

# Enabling Land Degradation Neutrality and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions in Cameroon?s Sudano- Sahelian agro-ecological zone

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10608

**Countries**

Cameroon

**Project Name**

Enabling Land Degradation Neutrality and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions in Cameroon?s Sudano-Sahelian agro-ecological zone

**Agencies**

FAO

**Date received by PM**

6/11/2020

**Review completed by PM**

**Program Manager**

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy

**Focal Area**

Land Degradation

**Project Type**

MSP

## **PIF**

### **Part I ? Project Information**

#### **Focal area elements**

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

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

The proposed project aims to support 1) the LDN enabling environment and 2) the implementation of LDN at municipal level. The project is aligned with the LD 2.5 Objective.

#### Agency Response

##### **Indicative project/program description summary**

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

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Please, understand that the question about the definition of "resilient seeds" is not a semantic issue: Some donors do not see positively the use of GEF resources for GM

seeds for instance. Please confirm that your definition of resilient seeds does not include GMO.

### **June 30, 2020**

The result framework is sufficiently clear, but please address the points below:

- The level of cofinancing almost reaches 1:10, except for the project management costs (1:2). It is not a good signal. We suggest increasing this ratio, also by exploring opportunities to increase cofinancing for the pmc, notably from FAO and the executing partners.
- In the text, we suggest you describe well the role of cofinancing for each component (\$1.2 million for the component 1, \$15 million for the component 2). It should be a way to better justify the use of GEF resources and focus them on additional activities related to LDN.
- We would like to see clear outputs related to sustainability, including financing mechanisms. The output 1.1.5. (Funding Proposal for LDN Municipal Model Scale-up) is not enough. Please explore national and local opportunities related to microfinancing. This is one of the reasons to increase the general budget of the project (see below).
- Please, provide the definition of "resilient seeds".

### **February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

#### **Agency Response**

Consistent with the Biosafety Law of Cameroon (Biosafety Decree, 2007), we confirm that the project will not promote the use of GMO seeds, and it is highlighted in the text and the footnote in the resubmitted PIF.

This shall be ensured through the project monitoring and supervision system.

Thank you.

#### **Co-financing**

**3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**April 22, 2021**

We take note of the cofinancing from FAO considered as a grant and reflected as recurrent expenditures. Explanations are provided. We understand it is a compromise to reflect the interventions from existing projects and staff. Cleared under the condition the quality control also accepts the rationale.

**February 19, 2021**

Please, confirm cofinancing at CEO approval.

**June 30, 2020**

We take note of the cofinancing from IFAD with the PAFDA2. We suggest you better describe the role of PAFDA2 activities in the result framework description to focus GEF resources on LDN related activities (enabling environment and implementation in the districts).

Agency Response

Description updated ? the role of PAFDAII co-financing included in the component descriptions.

**GEF Resource Availability**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**April 22, 2021**

A new letter of endorsement was included at the last submission, allowing a project grant of \$2,000,000, a PPG of \$50,000, and associated fees, for a total of \$2,244,750.

Agency fees have been updated in the portal.

Cleared

**June 30, 2020**

Yes.

The requested amount of GEF resources for this project is \$1,885,000 (project grant, PPG, associated fees).

Agency Response

**The STAR allocation?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**February 19, 2021**

We take note of the increase of the budget, up to \$2 million

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

We find the level of this MSP (project grant = \$1.671 million; \$1.885 million with PPG and fees) relatively low to address the ambition of the project. We suggest you open discussion with the GEF OFP, as there are unused resources in Cameroon's STAR allocations. It would be possible, in theory, to increase the project grant up to \$2 million + PPG and fees. To be discussed with the GEF OFP, and confirmed with a revised letter of endorsement.

Agency Response Project grant increased to \$2,000,000.

**The focal area allocation?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

**The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

**Focal area set-aside?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

**Impact Program Incentive?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

**Project Preparation Grant**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes

Agency Response

**Core indicators**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

Yes, but please address the following points:

- For the carbon indicator, please provide the EXACT tables with one page of explanation of the reasoning, and justification of assumptions and criteria.

- Please, provide a definition of SLM applicable to cotton fields. The work on commodities, as cotton, is complicated, as cotton in the Northern part of Cameroon is responsible of forest destruction and land degradation: 1) Confirm that the GEF project will not promote the extension of cotton fields and will not contribute to forest

destruction, 2) Define SLM in the context of cotton, and explain the multiple gains for lands, soils, water, and vegetation.

#### Agency Response

Land-based GHG emission reduction estimate revised using EXACT tool. Included in the submission.

Yes, work on commodities is complicated. Yet, as in the FOLUR IP case, because these are often in important landscapes, sometimes working on them cannot be avoided to protect the environment.

The negative features of cotton (driving deforestation, degrading soil) apply to its production in a monoculture / shifting cultivation/slash and burn scenario. This is all the more reason why this crop should be addressed through agroecological SLM. Examples of conservation farming practices include those currently being applied in SODECOTON demonstration plots, where they are rotating with sorghum, alhalpa, onion, garlic; implementing no till and cover crop solutions etc. While the planned partnership with SODECOTON will not matriculate (for a variety of other reasons) PADFA farmers do farm cotton amongst many other crops. Through project Output 1.1.2 the agroecological SLM package developed will mainstream relevant elements of SODECOTON's demonstration plots for the benefit of mainstreaming conservation cotton practices into PADFA cooperative farmers cultivation practices.

#### Project/Program taxonomy

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes.

#### Agency Response

#### Part II ? Project Justification

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

Yes, but we would like to see a more accurate description of LDN targets in the North and Far North regions: please, provide zoning, # of ha, objectives of protection, SLM, and/or restoration.

Agency Response Targets for the North/Far North have not been set. The purpose of component 1 is, in part to, help establish an LDN baseline and accordingly set targets for municipalities in the North / Far North. We do not know yet what these will be and cannot report on them. The best indication that we have of the scale of the problem is the extent of land degradation in these areas as reported in hectareage by MINADER. This has been included in the PIF: ?Table 1. State of land degradation in Sudano-Sahelian zone of Cameroon?.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

We take note of the Theory of Change and the proposed project trajectory. On one hand, we find the project very (over?) ambitious in regards to the proposed budget, on the other hand, we question the sustainability aspects, especially related to financing. Please, revise, and adjust (more elements on these aspects below).

Agency Response

Revised ? a new output 1.1.7 on financing has been added.



The targets have been revised because the partnership that was foreseen with SODECOTON has been de-emphasized.

Perhaps these targets were over-ambitious given the GEF grant, but we took into account the fact that the project (component 2) is going to be anchored on a relatively large IFAD investment - which increases the scope of impact and cost-effectiveness.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

The incremental reasoning is acceptable in the main lines. However, the incremental reasoning (table 2) is a little caricatured, as the PAFDA and the PAFDA2 are parts of the baseline situation. The goal of PAFDA II is to contribute to poverty reduction and improve food and nutrition security within the targeted populations. The development objective is to increase the incomes and resilience of family farmers producing rice and onion in the project area in a sustainable manner. It is an over-simplification to say that the usual scenario will contribute to "Accelerating soil erosion, declining soil fertility, deforestation & vegetation loss, the increased incidence of flooding, soil and water pollution, and uncontrolled use of fire is likely to continue"(table 2)? "

It would be fair to develop the baseline situation from the PAFDA2 framework and justify the use of additional GEF resources to implement LDN targets at municipal level. It would also be a way to revise the result framework to focus on LDN, sustainability, and the generation of global environment benefits (SLM and land restoration), and keep a certain distance from the activities related to commodity value chains.

### Agency Response

The incremental reasoning has been revised. As mentioned, PADFAII design already anticipated co-financing from the GEF for SLM TA. So, while PADFAII itself may not contribute to accelerating soil erosion etc. it does not address these existing issues in the target regions/landscapes. Under the baseline scenario, it is reasonable to predict these conditions would continue because of unsustainable land management practices.

The other thing is that PADFAII focuses on providing support *to onion and rice farmers* ? as it was only designed for development of the onion/rice value chains. The GEF leverages the onion/rice cooperative system to further extends SLM provision across the whole cooperative landscape to help achieve LDN.

Incremental reasoning revised to clarify.

**6. Are the project/s/program?s indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

Please, provide a definition of SLM applicable to cotton fields, as well as ricefields, with multiple gains for lands, soils, water, and vegetation.

Agency Response This has been addressed in earlier comments, and more emphasis on this point has been included in the document. It should be noted that this question will be fully answered at the end of project preparation when an agroecological SLM package is developed.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

The implementation of LDN at district and municipal level is indeed innovative and promising, with high opportunities for scaling up.

However, we would like to see more attention on sustainability aspects. Developing a project proposal is not a satisfactory response and represents a very partial element of sustainability. We suggest you explore national and local solutions, including microfinancing institutions, national banks for agriculture and/or development, the private sector, and the Ministry of Finance (MINFI/DGTFCM/Microfinance Division). Please, revise.

Agency Response This has been addressed ? through a specific output on finance under component 1. To be further refined during PPG.

**Project/Program Map and Coordinates**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Addressed

**February 19, 2021**

The proposed map is confusing.

- We expect the GEF project in selected districts of the North and Far North regions. Please, provide a map highlighting the selected districts,

- A map of the existing LDN targets, and especially those in the North and Far North regions, would be welcome.

Please, revise.

Agency Response New map included. To be improved further during PPG.

**Stakeholders**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

No.

- The annex F includes a list of stakeholders, but there is no information about missions, meetings, or consultations, number of people, etc. We do not know how these entities and partners were consulted to prepare this concept. Please, provide this information.

- The issue of Indigenous People is a sensitive issue, especially in the region. There is no information on these groups in the concept and no reminder about the legal context in Cameroon (cf the Constitution). To be completed.

- To be coherent with the approach developed under other GEF programs and projects in the region and Cameroon, we would like to ensure that Indigenous People representatives have been involved and contacted at concept stage, and FPIC approaches will be the rule for further project development. Please, complete.

- We recommend getting contact with the REPALEAC at regional level and its national representatives. We recommend referring to their regional strategy. For information, the deputy coordinator in Cameroon is from the Northern region.

#### Agency Response

- OK this has been updated.

- OK this has been updated.

- OK this has been updated.

- A meeting was held with Mrs Balkissou Bouba of Network of indigenous people and local communities for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems of central Africa (REPALEAC) and Mrs Didja-Djaili GARGA (Coordinator of the GREEN SAFE Association). Exchanges with Mrs Balkissou Bouba showed that GEF-7 project will contribute to the implementation of axes 2 and 4 of Strategy 2018-2025 for the sustainable development of indigenous peoples and local communities in central Africa (IPLCs) on; 2) participation of IPLCs in decisions on access to and sustainable management of lands, forests, and natural resources at local, national and international levels; 4) improvement of the living conditions of IPLCS.

#### **Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

No.

Gender issues are included in some outputs, but there is almost no information about the status of women in agriculture in the considered regions, and no analysis about the inequalities due to gender (access to land, credits, training; governance, decision making systems...). We do not see how the project is going to contribute to fighting these inequalities. Please, 1) provide more information on these subjects and 2) mainstream these aspects in the result framework.

### Agency Response

See paragraph 5: Background on gender inequality in the two regions.

Output 1.1.6: Project helps women overcome inequities in access to land and natural resource access.

Output 2.1.2 is a major output and it focuses on generating supplemental income for women ? this also targets women household nutritional status / reduced infant mortality (and further complimented by IFAD Output 2.4, ?supporting improved household nutritional status?.

Through the addition of output 1.1.7, women will also be targeted for credit screening for microfinance opportunities.

Thus, there are numerous activities contributing to several main dimensions of gender inequality (income generation, land and resource equality, nutrition and health).

Specific targets will developed/refined during PPG.

### Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

Partially, related to the PAFDA2.

Do you consider the SODECOTON as private sector?

This section should be improved at CEO approval.

#### Agency Response

Yes SODECOTON is private sector. It was fully privatized as noted in paragraph 3.

It should be noted that SODECOTON as a co-financing partner has been discontinued ? however as cotton is a major crop being produced in the North and Far North, efforts to understand SODECOTON's promotion of conservation farming (through demonstration plots) will be noted and incorporated as necessary into the SLM package.

#### Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion February 19, 2021

Addressed.

#### June 30, 2020

- The proposed project will deal with commodity related value chains (cotton, rice). We recommend a cautious approach, taking into account potential risks, also reputation risks, as these commodities are a cause of forest destruction and land-use change. The GEF cannot be associated to the destruction of forest, especially primary forest, for commodity development. Please, revise.

- The context of REDD+ has relatively been complicated in Cameroon in a recent period, with potentially consequences on the way to implement and execute projects (financial management). We would like to see these aspects included in the risk analysis at PIF level, and further developed at CEO approval stage.

- Don't you think that the COVID-19 situation is potentially a risk for the agriculture sector in the two considered regions? Please, revise.

- We are seeing the lack of gender mainstreaming in this project as a potential risk of failure, especially on the long-term (sustainability).

## Agency Response

By de-linking on the ground activities with SODECOTON the revised PIF takes a more cautious approach. Working with farmers who happen to be farming cotton in their cultivation mix is not a material risk to the project.

There is no direct connection with REDD+ in this project. Implementation arrangements and financial management will be further developed during project preparation. This includes an independent assessment of any and all executing agencies (by an independent audit firm) prior to confirmation of implementation arrangements.

Following the COVID-19 project design guidance, risk aspects have been taken into consideration - please see the risk section and output 1.1.6 description. Within the indigenous groups who are more vulnerable to the virus through their lack of access to health services and isolation from mainstream society and cultural messaging. This has been addressed in the document, particularly in Output 1.1.6.

Please see response to earlier comment on gender. See paragraph 5. Also, Output 2.1.2 is a major output and it focuses on just this. Outcome 1.1.7, which focuses on developing microfinance tools has been updated accordingly to target women.

## Coordination

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

There are interesting opportunities for coordination with other projects and initiatives. To be developed at CEO approval, in good intelligence with local governance.

Agency Response Yes, thanks.  
**Consistency with National Priorities**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.

**June 30, 2020**

The main strategic documents are mentioned. However, we are surprised to not find a mention of LDN targets in this section (see the NAP under UNCCD). We would like to see a more detailed analysis of LDN targets for the considered region. Please, revise.

Agency Response The national targets are mentioned. See Paragraph 24, description of the GEF6 Target setting project. There are no targets set for the North or the Far North yet. The proposed project will help Cameroon define these targets for the project regions and contribute towards their achievement.

**Knowledge Management**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**February 19, 2021**

Addressed.



**June 30, 2020**

The initial risk assessment concludes to a "moderate" risk.

Two safeguards are triggered (management of planted forests and indigenous people).

To be confirmed/completed at CEO approval (biodiversity? land tenure? ...)

Agency Response Yes, to be completed during PPG.

**Part III ? Country Endorsements**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**February 19, 2021**

Yes, a revised letter of endorsement is provided, requesting a \$2 million project grant.

**June 30, 2020**

Yes.

Agency Response

**Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects**

**Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.**

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

NA

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion  
**April 22, 2021**

All points are addressed. The PIF is recommended for clearance.

**February 19, 2021.**

Please, clarify the remaining question in the item 1 and on a revised package we will recommend technically the PIF for clearance.

**June 30, 2020**

The PIF cannot be recommended for technical clearance yet. Please, address the comments above.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

**Review Dates**

	<b>PIF Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>6/30/2020</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>2/19/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>4/22/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		

**PIF Recommendation to CEO**

**Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval**