



Tajikistan Ecosystem Restoration and Resilient Agriculture (TERRA) Project

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11398

Countries

Tajikistan

Project Name

Tajikistan Ecosystem Restoration and Resilient Agriculture (TERRA) Project

Agencies

IFAD

Date received by PM

10/18/2023

Review completed by PM

11/27/2023

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Project Type

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?

b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023:

a) YES.

b) YES, provided that the project is indeed designed as a Multifocal Area (MFA) project. This is not fully clear based on the design. The project seems to be fully and solely aligned with LD focal area objectives. Please see other comments further below on this issue.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Just to confirm, this project is an MFA project. In order to make it more evident, several sections (see further responses below) were strengthened.

2. Project Summary

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 results?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

3 Indicative Project Overview

3.1 a) Is the project objective presented as a concise statement and clear?

b) 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?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Not fully.

a) Yes.

b) No, the project is aligned with LD, BD, and CC objectives and designed as a MFA. However:

- While the proposal mentions KBAs and identifies protected areas management as an element of Component 2, no core indicators are presented that would track improved management effectiveness of protected areas. If indeed improving terrestrial PA management is an intended outcome of the projects, please provide core indicators for improving terrestrial PA management during the life of the project.

- The PA management plans must be implemented, not simply developed as is currently presented in the project framework. Please revise and allocate budget to both the development and implementation of the PA management plans.

- The names of the protected areas should be provided in the PIF and in the core indicators. Please provide a description of these protected areas and justify their global significance, as appropriate.

- Please clarify where these protected areas are in the target project landscape and how their management relates to the other components of the project and the objectives of the project. This is not clear.

- With regards to agrobiodiversity conservation, which is also mentioned, the strategy for achieving this is not clear. Please elaborate how the project will address threats to globally important agrobiodiversity.

- With regard to alignment to the CC-M focal area, please clarify to which CC-M objectives the project is aligned and how, exactly. There is currently no explanation in the respective section of the PIF.

- There are important gender dimensions with respect to Outputs 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2. Please reflect gender perspectives in these outputs.

- Can you please indicate under which "TBC" conditions the carbon market study will be conducted and which amount has been earmarked for the carbon market study?

11/20/2023: Not fully Addressed.

- Please clarify if the previous comment has been addressed: "There are important gender dimensions with respect to Outputs 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2. Please reflect gender perspectives in these outputs."

11/27/2023: Not fully Addressed.

Please reflect gender perspectives in the following, as earlier indicated: Outputs 2.2.1 and 2.2.3 must take into account gender equality aspects (must be gender-responsive); Outputs 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 must target women as beneficiaries.

11/29/2023: Addressed.

Gender responsive outputs have been included into the Indicative Project Overview table.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

- Core indicators have been updated.

- Project rationale and description under Sections A and B respectively have been revised, including the relative outputs in the Indicative Project Overview.

- The stakeholder consultations revealed that the project area includes several protected areas that do not have any PA management plans. PA management plans along with pasture management, joint forest management and water management plans will be integral parts of integrated community-based ILM ecosystem management plans.

- Following the proposal of the Committee of Environmental Protection of Tajikistan, it was agreed to include the preparation of the PA management plans in order to 1) pilot a new monitoring system (SMART patrol); 2) fence off/differentiate them from pastures and transhumance routes (not necessarily physically but fencing might be included as part

of pastures investments); and 3) implement some afforestation in buffer zones where needed. There will be no physical investments inside the protected areas.

*SMART patrol system is an integrated solution using up-to-date GIS technology, drones in parallel with physical spot-checks/validation by inspectors. It is expected that this system will avoid illegal grazing, tree cutting, hunting as well as forest fires. Please see Output 2.1.5.

- Names of protected areas have been included, including brief description in Section A.
- Please refer to Figures 5 and 6 (maps). The linkage of PAs with other project components was clarified throughout the text.
- Clarification with regard to agrobiodiversity conservation has been included in Sections A and B, and reflected in outputs of Indicative Project Overview.
- Alignment is to Pillar 1, Objective 4 of CC-M Focal Area Strategy. Please refer to Section C Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies.
- The diversity of stakeholder considerations, particularly women and youth, have been better reflected in the output column of the Indicative Project Overview.
- Apologies for this typo. ?TBC? should have been removed in the final version of the document. We were checking if other parallel initiatives in the country are working on this. We keep this output and its indicative cost is around US\$ 50,000 (might be revised at the PPG stage).

23/11/2023

In addition to more accurately reflecting gender and youth considerations in the Indicative Project Overview, the strategy that will be developed to address the unique challenges facing women and youth (in particular) within the Project scope have been further articulated in the Project Stakeholder Engagement section (pg. 14) and in the Addressing Important Gender Considerations section (pg. 19). The gender and youth considerations have been reflected in the Project Description and the outputs have been amended accordingly.

29/11/2023

The titles of the respective outputs in the Indicative Project Overview Table were revised accordingly.

3.2 Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation included within the project components and appropriately funded?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

Please note above.

11/27/2023: Addressed.

Agency's Comments

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

b) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?

c) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for FSPs or 10% for MSPs? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Not fully.

a) No, PMC co-financing is not proportional, please amend. The explanation provided is not considered justified, as it puts the responsibility to obtain the co-financing exclusively on the Government of Tajikistan, while one of the main tasks of the Implementing Agencies is to help the country to leverage co-financing.

b) Yes

11/20/2023: Not fully Addressed.

The PMC co-financing level is inadequate. In view of the overall low level of co-financing, an adequate co-financing of the PMC is a minimum requirement that must be met.

11/27/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

PMC costs have been amended

23/11/2023

PMC co-financing level has been amended making it proportional to the GEF financing.

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key contextual drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective?

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023:

a) Yes

b) Yes

Cleared

Agency's Comments

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

a) Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

b) Does it ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers?

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?

d) are the relevant stakeholders and their roles adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023:

a) Yes

b) Yes

c) Yes

d) Yes

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

a) Is there a concise theory of change that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the expected causal pathways, and the key assumptions underlying these?

b) Are the key outputs of each component defined (where possible)?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023:

a) Yes

b) Yes

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

a) Is the institutional setting, including potential executing partners, outlined and a rationale provided?

b) Comments to proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception).

c) is there a description of potential coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area

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

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023:

a) No, please elaborate in section "Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Projects"

b) n/a

c) There is some description throughout the PIF, please note that GCF-GEF cooperation description has duplicate paragraphs. Please edit.

d) Yes

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

The Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Projects section has been revised. Additional information regarding the project executing partner may be found under Project Stakeholder Engagement in Section B

Duplicate paragraph deleted (thank you).

5.4 a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)?

b) Are the project's indicative targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Not fully.

As mentioned above, the project design is unclear. There are no BD targets in the core indicators and the BD objectives and elements that the PIF mentions are not reflected here.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Project rationale and design revised, including core indicators.

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

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

a) Are climate risks and other main risks relevant to the project described and addressed within the project concept design?

b) Are the key risks that might affect the project preparation and implementation phases identified and adequately rated?

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

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023:

a) Yes

b) Yes

c) Yes

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5.7 Qualitative assessment

a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?

b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?

c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

It is noted that the project is well aligned with objectives of the Ecosystem Restoration IP.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

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

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with focal area and integrated program strategies and objectives, and/or adaptation priorities?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Not fully.

The project is adequately aligned with LD focal area objectives and the Ecosystem Restoration IP, and to a certain extent with CC focal area objectives.

However, the alignment with the BD focal area is unclear (please refer to comments throughout the review sheet on this issue).

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Project rationale and design with regard to addressing biodiversity conservation has been revised in Sections A and B, and reflected in the Indicative Project Overview

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's Comments

10/20/2023: Not fully.

Please elaborate further policy alignment with the UNCCD, and especially with the voluntary national LDN targets, as applicable, as well as strategies and plans under the UNCCD.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Coherence with national-level responsibilities under the UNCCD has been further elaborated in Section A. Global Environmental Significance, as well as in the description under Section B Project Description. This is also addressed under Contributions to International Environmental Agreements.

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's Comments

10/20/2023: No.

After undertaking the revisions with regard to the BD elements of the project, please identify the targets of the GBF that the project will address and help Tajikistan achieve.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

The relevant GBF targets to which the project will contribute are 8, 11, and 14 as well as improving overall access to data and information under Target 21. This has been reflected in Contributions to International Environmental Agreements under Section B.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations, provided?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 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's Comments

10/20/2023: Unclear.

Resources are available. However, it is unclear whether the programming of the funding has been correctly entered into the tables. Almost \$3 million are programmed towards BD objectives, the PIF as designed doesn't reflect that.

Note: In GEF-8 all STAR is fully flexible. The Source of Funding may be different from the Programming of Funds and is covered by the flexibility provisions. The Source of Funding table must reflect the LoE (which is what the OFP provides as a source for the project). The three Programming tables should indicate towards which objectives the funding goes, which needs to be in line with all the project design elements.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Sections A and B along with the Indicative Project Overview have been revised to fully reflect the multifocal nature of the TERRA project investment.

The financial tables (Annex A) were revised to reflect the actual allocation of funds by objectives and to make them coherent with all the project design elements using the opportunity that GEF-8 STAR funds are fully flexible.

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Resources are available.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

8.2 Is the PPG requested within the allowable cap (per size of project)? If requested, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

8.3 Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Not fully.

Public investment is usually "investment mobilized". Please revise the "recurrent expenditures" to "investment mobilized" for amount of \$300,000.

11/20/2023: Has been clarified (please see response below).

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

This in-kind co-financing comes from the annual recurrent budgets of the regular program of the Committee of Environmental Protection. Therefore, we kept it as "recurrent expenditures".

Annex B: Endorsements

8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country's(ies) GEF OFP and has the OFP at the time of PIF submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Yes.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments 10/20/2023: Yes.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Not fully.

The LoE template use for this project removed the footnote that conditions the selection of the executing partner to the following: "Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate?". As agencies have been informed consistently by GEFSEC, LoEs with modifications cannot be accepted and will be returned. While the removal of the footnote seems to be trivial, it is not: this footnote reduces the chances of having an executing partner that does not meet the fiduciary and procurement standards required to safely execute the project. As a compromise, please get an email from the OFP accepting this footnote to be part of the LoE (this is an alternative to request a new LoE). Please refrain from manually changing the LoE template in the future.

11/20/2023: Additional email with OFP confirmation provided and uploaded.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Noted. This issue is currently being addressed in collaboration with the OFP. The email from the OFP will be received as suggested and filed to the package accordingly.

Please note that a financial management assessment of the executing entity (CEP) was carried out in 2021 as part of the IFAD investment project design (CASP+) and is still valid.

8.5 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project to be submitted?

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments
Annex C: Project Location

8.6 Is there preliminary georeferenced information and a map of the project's intended location?

Secretariat's Comments
10/20/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.7 If there are safeguard screening documents or other ESS documents prepared, have these been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat's Comments
10/20/2023: Clarification requested.

The project overall ESS risk is classified as moderate, and uploaded is the Environmental and Social Safeguard Screen Checklist. However, it is not clear what is the plan during the PPG to address moderate environmental and social risks at the screening stage. Please provide a plan for any further environmental and social assessment during the PPG and

development of environmental and social risk management and monitoring plan as a next step.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Additional clarification included under Annex D.

Annex E: Rio Markers

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

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: No.

The reviewer does not agree with the selection of the Rio Markers. Based on the stated objective: "To generate multiple environmental and socio-economic benefits by applying integrated landscape management approaches for restoration of degraded grassland ecosystems in the Lower Panj river sub-basin" I would assume that the LD marker should select the principal objective, and not the CC marker.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Rio Markers table updated (thank you)

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: Please consider adding Land Degradation Neutrality as a key word, as appropriate.

11/20/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Taxonomy worksheet revised.

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

9.1 Is the PIF and PPG (if requested) recommended for technical clearance?

Secretariat's Comments

10/20/2023: No. Please address comments made in this review.

11/20/2023: No. Please address outstanding comments made in this review.

11/27/2023: No. Please address outstanding comments made in this review.

11/29/2023: Yes. Program Manager recommends CEO clearance.

Agency's Comments

07/11/2023

Comments addressed and revised PIF completed

**9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO Endorsement/
Approval**

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	10/20/2023	11/8/2023
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/20/2023	11/23/2023
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/27/2023	11/29/2023
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/29/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)		