



Restoring and Enhancing the Value of Degraded Lands and Forest Ecosystems for Enhanced Climate Resilience in Benin (PIRVaTEFoD-Benin)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10688

Countries

Benin

Project Name

Restoring and Enhancing the Value of Degraded Lands and Forest Ecosystems for Enhanced Climate Resilience in Benin (PIRVaTEFoD-Benin)

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

1/31/2022

Review completed by PM

8/24/2022

Program Manager

Jason Spensley

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Project Type

FSP

PIF

CEO Endorsement

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC 8/24/2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC 8/15/2022:

Thank you for updating the implementation start date.

Please re-upload the UNDP Audit Checklist with its classification as "Public", rather than "Official Use Only". It seems it is only possible for documents to be posted for Council review if they are classified by the Agency as "Public".

GEFSEC, 8/2/2022

Please change the implementation start date to a future date and adapt the expected completion date accordingly to meet the 72 months duration

Please also upload the UNDP Audit Checklist.

Agency Response

UNDP ? 16 August 2022

UNDP Audit Checklist reuploaded with classification as "Public".

UNDP ? 05 August 2022

The planned start date has been changed to 01 November 2022 and the dates for completion, MTR and TE have been adjusted accordingly.

The audit checklist has been uploaded, apologies for this oversight

Project description summary

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC 6/3/22 - Cleared.

GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - Clarifications requested.

A) What is the adaptation element of output 1.1?

B) Is there any overlap between outputs 3.1 and 3.3? The first 3 outputs seem to have some overlaps.

C) What is the adaptation element of output 4.2? This is being financed solely by the LDCF.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

A) Output 1.1 will make data on land degradation and climate risks available at the level of key agencies, for the climate change-informed implementation of LDN strategy and for the harmonization of policies, sector strategies and relevant programs. It will disseminate reports of actions related to SLM, SFM and associated livelihood issues and the review of national sector strategies, plans and indicators. The wording of Output 1.1 and of Activity 1.1.2 have been revised to reflect the integration that will take place between LDN, vulnerability and climate change adaptation needs.

B) These outputs may be distinguished from one another as follows:

- 3.1 concerns the selection and detailed analysis of five agricultural value chains, including the identification of priority measures needed to strengthen these value chains while promoting climate resilience.

•3.2 builds on Output 3.1, by implementing concrete actions to support the targeted, priority value chains

•3.3 is focused on bringing in additional financing, via partnerships, de-risking, etc. It will focus to some extent on the five value chains being supported under 3.1 and 3.2, thus complementing these, while also potentially supporting other key sectors and activities. The project will ensure complementarity and synergy between 3.2 and 3.3 in the case of the five priority value chains

C) Component 4 (excl. M&E) is funded 42% by GEFTF, 33% by LDCF and 25% by UNDP cash cofinancing. These proportions are roughly proportional across outputs 4.1-4.4. The wording of Output 4.2 and Activity 4.2.2 have been revised to better reflect their support to both LD and climate change adaptation.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Co-financing

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC 15 August 2022-

Cleared.

GEFSEC, 8/2/2022 -

On the **co-financing** from Apiservices: it seems that there was a typo in the letter. \$5,250 will be provided in the form of grants and \$30,700 in-kind for a total of **\$35,950**. The in-kind amount, in table C, should be corrected from \$35,750 to \$30,700. Please clarify.

GEFSEC, 5/26/2022 -

Cleared

GEFSEC, 2/2/2022 -

A) The first amount is listed as 44m but the co-financing letter says 43m. Please correct.

B) The section on baseline initiatives and co-financing is confusing and not easy to read. It is unclear which initiatives are providing co-financing and which are purely part of the baseline scenario. This makes it difficult to determine the additionality of the adaptation activities. Please clearly indicate the projects, relevant components, and amount of co-financing contributed in this section.

C) A number of the projects reflected in Table 1 (Assuming these are projects which are providing co-financing) do not seem to have compatible timelines with the proposed initiative, which is indicated to have an implementation period of 72 months, and which will likely not be approved until the third quarter of 2022. Quite a few initiatives listed will end in 2023, 2024, and 2025, which do not make them suitable as providing co-financing. Please clarify whether these are projects constitute the baseline scenario, or if they are co-financing initiatives.

D) PAGEFCOM2 is included in the co-financing provided by the government. However, this project was already co-financing another GEF project (GEFID 9383 with AfBD). Moreover, the connection with the PAGEFCOM2 seems weak as it takes place in different landscapes than the proposed project.

E) Several co-financing initiatives do not share the same landscapes (Communal Forests II, PADEFA-ENA, GCF, and PADMAR) as highlighted in Table 4 of the prodoc. We may wonder the kind and modalities of collaboration that will take place as the technical or institutional connection seems weak. Can these projects really be considered as cofinancing? Please, clarify and justify.

F) Cofinancing from the government should probably be considered as public finance and not "investment mobilized."

G) The cofinancing ratio between the GEF grant and the cofinancing are very different between the technical components (1: 5) and PMC (1:2), reflecting a possible disproportionate burden on GEF resources to finance project management activities. Please, justify or modify.

