs ? please remove it.

09/24/2024: Addressed as per response below.

Cleared

Agency ResponseIn FAO accounts, GOE include a number of expenditures that are eligible. For example: stationery, whiteboards or print out for community consultations, printing costs or translation services for disclosure of ESS provisions and project grievance redress mechanisms, fuel to bring community members in a consultation workshop in the project sites etc.

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?

Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: No.

No co-financing letters have been uploaded in Annex A. As noted in the Annex A description section, we understand that FAO is still waiting for the letters. Please ensure that co-financing letters for all four co-financing entries are attached for the next submission.

09/24/2024: No. The following issues need to be addressed:

a. The letter of co-financing for amount of USD 120,000,000 (which is 98% of the co-financing for this project) reads "I would like to inform you of the possibility to mobilize about one hundred and twenty million (120,000,000) American dollars through projects implemented by the MINEF. Indeed, Cote d'Ivoire is finalizing a funding agreement with the European Investment Bank (EIB) to approve the implementation of an investment of about three hundred million (300,000,000) euros, of which one hundred and twenty million (120,000,000) euros will target forest restoration in savannah areas in conjunction with the GEF project ID 11132/ FAO ID 744370".

The co-financing letter does not meet our requirements since it's not a committed amount and expressed as a "possibility". Please re-issue the letter providing a clear commitment to provide co-financing.

b. The co-financing letter from FAO for the amount of USD 2,788,906 does not have a date. Please consider including an updated estimation of the actual amount that the Agency (with the help of the co-financier) think will really go to the project considering the timeframe of both the co-finance and the GEF project.

11/01/2024: NOT Addressed.

I am sorry but I cannot find:

(a) a date on the MINAM letter.

(b) an updated FAO letter with a date. It is also not linked in the portal.

Please double check and resubmit.

11/05/2024: Letters have been uploaded.

Cleared

Agency Response

Please see updated cofinancing plan and letters. Additional cofinancing is being discussed with other partners and may materialize at inception.

1 November 2024

- a. Please see updated letter of cofinancing from MINEF uploaded.
- b. An updated, dated letter of cofinancing from FAO has been uploaded. The actual amounts that will go towards cofinancing in the project implementation period are the ones indicated in the letter. These correspond to the following activities, also added in the cofinancing section of CEO ER:
 - The SCALA project, with co-financing of US\$100,000.00, will implement cashew nut-based agroforestry activities in the savannah zone of Cote d'Ivoire and will carry out three studies on (i) the sensitivity of cashew nut cultivation to gender and climate change, (ii) cashew nut production and deforestation and (iii) the cashew nut sector.

The PROMIRE project will contribute through Component 1 "Finalisation and operationalisation of the national REDD+ architecture through key activities", the implementation of which will ensure rigorous monitoring, equitable benefit sharing, transparency in management and active participation of local communities in the fight against deforestation and forest degradation. Its contribution amounts to ?2,688,906.00

4 November

We have uploaded the letters again. The letter from MINEF has been updated with the date.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) If ? and only if - this is a global or regional project for which not all country-based interventions were known at PIF stage and, therefore, not all LOEs provided:

Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

b) Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

c) Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?

b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)

c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?

d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

e)[If a regional/global coordination child project under an integrated program] Does the results framework reflect the program-wide result framework, inclusive of results from child projects and specific to the regional/global coordination child project? [If a country child project under an integrated program] Is the child project result framework inclusive of program-wide metrics monitored across child project by the Regional/Global Child project?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes.

Please acknowledge: *During implementation, the child project is expected to report to program level indicators that are outlined in the Global Coordination Project to facilitate a programmatic M&E of the Integrated Program. Please ensure that necessary arrangements are made to enable the child project to report to these indicators.*

09/24/2024: Has been acknowledged.

Cleared

Agency Response Thank you, this is fully acknowledged and an explicit mention has been added in the Results-Based Framework section.

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Not fully.

The GeoName IDs do not seem to be available under the correct format of the <https://www.geonames.org/> platform. Please update as appropriate.

09/24/2024: Has been corrected.

Cleared

Agency Response This has been corrected.

Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Documentation and Rating

8.8 Have the relevant safeguard documents been uploaded to the GEF Portal? Has the safeguards rating been provided and filled out in the ER field below the risk table?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Yes, as part of the project document.

