

El Salvador Integrated Landscape Management and Restoration

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10346

Countries

El Salvador

Project Name

El Salvador Integrated Landscape Management and Restoration

Agencies

World Bank

Date received by PM

5/5/2021

Review completed by PM

8/26/2021

Program Manager

Pascal Martinez

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

May 12, 2021:

No, the Focal Area Outcomes of the Objectives/Programs 2.5 is not correct. It should be "Create enabling environments to support scaling up and mainstreaming of SLM and LDN". Please correct.

July 14, 2021:

Comment not addressed. Please correct.

August 19, 2021:

Thank you for the correction. Cleared.

Agency Response

8/14/2021

Corrected, thank you

6/17/21

thank you, corrected

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

May 14, 2021:

1. The table B of the Portal doesn't reflect exactly what is reported in the project description of the Project Document. For instance, the project description mentions under component 1 the activity of strengthening public sector coordination which is not clearly captured in Table B. Please complete the Table B so that it reflects exactly the project components with their outcomes and outputs as presented in the Project Document (including in the Annex 2: Project Description).

2. The Table B mentions as output "67,700 ha monitored through the ISR". This output is not mentioned in the project description. Please justify this restoration-related activity under the component 1 (shouldn't we need to monitor the other non-restored areas too?) and clarify how it relates with the GEF core indicators including the area of landscapes under improved practices.

July 14, 2021:

1. No, the Table B still doesn't reflect the project description and has some very vague outputs which are not outputs such as "Institutions prepared for Integrated Landscape Management" (isn't it an outcome?). The component 1 lists clear and concrete outputs in paragraphs 24-25-26 of the project document that we don't find in table B. The same applies for the Components 2 and 3 ("Restored lands" is very vague and is an outcome; "Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity" is an indicator, not an output...). Please revise the outputs and outcomes of Table B so that it includes the outputs listed in the project document and ensure that the outputs are formulated as actions contributing to an outcome and not as results.

2. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

3. Please correct the typos in Table B "Componet 1", "Componet 2" and "Componet 3".

August 19, 2021:

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response

8/14/2021

Table B has been revised to provide more specific output details based on the description in the Project Paper. Outputs have been expressed as much as possible

as *products* or *deliverables* directly expected from project resources/actions (therefore, outputs may somehow be perceived as a kind of result).

Typos corrected.

6/17/2021

thank you, see our responses below:

1. Table B now reflects the project description as in the Project Document.
2. The Project Document now clarifies the total area in which the ISR will be applied (see Paragraph 25 in the main text and Paragraph 18 in Annex 2). The project total area is 67,655.36 ha, including non-restored areas; Table 3 in Annex 2 presents the breakdown per land-use type by municipality. This output will support core indicators #3 Areas of Restored Lands and #4 Areas of Landscapes under Improved practices, as it will monitor indicators of landscape sustainability.
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

May 12, 2021:

1. Considering the contribution from UNDP comes actually from a project funded by the Adaptation Fund, the Adaptation Fund should be indicated under the ?Name of Co-financier? instead of UNDP.

2. According to the letter provided, the type of co-financing from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) should be referred as "In-kind" in Table C. Please correct.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the adjustments. Cleared.

Agency Response

8/14/2021

thank you

6/17/2021

thank you, noted. Adjustments in the cofinancing table are made.

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

May 12, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response thank you

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

May 12, 2021:

In the Annex C of the Portal, the table provided on the utilization of PPG reports that no money has been spent or is committed. Considering activities were undertaken to design the project please explain and revise the table as needed.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the clarification. Please note that per GEF Guidelines: "the Agency can continue to use the remaining funds only on the eligible expenditure items under PPG... within one year after the project has been CEO Endorsed. Thereafter, any unused PPG funds must be returned to the Trustee, for credit to the respective GEF Trust Fund".
Cleared.

Agency Response

8/14/2021

thank you, noted!

6/17/2021

The PPG has been approved and signed following some delays. The resources will be used to assist in project readiness, in particular, through additional analytical and procurement pieces needed to start implementation.

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

May 12, 2021:

1. The expected GHG emission mitigation appears relatively low. It may come from the low decrease of the deforestation rate with the project from 0.65% to 0.6%. Please explain and consider the feasibility of increasing the ambition. In addition, please upload the Ex-ACT tool in the document section of the Portal.
2. The expected area restored is significantly less than at PIF stage. This is essentially due the the drop in the areas of forests and mangroves restoration. Please justify this new target and consider the possibility of rising the ambition.
3. Please complete the "GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet" uploaded with the results which were estimated at PIF stage.
4. Please add the expected number of beneficiary in the Project Results Framework (at least in the Annex A of the CEO Endorsement Request).

July 14, 2021:

1. Thank you for the clarifications and for uploading the Ex-ACT tool. Nevertheless, the result in the Ex-ACT tool (444,851 tCO₂e) is not the same as the one reported under the core indicator 6.1 in the Portal entry, in the project document (paragraph 39), in the uploaded GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet and in the Project Results Framework (Annex A of the GEF Data Sheet) where it is 331,919 tCO₂e. Please update the results expected at CEO endorsement stage and ensure the information provided is consistent throughout the whole submission package.

2. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

3. Partially. The number of beneficiaries is missing at PIF stage in the uploaded "GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet". Please complete.

4. We don't see the expected number of beneficiaries (1,865) in the Project Results Framework and the sum of the beneficiaries in the Project Results Framework doesn't match with the number reported as GEF Core indicator (1,865). Please clarify.

August 19, 2021:

1. In the Annex A of the GEF Datasheet (Project Results Framework), the expected result is still 331,919 tCO₂e instead of 444,851 tCO₂e. Please correct.

3. As approved, the PIF mentioned 1249 expected beneficiaries, including 624 females and 625 males. Please report these numbers accordingly in the uploaded "GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet".

4. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

September 1, 2021:

There still discrepancies between the level of expected results in Core Indicators 3, 4 and 6, as compared to in Annex A (number of hectares sustainably managed, GHG emissions mitigation...). Please check and adjust for consistency where applicable.

Agency Response

9/1/2021

Noted, thank you. Results Framework (Annex A) is updated accordingly). Please see also updated Core Indicators worksheet as well.

8/21/2021

1. REporting on indicators is provided in the online template and uploaded Annex for GEF Core Indicators. All numbers are updated

3. Updated,, see GEF Core Indicators 8-21-2021 Annex uploaded

8/14/2021

thank you, our responses are below

1. The total of 444,851 tCO₂e has been adjusted in the Core Indicator Worksheet, the GEF Data Sheet (Section F), and the Project Paper (main text, Results Framework, and Annex 5).
2. Cleared.
3. The number of beneficiaries was not informed in the Data Sheet at PIF stage, therefore we don't assume this information can now be provided 'ex-post'. Note: In the Concept Paper, the direct beneficiaries were estimated to be at least 1,300 (Approximately 300 sugar cane producers will benefit with direct technical assistance and incentives; while at least 1000 producers, mainly small holders and communities, will receive support to restoration practices and key ecosystem conservation. In addition, the population in the entire landscape will benefit from improved ecosystem services, reduced erosion, and reduced contamination?).
4. As indicated in the GEF Data Sheet (explanatory text following the Core Indicator table), 'Indicator 11 includes the direct beneficiaries from Component 2 activities (1290), who are also captured by Component 2 intermediate indicators, as well those benefitting from the PLAS process (575)'. It was considered that the latter category shouldn't form an additional indicator in the Results Framework, hence the fact that the sum of the Component 2 beneficiaries is only 1,290. However, the total number of beneficiaries is 1,865. The relevant explanation is also provided on p. 13 of the updated version of the Project Paper

6/17/2021

1. The EX-ACT calculation was adjusted to make it consistent with the project areas in the project document. Also, the rate of deforestation in the baseline is now consistent with the Forest Reference Level of El Salvador, submitted to the UNFCCC in January 2021. Finally, a correction was made to avoid double counting between Management of Coastal Wetlands (2,650 ha) and avoided deforestation in mangroves (238), which together match the 2,888 ha presented in Table 3 of Annex 2. As a result, the project would contribute to generate 444,851 tCO₂e, more than the estimate presented at PIF stage.
2. The new version of the Project Paper (i.e., endorsement phase) reflects the GoES's decision to strike a balance between the promotion of sustainable management

approaches and direct restoration interventions, to maximize investment results. Thus, the total project area proposed at PIF stage would be affected by one or another type of measure. For example, under the endorsement version, the project investments would serve to restore 100 ha of degraded forest lands through direct restoration interventions while applying/promoting sustainable management approaches over 17,029 ha, to be compared with the 849 ha proposed at PIF stage. Similarly, by making direct restoration interventions in 40 ha of mangroves while applying innovative, sustainable management approaches in the broader mangrove area, the project is expected to have an impact on a total of 2,650 ha, to be compared with the 1,273 ha indicated at PIF stage. Furthermore, the combined effect of both types of measures is captured in the indicator "Landscape areas under improved practices", which increased significantly from the 1,500 to 52,014 ha. Table 4 of the Project Paper presents disaggregated information on the land-uses that would be affected by both the direct interventions and management approaches to be promoted by the proposed project.

3. added, uploaded in the portal

4. Done. See Annex A of the GEF Data Sheet.

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

May 18, 2021:

1. In paragraph 7 of the PAD, the following information is unclear "Approximately 15 percent of the country?s territory is experiencing severe land,...". Maybe the word "degradation" is missing. Please clarify.

2. The overall barriers the project is trying to address should be more explicit in the narrative and in the Theory of Change diagram. The project document mentions "gaps" in Para 14 and "constraints" in Annexes 1 & 2. With several past and ongoing initiatives and problems with land degradation still being faced, what are the barriers preventing things from progressing further and which of these is the project addressing? These should be clearly shown in the ToC with links to the specific project components/outcomes that will be addressing these barriers. Please elaborate further on the barriers and clarify the ToC accordingly.

July 14, 2021:

1 and 2. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

1. Thanks for catching this editorial mistake. The word degradation has been added.
2. Paragraph # 14 of the Project Document was edited to respond to this comment. It reflects alignment with the barriers the project seeks to address, as presented in the theory of change.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 18, 2021:

One of the main problems identified is the "unplanned expansion of sugarcane production and production of basic crops". What is the current context as it relates to national level and local level land use planning? What is the regulatory environment associated with this? Is there enforcement? Have these activities been considered by the project to complement the proposed interventions around finance, governance, restoration, SLM etc. Or are these interventions being covered by other initiatives? Please elaborate further on these questions.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

Paragraph # 13 of the Project Document now explains the related regulatory environment. It also states that the sugar cane industry is progressively adopting international standards (such as BONSUCRO) motivated by international trends. Furthermore, the Corporate Foundation for Social Action (*Fundaci?n Empresarial para la Acci?n Social*, FUNDEMAS) and the Salvadoran Association of the Sugar Industry are working together, with support from the GOES and the IKI Initiative, to promote best practices in sugar cane plantations to comply with national and international environmental regulations. Also, Paragraph #4 in Annex J on Additional Information also included information on the environmental regulation context.

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

May 19, 2021:

1. Under the component 2, the sub-component 2 will support the implementation of the BONSUCRO Standard. Please clarify the activities included in this sub-component, what concrete environmental benefits they will provide and how.
2. The project management can't be included using resources of specific component. Please remove the name of "management" and related activities from component 3 and include the corresponding expenses under the PMC.
3. Please remove the PMC from component 3 in the budget table.
4. The knowledge management plan includes activities implemented under each component, including component 3. Nevertheless, according to the budget and the project description in the PAD, the component 3 only includes activities of project management and M&E. In addition, we learn that the budget of component 3 is \$903,600 in the uploaded KM document while it is \$359,602 in the Budget table. Please clarify and adjust the component 3 accordingly in the budget and in the project description.

July 14, 2021:

1. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.
2. Not addressed. The component 3 in Table B and in the project description (including in the KM plan) still includes project management activities which should be covered by the PMC (not by a component). Please amend the proposal including the uploaded documents as needed.
3. The budget for PMC in the Budget table in Annex E is different from the one in the Table B of the Data Sheet. Please correct the number in the Annex E so that it is the same as the one in Table B which includes the right number (maximum 5% of the project budget).
4. There is no response to this comment. Please address this comment too.

August 19, 2021:

2. The response remains unclear: The component 3 is still titled "Project monitoring and management". In the Prodoc, the PMC is included in the component 3 ("Subcomponent

1. Project Management financed with \$169,602" while in the budget, the component 3 only include M&E activities with a budget of \$190,000 and the PMC financed with \$169,602 is separated. Also, in the table B of the Portal, the component 3 includes both M&E and management references but is only financed with \$190,000 which is the budget for the only M&E activities in the Prodoc. This is not consistent and confusing. We don't understand why the component 3 in table B needs to include also management references with the only M&E budget of \$190,000. Please clearly remove any project management activities and references in the component 3 of table B (including in the component title) so that it is consistent with the budget and please explicitly confirm no management activities will be supported by the project components in addition to the PMC.

3 and 4. Thank you for the clarification and amendments. Cleared.

August 26, 2021:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

8/24/21

2. The issue has now been clarified.

As initially designed, the project has only 3 components. Keeping a single component 3 (and a limited number of components for the overall project) is also justified by the limited amounts involved. In the project description, PMC has therefore been kept as part of Component 3 (but as a distinct subcomponent). This is in line with World Bank's practice. Under other GEF-supported projects, PMC has similarly been included as part of the last component. The budget for Component 3 is, therefore, \$359,602, of which 169,602 for the subcomponent on Project Management (PMC), and 190,000 for the subcomponent on Monitoring & Evaluation. We hope this will be acceptable to GEF Sec.

However, the tables presenting the budget in the PP, the Data Sheet, and the specific Annex on the project budget have been refined accordingly, to remove any confusion.

Also, the title of the overall component has been adjusted and is now Project Monitoring and Coordination. The subcomponents have been inverted in order to improve the presentation ? and have PMC come last. In addition, the text of the M&E sub-

component doesn't describe any management activities. No management activities will be supported by this sub-component, nor by any of the other Components (1 and 2).

8/14/2021

thank you, our responses are below

1. Cleared.

2. In table B and Annex A of the Data Sheet, the audits have been removed from, respectively, Component 3 outputs and the M&E budget (as they are covered under PMC). In the Project Paper, as part of project description, the audits have been moved from M&E to Project Management (PMC). In table B, the word Management has however been kept under 'Expected outcomes' of M&E activities as Project M&E is firstly meant to inform and strengthen Management. The outcome now reads: Improved capacity for project M&E and adaptive management. In the Project Paper, paragraph 47 on KM does not include any Management/PMC related activities, therefore no changes have been made there. In Annex H, Knowledge Management Strategy, the KM activities described, in particular under Component 3 and the budget table, do not include project management activities. However, to improve the reading, the text for Component 3 now refers explicitly to Project M&E activities.

3. The annexed budget has been adjusted to reflect the PMC total of \$169,602 (or 5% of the project budget) and the Project M&E total of \$190,000.

4. As indicated in the Project Paper, Component 3 activities on M&E include in particular the mid-term and final evaluations and the communications plan for sharing the experiences. To clarify the text, we've added 'hence contributing to Knowledge Management objectives'. Paragraph 47 also already contributes to the same idea ('The M&E system will also generate other knowledge products and services that will be disseminated among project beneficiaries through a range of communication channels, using user-friendly communication tools?'). The budget has been corrected and adjusted (the earlier \$903,600 figure was an error). Hence, the project's contribution to KM is indicated at the end of Annex H, KM Strategy (\$447,000 across the different components). M&E activities under Component 3 reach \$190,000, as now indicated in Annex A of the data sheet, the separate budget table, as well as Annex I on M&E Strategy and Budget.

6/17/2021

1. Subcomponent 2.2 seeks to support the sugar cane industry's transition towards sustainability and enhance its resilience to the impacts of climate change. Paragraph # 27 of the Project Document explains the scope of this subcomponent, which includes (i) promoting improved agriculture practices in 20 farms, for example in support for improved agriculture practices in the production of sugar cane in mangrove buffer areas and gallery forests around rivers, also through the promotion of agro-silvopastoral practices and seeking to improve landscape connectivity through patches with native forests. These will serve as demonstrative plots to disseminate and prove the effectiveness of implementing sustainable productive practices, to further expand their uptake beyond the project. The Subcomponent would also (ii) strengthen the technical capacity of 250 sugarcane producers on sustainable land management seeking to improve the adoption of the BONSUCRO standard, also with support from FUNDAZUCAR and the Corporate Foundation for Social Action (Fundaci?n Empresarial para la Acci?n Social, FUNDEMAS).

Regarding the environmental benefits of these activities, it is important to note that the proposed project would promote the application of national zoning norms and land-use guidelines. Also, the best practices this project would promote include a wide range of environmental aspects such as adequate use of agrochemicals, contamination reduction, efficient use of pest and disease management systems, as well as support of biodiversity conservation and ecosystems restoration (particularly wetlands and its buffer zones), and soil conservation.

2. Corrected.

3. Corrected.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 19, 2021:

It is unclear where is the information on how the project is aligned with the focal area strategies (BD 1-1, LD 1-1, LD 1-3 and LD 2-5). Please clarify.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

Paragraph # 38 was included in the Project Document to address this comment.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 20, 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

May 20, 2021:

Partially. The project document under the section "Global Environmental Benefits (GEB)" (page 19) presents the expected results in terms of GHG emission mitigation but there is no detailed mention of the other expected results reported under the core indicators section (areas restored and under improved management). Please elaborate further on these environmental benefits too, especially considering the important decrease in the restoration targets.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

Paragraphs # 40 and 41 were added in the Project Document to address this comment.

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

May 20, 2021:

Partially. The project document does explain how the project impact will be sustainable. Nevertheless, we don't see the explanation showing that the project is innovative and include the potential for scaling up. Please complete on these aspects too.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

Paragraph # 48 was added in the Project Document to address this comment. It highlights the project's aims (i) to address land restoration at the Conservation Area scale, contributing to implementing the environmental zoning and land-use guidelines for coastal-marine zones, and to provide lessons to replicate the model in other Conservation Areas, in the future; (ii) to involve public and private stakeholders in land-use planning, dialogue, establishment of agreements to protect ecosystem services, integrated implementation and monitoring of sustainable land management practices; (iii) to target multiple objectives in a coordinated fashion, including addressing land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change; and (iv) by promoting the adoption of the international BONSUCRO Standard in the sugarcane industry, the project would promote compliance with national environmental regulations.

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

May 12, 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

May 14, 2021:

Partially. The stakeholder engagement plan uploaded in the Portal is in Spanish. Please provide a summary in the Portal which includes, in addition to what is already presented (stakeholders engagement in the project), a presentation of the stakeholders, and a description of the consultations conducted and their results informing the project design.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

The GEF Data Sheet was adjusted in response to this comment (See Part II Section 2).

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

May 14, 2021:

1. The description informs that a Gender Analysis was part of the consultation process for project design. Nevertheless, the uploaded "Annex 3. Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan" is very general on the current situation in the country and in the project area and the consultation process for this project and its results remain unclear. Please elaborate further on the consultation process informing the project design.
2. In the uploaded "Annex 3. Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan", the Table 7 exceeds the limit of the page. Please adjust so that we can read all the table.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information and adjustment. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

1. The GEF Data Sheet was adjusted in response to this comment (See Part II Section 2).
2. table 7 will be adjusted, thank you for your comments

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

May 14, 2021:

Partially. Please elaborate further so that the text clearly includes the description of each kind of stakeholder from the private sector involved in the project (producers, cooperatives, industries...), what are their links and how they will engage in and benefit from the project support.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

Section 4 of the GEF Data sheet now addresses this comment.

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

May 12, 2021:

1. The risks to the project analysis is very limited: only violence and climate are mentioned. Please explore other potential risks such as weak local capacity, stakeholders actual interest and engagement, coordination among project stakeholders including institutions, availability of funds for the CES... and elaborate further as needed. Please indicate a rating for each identified risk.
2. The climate risk analysis relies on the climate risk profile available on line which focuses on the expected impacts of climate change. Please summarize the key findings of this document, including climate projections, rate the level of key hazards, and elaborate further on the mitigation measures which are missing.
3. In addition to impacts and mitigation measures, the COVID-19 analysis should also include opportunities this project could provide for a green recovery and improved resilience to possible new pandemic. Please complete accordingly.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

1. Following World Bank requirements, the Project Document shall include only those risk categories rated as substantial and with residual risks, i.e., risks remain substantial despite the consideration of adequate mitigation strategies. However, other risks explored to address this comment are now included in Annex J of the GEF Data Sheet.
2. Paragraphs # 2 and 66 of the Project Document were adjusted to address this comment.
3. Paragraph # 65 of the Project Document was adjusted to address this comment.

Paragraph # 65 of the Project Document was adjusted to address this comment.

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

May 14, 2021:

1. Please also consider the relevance of possible coordination with and lessons learned from other GEF projects such as "Enabling concerted Source to Sea management in the Paz river watershed" (GEF ID #10074) and "Climate Change Adaptation to Reduce Land Degradation in Fragile Micro-Watersheds Located in the Municipalities of Texistepeque and Candelaria de la Frontera" (GEF ID #4616) which take place in the same area.

2. Under Annex E of the project description in the Portal, the project budget is uploaded twice. Please remove one version.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information and amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

1. Paragraph # 12 now mentions these two projects. Also, MARN has closely coordinated with FAO during the design phase to maximize synergies among the proposed project and the projects they support in the same region, including the two mentioned projects and the RECLIMA project. This coordination will continue during project implementation.

2. budget duplicate version is removed

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

May 12, 2021:

We note the alignment with the national climate strategy and the SDGs. Nevertheless, considering the strong focus on the GEF LD Focal Area, please elaborate further in the "Annex J: Additional Project Information" on the alignment of the project with the national priorities in the framework of the UNCCD. In particular, please clarify how the project is aligned with and contribute to El Salvador's LDN strategy including targets setting.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the complement. Considering the objective 2-5 of the LD Focal Area, in addition, please mention that El Salvador is among the countries participating in the UNCCD Program on LDN Targets Setting and this project is aligned with such engagement.

August 19, 2021:

Thank you for the complement. Cleared.

Agency Response

8/14/2021

thank you. The following sentence has been added to paragraph 17 of the project paper:

As El Salvador is among the countries participating in the UNCCD Program on LDN Targets Setting, this project is aligned with this engagement.

6/17/2021

Paragraph # 17 now explains the proposed Project's contribution to the 2021 National Plan to Combat Deforestation, Erosion, and Desertification.

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

May 12, 2021:

Yes, the Knowledge Management Strategy & Budget is uploaded as Annex H in the Documents section of the Portal. Cleared.

Agency Response thank you

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

May 12, 2021:

Yes, through the document "Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary" uploaded in the Documents section of the Portal. Cleared.

Agency Response
thank you

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
May 12, 2021:

The audits should be covered by the PMC, not M&E. Please amend the Annex I and the budget accordingly.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response
06/17/2021

Thank you, documents were revised. Corrected both Annex I and the budget.

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
May 18, 2021:

Please correct the Rio Marker selection: considering this project hasn't a clear and explicit objective on climate change adaptation, please assign a '0.' In case the project developers would like to highlight climate change adaptation as a result of the project, they may want to highlight adaptive management, increased resilience or reduced vulnerability to impacts of climate change addressed through project activities and select a "1" for the Rio Marker related to adaptation.

July 14, 2021:

Not addressed. The Rio Marker selection is now "2" for climate change adaptation, instead of 0. Please correct.

August 19, 2021:

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

8/14/2021

thank you. Rio Marker for adaptation is marked as 0.

6/17/2021

Rio Marker corrected to zero for climate change adaptation.

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 12, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 20, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 20, 2021:

From the PIF approval, there was no additional recommendations to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO endorsement. Cleared.

September 10, 2021:

1, 2, 3 and 4. Thank you for the amendments and clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

9/9/2021

Response to GEFSEC questions from August 26, 2021 (see below, section GEFSEC Decision - there is no space in the review sheet under this section to post Agency response, therefore we post it here). All updated documents are uploaded in the GEF portal and changes were made in the online template as appropriate

	Comments	Task Team Response
	GEF comments August 26, 2021	
1.	On Co-financing: USAID stipulated a co-financing of \$262, 047 for the period 2018-2022. Since the end of that period will be shortly, please review and include a co-financing amount that sounds reasonable given the short period of time left for this USAID project and adjust accordingly the project description and the co-financing letter.	The co-financing letter has been adjusted, reflecting the reduced amount. The related tables and text in the Data Sheet have been updated accordingly (B and C Sections).
2.	Council comments were addressed but there is a small error on the name who provided the comments. As per the Stakeholder Section please correct the name from Katharina Stepping to Sylvia Schmidt.	In Annex B, the name has been changed to Sylvia Schmidt.

3.	On budget: the items (i) preparation and dissemination of the environmental education plan; (ii) monitoring of ISR; participative process for the design of the restauration training and technology transfer plan; and (iv) knowledge and dissemination plan are wrongly (though partially) charged to the PMC ? they have either to be fully charged to the project?s components or to M&E (which is component 3) as appropriate ? please amend accordingly.	Under the <i>Contractual Services ? Company</i> category, as explained in the <i>Detailed Description</i> column, these items are fully charged to, respectively, Component 1 (re: the preparation and dissemination of the environmental education plan, and the monitoring of ISR) and 2 (for the design of the restauration training and technology transfer plan; and the knowledge and dissemination plan). What will be fully charged to PMC for an amount of \$50K are the yearly financial audits. The description text has been adjusted to make it clearer.
4.	On core indicators: Annex I on the ?M&E Strategy and Budget? Annex I M&E Plan 08 02 2021 indicates that ?The tools will include the Biodiversity Management Effectiveness Monitoring (METT) tools for the EIBSCA region?. If a METT score is tracked during implementation, it is suggested to include its baseline at CEO Endorsement. We understand however that the Core Indicator 1 titled ?Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use? is not used, in which case the METT score is not mandatory.	Indeed, the Core Indicator 1 titled ?Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use? is not used for this project, therefore we understand the METT score is not mandatory. The related indication has been withdrawn in Annex I.

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 20, 2021:

The response to the German comment on the need to add/complete chapters (on 1. Baseline Scenario and Projects, 5. Risks, 6. Coordination, 7. Consistency with National Priorities, and 8. Knowledge Management) can be found in Annexes J and H and not only Annex H. Please amend accordingly.

July 14, 2021:

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

6/17/2021

Annex J has been revised.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
May 20, 2021:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response
Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response
Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response
CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response
Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
May 12, 2021:

Yes if the comment above on PPG is addressed. Cleared.

Agency Response
Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
May 12, 2021:

Yes, 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

May 20, 2021:

Thank you for the proposal. The project is not yet ready for recommendation. Please address the comments raised above.

July 14, 2021:

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments.

August 19, 2021:

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments.

August 26, 2021:

Not yet. In addition to the remaining comment above on core indicators, further screening of the proposal revealed the following issues. Please address them.

1. On Co-financing: USAID stipulated a co-financing of \$262, 047 for the period 2018-2022. Since the end of that period will be shortly, please review and include a co-financing amount that sounds reasonable given the short period of time left for this USAID project and adjust accordingly the project description and the co-financing letter.
2. Council comments were addressed but there is a small error on the name who provided the comments. As per the Stakeholder Section please correct the name from Katharina Stepping to Sylvia Schmidt.
3. On budget: the items (i) preparation and dissemination of the environmental education plan; (ii) monitoring of ISR; participative process for the design of the restoration training and technology transfer plan; and (iv) knowledge and dissemination plan are wrongly (though partially) charged to the PMC ? they have either to be fully charged to the project?s components or to M&E (which is component 3) as appropriate ? please amend accordingly.
4. On core indicators: Annex I on the ?M&E Strategy and Budget? Annex I M&E Plan 08 02 2021 indicates that ?The tools will include the Biodiversity Management Effectiveness Monitoring (METT) tools for the EIBSCA region?. If a METT score is tracked during implementation, it is suggested to include its baseline at CEO Endorsement. We understand however that the Core Indicator 1 titled ?Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use? is not used, in which case the METT score is not mandatory.

September 10, 2021:

Thank you for addressing the remaining comments. The project is now recommended for CEO endorsement.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	5/20/2021	

**Secretariat Comment at
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

Additional Review (as necessary)	7/14/2021
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/19/2021
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/26/2021
Additional Review (as necessary)	9/10/2021

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations