



# Towards Joint Integrated, Ecosystem-based Management of the Pacific Central American Coastal Large Marine Ecosystem (PACA)

[Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation](#)

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10076

**Countries**

Regional (Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama)

**Project Name**

Towards Joint Integrated, Ecosystem-based Management of the Pacific Central American Coastal Large Marine Ecosystem (PACA)

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

12/13/2020

**Review completed by PM**

7/26/2021

**Program Manager**

Christian Severin

**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

11th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

11th of January 2021 (cseverin): Partly, please address below questions:

1) it was mentioned in the PIF reviewsheet that demonstration projects/activities around Marine Protected Areas and mangrove restoration and health would be adviseable to strongly consider as project activities. However, they do not appear among the pilot projects, please elaborate on how the project will be supporting activities along these lines.

2) Under Global Environmental Benefits, it is mentioned that the project will be "improve conservation of about 199.6 million hectares of marine area" and that "contribute to sustain the livelihoods of about 17.1 million people who live in the 228 coastal municipalities". However, none of these values have been entered into the Core indicator framework. In the project results framework yet another number of total beneficiaries has been listed. Please make sure there is consistency between what is mentioned throughout in the submission.

3) Table B includes wording that the "SAP will be endorsed at national level" Please specify this to be at Ministerial level.

4) Please attach detailed project budget, to enable the GEF SEC to understand how project funds will be spent.

27th of April: Partly addressed. Please address following points:

1) The 82.000 tons fish brought to sustainable levels as included at time of PIF, does not feature in the Core indicator framework. Please include.

2) Further, please also carefully assess if it is possible for this project to have direct impact on ~15 mio people (according to the core indicator table, but then table 12 in prodoc lists a number of 4 mio direct beneficiaries) as included numerous places in the submission as well as in the Core indicator table. Based on assessment of other investments, it may make more sense to revert to something along the lines of what was promised at PIF stage.

3) The PIF and the previous submissions had MSP/MPA target hectare values. Those have disappeared too. Please reinsert into Table B, core indicator table and results framework.

13th of May 2021 (cseverin): addressed

27th of May 2021 (cseverin): No, please address following points and resubmit soonest:

1. There is a difference of \$273,973 USD between the programming of GEF funds at PIF Stage vs. CEO endorsement. Please revert to the amount granted at PIF Stage.
2. On the GEF Agency: Kindly note that if the selected agency for execution is WWF (GEF agency) then it should specify WWF-US. If this is a local WWF then the type should be corrected to CSO. This change needs to be amended accordingly throughout the document.
3. On implementation dates: please correct the implementation start to a future date and kindly make sure that completion date is 1 day before the start date to match the duration of the project.
4. PPG Selection should be ?TRUE?
5. On the Budget
  - i. Please modify the table so that it is not off margins, otherwise it is impossible to read ? also the budget is located in the incorrect Annex. It is difficult to review in such way.
  - ii. Project Coordinator should be charged to the PMC
  - iii. M&E Specialist should be charged to the M&E budget
  - iv. Salary from Staff of a GEF implementing agency should not be charged to the project.
  - v. GEF Funds cannot cover Government costs such as the renovation of Governmental offices ? please remove. Also, since the project is 4 years and audits are 10k/ year, the total should be \$40,000 instead of \$44,000
6. On core indicators: Sub-indicator 5.2 ?Number of Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) with reduced pollution and hypoxia? should say 1 and not 0, as the project has some activities related to reducing transboundary pollution
7. On Gender: Please include some summary information in the portal section on gender and also clearly reference the attached gender action plan.

Stakeholder Engagement: Please ensure that all relevant boxes have been ticked off. It seems that particular the box on indicating stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase, shoudl be ticked off.

9th of June 2021 (cseverin): Project submission includes STAR financing (vis a vis uploaded LOE from Panama), this should be reflected upon in 1) on front page, 2) table A, 3) table D and 4) table E, and potentially other places as well. Please also note that this will now become a MFA project compared to being a single focal area project.

11th of June 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

23rd of June 2021 (cseverin): No, Please address following points and resubmit:

1. Please make sure that the STAR financing from Panama is labeled correctly in Table D. It should say ?Panama? and ?BD STAR Allocation?. not "Regional" and "set aside".
2. Please tick the box under table F, it features as FALSE.
3. The Project Manager TOR seem to indicate that more tasks will be related to project management, than what the 20% the budget is indicating. Please make sure that there is a better coherency between the budget for the PM position and the tasks to be undertaken according TOR.
4. Please ensure that all budget tables reflect upon the fact that the ME specialist will be solely charged to the ME budget.
5. Please upload a budget table in the portal that is fully readable, the margins seem to vanish in the current version.
6. Please remove the budgetline that allocates 10% of PMC to be paid to the Implementing Partner for Project Management Services, these are not eligible costs according to GEF policies. Freeing up this budgetline may enable utilizing these funds to go towards covering the cost of the Project Manager to provide better balance between TOR and budget.

25th of June 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

14th of July 2021 (cseverin): No, please address the below comments:

- 1) Please make sure that the new version of the TORs correlate with the TORs in Portal.
- 2) The PMs TORs reflect a vast majority of activities related with Coordination functions while only a few are related to technical functions, however 77% of the cost of the PM has been assigned to technical components. Please provide reasoning that will support that the high 77% of the PMs salary is charged to the project components, or if not possible, move more of the PM salary to the PMC budget. (This project has 2.2 million of co-financing allocated to PMC, and the composition of the co-financing shows nearly 11.8 million in grants, some of this could be used to cover the Project Coordinator salary (as indicated in Guidelines) reflecting what is presented in TORs.)

26th of July 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

Agency Response  
UNDP Response, 14 April 2021

1) it was mentioned in the PIF reviewsheet that demonstration projects/activities around Marine Protected Areas and mangrove restoration and health would be advisable to strongly consider as project activities. However, they do not appear among the pilot projects, please elaborate on how the project will be supporting activities along these lines.

The PIF included two proposed pilot interventions: (i) marine spatial planning and (ii) regional strategy for conservation and management of billfishes. At that time the participating countries fully agreed on the scope of billfishes pilot, but could not reach consensus on the intervention site and the particular focus of the actions to be implemented. The ideas for the marine spatial planning pilot were mostly focused on coastal areas.

During project preparation (PPG), the participating countries decided to have a MSP regional pilot that:

- ? Will focus on the development of regional guidelines for marine spatial planning based on the existing experience and the lessons from the pilot.
- ? Will include four intervention sites that reflect different scenarios and challenges: (i) Mexico's South-Central Pacific Region, (ii) Costa Rica's Exclusive Economic Zone on the Pacific Ocean, (iii) Panama's Gulf of Chiriquí (area of influence of Coiba National Park), and (iv) Ecuador's coastal marine zone (three nautical miles offshore and one kilometre inland) of three municipalities.

Regarding marine protected areas, the interventions in Mexico, Costa Rica and Panama will directly address the links between MPAs and marine spatial planning.

Regarding mangrove restoration and health. This topic was not a priority for the participating countries. However: (i) mangrove areas will be an element of the marine spatial planning interventions in Mexico and Panama, and (ii) will be a topic to be discussed during the implementation of the TDA/SAP process.

2) Under Global Environmental Benefits, it is mentioned that the project will be "improve conservation of about 199.6 million hectares of marine area" and that "contribute to sustain the livelihoods of about 17.1 million people who live in the 228 coastal municipalities". However, none of these values have been entered into the Core indicator framework. In the project results framework yet another number of total beneficiaries has been listed. Please make sure there is consistency between what is mentioned throughout in the submission.

The figures indicated correspond to the following:

- (i) The total area of PACA = 199,665,900 ha
- (ii) The population of coastal municipalities = 17,195,869 (Table 2 of the PRODOC highlighted in light blue).

Regarding entering the surface into the core indicators worksheet.

It is foreseen that once the SAP is endorsed by the countries this will lead to improved management of the whole LME (i.e., 199.6 million hectares). This figure has been included into core indicator 5 (see Annex 12 of the PRODOC and Annex F of the CEO highlighted in light blue).

Regarding the number of direct beneficiaries.

Please note that the number of direct beneficiaries in the results framework (mandatory indicator 1) is smaller: 15,729,815. This is because the 17.1 million is based on the official population projections to 2020, whereas the 15.7 million correspond to the official figures given by the countries focal points (results from the last census, not projections taken from <https://www.ine.gob.hn/V3/indicadores-por-departamento>. Year 2018).

To be conservative, the number of direct beneficiaries from the pilot interventions (4.1 million) was included in the core indicator 11. This figure was updated to correspond to the end-of-project target (15.7 million) (see the results framework and Annexes 4 and 12 of the PRODOC, and Table E and Annexes A and F of the CEO ER highlighted in light blue).

3) Table B includes wording that the "SAP will be endorsed at national level" Please specify this to be at Ministerial level.

?SAP Endorsement at ministerial level? has been included (highlighted in light blue) in CEO (Table B, pp. 25, and Annex A), and in PRODOC (pp. 35, Table 17, in the results framework, Annex 3).

4) Please attach detailed project budget, to enable the GEF SEC to understand how project funds will be spent.

Revised. Please see project budget included in Annex F in the GEF portal.

28th of April 2021 (anamarianunez):

1) The 82.000 tons fish brought to sustainable levels as included at time of PIF, does not feature in the Core indicator framework. Please include.

Reintroduced, the advance will come mainly from improvements in (i) the long-line fishery for large pelagic fish in Ecuador and Costa Rica, (ii) the purse seine fishery for tuna in Ecuador, and (iii) the purse seine fishery for small pelagic fish in Ecuador and Panama. See Annex 4 and 12 of the Prodoc ? monitoring plan and core indicators, Results framework in the prodoc, CEO (Table E, Annex A and F) with inclusions highlighted in green.

2) Further, please also carefully assess if it is possible for this project to have direct impact on ~15 mio people (according to the core indicator table, but then table 12 in prodoc lists a number of 4 mio direct beneficiaries) as included numerous places in the submission as well as in the Core indicator table. Based on assessment of other investments, it may make more sense to revert to something along the lines of what was promised at PIF stage.

The number of direct project beneficiaries is correct and was validated with the participating countries. Table 12 of the PRODOC lists the number of direct project beneficiaries ?from the pilot interventions? (4,125,613 persons? which corresponds to

the mid-term target). The number is large because the population in Mexico linked to the MSP pilot intervention is about 3.9 million.

The end of project target is defined as the population of the coastal municipalities of the participating countries (once the SAP is endorsed). This definition was agreed with the participating countries and the figures are real.

The figure that was proposed in the PIF was very conservative estimate of the people who will be related to the pilot interventions. As per the GEFSEC request, the number of direct beneficiaries has been revised, reflecting the number of direct beneficiaries from the pilot interventions. See Annex 4 and 12 of the Prodoc ? monitoring plan and core indicators, Results framework in the prodoc, CEO (Table E, Annex A and F) with inclusions highlighted in green.

3) The PIF and the previous submissions had MSP/MPA target hectare values. Those have disappeared too. Please reinsert into Table B, core indicator table and results framework.

The figure (180,965,900) was reinserted. It will come from the areas covered by the MSP pilot interventions. See Annex 4 and 12 of the Prodoc ? monitoring plan and core indicators, Results framework in the prodoc, CEO (Table E, Annex A and F) with inclusions highlighted in green.

29<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 (anamarianunez):

1. There is a difference of \$273,973 USD between the programming of GEF funds at PIF Stage vs. CEO endorsement. Please revert to the amount granted at PIF Stage.

The indicated difference corresponds to the third pilot project on cetacean conservation (a new one from the PIF). As per request of the Panamanian government, BD STAR allocation was directed for this new pilot. This difference is indicated as a minor amendment in the ?Summary of Changes?, under Part II of the CEO Endorsement, and highlighted in purple. Additionally, the correspondent letter of endorsement from the government of Panama for these STAR resources is included as annex.

2. On the GEF Agency: Kindly note that if the selected agency for execution is WWF (GEF agency) then it should specify WWF-US. If this is a local WWF then the type should be corrected to CSO. This change needs to be amended accordingly throughout the document.

The executing agency is WWF Guatemala/Mesoamerica; then, as per your request, change was done in the GEF portal as CSO, and along the docs, it will be referred as WWF Guatemala/Mesoamerica, changes are highlighted in purple.

3. On implementation dates: please correct the implementation start to a future date and kindly make sure that completion date is 1 day before the start date to match the duration of the project.

Dates were corrected accordingly. Changes were highlighted in purple for easy reference along the documents.

4. PPG Selection should be ?TRUE?

Done in the portal.

## 5. On the Budget

i. Please modify the table so that it is not off margins, otherwise it is impossible to read ? also the budget is located in the incorrect Annex. It is difficult to review in such way.

Apologies! Table was modified for easy reading and located in the correct annex in the GEF portal.

ii. Project Coordinator should be charged to the PMC

The project coordinator is expected to guarantee the project implementation in coordination with 7 countries, including a big portion of the time dedicated to perform technical activities associated to the project components, delivering not only reports, but also generating technical deliverables, supervising the programmatic progress of the project, among others. Please see the detailed Terms of Reference in Annex 7 (attached) for the project coordinator, in which main deliverables from the position are highlighted in purple.

Considering the previous, the cost associated for this position has been spread along technical components 1 (50%) and 2 (30%) and PMC (20%)(see changes highlighted in purple in the budget). Component 1 involves the TDA/SAP preparation with major dedication of time and deliverables associated and Component 2 is related to the pilot interventions.

iii. M&E Specialist should be charged to the M&E budget

Change was done as requested. Please see changes highlighted in purple in the budget.

iv. Salary from Staff of a GEF implementing agency should not be charged to the project.

There is not any charge to salaries from UNDP staff. The charge done to contractual services ? individual in Ecuador is for CI ? Conservation International who is the Responsible Partner in charge of executing the pilot project in this country.

v. GEF Funds cannot cover Government costs such as the renovation of Governmental offices ? please remove. Also, since the project is 4 years and audits are 10k/ year, the total should be \$40,000 instead of \$44,000

Resources were to information and technology to cover for internet costs that will be in high demand due to the restrictions. Audits are 11k/year. This is fixed in the budget notes and highlighted in purple.

6. On core indicators: Sub-indicator 5.2 ?Number of Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) with reduced pollution and hypoxia? should say 1 and not 0, as the project has some activities related to reducing transboundary pollution

Change was done in the portal as requested.

7. On Gender: Please include some summary information in the portal section on gender and also clearly reference the attached gender action plan.

Summary information was included in the portal, as well as the reference requested.

Stakeholder Engagement: Please ensure that all relevant boxes have been ticked off. It seems that particular the box on indicating stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase, shoudl be ticked off.

Correspondent boxes were ticked off in the GEF portal, as requested.

**9th of June 2021 (anamarianu?ez):**

GEFSEC Comments: Project submission includes STAR financing (vis a vis uploaded LOE from Panama), this should be reflected upon in 1) on front page, 2) table A, 3) table D and 4) table E, and potentially other places as well. Please also note that this will now become a MFA project compared to being a single focal area project.

Agency response: On front page, GEF Portal IT is working on providing support to make focal areas changes and include Multi-Focal Area.

Table A and D have been adjusted in the portal, as well as in the CEO Endorsemet document, changes are highlighted in red.

Table E remains the same since Panama EBD STAR resources were not requested for the PPG phase of the project.

Budget has been revised to the correct amount of \$295,193 which is the total for Panama EBD Star allocation.

**24th of June 2021 (anamarianunez):**

1. Please make sure that the STAR financing from Panama is labeled correctly in Table D. It should say ?Panama? and ?BD STAR Allocation?. not "Regional" and "set aside".