Agency Response

UNDP? 05 August 2022

A revised letter of cofinance has been obtained from Apiservices and the cofinance information has been updated in the CEO ER and PRODOC.

UNDP 14 May 2022:

A) This confusion is due to the fact that, as per the co-financing letter, government has assembled \$43 million in co-financing from donors and, in addition, is providing \$1

million in cash co-financing from its own sources, together totaling \$44 million in investment mobilized. In order to make this clearer, these two sums have been separated in the Table.

B) The table on baseline initiatives and co-financing has been revised so that the listed projects correspond exactly with the co-financing information provided.

C) As pointed out in the Government's co-financing letter, the co-financing outlined represents approximately 25% of the total combined budgets of the projects listed. This represents a conservative estimate of the total funding that these projects will deliver both within the areas and themes covered by the GEF project and during the time frame covered by the GEF project. Thus, while temporal overlap is in many cases partial, the co-financing estimates are in line with GEF guidance on this matter.

D) The PAGEFCOM2 project has been removed from the table of baseline co-financing sources

E) As revised, two of the projects listed as co-financing lack site-specific overlap with the GER project. These are: (1) Project to support the development of the cashew sector and agricultural entrepreneurship in Benin (PADEFA-ENA) (FAD), and (2) Support program for the sustainable management of communal forests in Benin (Phase II) FFEM. However, these projects will give added value to results and achievements as practices to be extended and scaled up. The lessons learned by these projects will inform the project strategy and activities. Finally, tools and documents developed by these projects for the management of technical knowledge and innovations will be capitalized upon in the implementation of project activities. For these reasons, roughly 25% of these projects is counted as co-financing

F) Government cofinancing has now been separated out from donor financing mobilized by Government, and has been categorized as "Public finance".

G) This mistake has been corrected to show the proportional ratio of PMC: technical components in co-financing projects.

GEF Resource Availability

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 2/3/2022 - Yes.

Agency Response

Project Preparation Grant

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC 5/26/22 - Cleared

GEFSEC, 2/3/2022 - Clarification requested: What is the status of the "committed" funds?

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

Committed funds represent payments to consultants not yet made pending final approval of the project, including responses to GEFSec and Council comments. Figures have been updated.

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 2/3/2022 - Yes.

Agency Response

Part II ? Project Justification

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

3June2022:

A) The further information provided on climate hazards and their impacts in Niger Valley, Alibori Sud-Borgou Nord-2KP and PDF A5 region is well noted. Please include explicit references in Table 1 to climate risks and impacts for the Zou-Couffo Agricultural Development Area".

B) The reference to anticipated risks of increased climate hazards under a high emissions scenario RCP 8.5 is well noted. Please also include consideration of

anticipated risks of increased climate hazards and their impacts under a more optimistic emissions scenario (ideally RCP 4.5, to 2050), and (importantly) articulate consideration of this range of impacts on the project areas in the design of the project interventions.

GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - Clarification requested. There is not a strong connection linking the adaptation and the environmental problem aside from stating general climate trends and impacts from the degradation of land, which seem like they could apply to anywhere in Benin as well as the rest of Africa. A clearer articulation of the the specific problems facing project's target areas and how is climate change exacerbating the degradation of productive lands in the target areas would be much appreciated.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

An expanded discussion of the climate change adaptation problem and risk, including a table enumerating specific problems facing the project's target areas, and in particular the ways in which climate change is exacerbating the degradation of its productive lands, has been added to the description of the project's global environmental / adaptation problem.

UNDP 29 June 2022

- A) PDA5 is now correctly identified as Zou-Couffo, with risks and impacts as shown - CEO ER, p.22-24; Prodoc, p. 20-21
- B) The section on climate risk has been expanded to reflect the wider range of current and projected climate change risks and impacts facing Benin. In addition, the emphasis on a range of potential emissions scenarios and impacts has been included in the overview of the alternative project scenario - CEO ER p. 16-20, 37; Prodoc p. 14, 16, 49-50

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC , 3June2022 -

B) Is the Prodoc table being referred to in fact Table 5 on pages 28-31? Please clarify. Please also clarify the specific location of this corresponding information in the CEO ER.

C) Cleared.

GEFSEC, 2/3/2022 - No. Please see below. Comments B and C provided for the co-financing item are also relevant here, as there is some overlap between baseline initiatives and those which are providing co-financing.

B) The section on baseline initiatives and co-financing is confusing and not easy to read. It is unclear which initiatives are providing co-financing and which are purely part of the baseline scenario. This makes it difficult to determine the additionality of the adaptation activities. Please clearly indicate the projects, relevant components, and amount of co-financing contributed in this section.

C) A number of the projects reflected in Table 1 (Assuming these are projects which are providing co-financing) do not seem to have compatible timelines with the proposed initiative, which is indicated to have an implementation period of 72 months, and which will likely not be approved until the third quarter of 2022. Quite a few initiatives listed will end in 2023, 2024, and 2025, which do not make them suitable as providing co-financing. Please clarify whether these are projects constitute the baseline scenario, or if they are co-financing initiatives.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

This has now been elaborated and included in the harmonized baseline table and co-financing descriptions

B) Presentation of information on baseline initiatives (see Table 4 of Prodoc, p.24) and Section I.C. of the CEO ER are now fully harmonized and together provide complementary technical and financial details of cofinancing.

