

Strengthening human and natural systems resilience to climate change through mangrove ecosystems conservation and sustainable use in southern Benin

Basic Information

GEF ID

10166

Countries

Benin

Project Title

Strengthening human and natural systems resilience to climate change through mangrove ecosystems conservation and sustainable use in southern Benin

GEF Agency(ies)

FAO

Agency ID

FAO: 658282

GEF Focal Area(s)

Multi Focal Area

Program Manager

Katya Kuang-Idba

PIF

Part I – Project Informatic

Focal area elements

1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12-10-19

JC - What is the productive sector that this project will target to mainstream biodiversity measures?

KKI - Yes, the project is well aligned with GEF CCA-1 and 2.

GEFSEC - 9/23/2020, JS- The project is proposed under the BD-1-1 entry point with the ambition to do both some spatial land-use planning (1.3 mangrove management plan) and mainstreaming in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors. However,

1- Please clarify in the PIF how the mangrove management plans would articulate with existing land use and management plans (LUP but also management plans for the RAMSAR sites, most notably the Mono biosphere reserve) and corresponding institutional arrangements. The PIF states that the project will only “advocate for the inclusion of climate resilient mangrove ecosystems conservation and sustainable use plans into municipalities’ territorial planning” (para 52). Why is integration into municipal land use plans not part and parcel of the project with for example willingness of municipalities to align LUP a criterion for the choice of target municipalities.

2- Please also clarify how the project is to address urbanization, infrastructures and industrial waste, which are all presented as major threats to mangroves in the PIF. We understand that the “mangrove management plan” would only map urban areas and plans to involve stakeholders related to land planning for urbanization and infrastructures or to industries are unclear.

3- We note that GET and LDCF are proposed to cover more than 40% of the PMC, which is a disproportionate given the co-funding ratio (1:5.4). Please explain and consider revising.

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - Not cleared. Please clarify the response to point 1 in the last comment from the last review sheet – kindly explain what are the existing plans (in particular the new Mono biosphere reserve that just benefitted from a significant investment from GIZ) and what the interface is with this proposal. At a minimum, some language should be added into the PIF showing that the project developers are

aware of and in coordination with existing plans such as the above.

GEFSEC, 10/13/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

10/5/2020

Additional language has been provided in the PIF. A number of considerations are to be made in order to articulate the link between the existing land use and management plans and the proposed resilient and sustainable management plan of the mangrove ecosystems. First, the project partly overlaps with areas, such as the Mono Delta Biosphere, for which a participatory landscape management plan has been designed, anchored in the local development plans and initiatives. In such a case, the LDCF-GEFTF project will not redesign a plan, but rather work with the existing co-management structures (such as the local management committees supported by local NGOs) in order to assess potential gaps, particularly when it comes to climate change adaptation, and address these gaps. With changing climate patterns and increasing variability (and the cascading redistribution and decreasing resource availability and increasing competition and demands on these resources), the existing institutions and regulations governing land use planning are challenged.

In other project areas (in particular in the 1018 Ramsar site), participatory landscape management plans have not yet been developed. The planning and monitoring activities in these areas will learn from the insights and successes of the previous investments, while building upon and valuing the existing land use plans, mainstreaming biodiversity conservation/sustainable use and climate change resilience, and introducing the participatory, integrated and landscape dimensions that are believed to secure engagement and sustainability.

9/23/2020

1. More than advocacy

Thank you for the question raised. The language in the PIF has been amended, as the intention of the project is to go well beyond 'advocating' for climate change adaptation and BD conservation. The suggestion to include willingness of municipalities in the site selection criteria is well noted.

2. Urbanization, infrastructure and industrial waste

The management plans will be comprehensive, and therefore include urbanization, infrastructure and industries (with its waste). The fact of integrating climate change adaptation into the management plans has important repercussions on migration and urbanisation (at least in part due to increasing sea levels and its consequent floods and storm waves). The management plans can therefore identify areas best suited for further urban expansion, considering short and medium-term (50 year time frame) climate change scenarios and impacts on coastal Benin. Nevertheless, the mainstreaming into sectors efforts will be focusing on 3 priority sectors, i.e. forestry, fisheries and

agriculture.

3. Co-financing contribution to PMC

Point well taken. The co-financing to the project management has been increased. It now represents about 74% of the cost of managing the project. Nevertheless, these figures will be detailed during the PPG phase.

12/10/2019

The productive sectors that will mainstream BD are agriculture, forestry and fisheries. These have been mentioned more clearly in the PIF.

Indicative project/program description summary

2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12-10-19

JC - The PIF is loaded with buzzwords that make difficult to understand (and obscures) what activities on the ground will be carried out with LDCF and GEFTF funds. Please use plain English and a simplified language to describe the components, outcomes and outputs

The objective: "Increase the adaptive capacity of human and natural systems (TO DO WHAT?) through participatory mangrove ecosystem conservation and sustainable use in southern Benin Indicators

COMPONENT 1

1. The Outcome and outputs of this component appear to be over-complicated to achieve the ultimate goal of increasing resilience to climate change by means of mangrove conservation and sustainable use. Please simplify, keeping in mind those than in the future would need to execute a project in Benin.
2. How can "Vulnerable mangrove ecosystems can be made resilient to the impacts of climate change and sustainably managed" by means of "participatory planning, management approach and capacity-building of key local stakeholders"? Those interventions don't make mangroves more resilient to CC. Same with interventions such "assessment", "local platform", "planning and monitoring processes" and "capacity building".
3. What is the nature of the suggested "Local platforms in target sites for mangrove ecosystems awareness-raising"?
4. What is the relationship between "Farmer Field Schools" and making mangrove ecosystems climate resilient? For instance, why to do "improved crop-rotation schemes and small-scale irrigation systems" as the means make mangrove ecosystems climate resilient?

improved crop rotation schemes, and small scale irrigation systems – as the means make mangrove ecosystems climate resilient.

COMPONENT 2

5. Is it really necessary to do a "comprehensive socio-economic analysis and market and value chains studies in mangrove ecosystems" to find out the so call "biodiversity-friendly alternative livelihoods in mangrove ecosystems"? What would be a more down to earth approach to find if there are actual alternative livelihoods? What about the number of activities listed under paragraph 54?

6. Please clarify how "climate smart agriculture" fits within the equation of mangrove conservation and sustainable use. What cash crops grow inside mangroves? Please elaborate.

7. What are the private sector companies in Benin that will most likely engage with the "value chains through public-private partnerships"? (output 2.2). What does "local public-private partnerships platforms" actually mean?

KKI - More detail is needed under the breakdown for those activities which are designated to be funded by GET resources. In relation to the LDCF-financed activities:

- The LDCF's main function is to increase the resilience of people and communities to the negative impacts of climate change. Under Component 1, it says that the adaptive capacity of mangrove ecosystems will be increased. Please ensure the focus is on the communities which depend on these ecosystems to survive.
- Under component 2, slightly more specificity regarding the income generating alternative livelihood activities that will be financed would be appreciated, even if they are indicative.
- Under component 3, USD \$1.3 million seems steep for the capacity building activities listed as part of this component, considering that much of the actual plans will be formulated under component 1. Please provide some justification for the pricing for this component, which mostly seems to related to coordination and knowledge sharing. Additionally, some of the activities, particularly those relating to awareness raising and knowledge management seem to have some overlap with activities under component 1.

GEFSEC, 4/9/2020 -

LDCF: The LDCF portion of this item is cleared.

GEFSEC, 9/23/2020 - JS -

1- Please clarify the feasibility of output 2.2 in the context of Benin. Output 2.2 seems to rely strongly on an undefined "local NGO" and places great expectation on PPPs. ON what experiences the project would build on? Is the project to provide any finance and/or technical assistance under output 2.2?

2- Please clarify output 2.3 and consider further simplifying its wording. Is it small grants and/or micro/small loans that the project would provide ? What are the anticipated mechanisms of delivery?

3- Please clarify the project's approach to ensure that the provision of alternative livelihoods do translate into effective reduction of pressure on mangrove ecosystems (References? Past experiences?). How will it notably ensure that sustainable intensification of agriculture will not create a rebound effect by increasing the opportunity cost of mangrove protection.

4- Please clarify and be more specific in outputs 3.1 and 3.2. The underlying description of the alternative scenario (para 64) only mentions a gap analysis and identification of needs without any tangible deliverable that would change the situation of mangroves. Given that a "national strategy and action plan for sustainable mangroves management" has already been produced by FAO as outcomes of the project TCP 3502 (para 64.), there should be already a good ideas of the gaps and needs. Please clarify what are the concrete outputs

project for 2020 (phase 1), there should be already a good sense of the gaps and needed resources clearly stated in the concrete outputs anticipated in 3.1 and 3.2.

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - This item is cleared.

Agency Response

9/23/2020

1. Local NGO:

Thank you for the question. Though there are a number of NGOs operating in the project area that have the technical expertise, the network and long-term vision needed to deliver output 2.2, (including Action Plus, Nature tropicale, Eco Bénin and Africa mobile some of which have worked with FAO in previous mangrove-related projects, some of which are IUCN members and have signed the Memorandum of Understanding Collectif des deltas du Golfe du Benin) the PIF has been amended. The PPG will ensure the best partner is engaged for this output and related outputs under component 2. The idea is to anchor the project at the local level, within a structure that has a long-term vision, has the authority to operate in mangrove ecosystems, and is equipped to meaningfully and efficiently engage local communities in decision making, execution and monitoring.

The project is intended to provide a matching grant under output 2.2.

2. Financial mechanism output 2.2

The output has been reworded. In addition to output 2.2, the project will provide seed funding for the set up of local community resilience funds, which are being managed by the local communities (micro-loans, micro-grants, TBC), and which particularly reach out to the poorest and most vulnerable groups within the communities such as women, youth. Many successful examples (Senegal LDCF project, Iran LD-BD project, ...) can be considered to define the details of these funds.

3. Ensuring investments into alternative livelihoods deliver GEB and avoid negative feedback

Thank you for the query. Please, note that nature-based livelihoods will be considered for financing, and that the analysis of potential trade-offs will be conducted as part of the prioritisation work under output 2.1. To reflect this better, the language in the PIF has been amended.

4. Outputs 3.1 and 3.2

The language in the PIF has been amended to reflect the tangible results that are intended to be delivered through the component's outputs. The referenced FAO technical cooperation project (TCP/3502) is indeed an important input and helps to jumpstart important deliverables under this component, still the TCP project focused on forest management within the mangrove ecosystems, and therefore is too narrow in scope to strengthen the institutional and policy frameworks envisioned.

12/10/2019

GEFTF

The objective has been reformulated to improve comprehension of project intentions.

COMPONENT 1

1. Please, consider the changes made in table B. Clarifications have been added in the descriptive parts of the project components.
2. Component 1 includes various elements: **assessments** to better orient decision-making; **awareness-raising; planning; implementation** of plans; **monitoring** of plans. Outputs 1 (what ecosystem services can and should be restored and managed sustainably?) and 2 (raise awareness of local stakeholders) both help build the basis at the local level to meaningfully engage in a planning and management process. Output 3 focuses on the development of the management plan of the vulnerable and degrading ecosystem that no longer delivers its ecosystem services to the local populations (but also habitat to the globally significant BD). **Output 4 is entirely dedicated to the implementation of the plan**, while output 5 ensures future monitoring of the management plan. It is through output 4 that the direct GEBs and adaptation benefits are achieved, but outputs 1, 2, 3 and 5 ensure that results from baseline processes and investments are fully accounted for, and that these benefits are coherent with needs and expectations of local producers dependent on the mangrove ecosystem services, are fully engaged in the planning, implementation and monitoring, and equipped to remain engaged over time.
3. Paragraph 46 of the PIF provides clarifications on the suggested platforms. It is a **physical space** (e.g. local NGO/CSO office, local training center space, ...) hosting a team of experts (recruited by the project) tasked with awareness raising activities including knowledge exchange visits between villages and communities, broadcast from local radios, trainings, etc. It is a physical space, rather than virtual, as it aims at reaching out to the local communities.
4. Please, allow us to clarify why agriculture is one of the targeted sectors. Expansion of **farmland has put great pressure on the mangrove ecosystems**, which became less apt to deliver their services (developed in paragraphs 7-10 in the PIF). In order to avoid further receding of mangroves, production in existing farmland needs to be sustainably intensified. Therefore, the proposed examples of practices and approaches demonstrated by FFS contribute to a large-scale uptake of sustainable production intensification practices and approaches.

FFS is proposed as a successful, adaptable and highly participatory approach and alternative to more conventional extension services. The schools are not limited to demonstration of crop-related tools and practices, but have been used for agro-pastoral, agro-sylvo-pastoral, and fishery tools and practices, as well as for capacity development of producers with respect to business development, health and nutrition, and more.

The link with a more resilient ecosystem is made through the **management plan at the level of the mixed use 'landscape'**, which includes various land uses including mangroves, lagoons and lakes, wetlands, gallery forests, farmland, plantations and urban areas (this latter will be mapped only). A plan that would limit itself to the mangroves, would not address the root causes of the degradation of the ecosystem and its services and goods provided, including protection from climate-induced threats.

COMPONENT 2

5. The assessment proposed follows the FAO guiding framework (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6462e.pdf>) to developing gender-sensitive value chains. This includes:

1/ **Assess relevant territorial food systems** specifically identifying gender-based constraints, i.e. i) describing key elements of territorial food systems (production, processing, distribution and consumption); ii) defining the quantity and quality of employment in the value chain; iii) defining main tasks carried out by women and men; iv) defining the main gender-based constraints hindering women to fully benefit from their participation to food systems activities;

2/ **Identify potential strategies** to make food systems more inclusive for vulnerable producers and processors;

3/ **Analyse the benefits and limitations** of each identified strategy taking into account certain parameters (feasibility, reliability, reproducibility, sustainability, cost-effectiveness, etc.).

This guiding framework has been applied successfully in other contexts, and is feasible in the context of the proposed MTF project. In order to avoid misleading expectations from output 2.1, the language has been amended. Please see below for clarifications regarding the listed livelihood options.