R: done in the portal

2. Please tick the box under table F, it features as FALSE.

R: Box under table F is ticked in the portal as per screenshot below:

**F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)**

PPG Required

PPG Amount (\$) PPG Agency Fee (\$)

154,338

14,662

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)
UNDP	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	154,338.00	14,662.00
Total PPG Amount(\$)					154,338.00	14,662.00

3. The Project Manager TOR seem to indicate that more tasks will be related to project management, than what the 20% the budget is indicating. Please make sure that there is a better coherency between the budget for the PM position and the tasks to be undertaken according TOR.

R. Indeed, many project management activities are under the responsibility of the project manager, but considering the budget caps and limitations for management,

these activities are shared mainly with the Administrative and Financial Officer, as per clarifications and inclusions made in annex 7, highlighted in gray. Moreover, precisions were also made around the coordination and inputs provided by the rest of the team in the project manager duties alleviating the position workload, centralizing its management as oversight and more emphasis to technical duties.

At budget level, currently the coordinator share is 23% as per suggestions in the below comment.

4. Please ensure that all budget tables reflect upon the fact that the ME specialist will be solely charged to the ME budget.  
R: tables have been revised accordingly.

5. Please upload a budget table in the portal that is fully readable, the margins seem to vanish in the current version.  
R: budget table has been formatted to fit the portal.

6. Please remove the budgetline that allocates 10% of PMC to be paid to the Implementing Partner for Project Management Services, these are not eligible costs according to GEF policies. Freeing up this budgetline may make enable utilizing these funds to go towards covering the cost of the Project Manager to provide better balance between TOR and budget.  
R: Reference to 10% was removed as requested and re-assigned to the project coordinator accordingly.

**16th of July 2021 (anamarianunez):**

1) Please make sure that the new version of the TORs correlate with the TORs in Portal.  
There is no section in the portal in which the ToRs are included, apart of the updated annex which has been updated including the changes indicated in the next point.

2) The PMs TORs reflect a vast majority of activities related with Coordination functions while only a few are related to technical functions, however 77% of the cost of the PM has been assigned to technical components. Please provide reasoning that will support that the high 77% of the PMs salary is charged to the project components, or if not possible, move more of the PM salary to the PMC budget. (This project has 2.2 million of co-financing allocated to PMC, and the composition of the co-financing shows nearly 11.8 million in grants, some of this could be used to cover the Project Coordinator salary (as indicated in Guidelines) reflecting what is presented in TORs.)

The roles of key staff of the project have been adjusted. The Operations manager is charged totally in PMC and she/he overall conduct the project. The tasks have been clarified in the correspondent Annex. Under his/her supervision, a Principal Technical Advisor will provide technical inputs for components 1, 2 and 3 of the project and their costs are included in these components? budget. Changes between Project Coordinator to Operations Manager are reflected in Prodoc, CEO Endorsement and other documents, highlighted in green.

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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): No.

Please make sure to include conversion rate between the national currency and USD, in the english translation of the Cofinancing letters.

Further, please re-evaluate if In-kind cofinancing indeed can be categorized as "investment Mobilized" it seems that a number on "inkind cofinancing shoudl be reclassified as "recurrent expenditure".

27th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

**Agency Response**

**UNDP Response, 14 April 2021**

Revised. Conversion rates used are included in co-financing letters were conversions were applied. See PRODOC Annex 2.

Revised. In-kind contributions have been classified as ?recurrent expenditure? (see changes in the CEO Table C, highlighted in light blue).

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): 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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Partly. Please make sure the core indicators listed in Table E are in coherency with what is listed in other parts of the project submission. It also seems that the GEF Project document uploaded are missing the indicator on fisheries.

26th of April 2021 (cseverin): No. It is IMPORTANT that the project continues to deliver what was agreed to at PIF stage. Turning around and now not delivering any stress reduction, while at the same time suggesting that it will be able to DIRECTLY impact more than 15 mio people, seems a bit odd. Please address below points:

- 1) The 82.000 tons fish brought to sustainabel levels as included at time of PIF, does not feature in the Core indicator framework. Please include.
- 2) Further, please also carefully access if it is possible for this project to have direct impact on ~15 mio people (according to the core indicator table, but then table 12 in prodoc lists a number of 4 mio direct beneficiaries) as included numerous places in the submission as well as in the Core indicator table. Based on assessment of other investments, it may make more sense to revert to something along the lines of what was promised at PIF stage.
- 3) The CEO Endorsement request describes activities that will support MSP/MPA work. Please calculate the target hectare values that will be worked toward. Please reinsert into Table B, core indicator table, results framework and where else is appropriate. Please do NOT insert the entire Ha of the PACA LME, but only the hectare amount of the areas directly under MSP/MPA as an effect of demonstration investments.

13th of May 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

**Agency Response**  
**UNDP Response, 14 April 2021**

Revised.

1. The area of PACA was included into core indicator 5.
2. The number of beneficiaries in core indicator 11 was updated.

Pls review answer to question 2, item 2 for details of the two previous points.

About the missing indicator on fisheries, it is worth to mention that the project work will not contribute to the two fisheries-related core indicators (i.e., 5.1 and 8). There will be regional work with the billfish fishery but: (i) it will not undertake certification, and (ii) it is not considered over-exploited. On-the-ground progress towards reducing the volume of overexploited PaCA LME fisheries will primarily occur in the anticipated follow-up SAP implementation phase.

**28th of April 2021 (anamarianunez):**

- 1) The 82.000 tons fish brought to sustainabel levels as included at time of PIF, does not feature in the Core indicator framework. Please include.

Included. See Annex 4 and 12 of the Prodoc ? monitoring plan and core indicators, Results framework in the prodoc, CEO (Table E, Annex A and F) with inclusions highlighted in green.

- 2) Further, please also carefully access if it is possible for this project to have direct impact on ~15 mio people (according to the core indicator table, but then table 12 in prodoc lists a numbe rtof 4 mio direct beneficiaries) as included numerous places in the submission as well as in the Core indicator table. Based on assessment of other investments, it may make more sense to revert to somethign along the lines of what was promised at PIF stage.

Changes were included as indicated above. See Annex 4 and 12 of the Prodoc ? monitoring plan and core indicators, Results framework in the prodoc, CEO (Table E, Annex A and F) with inclusions highlighted in green.

- 3) The CEO Endorsement request describes activities that will support MSP/MPA work. Please calculate the target hectare values that will be worked toward. Please reinsert into Table B, core indicator table, results framework and where else is appropriate. Please do NOT insert the entire Ha of the PACA LME, but only the hectare amount f the areas directly under MSP/MPA as an effect of demonstration investments.

Included. See Annex 4 and 12 of the Prodoc ? monitoring plan and core indicators, Results framework in the prodoc, CEO (Table E, Annex A and F) with inclusions highlighted in green.

## **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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

- 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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

**Agency Response**

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

**Agency Response**

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

**Agency Response**

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): 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**

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): No: Please make sure to select all stakeholder groups, that the project will engage with, in the template.

27th of April 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

**Agency Response**

All pertinent stakeholders were marked in the CEO template as well as in the GEF portal: indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society organizations and private sector entities. Please indicate if any other option should be considered and how.

**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**

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

**Agency Response**

**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**

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes, to the extent possible for a TDA/SAP formulation project. However, it is seen as extremely important for the successful anchoring of the SAP priorities that private sector engagement is ensured throughout the TDA formulation process and SAP endorsement phase.

**Agency Response**  
**UNDP Response, 14 April 2021**

Thanks for the comment, it is well received. Private sector engagement will be a key matter during the development of the TDA/SAP process.

**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**

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Partly, risks have been identified, but the challenges and opportunities that the COVID pandemic presents needs to be much clearer presented. Please formulate an annex that outlines the short term, medium and long term opportunities and constraints and make sure that those that are direct risks to project performance is included in the risk matrix.

27th of April 2021 (cseverin): Partly, the annex only outlines opportunities and challenges but no mitigation/project responses. Please include

13th of May 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

**Agency Response**  
**UNDP Response, 14 April 2021**

The required annex was included into the CEO ER (new Annex H). Pertinent actions had already been mainstreamed into the PRODOC and CEO (highlighted in light blue).