C) As pointed out in the Government's co-financing letter, and indicated in CEO ER, footnote 4, the co-financing outlined represents approximately 25% of the total combined budgets of the projects listed. This represents a conservative estimate of the total funding that these projects will deliver both within the areas and themes covered by the GEF project and during the time frame covered by the GEF project. Thus, while several of the cofinancing projects only partially overlap in geographic and temporal terms with GEF project, the cofinancing estimates are in line with GEF guidance on this matter. As noted above, Table 4 of prodoc provides additional technical details of these projects.

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

Yes. With regards to Item 2B of Part II of the 8 Feb comments, the response in fact refers to Table 5 on pages 28-31 of the prodoc. This table is also presented as Table 2 on p. 28-31 of the CEO ER - CEO ER, p. 28-31; Prodoc p. 29-32

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

17July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

A) We note additional information is added to the UNDP Prodoc. However, all relevant information also needs to be included in the GEF CEO ER, including with regards to how the project will account for the overlap and lack of congruence between radiational and modern land management systems.

B) Cleared

C) Cleared

D) We note the improved integration of climate adaptation and resilience objectives and activities within paragraphs 46 to 95 of the CEO ER. However, it appears these changes have not been made to the Project Summary (section 1.B) at the top of the CEO ER. Please insure full consistency with the Project Summary.

E) Please ensure greater consideration of anticipated climate impacts, noting the comment above in the section on Project Justification (in regards to question 1, comment B) about RCP scenarios 8.5 and 4.5, and designing to adapt to climate impacts within a range of high and optimistic emissions scenarios).

F) As requested in the GEF CEO ER, please ensure the Stakeholders section includes "a summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, how information will be disseminated, and an explanation of any resource requirements throughout the project/program cycle to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement"

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - Some clarifications requested.

A) In the problem analysis, there is a reference to the overlap and lack of congruence between the traditional and ?modern? land management systems. However, these aspects are absent in the stakeholder engagement plan: would not it be an opportunity to involve traditional authorities, especially in remote areas where these traditional systems are still strong (Alibori).

B) There are several intercommunal models in Benin. It is clear that the project will support the Agricultural Development Areas and their Territorial

Agricultural Development Agency (ATDA), but how will these development areas be complementary and not duplication of other territorial divisions, such as the intercommunal under the Ministry in charge of collectivities and the Land-use planning Master Plan (SDAT)?

C) We take note of the promotion of beekeeping to enhance tree restoration and income diversification. However, several experiences in Benin have shown that this activity needs to be addressed as a value-chain, with long-term needs in terms of capacity building (manufacture, repair of hives, harvest, packaging, market?). Please, explain these sustainability aspects will be addressed.

D) This was indicated at PIF stage, but the issue remains in that there is very little in regards to adaptation integrated into the project design and structure. Simply accounting for climate risk alone, which is the sole adaptation action under some of the outcomes under components 1 and 2 is not an adaptation activity.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

A) The stakeholder engagement plan has been revised to better account for the overlap and lack of congruence between traditional and modern land management systems

B) The Territorial Agency for Agricultural Development (ATDA) include commune-level units that act as decentralized structures of the State under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. These units will support implementation of the project at the municipal level. They will also be strengthened to further ensure the sustainability of project achievements. In addition to ATDA, various other inter-municipal organizations have been included in the mapping of stakeholders / beneficiaries, namely the Association of Municipalities of Alibori (ACA and APIDA), Association of municipalities of Atacora and Donga (ACAD), Association of the municipalities of Zou and the unions of producers of Zou (UCPZ, ACZ, etc.), Association of the municipalities of Couffo and the Unions of producers of Couffo (ACC etc.). These entities will likewise be strengthened as beneficiaries of the project and will support project implementation. The local expertise that exists at the level of the ATDA and the communal cells will be used to support the beneficiaries, which include inter-municipal associations, producers' unions, and communities.

C) The value chain for beekeeping is already under development in municipalities across Benin. Key links across NGOs, microenterprises and individuals are in place and an organization exists between producers and buyers with bottling and packaging efforts. Local skills and competencies exist in terms of manufacturing services, hive repair, harvesting, packaging, marketing. Expertise also exists to train and organize community-level actors. The above actors will be targeted in the municipalities of intervention and will be reinforced with support for the strengthening of production and

marketing capacities. In this way, the project will employ existing local expertise for the further development of the value chain already under construction.

D) The project development team has undertaken a thorough review of the proposal's adaptation elements. This has included a careful consideration of the 'GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund and Operational Improvements, July 2018 to June 2022.' Based on this review, several changes and clarifications have been made to the project. These include:

1. An overview of the project approach vis-à-vis GEF programming directions has been added to sections describing changes since the PIF (CEO doc) and in Sections on Alignment with GEF Focal Areas (both docs). This includes a table showing output-level correspondences between the project structure and multiple objectives, outcomes and outputs in the LDCF Programming Directions.

