

Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainable Land Management in Tongoa Island

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10046

Countries

Vanuatu

Project Name

Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainable Land Management in Tongoa Island

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

6/20/2019

Review completed by PM

12/14/2020

Program Manager

Asha Bobb-Semple

Focal Area

Land Degradation

Project Type

MSP

PIF

CEO Endorsement

Project Design and Financing

1. If there are any changes from that presented in the PIF, have justifications been provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

If no changes have been made since the PIF stage, please indicate.

Response to Secretariat comments no change has been made since the PIF stage.

2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Yes, however please address the following.

-In keeping with the the focus of the LD focal area not only on land but also livelihoods, please indicate how many farmers are to benefit from the intervention. Please also ensure this information is disaggregated by gender and reflected throughout the project document. Please also add the information on the potential increase in income to Table B.

-How will the nurseries be maintained (financially) after the project has ended?

General

-Tables D & F under the column Programming of Funds, please include LD STAR Allocation.

-Please check the text under section A.7 (of the CEO Endorsement Request) and Section 10 of the Project Document as it may be referring to another project.

-Please ensure Gender considerations are included in the project description and not only in the Gender section of the CEO ER and the project document.

-Please elaborate on the involvement of the private sector in particular given the targets of Output 2.1.2 re value chain development.

9/25/2019:

Not fully.

Please include 'LD STAR Allocation' under the column of Programming of Funds in Tables D & F . We will need this column completed for accounting purposes.

5/27/2020:

Cleared

Response to Secretariat comments

-In keeping with the focus of the LD focal area not only on land but also livelihoods, please indicate how many farmers are to benefit from the intervention. Please also ensure this information is disaggregated by gender and reflected throughout the project document. Please also add the information on the potential increase in income to Table B.

Information on income has been added under Table B.

Hundred and forty farmers will be targeted (95 men and 45 women). This information has been added under section F. This has been reflected under project description (Output 1.1.2)

-How will the nurseries be maintained (financially) after the project has ended?

It has been agreed with the Dept. of Forestry that a part of the Department's core funding assigned to outer islands (specifically Tongoa) for extension support will be channeled to maintaining the nurseries.

-Tables D & F under the column Programming of Funds, please include LD STAR Allocation.

This has been addressed.

-Please check the text under section A.7 (of the CEO Endorsement Request) and Section 10 of the Project Document as it may be referring to another project.

This has been addressed.

-Please ensure Gender considerations are included in the project description and not only in the Gender section of the CEO ER and the project document.

Addressed under Section 3

-Please elaborate on the involvement of the private sector in particular given the targets of Output 2.1.2 re value chain development.

Addressed under section 4.

Please include 'LD STAR Allocation' under the column of Programming of Funds in Tables D & F . We will need this column completed for accounting purposes.

RE 25 Sept: After consulting the GEF IT team, they informed us that, "We have clarified internally with the GEF and reach a conclusion. Since this is a GEF-6 MSP programming of funds in table D and F is not required?. Therefore, no action required.

3. Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Not fully. Please address the following queries.

-We are concerned about the number of project and consultant staff for the project when compared to the project budget and expected GEBs. In particular the need for an Admin Assistant separate from an Operations and Finance Assistant. As well as, the need for a CTA (is this a Chief Technical Advisor?), when FAO will have a Lead Technical Officer supporting the project.

-We have only seen the TOR for the National Project Coordinator. Please submit the TORs for all other staff and consultants that will be recruited under the project.

-How will the motor vehicle costs be maintained after the project ends?

9/25/2019:

Cleared

10/15/2019:

Please disregard the previous clearance note at this time. Following further internal review, we have an additional query with the project staff costs. As the project has 3 project staff- Project Coordinator, Field Coordinator and the Operations and Finance Assistant who will be dedicated full time to the project activities, these costs as much possible will have to be assigned to the PMC utilizing both the GEF financing and the cash co-financing available. On the on the other hand, if these staff are not dedicated full time to the project and are only Consultants, then their costs can be assigned to the project components. Please make adjustments to the budget accordingly.

Response to Secretariat comments

-We are concerned about the number of project and consultant staff for the project when compared to the project budget and expected GEBs. In particular the need for an Admin Assistant separate from an Operations and Finance Assistant. As well as, the need for a CTA (is this a Chief Technical Advisor?), when FAO will have a Lead Technical Officer supporting the project.

We have removed the CTA and the Admin Assistant posts.

-We have only seen the TOR for the National Project Coordinator. Please submit the TORs for all other staff and consultants that will be recruited under the project.

ToRs have been added in the Annex L.

-How will the motor vehicle costs be maintained after the project ends?

The motor vehicle will be handed over to the Dept. of Forestry, and will be maintained by the Dept. as part of their extension support to the island.

RE 15 Oct: This has been addressed and reflected in the budget table.

4. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Potential climate change risks have not been identified. Please include.

9/25/2019:

Cleared

Response to Secretariat comments

The language has been edited in the risk matrix to reflect the climate change risk (section 5). The original risk was intended to be a climate change risk.

5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Not fully.

-We will require that the letter specifies if the contribution from FAO- FLR is cash or in kind.

9/24/2019:

Please clarify the co-financing contributions from FAO . Table C indicates Grant co-financing for \$100,000 and In-kind for \$200,000, however the letters indicate FAO Sub-Regional Office-\$200,000 (in kind) and FAO FLR Mechanism- \$50,000 cash and \$50,000 in kind. These are the letters dated August 21, 2019 and June 20 2019 respectively. Where there are changes to be made, please do so in the Portal as well as the project document attached.

10/15/2019:

Please note that the uploaded Project document, still has \$100,000 as grant, while the Portal entry has \$50,000 as grant from FAO. Please ensure the information is consistent.

5/27/2020:

The co-financing numbers as outlined in the project document and the portal do not appear to match the information provided in the letters dated 20 June 2019 and 21 August 2019. The letter of 20 June 2019 indicates in-kind contribution of \$200,000 and

the letter of 21 August 2019 indicates **in-kind** contribution of \$50,000 and **cash** of \$50,000. This is a total of \$250,000 **in-kind** and \$50,000 **cash** from FAO.

Please confirm if this is correct and if so please make the edits in the co-financing table in the portal **and** the project document so that they are consistent with the letters.

6/8/2020:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

6/15/2020:

Following further review by the GEF Secretariat, the co-financing letters provided do not provide a clear understanding of the type of co-financing offered by FAO. We will require supporting evidence that **clearly indicates** the type of co-financing that is being provided from FAO - whether it is **cash** or **in kind**.

For the letter dated August 21 2019, the first paragraph indicates '*USD 100,000 co-financing (50% in cash and 50% in kind)*' while the table below that indicates *Source of Financing - Grant*. We expect that the table would specifically indicate both cash and in-kind. Please provide a revised letter.

For the letter dated June 20, 2019, the second paragraph does not currently state cash co-financing, yet the co-financing table in the portal and prior comments in the review sheet indicate both cash and in-kind. We would require a letter that clearly indicates what portion of the USD 200,000 is **in-kind** and what portion is **cash**.

Please also upload to the portal the co-financing letters from i) Shefa Provincial Government indicating the in-kind contribution of USD 60,000 and the ii) Ministry of Climate Change, Adaptation, Meteorology, GEO-hazards, Environment and Energy indicating in-kind contribution of USD 300,000.

12/8/2020:

The revised FAO financing letters are not currently in the portal. Please upload same.

12/14/2020:

Cleared. The correct co-financing letters have been uploaded. Cleared. The co-financing letters from Shefa Provincial Government (USD 60,000) and Ministry of Climate Change, Adaptation, Meteorology, GEO-hazards, Environment and Energy (USD

300,000) are part of the uploaded file named 'Co-financing for GEF 6 project in Vanuatu_Gov' and have been verified.

Response to Secretariat comments

Revised co-financing letter has been uploaded.

RE 15 Oct: We have uploaded a corrected version of Project Document (USD 150,000 total in-kind and USD 150,000 grant contributions through 2 FAO co-financing letters)

RE 27 May: Thank you for your message. We have uploaded the revised co-financing letter from FAO. The total co-financing from FAO for the project is USD 300,000 and the breakdown is USD 150,000 in-kind and USD 150,000 cash.

RE 15 June:

FAO: Revised co-financing letters have been uploaded in the Portal.

Shefa Provincial Government (USD 60,000) and Ministry of Climate Change, Adaptation, Meteorology, GEO-hazards, Environment and Energy (USD 300,000) are part of the uploaded file named 'Co-financing for GEF 6 project in Vanuatu_Gov' dated 20/06/2019.

RE 8 Dec: The revised co-financing letters have been uploaded in the Portal.

6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Response to Secretariat comments

7. Only for Non-Grant Instrument: Has a reflow calendar been presented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Response to Secretariat comments

8. Is the project coordinated with other related initiatives and national/regional plans in the country or in the region?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Yes.

However, please indicate how the project may assist Vanuatu to set their LDN targets in the future.

9/25/2019:

Cleared

Response to Secretariat comments

There is very little information on land degradation processes (rate, drivers and impacts, etc) in the smaller outer islands (including Tongoa). Through this project, there will be a very clear basis- information collection and analysis conducted-for future target setting to achieve LDN in Tongoa (the project in itself will take huge initial strides towards achieving LDN), similarly, the template can be replicated in other smaller islands as well.

9. Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Yes.

However please clarify if the costs to prepare the Inception Report will be covered by Project management staff costs.

9/25/2019:

Cleared

10/15/2019:

Please disregard the previous clearance note at this time. Following further internal review, please note that according to GEF policies, PSC Meetings and Co-Financing reports are not eligible M&E expenses. Please make the adjustments to the M&E budget. As the cost to prepare the Inception report will be covered by the project staff

time, please also remove the Inception Report cost from the M&E budget and assign it to the PMC category.

5/27/2020:

Cleared.

Response to Secretariat comments

This is correct

RE 15 Oct: Thank you for your additional guidance. We have updated the M&E table accordingly.

10. Does the project have descriptions of a knowledge management plan?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Yes

Response to Secretariat comments

Agency Responses

11. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments at the PIF stage from:

GEFSEC

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/9/2019:

Yes

Response to Secretariat comments

STAP

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Response to Secretariat comments

GEF Council

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Response to Secretariat comments

Convention Secretariat

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Response to Secretariat comments

Recommendation

12. Is CEO endorsement recommended?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
7/9/2019:

Not at this time. Please address the comments above.

9/25/2019:

Not at this time. Please see questions above for clarification.

10/15/2019:

Not at this time. Please refer to comments under Questions 3, 5 & 9.

In addition, in reference to Section A.6 (Institutional Arrangements) of the Portal and Project Document, in keeping with GEF GUIDELINES ON THE PROJECT AND PROGRAM CYCLE POLICY GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01, unless there are merits for the project to have an exception, which would need to be justified, the mention of FAO to (potentially) carry out executing functions will have to be removed from the project submission.

5/27/2020:

Thank you for the changes. Please note Question 5, on co-financing still requires clarification.

6/15/2020:

Following further review by the GEF Secretariat, the following items will need to be addressed prior to CEO Endorsement:

-Question 5 for queries related to co-financing evidence

-Gender- We note the information provided on gender and we are querying if there is any further analysis on the gender dimensions in relation to the project scope. We recall that at PIF stage, there was the idea to utilize the results from the gender assessment under the GEF-5 project Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management.

In addition, the project states that women will make up at least 30% of the project beneficiaries. Please clarify the rationale behind the relatively lower target for females.

12/8/2020:

Not at this time. Please see comments under Question 5 re the co-financing letters.

Thank you for the comments on Gender. We expect periodic updates on this matter in the PIRs and at the MTR stage.

12/14/2020:

The project is technically cleared and recommended for CEO Endorsement.

As indicated previously, we expect periodic updates on gender throughout the PIRs and MTR stages.

In addition, in relation to climate change risks identified in the Risk Table, we recommended a full climate change risk screening at project inception and close monitoring of climate change risks throughout the project for reporting at PIR, MTR and TE.

In relation to COVID impacts and potential responses/opportunities, we expect further communication to the GEFSEC on any relevant COVID-19 risks, responses and considerations in the PIRs, MTR, and TE.

Response to Secretariat comments

RE 15 Oct: Based on the draft capacity assessment results from April 2020, we have updated budget and the relevant section of the project document accordingly. Though the operational partner has rated moderate risk, FAO and the operational partner will develop mitigation measure to address this.

RE 15 June:

- Revised co-financing letters have been uploaded.
- The information from the GEF-5 project on gender at this stage has been limited to the figures on the women and men targeted under the project for various capacity building and awareness activities. However, recently conducted damage and loss assessment in South Pentecost, jointly by the government and the GEF-5 project, we have seen that almost 40% of women lead the household. More specific assessments are envisaged in near future in a broader scale which will feed into this project during implementation.
- We chose women will make up 30% of the project beneficiaries, as it is a realistic target given the existing socio-economic conditions (division of labor, cultural restrictions, etc.) on the island. However, once we complete more assessments, we will update the target accordingly.

RE 8 Dec: We have addressed Question 5 accordingly. We will report on gender periodically as requested.

Review Dates

**Secretariat comment at CEO
Endorsement Request**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

First Review	7/9/2019
Additional Review (as necessary)	9/26/2019
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/15/2019
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/27/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/16/2020

CEO Recommendation

Brief Reasoning for CEO Recommendations

The project is recommended for CEO Endorsement.

CONTEXT:

Tongoa is one of the Shepherd Islands off the Southeast coasts of Epi in Vanuatu. The main land use in Tongoa is the human made settlements and farms. There are only patches of secondary, low- canopy forests and thickets of mixed shrub/tree composition. The lack of adequate forest cover, in conjunction with other topographic and climatic characteristics, combine to determine a high degree and rate of land degradation in Tongoa. Human influences affecting land degradation include unsustainable agricultural practices and extraction of timber and non-timber forest products. This is exacerbated by limited governance and land management planning due to the system of customary land use and limited capacity on sustainable approaches to land use.

OBJECTIVE AND KEY INTERVENTIONS:

The primary objective is to effectively restore degraded landscapes and implement climate-resilient sustainable land management practices in Tongoa Island. The key components of the project are i) Strengthening local enabling environment for ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management; ii) Community-based ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management on key targeted sites and making use of climate smart agricultural practices iii)

Monitoring, evaluation and lessons dissemination which will help to support the implementation of the National Strategy on Forest and Landscape Restoration in Vanuatu.

Global Environment Benefits- These interventions are expected to lead to i) 300ha of land restored (forests); ii) 600ha under SLM; iii) 560 beneficiaries will benefit directly from the project.

INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND POTENTIAL FOR SCALING UP:

The ecosystem approach which will be applied is new to Tongoa. Sustainability of project outcomes will be ensured through institutional strengthening at the local government level and enhancing land use planning processes integrating the local customary land tenure systems. In terms of scaling up, the project approach can be scaled up to other islands in Vanuatu and the Forest Land and Restoration strategy will be a good vehicle for scaling up.

Requested GEF Project Grant: \$ 867,580, Co-financing: \$1,260,000; Focal Area Sources: LD: 1-1 367,032; LD2-3 500,548; Project Co-financed at a ratio 1: 1.45; Project Management Budget \$78,871 actual 9% of project management with respect to the total GEF Grant.