About direct risks to project performance, the main risk for project performance is ?difficulty to materialize cofinancing due to the impacts of COVID-19 on national economies?, already included into the risk matrix.

**28th of April 2021 (anamarianunez):**

The final section of Annex 17 of the PRODOC and Annex H of the CEO (?project implementation actions?) has been changed by risk mitigation actions highlighted in green.

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): 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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): 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

14th of January 2021 (cseverin): Yes

**Agency Response**

**Annexes**

**Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

18th of January 2021 (cseverin): No, please prepare and upload an annex that outlines the short, medium and long term opportunities and constraints that the current COVID pandemic presents to the project and its implementation. Further, please prepare and ensure that the Checklist for CEO Endorsement Template is duly filled out for this project and uploaded as an annex.

27th of April 2021 (ceverin): The covid annex need to also include mitigation measures/project responses to the constraints and opportunities that COVID may present to the project. Please include.

Check list filled in and included.

13th of May 2021 (cseverin): Addressed

**Agency Response**  
**UNDP Response, 14 April 2021**

The requested annex for COVID pandemic outlining the short, medium and long-term opportunities and constraints is included into the CEO ER (new Annex H and new Annex 17 in the PRODOC).

The checklist for CEO Endorsement Template has been completed and included as Annex I in the CEO.

**28 of April 2021 (anamarijunez):**

The final section of Annex 17 of the PRODOC and Annex H of the CEO (?project implementation actions?) has been changed by risk mitigation actions highlighted in green.

**Project Results Framework**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**  
18th of January 2021 (cseverin):Yes

**Agency Response**  
**GEF Secretariat comments**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**  
18th of January 2021 (cseverin):Yes

**Agency Response**  
**Council comments**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**  
18th of January 2021 (cseverin): No, please ensure that proof (description inserted) that the comments received by Council has been addressed. The CEO Request mentions that no council comments were received, this is incorrect. Please check your records.

27th of April 2021 (cseverin): council comments addressed.

**Agency Response**  
**UNDP Response, 14 April 2021**

Response included into Annex B of the CEO ER (highlighted in light blue).

**STAP comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
18th of January 2021 (cseverin):Yes

Agency Response

**Convention Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**CSOs comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Status of PPG utilization**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
18th of January 2021 (cseverin); It is okay

Agency Response

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
18th of January 2021 (cseverin):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**

**Agency Response**

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

18th of January 2021 (cseverin):No, please address above comments.

27th of April 2021 (cseverin): No, please address above comments

13th of May 2021 (cseverin): Yes, CEO Endorsement is recommended.

27th of May 2021 (cseverin): No, please address above comments

9th of June 2021 (cseverin): No, please address remaining comment

11th of June 2021 (cseverin): Yes, CEO Endorsement is recommended.

23rd of June 2021 (cseverin): No, please address above comments and resubmit.

25th of June 2021 (cseverin): Yes, CEO Endorsement is recommended

14th of July 2021 (cseverin): No please address comments

26th of July 2021 (cseverin): Yes CEO Endorsement is recommended

#### **Review Dates**

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

#### **CEO Recommendation**

##### **Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**

The Pacific Central-American Coastal Large Marine Ecosystem (PACA) is shared by nine countries (Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panam?, Colombia, and Ecuador). This Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) has warmer conditions than the neighbouring Gulf of California LME and Humboldt current LME.

The northern and southern extremes are transition areas with seasonal subtropical conditions caused by the influence of the California and Humboldt currents.

The investment will promote ecosystem based management of the Pacific Central American Large Marine Ecosystem through the strengthening of regional governance.

Without an intervention to strengthen regional cooperation, it is unlikely that seascapes-level ecosystem-based management will advance in the near future. Key drivers like (i) population growth (expected to double by 2100), (ii) coastal development (motivated by growing urban and tourist demand), (iii) fishing pressure (driven by local needs for food and income and the expanding international demand for seafood) and (iv) discharge of pollutants (derived from an increasing demand of farm and aquaculture products, expanding tourist operations, increasing maritime transportation, and a growing population, among other factors), will continue deteriorating the biodiversity base of this LME.

It is impossible to address all the different stressors that the shared ecosystem of PACA at once. Therefore, the most strategic approach is to develop regional collaboration mechanisms to articulate common action on agreed priorities at the LME level. The long-term solution is to build agreed regional actions and governance arrangements to address the main common problems that threaten coastal and marine biodiversity of the Pacific Central American Coastal Large Marine Ecosystem and adjacent areas.

The focus of the project is to build governance arrangements for transboundary management of the Pacific Central American large marine ecosystem. The highly participatory approach of the project will contribute to internalize the perspective of the ecosystem management at different levels of society in the participating countries. Measures will be taken to ensure that key stakeholders (fishers, tourist operators, indigenous people, shipping companies, local governments) are represented and participate in the processes of construction of the TDA and the SAP, in the pilot interventions, and in training and knowledge exchange activities.

There is a high probability of replication of the lessons and good practices of the project. GEF resources have been strategically assigned to activities with high potential to catalyze learning. For this purpose, both experience and lessons will be systematically documented and disseminated through the project website, the portals and channels of the project partners and the IW: LEARN platform.

#### ----- COVID ANALYSIS -----

The project document package includes a full annex dealing with COVID constraints and opportunities (annex 17). The below is a summary of component specific COVID

related considerations. On top of these, the annex also includes a matrix that spells out short, medium ad long-term challenges and opportunities.

Component 1.

1. The TDA will consider the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on PACA's blue economy and the SAP will integrate, as much as possible, the countries' recovery strategies related to blue growth.
2. For TDA, each national diagnostic analysis will document (i) the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on coastal populations and key blue economic sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture and coastal and marine tourism, and (ii) adopted post-crisis recovery strategies.
3. For SAP, ensure it is connected with pertinent national and regional post-COVID recover strategies.

Component 2.

1. The pilot interventions will document pertinent COVID-19 impacts to provide inputs to the TDA/SAP process.
2. The billfishes' pilot will document the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the billfish recreational fishing and related tourism value chain. The regional plan will include, as appropriate, pertinent post COVID-19 recovery actions.
3. The MSP pilot intervention (with site actions in Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, and Ecuador). The initiation workshop will include sharing information about the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and possible implications for MSP. On each site intervention: (i) document the main impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the key coastal and marine sectors and the corresponding recovery strategies and plans, and (ii) mainstream pertinent post COVID-19 recovery measures on the instruments and actions to be implemented.
4. The cetacean conservation pilot will (ii) document COVID-19 pandemic impacts on whale watching and related tourism and recovery measures under implementation and (ii) mainstream post COVID-19 recovery measures into the regional guidelines.

Risk mitigation actions

1. In-person work will be encouraged ?only? if sanitary and legal conditions allow it (e.g., personnel are vaccinated, project partners start their in-person activities, mobility restrictions are removed) and if personal conditions of each individual allow it (e.g., children not able to start school yet, living with elderly people in higher risk of not coping well with the COVID-19, among others).
2. Prepare and implement guidelines for in-person meetings under COVID-19 scenario based on advice from the World Health Organization, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ministries of Public Health of the participating countries.
3. Develop and implement biosecurity plans for in-person meetings.

4. The project will encourage virtual work whenever. Project personnel, local partners and communities will be trained in the use of virtual methods for meetings and will be given the tools to use them. The project will use, as much as possible, the virtual communication means that local stakeholders prefer (e.g., FaceTime, WhatsApp video calls).

5. Maintain fluid communication with key project partners to identify difficulties in materializing co-financing. The project will encourage project partners to maintain as much as possible their contributions to the project. In addition, the project will seek opportunities of collaboration with other ongoing projects and initiatives to obtain contributions that can add to project co-financing.

6. Undertake, as necessary, budget reviews to assign resources for implementation of biosecurity protocols and strengthening capabilities for web-based collaboration.