2. The wording of the following outputs and activities has been revised to better reflect the adaptation aspects:

- ? Output 1.1
- ? Activity 1.1.2
- ? Activity 2.1.6
- ? Activity 2.2.5
- ? Output 3.1
- ? Output 4.2
- ? Activity 4.2.2

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

- A) The overlap and lack of congruence between traditional and modern land management systems has been added to the baseline descriptions as an underlying cause.

The project's strategy for handling this challenge has been clarified in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, as well as in the Stakeholders section of the CEO ER. As explained there, during the first year of the project, ESMPs Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) will be developed for each PDA, integrating findings from Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) that will also be developed for each PDA at this time. Each ESMP will include a detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the PDA. These PDA-specific ESMPs will ensure that the knowledge and views of stakeholders involved in local land management will be taken into consideration in project implementation. Corresponding ESIAs will, *inter alia*, assess traditional and modern land management systems, identifying different roles and responsibilities associated with each of the systems. These assessments will help to inform and further specify roles and responsibilities associated with implementation of individual project

activities in ways designed to best achieve the project's objectives - CEO ER, p.16, 67-69; Prodoc p. 14 and Annex 8 (p.28)

D) Section 1B of CEO ER has been updated to fully reflect changes made to Outputs in the project description - CEO ER, p. 2-4

E) Please see response to 1B above.

F) Table 7 in the CEO ER summarizes this information. (This table is also included in Annex 8, Stakeholder Participation Plan). CEO ER, p. 69-74; Prodoc Annex 8, p. 21-24

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

Please note the comments in other sections on climate rationale.

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - Not clear. For LDCF, this is not very clearly articulated at all.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

As noted above, the alignment section has been fully revised and a table showing output-level correspondences between the project structure and multiple objectives, outcomes and outputs in the LDCF Programming Directions has been added.

UNDP? 29 June 2022

Please see responses provided above

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC 3June2022 -

Please note the comments above on need for further information and reasoning on adapting to anticipated climate impacts based on a scenario range.

GEFSEC, 2/3/2022 - No, further clarification requested. Please refer to the items on co-financing and baseline initiatives. Due to the lack of clarity in those two sections, it is difficult to determine the additional reasoning of the project, at least for the LDCF portion of the activities. Additionally, although climate resilient activities are referred to in Table 4, any more detailed adaptation reasoning is largely absent.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

As noted above, the information on cofinancing and baseline projects have now been harmonized. Further discussion of adaptation reasoning has also been added; in particular, the section on Focal Area alignment clearly lays out the adaptation-specific support being provided, in close alignment with the LDCF Programming Directions.

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

Please see responses provided above

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

The additions made are well noted. Please note and address the further comments above.

GEFSEC, 2/3/2022 - More information requested. The contribution to adaptation benefits is not clear. Increased resilience is referred to without specificity. At this stage of project development, more specificity regarding the increased resilience of households and the greater intervention site would be appreciated.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

Adaptation-related benefits are now further described in the relevant sections of the submission documents

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

Please see responses provided above

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

Please further strengthen the articulation on how the project is innovative and sustainable with consideration of how the project empower and support the action and leadership of the the ATDAs and other types of strategic local partners listed in this section and detailed in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, in advancing sustainable local action for climate adaptation and LDN.

GEFSEC, 2/3/2022 - More information requested. The proposed approach to empower the government to mainstream LDN across different sectors is appreciated, however the reasoning should be further developed to further include strategic partnerships on the ground, including farmer organizations and their networks; as well as traditional authority structures, to ensure longer-term approaches and coherence between traditional and modern laws and regulations. Please revise and also list the strategic partners on the ground.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

A discussion has been added regarding strategic partnerships on the ground, including farmer organizations and their networks, as well as traditional authority structures. A list of strategic partners on the ground has been added.

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

Support for the role of ATDAs and other local institutions in generating and sustaining innovation and local knowledge has been clarified in the CEO ER section on innovativeness - CEO ER, p. 67

Project Map and Coordinates

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - Yes.

Agency Response
Child Project

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
NA

Agency Response
Stakeholders

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

Cleared

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - Until recently (January 2021), associations of local stakeholders were constituted around the parks of Pendjari and W ? the AVIGREF for Associations Villageoises de Gestion des Reserves de Faune. We wonder if they should not be included in the participatory consultations. Please confirm.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

Multiple representatives of AVIGREF were consulted during PPG field visits, particularly in the northern intervention areas. These are very active co-management structures. They are identified in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and also in a new list of strategic partnerships.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC 15 August 2022 -

Cleared.

GEFSEC, 8/2/2022 -

The project has mainstreamed gender perspectives in some of the project components. To be consistent with the accompanying Gender Action Plan and the spirit of gender mainstreaming, please ask the Agency to reflect the bolded text in section B. Project description summary (table on project components) the following:

- i) Output 2.5: development of **gender-responsive** manuals;
- ii) Output 3.3.: **gender-responsive** income-generating opportunities;
Outcome 3: Building diversified and **gender-differentiated** income-generating activities and value chains to strengthen community resilience.

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - Yes.