6. The terminology climate-smart agriculture has been eliminated. Instead, **sustainable production intensification** practices and approaches will be promoted (see rationale above) on farmland that produces subsistence agricultural products and cash crops. Crops for export are listed in paragraph 8 of the PIF, and include pineapples, banana, coconuts, and palm oil.

7. Please, note the simplified wording and consider the paragraph on the private sector engagement in the PIF. The project will primarily target the more **vulnerable small and micro-scale producers** in the demonstration sites. Local investors will be involved on a voluntary basis in the PPPs created under component 2. Further detail on the meaning of these PPPs is provided in paragraph 57 of the PIF.

LDCF

- The language has been amended in order to more clearly mention the intention of the project, which eventually is climate resilient livelihoods for people dependent on mangrove ecosystem goods and services. **For the communities to thrive, the ecosystem needs to be restored and sustainably managed** (please note that SLM and restoration activities are largely covered by the baseline investments, in particular OCRI and Transboundary Biosphere Reserve projects), so it can deliver its full potential of ecosystem services, which include habitat for biodiversity, protection from climate threats, livelihoods.

- Please, consider the **illustrative alternative livelihood options** that are listed in paragraph 56 of the PIF. The list provided only examples to give an idea of the type of alternative livelihoods the project could support, but it is neither exhaustive nor descriptive. Assessments are needed in order to shortlist livelihoods based on criteria that include: gender-sensitivity, contribution to biodiversity conservation and sustainably use, contribution to ecosystem restoration, connection to local (or regional) market, complementary with baseline investments in the project area, and more. These criteria are listed in the PIF as well.

- Please, note that the amount allocated to component 3 has been **reduced** to accommodate the concern. Still, a considerable amount is reserved for technical and institutional capacity development, critical for the future up-scaling, out-scaling and in-scaling of the lessons learnt of the project. Considering the project is a sister-project of the #10165 LDCF project in Togo, under output 3.5 a budget for exchanges with this and other mangrove management investments is foreseen (e.g. for field visits, capitalization workshops, ...). The awareness-raising and training activities under this component are complementary to the activities under component 1, as the components target different stakeholder groups. Component 1 is entirely dedicated to local stakeholder engagement, while component 3 targets regional and national stakeholders.

Co-financing

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, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 12/10/19

KKI - the description of the GCF-financed initiative in the baseline section of the PIF is appreciated, but more clarity on what that project is financing exactly would be appreciated. Will new infrastructure be built as part of the GCF project? That information is important to understand how that project will serve as co-financing for the LDCF-GEFTF project.

GEFSEC, 4/9/2020 - 3 clarifications: (i) How exactly is this investment mobilized?; and (ii) Considering the assumptions are different for incremental and additional reasoning, why is this not more clearly articulated? (iii) The GIZ project "Transboundary Biosphere Reserve in the Mono Delta" that is supposed to bring \$3,000,000 in co-funding seems to have ended in 2019 (https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/details/project/transboundary-biosphere-reserve-mono-delta-13_IV+_029-474). Please clarify.

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - Not cleared. The closed GIZ project is still listed as an ongoing project in the PIF submission.

GEFSEC, 10/10/2020 - Not cleared.

Agency Response

10/05/2020

Past tense has been used instead of present tense in the project description (it remains an important project from which lessons and results are informing the proposed project), and the project has been eliminated from the Coordination section in the PIF.

09/23/2020

(iii) The project design team in Benin confirms the GIZ project has concluded project activities on the ground. Therefore, the project is no longer mobilised as investment in the form of co-financing. It remains an important project of the baseline, and lessons and successes continue to inform the LDCF-GEFTF project. The relevant changes have been made throughout the PIF to reflect this change.

09/03/2020

(i) The baseline investments identified as mobilized investment have been discussed with the development partners during the PIF design missions and encounters. Scope for future collaboration has been agreed upon, and as a result the ongoing and planned investments have been mobilized in order to support the achievement of the project objectives. Therefore, the various project teams and decision-making bodies (steering committees for instance) of the projects will work closely together throughout the design phase and the implementation phase of the GEF project, coordinating to the extent possible results delivery. This close collaboration and partnership will allow best and efficient use of investments made in the project area and technical area of resilient and sustainable mangrove management.

(ii) The PIF includes extensive language on incrementality and additionality, in particular the following sections elaborate on the GEF's niche in the current and planned finance architecture in Benin's mangrove ecosystems:

- Table '*Baseline projects valued as co-financing*' in section 'Baseline Scenario and Projects'. This table specifies the nature of the baseline investments, and how they complement GEF investments in order to achieve project objectives;
- Section '*Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF and co-financing*' illustrates the additionality and incrementality of the GEF investments per component. Some additional language has been provided and relevant language highlighted in yellow for easy reference.

Furthermore, please note that the design team developed a theory of change that has been added as an annex to the PIF. In addition, some minor amendments have been made throughout the document.

March 2020

The baseline projects section and the section on incremental/additional cost reasoning have been revised, and additional language has been provided. This includes additional information on the GCF project.

GEF Resource Availability

4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion GEFSEC, 4/8/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion GEFSEC, 9/23/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes. Benin is eligible to access up to \$10m in GEF-7 under the current GEF adaptation strategy.

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Project Preparation Grant

5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

Core indicators

**6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines?
(GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - More information requested. The core indicators for the BD portion of the project seems sufficient, however on the CCA core indicators and metadata spreadsheet, it does not include any figures for indicator 4. According to Table B and the project description, many people are being trained as part of this project. Please provide an indicative number of people trained under Core Indicator 4.

GEFSEC, 4/8/2020 - Follow up clarification. As the Secretariat is aiming for increase ambition across the LDCF portfolio, the number of beneficiaries offered for BOTH LDCF and GET investments seems extremely low. According to the submission, Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 have a combined population of more than 3 million people. The target beneficiaries thus represent a fraction of the total population in the target area...Is there any justification for the high dollar per beneficiary cost rationale and/or other assumptions that may increase the total number of people benefitting from this intervention?

Regarding the BD Core indicators: in the results framework, there is references to *32,000 ha of vulnerable and degraded mangrove ecosystems under climate resilient and sustainable management*, but in the Core Indicators, there are only 10,000 ha listed. This is a critical point because there are the Globally Significant Biodiversity benefits of the project with an investment of BS \$2.6 million.

GEFSEC, 9/23/2020, JS - A total of 120,000 ha are reported on core indicators, all under 4.1. 120,000 ha for a \$8,000,000 GET/LDCF investment with \$38,000,000 of co-funding is a low target. Please clarify the assumptions used to set the target. Are the 120,000 ha the anticipated scale of the mangrove ecosystem management plans. Are all the interventions of component 2 to take place within the area of the mangrove management plans or are there further impacts of the project that have not yet been translated onto core indicator targets? If not, please justify the relatively low cost-efficiency for GEBs of the proposed project.

The PIF mentions rehabilitation/restoration of mangroves in several instances. Please clarify why there is no target on core indicator 3 dedicated to restoration.

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - JS As per GEF guidelines, the core indicators should capture the entire project. Please revise, especially because there is significant co-funding on component 1 that is to deliver the results on the ground. If this is not possible to commit to at PIF stage, please indicate if this is possible to achieve at PPG.

GEFSEC, 10/13/2020 - This is cleared with the understanding that it will be revised at PPG.

Agency Response

10/05/2020

A footnote has been added to the CI section. At PIF stage, the figures are estimates, which will be confirmed and refined during the PPG phase.

23/9/2020

The area that will benefit from the management plans is considered in full under CI 4.1. This represents roughly 10% of the original Ramsar sites, which is a considerable percentage for demonstration. Please, consider that the CI request for the direct benefits from the GEF investment, and this does not include the co-financing. The per-hectare cost is therefore around USD58 (roughly USD7M invested to directly benefit 120,000ha), which is an ambitious but realistic cost, particularly considering the generally high cost of restoration/conservation in mangroves. The point on ambition is well taken, and during the PPG further efforts will be made to make the GEF investment as efficient as possible, therefore potentially bringing down the per-hectare cost and increasing the area to report under CI 4.1.

As for the reason why no target is mentioned under CI 4.3, please consider that restoration is part of sustainable management. The management plans will identify areas that need restoration interventions, but these lands will be part and partial of the areas under improved management to benefit BD. To avoid double-counting, the whole area is reflected under the CI 4.1.

3/9/2020

Please see the updates in the GEFTF core indicators worksheet and CCA core indicators and metadata spreadsheet. Note that the new reported target impacted area of mangrove ecosystems under improved practices to benefit biodiversity is 120,000 ha. The area is also benefiting from improved resilience. With regard to the number of beneficiaries, the number has been increased substantially to 250,000 persons (50% women). This figure was estimated based on the area of land the project will directly deliver results upon, and the families and producers living from and working these lands, in addition to the fishermen living and working in the project area. This figure represents close to 10% of the population living in the two sites.

A little more detail to clarify the numbers:

Area under improved and resilient management includes: 70,000 ha of land within the RAMSAR sites, characterised by mixed land use (this is close to half of the area originally delimited as RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 in 2001) + 50,000 ha (i.e. about a third) of degraded and vulnerable production land surrounding the RAMSAR sites where smallholders live and work. Interventions on the total 120,000 ha will benefit the biodiversity and resilience of the communities.

Project beneficiaries include: 34,000 fishermen and 50,000 producers (agro-sylvo) who will receive training, be concerned by awareness raising efforts, be actively involved in livelihood development initiatives, etc., while another 166,000 women and men from the rural communities concerned will benefit from an improved management of the NR base and increased resilience of the ecosystem they depend upon. These latter will be directly concerned by the planning and implementation of management plans.

March 2020

Please, consider the updates in the CCA core indicators and metadata spreadsheet. Please, note revisions have been made and the reported targets at the objective level are the SUM of the targets achieved thanks to GEFTF and LDCF investments. Therefore, there is no double counting.

Project/Program taxonomy

7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Please remove the mitigation tag from the Rio Markers. A 1 indicates that the project has significant mitigation measures, which does not seem to be the case here.

GEFSEC, 4/8/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

This has been addressed. Indeed, the LDCF and GEFTF do not primarily target mitigation. Part of the baseline projects do address mitigation though, complementing the integrated nature of the investments into the mangrove ecosystems.

art II – Project Justification

1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes. This is well described.

Agency Response

2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?

2. Is the baseline scenario of any associated baseline projects appropriately described:

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Not clear. The baseline section is fairly clear, but it would be appreciated if the Agency could provide more information on the 5 initiatives identified as providing co-financing to this project in the context of the additionality of the proposed initiative - Please refer to the item on additional cost reasoning.

GEFSEC, 4/8/2020 -

LDCF: The additional reasoning is not particularly clear here. Please refer to the item on co-financing.

GEFSEC, 9/23/2020 - The additional detail is appreciated. However, considering the GEFTF financing is assessed for incrementality and the LDCF financing is assessed for additionality, it would be appreciated if slightly more detail could be added to this section, broken down accordingly in the write-up per component. Furthermore, the additionality of the LDCF investment is still not explicitly clear - please indicate exactly how the LDCF investment results in additional outcomes directly relating to the resilience of target communities to the negative impacts of climate change. Increased nutrition and gender equality are socio-economic benefits and co-benefits, but the focus should be on the climate resilience and decreased vulnerability in this section. These outcomes should be above and beyond what the baseline is already doing.

Additionally, The Secretariat would appreciate a bit more clarity on the project's relationship with WACA. WACA is presented in the baseline and in the increment section, and is involved in many activities in the project's target areas: "As immediate action, emergency interventions are implemented while at the same time studies are underway to design and build long-term coastal protection infrastructure. In addition, the Mono River basin will be restored with a combination of dredging of lagoons for maintenance, river bank stabilization, revetment as well revegetation of the shores. For nearby communities at the Avlo site, the risk of erosion caused by the river will be reduced with a complementary approach, the regular opening of the Bouche du Roy. In Ouidah, and within the wider Chenal de Gbaga ecosystem, coastal erosion will be managed through a landscape-based approach, with the creation of community biodiversity conservation areas, made of wetlands and mangroves, to act as a buffer for the erosion, as well as to provide income-generating activities for the population." (<https://www.wacaprogram.org/country/benin>) The proposed intervention indicates that it will "will extend coastal resilience efforts to the target sites." The Secretariat would appreciate additional clarity on the increment provided with the proposed financing.

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

23/9/2020

Incrementality versus additionality

The language has been updated under the relevant section to respond to the question raised.

WACA programme

Please, note that the WACA programme in Benin has a strong focus on infrastructure along the coastline to protect human and natural areas from erosion processes caused by an increasing sea level rise. The LDCF-GEF project benefits from these investments made by WACA, even though they are made in a different geography, i.e. more downstream in the watershed as compared to the project intervention area of the LDCF-GEF project. There is therefore a geographical complementarity, as well as a technical complementarity: where WACA focuses on erosion and protection of infrastructure from erosion intensified by climate change, LDCF-GEF focuses on vulnerability to increasing floods, storm waves, soil salinisation and unsustainable charcoal and timber extraction intensified resulting from climate change.

9/3//2020

Please, see the response provided in the co-financing section above and consider some additional language provided in the PIF.

March 2020

Please consider the additions that have been made in the baseline projects and the incremental/additional cost reasoning sections of the project description.

3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes. This is clear. However, refer to Item 2 in part 1.

Agency Response

See response above.

4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 11/17/2020 - Clarification requested. It is not immediately clear how the project is additional to the baseline investments. How is the LDCF financing additional specifically to that of the baseline investments in Table C?

GEFSEC, 4/8/2020 - Additional clarification requested. The additional text does not seem to clarify and/or separate as appropriate the additionality of the LDCF-financed initiatives versus the GET. Considering that there are two different approaches at play with the respective funds (incremental vs additional), articulating the specific cost reasoning from each approach would be appropriate. Regarding the Biosphere project mentioned - does this investment take into account climate change at all? This does not seem to be an additional cost, but rather an inherent cost of that should already be taken into account by the baseline. This is also flagged in the co-financing item.

GEFSEC, 9/23/2020 - This item still needs further clarification. Please see the previous item on the baseline scenario.

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - Cleared for this stage of project development.

Agency Response

23/9/2020

The additional cost reasoning has been developed further, and relevant language has been highlighted.

March 2020

Please consider the additions that have been made in the baseline projects and the incremental/additional cost reasoning sections of the project description.

6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core

indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 -

Adaptation benefits - More information requested: Please briefly indicate exactly how the target communities will be more resilient as a direct result of this project and the more resilient mangrove ecosystems delivered by the project's activities.

GEFSEC, 4//8/2020 - This is cleared with the understanding that more detailed descriptions of the adaptation benefits of this project will be articulated at PPG.

Agency Response

Please, consider the clarifying language that has been added in the descriptive part of the project. Benefits to local communities are multiple:

- from component 1, a more **resilient mangrove ecosystem** is expected, which has a positive bearing on the productivity of the agricultural, forestry and fishery producers depending on the ecosystem;
- from component 2, a **diversification of livelihood options** benefiting local vulnerable women and men is expected, believing that diversification is a successful adaptation strategy;
- from component 3, an **enabling environment for CCA mainstreaming** and BD conservation is expected to sustain the benefits through time and facilitate further in-scaling, up-scaling and out-scaling of successes.

7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes. Participatory climate-resilient mangrove ecosystem conservation and sustainable management plans that have not been implemented in Benin to date and the participatory and community-centric approach ensures longer-term sustainability. The project has good scaling potential, the specificity of which will be explored during implementation.

Agency Response

Project/Program Map and Coordinates

Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

Stakeholders

Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes, there is indicative information on stakeholders that is sufficient for this stage of project development, with the understanding that further information will be included at PPG.

Agency Response

The agency reconfirms this commitment.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes. The PIF provides gender context and indicates that gender disaggregated/responsive indicators will be developed at PPG, in line with a gender rapid assessment.

Agency Response

The agency reconfirms this commitment.

Private Sector Engagement

Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes. the project will mainly engage with the private sector at the MSME level.

Agency Response

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - More information requested. Please consider fiduciary risk and include relevant mitigation measures.

GEFSEC, 4/8/2020 - The addition is noted and this is cleared.

Agency Response

The risk table has been updated in order to include a fiduciary risk. Please, also note the explicit reference to the Environmental and Social Risks from the project, aligning to the updated GEF policy on this point.

Coordination

**Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined?
Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - More information requested. There is an AfDB project under implementation with LDCF financing in the Oueme Valley. Please indicate whether project developers are in contact/coordination with the AfDB on this initiative to maximize synergies.

GEFSEC, 4/8/2020 - This is cleared

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

Please, consider that the national representation of FAO in Benin is in continuous contact with all development actors operating in the country. AfDB is an important actor in the country, and therefore, regular exchanges are taking place. Furthermore, a design mission took place in Benin for the development of the PIF, and a number of development actors had been met with bilaterally, including AfDB. The PADPPA (Participatory Artisanal Fisheries Development Support Programme) was discussed in detail, as important lessons from the programme inform the project design. The ongoing Flood Control and Climate Resilience of Agriculture Infrastructures in Oueme Valley is expected to be finalized by the time this project becomes operational, but as it covers the same geography and the agricultural sector, explicit reference to this project has been added in the PIF to ensure that exchanges with AfDB are furthered during the PPG phase, and lessons (not only technical, but also with respect to institutional arrangement, stakeholder engagement, etc.) are fully integrated in the project intervention logic.

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - More information requested. Please indicate how this project will coordinate with the ongoing in-country NAP process. The country has received GCF NAP Readiness financing, and as such, it would be good to coordinate on this to ensure project development, implementation, and eventual results are done so in coordination with, and informs upon, this process.

GEFSEC, 4/9/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

Thank you for raising this very important point. Reference to the **NAP Readiness project and NAP process** has been included in the PIF, in the coordination section.

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed “knowledge management (KM) approach” in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project’s/program’s overall impact and sustainability?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - More information requested. It is noted that KM is captured within all three components of the project. The last paragraph of Section 8 in the PIF indicates that the project will design a KM plan - will this be done at PPG and presented in the CEO ER as part of the full proposal?

GEFSEC, 4/9/2020 - Noted and cleared.

Agency Response

It is indeed the intention to develop a KM plan during the PPG phase.

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 7/2/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

art III – Country Endorsements

Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Yes. A LOE signed in January 2019 is included, as well as written confirmation outlining Benin's national adaptation priorities, which was submitted in November 2019.

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

9/23/2020

An updated LOE has been attached, reflecting the new project title and correct grant-fee distribution.

Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects

Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) 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 in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

N/A

NA

Agency Response

EFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 1/17/2020 - Not yet, please consider flagged items and resubmit for consideration.

GEFSEC, 9/14/2020 - Not yet. Please refer to flagged items and resubmit. Additional items for consideration below:

While the Secretariat appreciates that the COVID-19 Pandemic has been included in the risk table, please ease refer to the recently circulated COVID Project design and review considerations document. The Secretariat expects all new PIFs to demonstrate a strategy or action framework for the pandemic, which should include an analysis of emergent risks and opportunities, relative to the specific context of this project.

Additionally, for a project in a region where increasing temperatures and floods will be projected to have an impact on the spread of infectious diseases, the Secretariat would appreciate linking zoonotic diseases to infectious diseases in general if the project aims to finance health-related activities (e.g. contribution to early warning systems, information and education on how to decrease risk), as it is currently stated in para 46. Perhaps this could be framed as part of a green recovery approach (nature-based solutions, mangrove based economies etc.).

Lastly, the Secretariat has gone over the endorsement letter for this submission, and while the written communication indicating Benin's priorities does mention a project on mangrove ecosystems, the actual LOE refers to a project with a different title than the actual submission. The letter is endorsing a project entitled "Sustainable Development of Forest Ecosystems in Coastal Benin", which is not the name of the title of the portal submission, nor closely resembling it. Please submit an updated LOE with the correct title.

GEFSEC, 10/5/2020 - Not yet. Please refer to the flagged items and the below and resubmit for consideration:

The Secretariat suggest to add into the PPG to do list specific work on their theory of change linking livelihood interventions of component 2 and actual, lasting improvement for mangrove ecosystems. The response that "The supported livelihoods will be nature-based and therefore

will deliver biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and resilience benefits (trade-offs will be studied thoroughly)", as if the link will be automatic, despite experience and the literature showing that it is not for biodiversity conservation (e.g. Roe, Dilys, et al. "Are alternative

livelihood projects effective at reducing local threats to specified elements of biodiversity and/or improving or maintaining the conservation status of those elements?". *Environmental Evidence* 4.1 (2015): 22; or the USAID or WB projects

https://rportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway/projects/closed-global-projects/measuring-impact/mi-project-resources/integrating-livelihood-and-conservation-goals-a-retrospective-analysis-of-world-bank-projects/at_download/file?subsite=biodiversityconservation-gateway).

The Secretariat would appreciate some reference some past experience/project or literature to back this approach.

GEFSEC, 10/13/2020 - The agency has noted that it will take this into consideration and this item is cleared.

GEFSEC, 10/19/2020 - While FAO has attached the Project Risk Certification (categorizing the ESS risk as low), no additional information has been provided in terms of the kind of screening that has taken place. Considering the project context and activities, please provide information on any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

/iew Dates

PIF Review Agency Response

First Review	1/17/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/9/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	7/2/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	9/23/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/2/2020

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval

Benin: Strengthening human and natural systems resilience to climate change through mangrove ecosystems conservation and sustainable use in southern Benin (GEF ID 101666); Agency: FAO; GEF Project Financing: \$1,155,936 – 4,466,210 LDCF; Co-financing: \$35,000,000. This project will increase the resilience of mangrove ecosystems and their dependent agricultural, forestry, and fishery communities in southern Benin. The project will achieve its objective through the implementation of three components with complementary financing from the BD allocation of the GEFTF and the LDCF. The LDCF activities will be executed through (i) Increased adaptive capacity of the natural systems; (ii) Increased adaptive capacity of human systems resulting to livelihood diversification and development; (iii) Enabling environment for sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems in a context of climate change. The project will place 120,000 ha of land under more climate resilient management, including 70,000 ha within Ramsar sites and 50,000 ha of surrounding smallholder production land, directly benefitting 350,000 people (of which 50% are women). Project activities will result in the strengthening of national institutional and policy frameworks for more sustainable mangrove ecosystem management, integrating both conservation and adaptation principles. The project leverages a GCF investment of USD \$30,000,000, which was designed in tandem with the proposed intervention while tackling more upstream lands adjacent to the mangrove ecosystems targeted by this intervention. The proposed intervention will also complement the West Africa Coastal Areas Resilience Investment Project. By funding the additional costs of interventions necessary to integrate the expected impacts of climate change on conservation and restoration of mangrove ecosystems, the project will contribute to ensure that the risks related to climate change, including variability, are integrated into biodiversity restoration and conservation management plans in mangrove areas. The project will further generate adaptation benefits by facilitating the integration of climate risk into existing legal instruments and institutional arrangements related to mangroves management while mainstreaming climate resilience into a number of policies, plans or development frameworks

