

Strengthening the climate resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) in Mauritania's Great Green Wall

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11457

Countries

Mauritania

Project Name

Strengthening the climate resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) in Mauritania's Great Green Wall

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

8/20/2025

Review completed by PM

9/12/2025

Program Manager

Jason Spensley

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

FSP

CEO

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Sept 10, 2025:

Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

Sept 10, 2025:

Given the several references to ecosystem services, NbS, and biodiversity, we suggest indicating a 1 for biodiversity.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

The Rio Markers have been revised as suggested, indicating a 1 for biodiversity.

2. Project Summary.

a) Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected outcomes?

b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?

c) [If a child project under a program] Does the project summary include adequate and substantive link with the parent program goal and approach?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Sept 10, 2025:

The explicit articulation of the climate problem, based on current and anticipated hazards and their impacts, is appreciated. The project also explains how the solutions are focused directly on these problems.

Agency Response

3. Project Description Overview

- a) **Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?**
- b) **[If a child project under a program] Is there a project Theory of Change that is aligned and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?**
- c) **Are the components, outcomes, and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?**
- d) **Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?**
- e) **Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**
- f) **Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

Sept 10, 2025:

- a) Given the focus in component 3 related to incubation of micro, small and medium businesses that provide climate adaptation and resilience goods and services, please consider importance and options for strengthening EbA technical skills support in throughout relevant activities in component 1 focused on entrepreneurs and possibly also farmers. Please ensure this technical awareness building and training in commercially viable EbA solutions adapted to the local context also includes a strong focus on inclusive financial service providers, including microfinance institutions, credit unions, and other local financial services providers including NGOs, banks, etc.
- b) Please strengthen Component 3 to include a robust focus on making accessible capital available to entrepreneurs and small holder farmers for IGAs by transitioning to climate resilient practices and/or creating IGAs that provide climate adaptation goods and services to local populations. Accessible capital to enable the cost of transitioning and IGA incubation is essential for the EbAs and entrepreneurship training to be of use. Please consider outputs and activities to achieve this, in collaboration with inclusive financial service providers. In doing so, please consider the potential for grant based guarantees with financial service providers, in order to enable the creation of lines of credit for IGAs and farmers to invest in EbAs and EbA goods and service provision to others. In doing, so, please consider the learning and experience of other UNEP led initiatives such as Microfinance for Ecosystem Based Adaptation (MEbA), CC Blend financed by SCCF, and others.
- c) For example, in output 3.1.2. please reconsider a sinking grant fund to developing a sustainable model of accessible capital to IGAs and farmers in ways that are more financially sustainable than a sinking grant fund, and would not create distortions in the market by providing grants to a limited number of IGAs. Options could including partnering with inclusive financial service providers by providing an interest rate buy down for micro loans focused on IGAs and farmers doing EbAs; or a community based microfinance with a relevant local organization; or otherwise.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

a) Component 1 remains centered on the overall vertical integration and management of EbA solutions within the Mauritanian institutional framework. Some of the beneficiaries under Output 1.1.2 will also be those benefiting from Components 2 and 3, which center more specifically on the technical training related to EbA. Under Component 3, in particular, there is a focus on inclusive financial services, which has been better highlighted under Output 3.1.2 (CBO training) and under the new Output 3.1.4 (MFI support). In terms of training of MFIs, there are funds allocated (Output 3.1.4).

b and c) Output 3.1.2 has been rethought, taking into account the comments and further consultations with partners. Moved to a new position as Output 3.1.4, the project will invest in financing of existing credit lines that cater to small producers in arid zones; the proposed mechanism is subsidized loans (grant-backed loans), with a particular focus on climate-resilient, sustainable natural resource-based activities. This will build on existing and past efforts undertaken by Enabel through EU funding, and will include training of MFI staff, ongoing support of CBOs and MSMEs which take out loans, and continued awareness raising on relevant and targeted MFI products.

4. Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?

b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?

c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 10, 2025:

Please strengthen the role of financial institutions, including inclusive financial service providers, to ensure MSMEs and farmers can access the capital they need at accessible terms in order to build their IGAs and transition to more climate resilient practices.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

See previous answer on restructuring of Output 3.1.4.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?

b) [If a child project under a program] Is the Theory of change aligned with and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region? [If a child project under a program] Does the description include how the alternative aligns with and contributes to the overall program

goal and approach?

- d) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?
- e) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?
- f) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?
- g) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?
- h) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this FSP/MSP)?
- i) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?
- j) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and description/s?
- k) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?
- l) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?
- m) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? [If a child project under an integrated program] Are the specific levers of transformation identified and described? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

September 10, 2025:

Yes

Agency Response

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project

- a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?
- b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?
- c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).
- d) [If a child project under an integrated program] Does the framework for coordination and collaboration demonstrate consistency with overall ambition of the program for transformative change?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 11, 2025:

A) We note the CER indicates other relevant projects, including several supported by GEF, including in paragraphs 222 to 228. Please expand on how this project is necessary and its value added to the extensive set of other previous and ongoing complementary projects.

B) Please explain the complementarity specifically with relevant projects in Mauritania and the GGW region, including but not limited to the following projects:

- Project ID 10634 "Harnessing the GGWI for a sustainable and resilient Sahel". GET LD. Implemented by UNEP.

- Project ID 11455 "Transformation Approach to Large Scale Investment in Support of the Implementation of the GGWI". Supported by LDCF. PFD. Implemented by UNEP.

- Project ID 11000 "GGW Climate Change Adaptation Regional Support Project" with LDCF support. Implemented by IFAD.

- Project ID 11746 "Sahel Bilateral Capacity Building, Coordination and Climate Services: with LDCF support. Implemented by World Bank.

- Project ID 10103 "Climate change adaptation and livelihoods in three arid regions of Mauritania" With LDDF support. Implemented by UNEP.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

This section has been strengthened, in particular highlighting the multiscale approach of the project, from site-specific investments to contributing to the regional effort, as well as capitalizing on previous experiences and scaling up when appropriate, all while providing space for innovations. Specific references to the projects are included.

5.3 Core indicators

a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)? [If a child project under a program] Is the choice of core indicators consistent with those prioritized under the parent program?

b) Are the project's targeted contributions to GEBS (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable? Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

Sept 10, 2025:

Given the GEF financing is \$20 million, please identify opportunities to increase the impact ambition for all 5 core indicators and reflect this in higher indicator numbers.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

Four of the core indicators have been revised:

Core indicator 2: There is the inclusion on a new activity (drone-assisted seedball reforestation), which will add 2,000 ha under Output 2.1.1. Furthermore, the hectareage of the new FACI (20 new FACI of approx. 2 ha each) is now included. The new target is therefore 5,540 ha.

Core indicator 3: This now includes the updated ANGMV Strategy and Work Plan, which will be climate mainstreamed with project support, focusing on strengthening the integration of climate change adaptation and EbA approaches.

Core indicator 4: This indicator target now includes the number of people with raised awareness, as well as those trained by the project. The new target has been estimated at 50,000 people, to be targeted by outputs under Component 4, and including all the trained people under Components 1 to 3, which is estimated at 4,370 (2,445 women).

Core indicator 5: The broadening of the microfinance support under Output 3.1.4 sees 600 MSMEs or CBOs to be supported.

5.4 Risks

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?

b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 10, 2025:

A) With regards to the risk of "Financial and Business Model", it is important to strengthen the strategy to manage this risk and thereby support financial sustainability of the outcomes after the project is completed. We note the brief comment on "promoting microfinance institutions", but this needs to be strengthened in the project. We also note that a new grant mechanism is individual dependent, which is not conducive to sustainability. As indicated above, please rethink and revise the grant mechanism for a more sustainable strategy, considering sustainability of the outcomes after the project ends.

B) Please explain how the overall risk rating was identified.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

a) The "Financial and Business Model" risk has been redefined, after also addressing the previous GEF comments.

b) An explanation of the overall risk rating has been added.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

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

6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy?

b) [If a child project under an integrated program] Is the project adequately aligned with the program objective in the GEF-8 programming directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

September 10, 2025:

Yes

Agency Response

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 10, 2025:

Please ensure and strengthen articulation of alignment with regional GGW and Sahel initiatives and institutions. For example, how is this project linked with the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall, and the Alliance of the Sahel States. Especially given the proposed scale of GEF finance of \$20 million, please ensure strong institutional and political linkages in this project in order to enable institutional sustainability of the outcomes after the project funds end.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

There is now a section under Section C (Alignment with GEF-8, regional and national priorities) which outlines how the project is in line with the regional GGW effort and the Sahel Alliance (as well as under the Coordination section, as two members of the Sahel Alliance are providing cofinancing for the project). There is also mention of alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Framework and the UNCCD.

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 10, 2025:

Given the extensive references to EbA, NbS, and biodiversity, please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s).

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

Please see previous answer. The project's contribution towards six of the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework targets is now included under Section C.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

September 10, 2025:

Pending comments from OP colleagues.

Agency Response

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

September 10, 2025:

Yes

Agency Response

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 10, 2025:

Please indicate where and with which file name the Stakeholder Engagement Plan is uploaded, or upload it.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is included in the file ?Appendices to CEO Endorsement?, under Appendix 5c.

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

September 10, 2025:

Yes

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: Is the proposed GEF financing (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply): STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

September 10, 2025:

Yes

Agency Response

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestYes

Agency Response

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

a) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

Sept 2025:

1. Please breakdown the costs of categories embedded with International and National consultants ? specifically, present the costs of stakeholder consultations / international and local travel / workshops and local travel costs.

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GET/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
International consultant team to lead on the development of the CEO Endorsement Request documentation (includes stakeholder consultations, information collection, specialized studies and background reports, submissions and book review, and drafting of project documentation)	186,000.00	76,000.00	110,000.00
National consultant team to undertake stakeholder consultations, information collection, and drafting of consultation and workshops reports (includes workshop and local travel costs)	110,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
Capacity assessment of ANGMV	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00
Total	300,000.00	126,000.00	174,000.00

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

The breakdown of the costs for the various categories has been added in Annex D, and the figures have been updated to reflect the current status of PPG utilization.

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?

Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request Yes

Agency Response

8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 14, 2025:

Cleared, pending final review and clearance from OP.

Nov 11, 2025:

Please provide all co-financing letters ASAP, noting this project is due to be cancelled shortly if not fully approved. Please submit by November 20, 2025 at the latest, to enable sufficient time to review again and process.

September 2025:

1. Please include the supporting cofinancing letter from each listed co-financing sources.

Agency Response

14 November 2025:

All remaining co-financing letters have been provided (from ANGMV and UNEP). Enabel co-financing (\$4.6M) has been removed, reducing the total co-finance amount from \$51.2M to \$46.6.

3 November 2025:

The cofinancing letter from AFD has been uploaded on the portal. Other letters are expected in the next few weeks.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) If ? and only if - this is a global or regional project for which not all country-based interventions were known at PIF stage and, therefore, not all LOEs provided:

Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?

b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets

correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)

c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?

d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

e)[If a regional/global coordination child project under an integrated program] Does the results framework reflect the program-wide result framework, inclusive of results from child projects and specific to the regional/global coordination child project? [If a country child project under an integrated program] Is the child project result framework inclusive of program-wide metrics monitored across child project by the Regional/Global Child project?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 10, 2025:

Please note comments above on increasing indicator ambition

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

The indicator ambition has been increased, as outlined in the response above.

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 10, 2025:

We note the map. Please include coordinates.

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

Coordinates have been added on the GEF portal.

Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Documentation and Rating

8.8 Have the relevant safeguard documents been uploaded to the GEF Portal? Has the safeguards rating been provided and filled out in the ER field below the risk table?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 11, 2025:

Cleared

September 26, 2025:

The ESS supporting document (ESMF) suggests that Mauritania does not recognize Indigenous Peoples. It is important to note that Mauritania is home to Indigenous Peoples, and this can be assessed in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and ILO Convention 169 criteria. Under the GEF's ESS on Indigenous Peoples, which aligns with UNDRIP, self-identification of Indigenous Peoples is a core principle, independent of state recognition or ratification of UNDRIP or ILO169. Therefore, we request the following actions:

1.
 1. Revise the Project Document (PD) and reassess the ESS to clearly indicate the measures the implementing agencies will take if Indigenous Peoples and local communities are present or encountered in the project area or during implementation.
 2. Specify that the implementing agency will comply with the ESS requirements, including Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) and meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities throughout project design and implementation.
 3. Reflect these changes in the PD Key Risks section/ESS summary

Agency Response

3 November 2025:

The Safeguard screening and ESMF have been amended to clarify that there is no national data available on indigenous peoples. During the PPG phase, there were no self-identified indigenous peoples or groups encountered. However, due to the possibility of these being identified during project implementation (the Great Green Wall can be home to Fulani or Peuhl, nomadic agropastoralists), the ESS documentation clearly states the need for the Safeguard Officer to devise FPIC procedures and ensure the training of project staff, as well as for the integration of said measures into any implementing partner agreements. Reminders of the need to include FPIC processes if self-identifying groups are in target sites are included in the document, mainly under Component 2.

The risk has been added to the stakeholder category in the Project Document Key risk section.

Annex G: GEF Budget template

8.9 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?

b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 18, 2025:

This is cleared.

Nov 17, 2025:

There are three positions associated with the project's management/technical guidance: (i) Part-time Chief Technical Advisor (\$240,000); (ii) Project Coordinator (\$170,100); and (iii) Regional Technical Officer (\$300,000). It is typically not advised to add multiple layers of management inside the PMU from a value-for-money perspective. Therefore, please identify opportunities to merge the positions to carry out managerial and technical responsibilities, also indicating where the unused funds will be allocated.

The three positions remain in the budget with even higher allocated funds: (i) Part-time Chief Technical Advisor (\$316,800); (ii) Project Coordinator (\$170,100); and (iii) five Regional Technical Officers (\$330,000). Please reduce the budget for these positions.

Nov 11, 2025:

Again, please note that purchase of vehicles is not permitted with GEF finance. Please move to co-finance or otherwise.

September 10, 2025:

a) Please note that purchase of vehicles is not permitted with GEF finance. Please move to co-finance or otherwise. Also, the fuel costs are exorbitant. Please revise.

b) Please provide a breakdown of the following large items: (including detailing items required, estimated unit costs, number of each item, etc)

- All items under "Works" and "Goods" that total over \$200,000.

- Grants/sub grants indicated as "Small FACI - new", "support for existing FACI", and "2 year research grant". Please explain what these will do, and what the breakdown of their budget is for each.

- "PDCR development and validation contract" of \$550,000

- Under other operating costs, please clarify what "and communication budget" is for.

- Regarding workshop expenses, there seems to be duplication with budget above for a contract for workshops. Also, a breakdown of workshops and meetings is required. For example for the international meeting/workshop requiring \$200,000 X 2.

c) \$104,000 for "EbA knowledge and capacity training workshop development and animation" seems very high. How many workshops is this for? Please reduce and provide an explanation of how many workshops, for how many people for each workshop, etc.

d) What is the Regional Technical Officer going to do and why are they needed at \$100,000/annum, given all the other functions.

e) The budget for several of the items listed seems very high and generalized. Please reduce budget for several of the items in order to significantly increase budget for component 3 including incentivizing and derisking inclusive financial service providers to provide accessible capital for enterprises and farmers to transition.

f) M&E component lacks outputs and outcomes ? please ask the Agency to complete.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)						
M&E	Technical Assistance			LDCF	555,250.00	1,500,000.00
Sub Total (\$)					17,189,524.00	46,562,348.00

h) Budget table - In addition:

- Column 'Responsible Entity' is missed ? please ask the Agency to include it.
- We could not find the TORs of the project personnel ? please ask the Agency to amend.
- The budget line 'Mechanical fixation of Dune' (\$4,165,000) requires more detail in the budget table ? as you mentioned, a better explanation to many other budget lines (Roundtable; International Meeting Workshop, etc.) is required under the column 'Detailed Description' (note: please ask the Agency to provide the explanation with a reasonable amount of words ? not with long paragraphs)
- Though already mentioned by you in the Review Sheet, we also believe that the cost of fuel (\$642,500) is outrageous.
- There are three positions associated with the project's management/technical guidance: (i) Part-time Chief Technical Advisor (\$240,000); (ii) Project Coordinator (\$170,100); and (iii) Regional Technical Officer (\$300,000). It is typically not advised to add multiple layers of management inside the PMU from a value-for-money perspective. Therefore, please ask the Agency to merge the positions in one for this position to carry out managerial and technical responsibilities, also indicating where the unused funds will be allocated.
- Same as above applies to other two positions: Finance and Administration Officer and Administrative Assistant. Please ask the Agency to merge these two positions in one for this position to carry out administrative responsibilities, also indicating where the unused funds will be allocated.
- When resubmitted, we will review the budget table again and provide comments as appropriate.

Agency Response

18 November 2025:

The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) effort has been reduced, resulting in a budget allocation reduction of (USD 79,200) from USD 316,800 to USD 237,600. The funds have been reallocated to the microfinance-related activities under Output 3.1.4 (credit line and support to CBOs/MSMEs), as well as to increase the unit cost (from \$600 to \$620 / hectare) for the innovative revegetation technologies under Output 2.1.1. These revisions have been reflected

across the various budget formats in the Excel sheet tabs (including the GEF format budget), and highlighted in yellow.

13 November 2025:

The vehicles have been removed from the GEF-financed budget (and will be provided to the extent possible as part of the ANGMV in-kind co-finance). The funds have been re-allocated to maintenance costs for the co-financed vehicle and to car rental. These budget lines have been highlighted in yellow in the budget Excel file.

3 November 2025:

i) Considering the geographic scope of the project (over 1,000 km between the PMU offices in Nouakchott and the furthest regional office) and limited travel options (limited road network, limited rental options), as well as the expressed need for increased presence and visibility of project staff on the ground by the beneficiaries, the Executing Agency feels that there is a case for 2 vehicles. In particular, two of the wilayas (Hodh El Gharbi and Hodh El Chargui) have, up to now, limited presence of the ANGMV. Vehicles will help ensure longer term presence of the ANGMV to support the upscaling of the project intervention strategy. However, the fuel costs have been reduced by more than half after revision of budget notes. This was done by re-evaluating the use of the cars, and clarifying cofinancing from government partners.

ii) Budget notes and further details are included in the UNEP format budget, which is included in the Appendices document (and also provided as a separate document in the portal documents repository). These budget notes have now been integrated into the GEF budget format. Each line includes the overall details of the envelope provided.

Some of the specifics include:

? All ?works? and ?goods? items are detailed as to what is included.

? Details for each of these sub grants are added in budget, with additional references to specific activities in the Project Document.

? PDC development and validation contract cost has been reduced (to \$250,000), with details provided on the included items and costs. These are based on cost estimates from the experience of the LDCF AMSTRA project (GEF ID 10103).

? Communication budget includes details, and corrections have been made in its use (it had been duplicated).

? International workshop / meeting has a unit cost of \$8,000, based on an average estimate from the ANGMV. 25 trips are budgeted for, including in particular the coordination, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building meetings under the TALSISI GGWI Regional Program and its Regional Coordination child project. These costs are expected to be covered by the country child projects.

iii) "EbA knowledge and capacity training workshop development and animation" refers to two separate contracts, both with similar objectives, but different target audience (the first for output 1.1.1, institutional and technical stakeholders, and the second for output 1.1.2 for local communities). The amounts have been revised, and details included.

iv) Regional Technical Officers (RTOs) are field staff for the project, and play a key role in ensuring consistent and continuous engagement with community stakeholders, as this was identified as a barrier and a need during consultations. The budget represents 5 staff members, not a single one ? each will be responsible for a single wilaya.

In response to the project management comment (under comment vii), the Regional Office Managers have now been removed, leaving the RTOs directly under the management of the

PMU, and each responsible for the activities within their target wilaya. A slight increase in salary has been included due to additional responsibilities and reporting duties.

v) All budget lines have been reviewed, with costs reallocated to increase indicator targets, and for incentivizing and derisking inclusive financial service providers to provide accessible capital. The main savings are linked to the reduction in fuel costs (car and motorcycles), the reduction of cost in the PDC development sub-contract, and removal of 2 PMU staff (the Regional Office Managers).

vi) An outcome and an output have been added to the M&E component in the summary table, and a description has been added in the Project Document (immediately after the project component and activity descriptions).

vii) The comments have been addressed as follows.

? Responsible Entity column has been added.

? ToRs are available in the Appendices document, as Appendix 5e.

? Detailed descriptions of the ?mechanical fixation of dunes? budget lines, as well as other lines, have been provided. Please also see response (ii) above, on how the more detailed budget file is structured.

? Fuel costs have been reduced.

? Project management structure has been streamlined, removing the Regional Office Managers.

? The Administrative Assistant has been kept. The senior Financial and Administrative Officer (the official title) is the one that will have financial oversight of the project. The Administrative Assistant will be a more junior position, who will allow to facilitate the coordination of the project: the geographic, financial and technical scope of the project is large, and ensuring smooth coordination among the various staff, partners and beneficiaries will require time and cannot simply be allocated to in-kind cofinancing. While the ANGMV will provide administrative staff (for instance, procurement), having a project assistant will greatly facilitate the implementation, and represents a relatively minor cost (60,000 USD over the course of 60 months).

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.

b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.

c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation

Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Nov 18, 2025:

This is cleared by the PM and OP.

Nov 17, 2025:

One comment is remaining related to budget.

Nov 14, 2025:

Cleared, pending final review and clearance by OP.

Nov 11, 2025:

Please address remaining comments.

September 10, 2025:

Please address the comments.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	9/10/2025	11/3/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	9/26/2025	11/14/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/11/2025	11/18/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/14/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/17/2025	