Agency Response

UNDP ? 05 August 2022

Gender-responsiveness has been included in Outcome and Output statements throughout Section B

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

We note with interest the first of the three roles identified during project preparation in which project sector actors will be involved in the project, as follows: " facilitating market and credit access for producers involved in the resilient development of livelihoods". Please ensure this important role and contribution is fully conveyed in the project project summary and project output descriptions, as well as in this project sector description section, and the stakeholder engagement section and plan.

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - More information requested. There seems to be quite a few mentions of the private sector, but there is no description nor or the box checked under private sector entities (stakeholders). Please clarify.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

Key private sector roles as well as a list of private sector actors for further engagement and participation during the full project have been added.

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

This important private sector role has been highlighted in the Stakeholder Plan, Stakeholder Plan Summary and in the 'Brief project description' in the Prodoc - CEO ER, Table 7, p. 71, UNDP prodoc, p. 2 and Annex 8

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

The section on COVID risks and opportunities is well noted with appreciation. However, as indicated in the comment provided on 7 July 2022, a more elaborate analysis of risks and risk mitigation measure for each of them is required, beyond just Covid related risks and their corresponding mitigation measures.

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - More information requested. The information provided in this section is not adequate for this stage of project development. For example, certain risks are listed in general terms with no mitigation measures. Additionally, 5 risks have been identified as COVID-related risks, but they are not elaborated upon. The GEFSEC requires all CEO endorsement requests being submitted at this time to offer a thorough analysis of risks relating to COVID-19, as well as opportunities for proposed projects to support green recovery and resilience strategies. Please add. This information was provided at PIF stage, so building or updating on this would be appropriate for this stage of project development.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

An expanded section on COVID risks and opportunities has been provided.

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

Non-COVID risks and mitigation measures are now presented in Table 9 of the CEO doc and are also found in Annex 6 of the UNDP prodoc - CEO doc, Table 9, p. 79-86

Coordination

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

Well noted. Please ensure this information is reflected in the CEO ER.

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - More information requested.

1. Please clarify or provide further details regarding the collaboration with other Ministries needs to be clarified (agriculture, collectivities), as well as on the field with key partners (farmer organizations).
2. Other GEF projects (GEFID 3770, 4705, 5215, 9383) have contributed to the protection and sustainable management of various natural habitats in the targeted landscapes (Pendjari park, W Park, sacred forests, community forests?). We would like to see confirmation that the proposed project will not jeopardize these results and includes the inclusion of recommendations and lessons from these projects, as well as in the safeguards. Please, confirm.
3. Other GEF and LDCF projects also have produced lessons on adaptation, SLM, and agriculture. Did you incorporate lessons and recommendations from these projects (see #3704, 5232, 5487, 5904). Several of these projects were implemented by UNDP.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

1. The project will be implemented by the National Directorate of Environment and Climate (DGEC) as the Implementing Partner. It will work with the Ministry of Agriculture and the ATDAs as well as the CTAFs and Forest Inspectorates in all the communes where it operates. Partnerships and service contracts will be established with NGOs, firms and consultants in the thematic areas covered for the implementation of activities for the benefit of the communities.

The ATDAs of the MAEP (Ministry of Agriculture) will be most directly involved in the implementation of the project because they are responsible for the themes of organizing producers, and everything related to the MAEP in the project. Collaboration with other Ministries (including Ministry of Water and Mines, Ministry of Trade and Industries, Ministry of Planning and Development, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Social Affairs and Microfinance) will be done through meetings and workshops organized for the preparation, development and validation of certain key documents. The technical departments of these other ministries will be involved in the

implementation of activities according to their thematic responsibilities. Actions to secure farms and areas of infrastructure construction, as well as actions relating to the participation of socio-professional groups, will be carried out with the municipalities and local branches of the Ministry of Local Authorities.

Field-level cooperation, including with non-governmental organizations, has been clarified, including a list of strategic partners list and a list of private sector actors identified for further engagement.

2. This project will in no way jeopardize the achievements of previous GEF projects. Implementation will be monitored by the technical management committee chaired by the DGEC, which will provide political and technical guidelines in connection with the Rio conventions and other conventions and sectoral policy documents. All the ministries, CSOs, producer groups, socio-professional groups involved will be represented in the technical management committee which is responsible for providing guidance and monitoring the implementation of the project. Sustainable management will be enhanced, with care taken to assure that conservation-related benefits from previous projects are in no way threatened, but rather are further reinforced.

3. This project capitalizes on the results of previous natural resource and protected area management projects. Practices in terms of conservation, development and above all restoration of degraded forest lands and spaces will be capitalized on and extended within the framework of this project. Recommendations and lessons learned from these projects, including safeguards and restoration measures, will help to guide the establishment of the green belt and the implementation of restoration, enhancement and alternative income-generating activities for the benefit of local communities.

GEF ID 3704 (2010-2015) : this project has generated valuable experiences on which the current project will build in terms of formation of local land user groups to implement activities ; distribution of seeds and plants for land restoration ; management of watersheds for increased water conservation and supply.

GEF ID 5904 (2019-2023) : Currently generating valuable lessons in terms of watershed management including the use of green belts for runoff prevention and water conservation.