Cleared

Agency Response

Annex G: GEF Budget template

8.9 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?

b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: Comments on the budget:

- Please include budget lines with adequate funding that will facilitate the project's participation in global/regional coordination events and activities such as communities of practice under the Ecosystem Restoration IP and the Global Coordination Project.
- National Project Coordinator should be charged 100% to PMC but not to project components.
- Technical Advisor is charged throughout 48 months to component 2 ? we understand this is a person that will be part of the Project Management Unit. If so, this position should be charged to PMC.

09/24/2024: Not fully addressed.

1) When reviewing the CEO Endorsement Request Portal view, we found issues that need to be amended: For instance, the Budget table is truncated and incomplete, and many sections are yellow shaded. Therefore, it is not possible to review which position is charged where. Please resubmit a legible and complete version.

2) On the comment of 08/20/2024 regarding National Coordinator and Technical Advisor, FAO's answer are as follows:

?The National Project Coordinator's time will be shared between actual coordination tasks (charged under PMC) and technical work (charged under technical components). This has been made more explicit in the draft ToRs for this position (cf. Annex L) and adjusted in the budget. The monthly rate was also revised from USD 6,000 to USD 5,000. Any additional funding will need to be covered by cofinancing.

The International Technical Advisor will not be part of the PMU; rather, he/she will intervene only on technical aspects to advise the PMU and national consultants. The budget line has been expressed in days rather than months to better reflect this. In addition, the CTA may advise on technical components other than Component 2, which has been reflected through changes in the budget balance across components and made clearer in the draft ToRs (Annex L)?

However, when we review the TORs in Annex L (see attached ProDoc (pages 164 ? 165), there are several technical and managerial activities that overlap between these two positions. We don't see the justification of having two different positions when in most of the projects implemented by other Agencies one position is sufficient to carry out both functions. Please revise.

11/01/2024: Addressed.

The attached file is fine. However, the budget table is truncated when opened in the print view of the portal template. The print view will be circulated to Council. Please double check on whether this issue can be solved on your end or needs to be elevated to IT support.

11/05/2024: Addressed. Agency uploaded a simplified table so that it shows in the print view.

Cleared

Agency Response

-About USD 88,000 have been set aside to allow for in-person participation to GCP / ERIP events. A separate table is presented in Annex D to show this explicitly.

-The National Project Coordinator's time will be shared between actual coordination tasks (charged under PMC) and technical work (charged under technical components). This has been made more explicit in the draft ToRs for this position (cf. Annex L) and adjusted in the budget. The monthly rate was also revised from USD 6,000 to USD 5,000. Any additional funding will need to be covered by cofinancing.

-The International Technical Advisor will not be part of the PMU; rather, he/she will intervene only on technical aspects to advise the PMU and national consultants. The budget line has been expressed in days rather than months to better reflect this. In addition, the CTA may advise on technical components other than Component 2, which has been reflected through changes in the budget balance across components and made clearer in the draft ToRs (Annex L)

1 November 2024

1. The highlighted budget lines were meant to facilitate the review of the changes made to the budget compared to the previous version; however, please find a clean version attached as requested.

We are not sure what part is being shown as truncated in the portal as we do not see such error in the attachment. To see what position is charged where, please refer to columns U and V of the budget spreadsheet.

2. Noted with thanks. The "Technical Advisor" position has been removed; adequate technical will be provided by other key technical experts to be engaged by the project

4 November

We have uploaded a simplified table hoping it will work - however, we cannot access the "print" function before submission so we cannot control that the output will be fine.

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.

b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.

c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Requestn/a

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation

Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

08/20/2024: No. Please address comments made in this review.

09/24/2024. No. Please address outstanding comments. Please resubmit a final version without yellow highlights for circulation to Council.

11/01/2024: No. Please address outstanding issues.

11/05/2024: Yes. Program Manager recommends CEO endorsement.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestPlease ensure that GEF Council comments provided at parent program PFD approval (#11118) are addressed, if they are relevant for this child project.

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	8/20/2024	9/23/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	9/24/2024	11/1/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/1/2024	11/4/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/5/2024	

CEO
Approval

Response to Secretariat
comments

Additional Review (as necessary)
