



# Enabling Activities to Support the ratification and early implementation of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (EA-BBNJ)

**Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation**

## **Basic project information**

**GEF ID**

11656

**Countries**

Regional (Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Palau)

**Project Name**

Enabling Activities to Support the ratification and early implementation of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (EA-BBNJ)

**Agencies**

FAO

**Date received by PM**

6/7/2024

**Review completed by PM**

6/13/2024

**Program Manager**

Andrew Hume

**Focal Area**

International Waters

**Project Type**

EA

## Expedited Enabling Activity req (CEO)

### Section I - Enabling Activity Summary

**Funding elements.**

**Is the enabling activity aligned with the relevant GEF funding elements as indicated in Table A and as defined by the GEF-8 Programming Directions? Is the General Enabling Activity Information table correctly populated?**

Secretariat's Comments

June 13 2024 (ahume): Addressed.

June 9 2024 (ahume): No.

1) Please consider increasing the project duration from 12 months to at least 18 or 24 months.

2) At this point, this project is "Regional" (instead of Global) as it includes only countries from the Pacific Islands. Please note that to be "Global", by the time of CEO Approval, it requires the inclusion of countries from other regions. For the time being, please modify "Global" for "Regional" and if needed in the future, we can change to Global.

3) Type of report(s) and Expected Report Submission to Convention fields are empty ? please amend.

4) The title is missing "early implementation". Enabling Activities to Support the ratification and early implementation of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (EA-BBNJ)

#### Agency's Comments

##### **FAO response 12 June 2024:**

1) project duration increased to 24 months

2) The project has been changed to "Regional". We will request changing to "Global" as and when need be.

3) Type of report changed to "BBNJ Ratification Support" , because "BBNJ initial assessment" is not available in the drop down menu (see screen short hereunder)

**Biodiversity\***      **Desertification\***

Significant Objective ▾      No Contribution 0 ▾

**Expected Implementation Start ⓘ**

9/1/2024

**Type of Reports ⓘ**      **Expected ⓘ**

BBNJ Ratification Support ▾      12/3

- Select Type of Report
- Cartagena Protocol National Report
- C** CBD National Report
- Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA)
- D** Nagoya Protocol National Report
- UNFCCC National Determined Contribution
- UNFCCC Technology Needs Assessment
- UNFCCC Biennial Transparency Report/ National Communication (BTR/NC)
- UNFCCC Biennial Transparency Report (BTR)
- BBNJ Ratification Support**
- UNFCCC National Communications (NC)
- ASGM National Action Plan (ASGM NAP)
- UNCCD Reporting
- UNFCCC Biennial Update Report (BUR)
- Stockholm National Implementation Plan Update
- National Bio Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP)
- National Adaptation Programme of Action Update
- Stockholm National Implementation Plan (NIP)

4) The title was changed to: *"Enabling Activities to Support the ratification and early implementation of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (EA-BBNJ)"*

**Cost Ranges.**

**If there was a deviation in the cost range, was this explained?**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

**Enabling activity summary.**

**Is the enabling activity summary clear? Are the components in Table B and as described in the enabling activity request sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objectives?**

Secretariat's Comments

June 13 2024 (ahume): Addressed.

June 9 2024 (ahume): Partly. The component aligns with GEF Council document C.66/07 Initial Guidelines for EAs and Ratification Support Projects for the BBNJ Agreement. However, there are other areas that need attention:

1. Please revise the project objective. It needs to include a direct reference to implementation readiness. It is unclear why the objective refers to "meet the requirements under the main sections in the BBNJ Agreement"? Ratification support is for the whole BBNJ Agreement, not just certain sections. Please rework the objective into something more concise and aligned with overall goals articulated in C.66/07.

2. The summary/intro text needs work. The formatting is poorly presented, there are typos and extra words, and it includes confusing and inaccurate statements. Please work with DOALOS to ensure an accurate summary is presented. Also, the number of BBNJ Agreement signatories and parties noted is outdated by at least a month.

3) On stakeholder engagement: A key component of the project is to facilitate a documented assessment of national situation with respect to the conservation and sustainable use of BBNJ and potential impact thereon (e.g., mapping of relevant stakeholders and activities under the country's jurisdiction or control; of relevant traditional knowledge of Indigenous People and Local communities. The project does not provide any indicative information, however, on key stakeholder groups consulted and or details on stakeholder engagement plans during project implementation. Please ask agency to further describe (1) stakeholder consultations in project design; (2) indicative key stakeholder groups and organizations relevant to project objective; and (3) plans for stakeholder engagement during project implementation.

4) There are key gender perspectives in the project outputs. As per GEF's gender mainstreaming guidance, Agency is requested to conduct a thorough gender analysis and

reflect and capture gender equality considerations in all the outputs. Gender dimensions go beyond consultations with women and gender stakeholders. For example, in Output 1.2., the issue of fair and equitable sharing of benefits, as well as the conduct of environmental and impact assessments have to consider gender equality considerations. In Outputs 1.3 and 1.4, please ensure that the legislation and regulations and outreach products are gender-responsive.

### Agency's Comments

#### **FAO response 12 June 2024:**

- 1) The project objective was revised to be more concise and aligned with overall goals articulated in C.66/07.
- 2) The summary/intro was redone in collaboration with DOALOS to ensure an accurate summary is presented.
- 3) Details on stakeholder engagement were added to the submission.
- 4) Key gender perspectives were added in several project outputs. Moreover, wording explaining what will be done during execution was added.

#### **Section 2 - Enabling Activity Supporting Information**

#### **Eligibility Criteria.**

**Is this enabling activity eligible for GEF funding?**

#### **Secretariat's Comments**

June 13 2024 (ahume): Addressed.

June 9 2024 (ahume): No.

- 1) The letter of Endorsement from Vanuatu is missing in the Portal. Please note for future inclusion of additional countries that if the country is not a signatory of the BBNJ Agreement, please follow GEF Council document C.66/07 para 26(a) regarding providing a letter stating the meaningful steps towards becoming a Party.
- 2) On the Project executing agencies: some executing agencies have already been identified in the LoE - please include this information in Portal:

### Agency's Comments

**FAO response 12 June 2024:**

1) The LOEs of Vanuatu was duly uploaded.

Duly noted for future inclusion of additional countries that if the country is not a signatory of the BBNJ Agreement, we will follow GEF Council document C.66/07 para 26(a) regarding providing a letter stating the meaningful steps towards becoming a Party.

2) The executing agencies mentioned by the Marshall Islands are Solomon Islands (2 agencies) and Vanuatu.

Please note that we have also added Palau to the project with the corresponding LOE. Palau did not indicate an executing agency, so we have indicated "Other National Executing Agencies (tbd) (Palau)" in the EA field.

**Institutional framework.**

**Are the institutional arrangements for implementation adequately described?**

**Secretariat's Comments**

June 13 2024 (ahume): Addressed.

June 9 2024 (ahume): No. Please include additional detail about the institutional arrangements for implementation under D. Institutional Framework section. Specifically, please provide further information on the process for Agency disbursement of national EA funding, including the identification of specific project activities by each country. Please also clarify if there actually will be a project manager/admin for each country interventions as this may be excessive. The section needs significant revisions for clarity.

**Agency's Comments**

**FAO response 12 June 2024:**

1) Additional details about the institutional arrangements for implementation under D. Institutional Framework section were added.

**Monitoring and Evaluation.**

**Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan?**

## Secretariat's Comments

June 13 2024 (ahume): Addressed.

June 9 2024 (ahume): No.

1) Please remove the "tbd" text from the M&E Component. Please include information related to expenses on M&E

2) The M&E section seems to be a poorly reviewed copy and paste and needs careful editing. Please spell out acronyms, such as BH, PTF, LTO, and FLO. Please also explain why a Project Coordination Unit will be based in IMO HQ in London? Please review this section closely and draft appropriate text for the needs of the proposal. If no budget from the EA is being used for M&E, please include a rough estimate of the budget from the global MSP that will be used to support M&E these national level umbrella EAs.

## Agency's Comments

### **FAO response 12 June 2024:**

1) "tbd" text from the M&E Component was removed and replaced by an assessed amount. Kindly note that the allocation for M&E will be discussed with the countries and the selected National Executing Agency (NEA) at the disbursement stage. However, the M&E budget will be no more than 5% of the total available grant (USD 175,000).

2) The M&E section was completely restructured.

### **Section 3. Information Tables**

#### **GEF resource availability.**

**Is the proposed GEF financing in Table F (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion** June 9 2024 (ahume): Yes.

#### **Agency Response** N/A

**Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):**

**STAR allocation?**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A



**Focal Area allocation?**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): Yes. From GEF-8 IW Objective 2 (ABNJ).

Agency's Comments N/A

**LDCF under the principle of equitable access?**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

**SCCF (Adaptation or Tech Transfer)?**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

**Focal Area Set Aside?**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

**Rio Markers.**

**Are the Rio Markers for CCM ,CCA, BD and LD presented?**

Secretariat's Comments

June 13 2024 (ahume): Addressed.

June 9 2024 (ahume): Rio Marker for BD is included.

Agency's Comments

**FAO response 12 June 2024:**

1) kindly note that for resubmission we also included the Climate Change Mitigation marker set to 1 = significant objective.

**Country endorsement.**

**Has the project been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point at the time of the EA submission and has the name and position been checked against the GEF database? Are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in Portal**

**Secretariat's Comments**

June 13 2024 (ahume): Addressed. Vanuatu Letter of Endorsement now uploaded and matches the revised Vanuatu OFP. A Palau Letter of Endorsement is now also included in the resubmission.

June 9 2024 (ahume): No. The letter of Endorsement from Vanuatu is missing in the Portal.

**Agency's Comments**

**FAO response 12 June 2024:**

1) The LOE of Vanuatu was uploaded.

**Response to Comments**

**Are all the comments adequately responded to? (only as applicable)**

**Gef Secretariat comments**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

**Council comments**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A

**STAP comments**

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A  
Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A  
CSOs comments

Secretariat's Comments June 9 2024 (ahume): N/A

Agency's Comments N/A  
Project Budget Table.

**Is the project budget table attached? Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?**

Secretariat's Comments

June 13 2024 (ahume): This EA is exceptionally approved with the scarce information provided in the budget table. For further submissions, including resubmissions of this EA, a more comprehensive information in the budget lines will be required.

June 9 2024 (ahume): No. Please provide an estimated "general country" budget using the GEF budget template representing a single country use of the \$175,00 national EA resources. We will only be able to review the budget table once all the information has been incorporated, and provide comments if appropriate.

Agency's Comments  
**FAO response 12 June 2024:**

1) We provided an estimated "general country" budget using the GEF budget template representing a single country use of the \$175,00 national EA resources.  
**Environmental and Social Safeguards.**

**If there are screening documents or other ESS documents available, have these been attached? (only as applicable)**

Secretariat's Comments

June 9 2024 (ahume): Yes. The Agency has noted that a ESS screening is not required per Agency's regulations.

Agency's Comments N/A

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION.**

**Is CEO endorsement/ approval recommended?**

**Secretariat's Comments**

June 13 2024 (ahume): Yes, the project is being for CEO Approval. As noted above, this EA is being exceptionally approved with the scarce information provided in the budget table. For further submissions, including resubmissions of this EA, a more comprehensive information in the budget lines will be required.

June 9 2024 (ahume): Please address the above comments and resubmit.

**REVIEW DATE(S)**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>6/11/2024</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>6/13/2024</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		