GEF ID 5487 (2017-2021) : This regional project has generated valuable experiences in terms of creation of migration corridors for transhumant pastoralists, restoration of degraded forests, and measures of land vulnerability and hydro-climatic risks on which the current project will build.

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

This information has been added to the CEO ER - CEO ER, p. 91-92

Consistency with National Priorities

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

Cleared

GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - No. Please provide the information for this section, focusing on relevant policies on land degradation and adaptation, to include UNCCD and UNFCCC communications. Additionally, this project seems well aligned with the National Adaptation Plan process, but it's not indicated as such. How will the climate information and assessments undertaken under components 1 and 2 inform and reinforce the NAP?

Agency Response
UNDP 14 May 2022:

This section was mistakenly left out of the CEO ER. It has now been included and incorporates a discussion of the issues raised in this comment.

Knowledge Management

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

Similar to other comments provided, please strengthen articulation of the direct relevance of the knowledge management strategy through this project to adapting and strengthening resilience to current and anticipated. specific climate change impacts.

GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - More information requested. Is there not a fully developed KM plan available now with indicative budget, timeline, and deliverables? The information provided here is appreciated, but a more coherent presentation of the KM strategy would be appreciated.

Agency Response
UNDP 14 May 2022:

Experiences and knowledge in the development of smart, ecological agricultural value chains in resilient technology and sustainable management of land, water and forests will be capitalized and disseminated for better adoption and use at scale.

The tools and approaches for developing databases for monitoring degradation and restoration on the SLM, GDF, LDN indicators, on the carbon stock in the 3 development poles covered by the project will be capitalized and used for the of the 7 agricultural development poles in Benin.

The achievements in terms of practices and successful experiences in terms of activities and technologies of resilience, SLM, SFM, CES with the communities will be capitalized and shared with the other communities in the other villages of the targeted communes of the PDAs & , ? and 5 and also in the other poles of agricultural development.

Technical data sheets, tools and knowledge management framework documents will be developed which will be disseminated for their use by stakeholders and communities. Visits for exchanges and sharing of experiences will be organized between the beneficiaries in the targeted PDAs.

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

Support for the role of ATDAs and other local institutions in generating and sustaining innovation and local knowledge with respect to adapting to, and strengthening resilience to, climate change has been clarified in the CEO ER section on innovativeness - CEO ER, p. 67

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 -Yes.

Agency Response

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 2/2/2022 - Yes

Agency Response

Benefits

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - Yes. The benefits are well articulated.

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14July2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -

A) Please note and provide responses to the comments provided by the following Council members:

- i. Chair (12/9/2020)
- ii. Japan (12/3/2020)
- iii. Germany - 2 comments (1/7/2021)
- iv. Canada - 3 comments (1/11/2021)

B) Please clarify where the responses were provided to STAP comments.

C) Annex E (Budget):

Noting the Agencies response inserted in the box related to STAP comments with regards to GEFSEC comments made on the budget in the "recommendations" section:

- i. Please provide a breakdown of all equipment expenses. Please clarify if any vehicles are being proposed.

ii. Please provide a breakdown and explanation of the following significant contractual services-company amounts:

Component 2: "(3) Conservation and rehabilitation of priority cropland and conservation of soil fertility (Activity 2.2.2) = \$640,000; (4) Conservation and restoration of priority forest areas, including classified forests (Activity 2.2.3) = \$500,000. (5) Reforestation for riverbank protection (Activity 2.2.4) = \$340,000; (6) Multi-purpose water reservoirs (Activity 2.2.5) = \$300,000. (7) Provision of extension services to 24,000 farmers and community leaders (Output 2.4) = \$355,000;(8) Development of green belt infrastructure (Output 2.5) = \$450,000. Note: Additional funding for these sub-contracts is available under BN 22."

Component 2: (2) Conservation and restoration of priority forest areas, including classified forests (Activity 2.2.3) = \$200,000; (3) Reforestation for riverbank protection (Activity 2.2.4) = \$185,000; (4) Multi-purpose water reservoirs (Activity 2.2.5) = \$50,000; (5) Provision of extension services to 24,000 farmers and community leaders (Output 2.4) = \$100,000. (6) Development of green belt infrastructure (Output 2.5) = 150,000

Component 3: (1) Strengthening of selected value chains (Output 3.2) (\$354,937).

GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - No. Please provide the STAP and Council comments, if any, as well as responses in Annex B.

Agency Response

UNDP 14 May 2022:

STAP comments have been added, together with responses. No Council comments were received

UNDP ? 29 June 2022

A) Responses to Council Comments have been included - CEO ER, Annex B, Response Matrix

B) Responses to STAP comments are included in the CEO document, Annex B, Response to Project Reviews, Section 2, p. 119-129 - CEO ER, Annex B, Response Matrix

C) i. Additional details have been provided re. equipment expenses. Vehicles are funded by UNDP co-financing

ii. Breakdowns of all sub-contracts have been provided in the Budget Notes, in the UNDP Prodoc. - UNDP Prodoc, p. 114-130

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC 15 August 2022 -
Cleared.

GEFSEC 8/2/2022 -

Please include reflection of the expected results indicated for core indicator 6 and its target in the results framework detailed in Annex A.

GEFSEC, 3June2022 -
Cleared

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - Generally speaking, the results framework does not seem to be fully developed - please confirm? For example, for Indicator 4? Additionally, elsewhere in the document, the value chains are identified as mango, cashew, citrus but these are not indicated in the results framework - is there a reason for this? Additional component specific comments below:

Component 2:

- There is a long experience in Benin of participative approaches in planning and policy development. However, there is often a disconnect with implementation. We insist to keep a reasonable level of resources for planning exercises (focusing on the integration of climate risks to existing plans) and systematically complete the planning exercises with the implementation of climate risk related activities, including learning and coordination with other sources of funding.
- Output 2.1: we take note and can support the integration of climate risks in various existing plans ? management plans for Parc W and the Pendjari complex, various classified forests, and the need to reinforce capacities of existing agencies to implement these plans. In terms of activities, we however question the level of importance to give to data collection (2.1.1) and field surveys (2.2.2), as these activities show a problem of sustainability. Please, clarify.
- Same comment as the above for municipal planning documents ? most of the SDAC already exist in the considered communes. There are also inter-communal plans in the considered landscapes (Karimama): OK to mainstream climate risks in the existing plans and reinforce capacities for implementation, but please, pay attention to maintain these activities to a reasonable level and focus on implementation of adaptation and SLM activities, especially targeting the farmer organizations and their network that are not that visible in the project.
- 2.2.5: The development of water reservoirs for agriculture is acceptable as an adaptation measure if there is a collective thinking to reduce the water uses and select water saving crops and value chains. Please, clarify.
- Output 2.3 (and partially 2.4): please explain how you selected the government extension services? We wonder if there are no other entities with a better comparative advantage to provide these extension services (farmer organizations, NGOs, private companies, research centers?)

Component 3:

- The level of analysis and stakeholder identification seems less advanced for this component (see output 3.1, activity 3.1.4, output 3.2: activities 3.2.1, 3.2.3; output 3.3, especially activities 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3; output 3.4). We would like to see at least an agreement at CEO endorsement on the key stakeholders to empower, especially the farmer organizations and their network who are not clearly included. These partners are essential if you want a certain degree of implementation and sustainability with smallholder farmers. Please, confirm.

Agency Response

Agency Response ? 05 August 2022

A 4th mandatory indicator on GHG emissions avoided has been added to the Results Framework

UNDP 14 May 2022:

The results framework is fully developed. Indicator 4, as per the baseline description, reflects the current situation in which little or no setting or monitoring of targets has taken place to date. The indicator itself is thus focused on the establishment of the monitoring system, with specific targets to emerge as part of that process. As far as value chains are concerned, mango, cashew and citrus are all expected to benefit from project support under Outputs 3.1 and/or 3.3. However, whether they will be included among the five priority value chains under 3.1 has not yet been determined; indeed, such determination is the purpose of Output 3.1. For this reason, they are not identified in Indicator #8

Support to planning will be focused on integrating LDN and climate change adaptation issues into existing plans and will be directly linked to implementation / action, thereby ensuring practical results on-the-ground. This has been reflected as needed for added clarity (see, e.g. Activity 2.1.6)

The project team does consider it important to build capacity for data collection related to both climate change adaptation and land degradation neutrality, including as a support to local level planning efforts. It plans to incorporate elements designed to ensure sustainability, including using low-cost methodologies and building follow up measures, into local planning guidelines.

Activity 2.1.6, on support to SDACs, etc., has been revised to reflect the incremental nature of this activity. It now reads: ?Support the incorporation of LDN and climate change aspects eight commune-level integrated, spatially explicit planning documents??Sch?ma directeur d?am?nement de la commune? (SDAC) and ?plan de d?veloppement communal? (PDC)

Water conservation will represent an important aspect of the project?s adaptation elements, including, as noted in the comment, crop and value chain selection. It is within this context that funding for water reservoirs will be provided. This will include collective consideration via stakeholder consultations and emerging plans. This linkage has been clarified with revision of Activity 2.2.5

No final decisions have been taken on which extension services will be supported. To ensure broad and effective coverage, and in response to the comment, a list of 14 potential service providers, including organizations from each of the categories mentioned, has been added to the project document.

As indicated in the updated Stakeholder Engagement Plan, the key stakeholders under Component 3 are: Farmers, Livestock farmers, Traders, Women/women groups, Youths/Youths groups, Men/head of Household, Migrants/Displaced peoples, Landowners, Livestock owners, Benin Government agencies, Other Government (bordering with Benin), Contractors and subcontractors, Private sector, Consumers of goods (agricultural products, others), Donors? agencies and UNDP.

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
GEFSEC 24August2022 -

Cleared

GEFSEC 15 August 2022 -

Please address the comment on the classification of the UNDP Audit checklist needing to be "Public".

GEFSEC, 8/2/2022 -

Please upload the UNDP Audit Checklist. Please also address all remaining comments highlighted in yellow.

GEFSEC, 14July2022 - Technically cleared, pending further review for policy alignment

GEFSEC, 3June2022 - In process

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - In process.

Agency Response

UNDP ? 16 August 2022

UNDP Audit Checklist reuploaded with classification as "Public".

UNDP ? 05 August 2022

All comments have been addressed, the UNDP Audit Checklist and updated Apiservices co-financing letter have been uploaded to Portal.

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - No.
Please advise.

Agency Response
UNDP 14 May 2022:

No Council comments were received on the PIF.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - No.
Please advise.

Agency Response
UNDP 14 May 2022:

STAP comments and responses have been added.

Please note that since there is no box for UNDP responses under the Secretariat Comments on CEO Endorsement Recommendation, we are adding the response within this last response:

Notes on response based on existing budget and potential for changes

We have carefully analysed the budget as initially submitted and note the following:

- Total budgeted cost of international consultants is \$322,000, or 3.4% of the total project budget. This includes \$50,000 for evaluations. The largest component is for value chain specialists (\$100,000).
- Total budgeted cost of local consultants is \$333,000, or 3.5% of the total project budget.
- Total budgeted costs of contractual services - companies is \$6,147,263. This includes \$2,935,000, or 30.8% of the total project budget for field interventions under Component 2. (Note: This was the total amount in the submitted budget, not \$2,190,000, based on support for field-level interventions in BN 16 and 22).
- Under Component 3, in addition to the \$200,000 to cooperatives mentioned in the comment, several activities under Component 3 sub-contracts (see BN 27 and 3, and activities 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4 and 3.4.3[1]) include material support delivered at field level. The project team estimates this material support at 30% of the overall sub-contract totals, i.e. \$627,000 of the total \$2,090,000 under these budget lines.
- Given the above, total support to field interventions as submitted is estimated at \$3,562,000, or 39.4% of the combined GEFTF and LDCF budgets.
- Altogether, the submitted budget included 11 travel lines totalling \$359,311.

In light of the above, we have reduced the following budget lines:

- International consultants? costs have been reduced from \$322,000 to \$297,000
- National consultants? costs have been reduced from \$333,000 to \$300,000
- Total travel allocations, including travel for supervision, have been reduced from \$359,311 to \$279,311.

Savings from the above budget lines have been directed towards field-level interventions, as follows:

- An additional \$80,000 has been allocated for field interventions under Component 2 (BL 16 and 22)
- An additional \$58,000 has been allocated for field-level interventions under Component 3 (BL31)
- Budget notes for Component 3 sub-contracts now include the following statement: ?At least 30% of the value of these sub-contracts will be allocated for material, field-level support.?

As a result of which total support to field-level interventions is now estimated at \$3,700,000, or 41.0% of combined GEF / LDCF budgets

[1] These are (with material support element underlined): 3.2.2 Improve access to information and to appropriate post-harvest processing and storage equipment and infrastructure, at different levels of the marketing chain, to help processors better respond to quantitative and qualitative aspects of market demand; 3.2.3 Contribute to the sustainable intensification of production in the selected sectors by supporting the adoption of improved technologies adapted to the needs of farmers, in particular women, and enabling them to better respond to market signals; 3.2.4 Support efforts by cooperatives to strengthen crop processing and storage; 3.4.3 Support improved packaging and delivery of new products to market

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response
Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 2/8/2022 - Yes.

Agency Response
Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 2/8/2022 - Yes.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 24August2022:

Cleared

GEFSEC, 14July2022:

Technically cleared, pending further review for policy alignment

GEFSEC, 3June2022:

Several comments remain to be addressed.

GEFSEC, 2/7/2022 - Not yet. Please refer to flagged items and resubmit for consideration. Additionally, please see the below:

Budget

There are several critical questions related to the GEF/LDCF budget:

- There are 33 lines of budget of contractual services for local or international consultants and companies for a total amount of \$7,745,4100, representing 86% of the project budget. We recommend making a rapid analysis of the amount to assess the share of consultants for planning, studies and the share of field interventions. This information is not readable in the GEF budget but readable on the first page of the excel file named ?TBWP?. We advise to revise the heavy reliance on international consultants.

- At first sight, we are seeing some field interventions for a total of \$2,190,000 (24%), with conservation and rehabilitation of soils (\$600,000), conservation and restoration of forests (\$500,000), reforestation of riverbanks (\$340,000), multi-purpose reservoir (\$300,000), green belt infrastructure (\$450,000). There is one line of budget under the component 3 (see note 34) assigning \$200,000 for materials to cooperatives for improved crop processing and storage within selected value chains.

- Other interventions include the development of plans. We recommend looking at the proportion of consultants for studies and plans? it seems excessive, causing questions about the value for money and sustainability issues. The balance between studies, plans, capacity building, and field interventions should be carefully assessed to justify an optimal use of GEF and LDCF resources.

- The development of studies, assessment, and plans makes sense however to install a LDN framework and a monitoring system of LDN targets (component 1, and partially 2). Other sources of financing exist for local and intercommunal plans ? and several of these plans already exist. No need to duplicate these plans. Several plans should be limited to the inclusion of

climate risks.

- Travel: there are eight (8) lines of budget related to travel of the project management team and short-term experts at a height of \$254,574, in addition to \$60,000 of travel for supervision. It seems a lot and needs to be justified and probably reduced.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	2/8/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/3/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	7/14/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/2/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/15/2022	

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations