

Managing Peatlands in Mongolia and Enhancing the Resilience of Pastoral Ecosystems and Livelihoods of Nomadic Herders

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10545

Countries

Global (Mongolia)

Project Name

Managing Peatlands in Mongolia and Enhancing the Resilience of Pastoral Ecosystems and Livelihoods of Nomadic Herders

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

11/29/2021

Review completed by PM

1/31/2022

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Land Degradation

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

12/23/2021: ADDITIONAL REQUEST:

Please revise the expected implementation start to a future date that can be realistically achieved.

01/27/2022: Addressed.

01/31/2022: NOT CORRECTLY ADDRESSED.

Please correct both the start and end date to March 15, it should be in line with project duration of 48 months.

02/03/2022: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

01/21/2022

The start of implementation date was revised to March 15 in the CEO Endorsement Request Document.

02/03/2022

We corrected the start and the end dates. see the screenshot

Expected Implementation Start

03/15/2022

Expected Completion Date

03/14/2026

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

12/01/2021: Yes. There have been some minor changes compared to the PIF stage, which have all been explained and fully justified.

12/23/2021: ADDITIONAL REQUEST:

Please include the missing outcomes and outputs for the M&E Component in Table B.

01/27/2022: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

01/21/2022

Agreed and done: outcomes and three distinct outputs for the M&E Component included in Table B. Additionally also included in the ProDoc and LogFrame.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

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

12/01/2021: No.

- The UNEP co-financing letter specifically states that the contribution is "in kind" while the table C indicates "grant". Please align.

- Reviewer could not locate the 4 commitment letters from the recipient government entities. Please provide.

12/23/2021: Further comment:

- Wildlife science and conservation center of Mongolia ? as per the co-financing letter, change the entries to ?In-kind? and ?Recurrent expenditures?.

01/27/2022: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

12/09/2021

UNEP's commitment as expressed in the co-finance letter indeed states that the contribution is ?in-kind? and Table C is reflecting this now correctly.

The commitment letters of the Government of Mongolia are now reflected in Annex 12 Co-Financing letters, with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism expressing in-kind commitment of US\$6 million and three local authorities, Aimags, expressing in-kind commitment of in total US\$3.5 million.

01/21/2022

We changed the WSCC co-finance entry on table C to in-kind on the portal.

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

12/01/2021: No. While Table D is adequate, the GEF budget could not be fully assessed.

Comments on the budget:

- Please present the budget in line with the proposed GEF budget template per categories, not per year. The annual presentation makes it difficult to assess which costs are charged to project components, M&E, and PMC. The GEF budget template is provided in the Guidelines for Project and Program Cycle Policy.

- Audit costs are not eligible under M&E.

- Further comments may be made based on the re-submitted budget.

12/23/2021: Further comments:

- The three budget items (1) computer for Project Manager, (2) furniture, and (3) computers for local staff should be charged to the PMC rather than to the components.

- We could not locate the Appendix 11 in the latest PRODOC and it seems to be not uploaded separately either. This is relevant since we noticed that the project manager, policy and outreach specialist, and local staff as well as other M&E specialist have been charged directly to the projects components + PMC, but we could not find the ToR to double check the specific contribution to these components (as required as per GEF Guidelines).

- Travel for staff to do M&E should be charged to the M&E budget and not to the components.

01/27/2022: Budget comments addressed.

DISCREPANCY FOUND: Please correct the entries in Table D. The source for the Mongolia amount is STAR, not regional/global set-aside. Please bring in line with what was approved at PIF stage.

01/31/2022: Table D corrected.

NEW ISSUE: The budget table that is pasted in Annex F is now off the margins and has a break in between, please edit for better readability.

02/03/2022: budget table has been edited.

Cleared

Agency Response

12/09/2021

The budget has now been presented following the proposed GEF budget template and uploaded on Annex F.

Audit costs are no longer reflected as GEF costs in the costed M&E plan, Annex 7.

01/21/2022

? Done. These three budget items, under ?Goods? have been now charged under PMC, as suggested.

? Apparently, the Appendix 11 was part of the pdf file with the name " Annexes appendixes to the project documents _Annexes3to18 Mongolia.pdf" uploaded on the portal. We uploaded all Appendices separately on the portal. The named ToRs are reflected in this Appendix 11.

? "Travel of local staff for field monitoring" was planned to support implementation, consult stakeholders and guide consultants and participate in training and demonstration activities, has been raised to enable staff to fulfil their expected duties. Costs for project staff to travel to the four target sites in Mongolia are however considerable, considering distances and remoteness. Therefore, we removed the "Travel of local staff for field monitoring" and adjusted the " Travel of office staff to pilot sites" budget line.

01/28/22

We corrected Table D, see the screenshot:

D. Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total(\$)	
UNEP	GET	Mongolia	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	1,757,991.00	167,009.00	1,925,000.00	
UNEP	GET	Global	Land Degradation	LD Global/Regional Set-Aside	2,000,000.00	190,000.00	2,190,000.00	
+ Add New					Total Grant Resources(\$)	3,757,991.00	357,009.00	4,115,000.00

02/03/2022

We readjusted the margins, see the screenshot below. It is within margins when we check print view of the pdf file. However, we suggest using the uploaded 'Budget file'. We have control on that file and has a better format than the automatically created file.

ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

GLOBAL BUDGET

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component						Sub-total	M&E	PMC	Total USD	Resp. Entity
		Comp 1		Comp 2	Comp 3							
		01.1	01.2	02.1	03.1	03.2	03.3					
Goods										175,750		

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Part II ? Project Justification

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

n/a

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

12/23/2021: ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION REQUEST:

It is well noted that the project includes an overview of gender dimensions related to the project components. The project also include a description of the gender action (but it is not included in the prodoc annex 17 as noted in the prodoc and in the portal). The main issue is that the submission does provide a gender analysis. While it states "The consultations in the project development phase, through close consultations with local peoples, and communities in the project areas" particularly with women and women representatives, have led to the identification of two main ways in which the project can appropriately ensure that women's participation is equal and beneficial? there is no indication in the submission that a gender analysis has been carried out during PPG. Please clarify and provide further information.

01/27/2022: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

01/21/2022

Apparently, Annex 17 containing the Gender Action Plan, as an excerpt from the description in the ProDoc, was enclosed in the uploaded Annexes Zip file. This time we uploaded Annex 17 for easy access. The gender section itself acknowledges the fact that very little literature on peatland management and gender issues is available, not only for Mongolia but globally. The diversity of the nomadic reindeer herding communities, with more than 20 different Indigenous Peoples engaged with the project in the Arctic region, makes a more detailed gender analysis difficult. It, therefore, has been the choice to identify those approaches and methods that allow the project team to be aware and sensitive of gender aspects and proactively be focused, with help of the targeted gender action plan, to pragmatically implement the various activities identified. The team will be supported by a local Mongolian NGO to plan and implement activities with gender roles and specific approaches in mind in the four target areas.

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

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

12/01/2021: Yes. However:

- Audit costs are not eligible under M&E budgets, they have to be charged to PMC. Further, it is unclear whether they are included in the M&E budget while the total is the same for the different tables provided, the individual costs items seem to be different - please bring in line. It is also unclear what is meant by the staff costs included in M&E budget. It is proposed to follow the GEF budget template format to present the budget so that we can better assess this.

12/23/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

12/09/2021

As reflected under Section " GEF Resource Availability 5", the costs for audits are not longer reflected in the M&E budget for GEF costs. As suggested, the M&E budgets have been aligned and harmonized. Staff costs for M&E have been lowered and made more explicit as key tasks of project managers.

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

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Comments at PIF stage have all been addressed during the PPG phase.

Cleared

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Adequately addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Adequately addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Has been provided in Annex C.

12/23/2021: DISCREPANCY FOUND:

When looking at the PPG Utilization report, we noticed that the sum of the numbers in the columns does not match the total amounts stipulated at the bottom of the table. For the column ?Budgeted Amount? when adding all the items the total is \$194,013 and not \$136,988. Same comment for the ?Amount Committed? (Total add up to \$169,013) ? please correct.

01/27/2022: Has been corrected.

Cleared

Agency Response

By an error, we entered the cost and committed amount for the " Travel for site missions" budget line as 73,625. The correct figure for the travel is \$16,600 and we corrected it on Annex C of the CEO End Req.

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: Have been provided.

Cleared

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

n/a

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 n/a

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 n/a

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/01/2021: No. Please address comments made in this review.

12/23/2021: No. Please address further comments made in this review.

01/27/2022: Please correct discrepancy in Table D (see review comments).

01/31/2022: Please edit start/end date and bring budget table into margins.

02/03/2022: All issues addressed. Program Manager recommends CEO endorsement.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	12/1/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	12/23/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/27/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/31/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	2/3/2022	

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

The project has the objective to develop the capacity for enhancing ecosystem services of peatlands in Mongolia and the

capacity of indigenous reindeer herders globally to reduce land degradation and improve the provision of ecosystem services and increase community resilience. The main premise of the project is that in order to sustain ecosystem services of peatlands and reduce land degradation, sustainable peatland management must be mainstreamed into policy frameworks and sectoral policies, and nomadic herders capacitated to contribute to sustainable land management. This will be supported by generating knowledge and managing data on peatlands so that sustainable peatland management activities can be adequately implemented, reported and monitored.

Nomadic herder communities' capacities will be enhanced so that these communities participate in rangeland management processes and indigenous knowledge becomes part of sustainable landscape management approaches. Cross-community exchanges at global scale will further facilitate dissemination of project's good practices, lessons learned on herders' contribution to sustainable landscape management globally so that the project's best practices will be replicated at global scale. The project will generate global environmental benefits through restoring 12,000 ha, bringing 8,000 ha of land under sustainable management, sequestering 600,000 tCO₂eq, and targeting directly 14,000 beneficiaries.

With regard to COVID-19, the project management team will carefully monitor implementation progress and timelines and consider in their adaptive management, approaches to minimize impact on project execution. Further, in August 2020, the Mongolian Parliament approved the "Action Plan of the Government of Mongolia for 2020-2024". The action plan includes policies to overcome the social and economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as human development, economic, green development, governance and capital city, regional and local development policies. Under this action plan, the green development policy focuses on the rational use of natural resources, the reduction of environmental pollution and degradation, and the creation of healthy living conditions for citizens.