

# Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable Development of the Limpopo River Basin

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10182

**Countries**

Regional (Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe)

**Project Name**

Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable  
Development of the Limpopo River Basin

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

6/17/2021

**Review completed by PM**

10/26/2021

**Program Manager**

Astrid Hillers

**Focal Area**

International Waters

**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**

(7/8/2021) Yes, the project remains aligned with the GEF IW focal area elements.

**Cleared****Agency Response****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**

(7/8/2021) Table B:

1. PDO: please revisit the PDO. The SAP development is serving an end which could be articulated more clearly, but has improved from . The PDO is mentioning the uplifting of people's living standards and conserving the basin's resources and ecosystem services and in that articulating the views on sustainable development of the stakeholders. Will

the project establish a factual baseline upon which the SAP can base measurable targets on the social, development and ecosystem conservation side ?

2. Component 1: the project describes the establishment of equivalent of inter-ministerial committees on national level which is important and well appreciated. Please include these as output/activity in the project summary and/or results framework.

3. Component 3.1.5 (Table B) - please substitute the SAP to be 'endorsed on ministerial level' to 'endorsed by at least one Minister from each country'. This will reduce ambiguity on who is expected to endorse a final SAP.

4. Please add an output or activity addressing a *dialogue* with member countries to ramp up country contributions to LIMOCOM over time and be able to cover core costs and positions in future. Examples and lessons to structure country contributions can be shared by other, longer established RBOs. Is that interaction and dialogue process budgeted for in the development of the Financial Sustainability Plan under component 1.1.3. ?

(10/5/2021)

Comments 2 to 4 have been addressed. Please revisit comment 1:

1. Please revisit the PDO: Please make the PDO less wordy and focus on what the project means to achieve (not how: ... evidence based planning etc.). Also, as mentioned before the SAP is a means to end and its value - among other - is that it is a process for basin countries to agree on priority actions and commit to targets incl. on stress reductions, time frames for reforms, etc.

(10/26/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 17 August 2021

1. The SAP will create an 'enabling' framework for improving ecosystem and socio-economic conditions (including living standards for the basin's residents), but since this project represents a foundational phase for integrated management of the basin, the project will not actually deliver these improvements, which instead would be expected to accrue in subsequent years through national and sub-regional programs, possibly including a phase 2 project funded by the GEF. The text of Output 3.1.1 has been revised to clarify that the SAP will include targets for both ecosystem and socio-

economic quality objectives, which will be based on baseline information collected during the TDA-SAP process (See page 36 of the prodoc).

2. The establishment of national-level inter-ministerial committees, called National Stakeholder Coordination Committees (NASCs), is noted in both the Alternative Scenario (Output 1.1.4) in the UNDP Prodoc, and in the Results Framework (indicator 8). New text has been added to the Strategy / Approach section of the UNDP Prodoc regarding the establishment of the NASCs (See page 21 of the prodoc).

3. Output 3.1.5 has been changed as suggested throughout the GEF CEO ER and UNDP Prodoc (See page 67 of the Prodoc).

4. Text has been added under Output 1.1.3 explaining that the process of developing the Financial Sustainability Plan will include an ongoing dialogue with member countries regarding their contributions to LIMCOM to support its core costs over the long-term, and that the project will work with IW:LEARN to establish linkages with more mature? GEF financed and in some cases GEF established RBOs to learn from and apply their experiences in establishing sustainable financing schemes for their Commissions and Secretariats (See page 26 of the prodoc). The budget for Output 1.1.3 has been revised to include funds for travel / meeting costs to support dialogue with the LIMCOM Member States (See page 83 of the prodoc).

20 October 2021

The Project Objective has been revised as follows: "To achieve integrated, cross-sectoral, ecosystem-based management of the Limpopo River to uplift the living standards of the basin's population and conserve the basin's resources and ecosystem services" (P.1 of the Prodoc and P.1 of CEO ER)

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

(7/8/2021)

All letters of co-finance have been signed and submitted. The confirmed co-finance is slightly/somewhat below PIF expected levels and remains adequate. Co-finance at PIF stage is an estimate and there has been a decline in co-finance in many instances during the pandemic.

Please address the points below:

- UNDP Zimbabwe - please confirm that this is meant to be in-kind as per the table. The letter missed to state it.
- GRID Arendal - please explain why the letter subject heading mentions CRIDF not GRID, but otherwise is addressed and signed by GRID Arendal
- SADC GMI: Please provide assurance that the SADC GMI co-finance is not double counted in the GEF funding to SADC GMI.
- The explanation on type of co-finance by USAID is noted.

(10/5/2021)

1. As one council member requested the circulation of the letters of co-finance please assemble the latest letters plus any additional correspondence to clarify the type of co-finance in ONE file for circulation to Council. Please assure that all letters from countries outline clearly what the nature of the co-finance is or include additional information sent by countries or agencies. Again, please combine all in one file as otherwise it'll be impossible for Council to deal with all the files to be circulated (incl. all annexes) Thank you.
2. The reissued letter by GRID is noted, Please have them clarify the nature of the co-finance (in-kind or grant).
3. Please go back to SADC GMI. GEF Council approved a USD 5 million project in support of SADC GMI this year which is not mentioned in their email. The 100,000.- co-finance by SADC can only be counted as co-finance to the Limpopo project if not indicated as co-finance in the latest PIF.

**(10/26/2021 and 11/1/2021)** Thank you for addressing comments above. Please note the following and address in table C:

- Gov't of Zimbabwe \$440,110 grant: change ?grant? to ?public investment?.
- UNDP Cap-Net \$200,000 grant: the activities described in the co-financing letter appear to be ?in-kind? activities. Will the amount be provided as cash contribution?
- Global water partnership ? Southern Africa: change ?CSO? to ?Other?.
- Southern African Development Community ? Groundwater Management Institute: change ?CSO? to ?Other?.
- Southern African Development Community ? WaterNet: change ?CSO? to ?Other?.
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•(11/15/2021) Thank you for addressing most of the comments.

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•Please though address the comment re. CapNET. You attached a revised co-financing letter that clarifies the co-finance to be 50 % (100K) as in kind and 50 % as investment mobilized - thank you for that. This has been revised in the UNDP prodoc but you forgot to revise this in table C the ER in the portal accordingly. Please address.

(11/19/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

### Agency Response

#### UNDP Response, 17 August 2021

1. UNDP Zimbabwe has confirmed that its co-financing will be In-kind.
2. GRID Arendal has submitted a corrected letter.
3. The Executive Director of SADC-GMI, Mr. James Sauramba, confirmed in an email dated 10 August 2021 that "the funds pledged by SADC-GMI to support LIMCOM on the proposed project will not come from other GEF funding. The last funding we had from GEF ended on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021". We anticipate to fund the LIMCOM activities from our sources including our own income and partnerships."

20 October 2021

1. Where countries/agencies had not clearly indicated the type of co-financing in letters, clarification has been provided by e-mail and included in the file of combined co-financing letters (Annex 17 attached).
2. GRID e-mail confirming that their co-financing is grant is in the file of combined co-financing letters.
3. SADC GMI confirmed that the USD 100,000 co-finance is not indicated as co-finance in the PIF of the USD 5 million project approved by the GEF Council. The e-mail is in the file of combined co-financing letters.

### Agency Response

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

- o - Gov't of Zimbabwe \$440,110 "grant" has been changed to "public investment".
- o - The UNDP Cap-Net \$200,000 grant has been split into 50% "in-kind and 50% grant as described in the attached updated co-financing letter. These changes have been added in the Prodoc. Under table 7: Co-financing
- o - Global Water Partnership "Southern Africa" has been changed from "CSO" to "Other".
- o - Southern African Development Community "Groundwater Management Institute" has been changed from "CSO" to "Other".
- Southern African Development Community "WaterNet" has been changed from "CSO" to "Other".

18 Nov 2021

The co-financing has been revised in table C of the ER

## 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

(7/8/2021)

- The funding is in the range of other GEF foundational projects. It has been noted at PIF stage that despite streamlining efforts the project activities are ambitious. It will be important for the this project and LIMCOM as well as UNDP to assure synergies and seeking seamless linkage between related funding sources and cooperation with development partners. This will require regular dialogue and cooperation among all partners in support of LIMCOM. We understand and comment LIMCOM for intending to establish an International Development Partner Forum which could be e.g. convened back-to-back high level meetings/ COM meetings among basin countries.
- At PIF stage a table was developed that showed the synergies between development partner support and LIMCOM 's IWRM plan implementation. Keeping such a table or diagram up to date during the duration of the project in a one-to-two-page format would go a long way to clarify synergies which are essential to deliver towards LIMCOM's and the member country ambitions in the basin.
- The costs for the project coordinator are distributed across the components as well as PMC. We could not find Annex 7 in the Portal to verify that the project coordinator is indeed a technical position for indicated percentage as s/he is charged to components and only a percentage is devoted to coordination functions. Please resubmit Annex 7 and show transparently which part of this and/or other positions are charged to which component and which percentage of their work is aligned with project coordination/management tasks and therefore to be charged to PMC.
- Please modify the figure depicting the Project Organization Structure (pg. 73 of prodoc) to clearly indicate and separate implementation and execution functions (by color/shading ?). E.g. " Project assurance: M&E and project manager" within UNDP SA is part of the GEF agency role whereas PMU/project internal M&E functions are not. Please confirm. Please also provide a footnote to clarify the use of terms "implementing partner" as used by UNDP versus GEF.

(10/5/2021)

1. Addressed.

2. Annex 18 is very much appreciated and very useful. Please provide some short indication who is doing what when there are 3 - 4 listed partners for one sub-component - this will aid clarification to all partners on their respective roles and show in a transparent way the aim to maximize synergies and avoid overlap.

3. Thank you for uploading Annex 7 and clearly showing the staff locations and respective technical and project management roles. It is noted again that one of the outcomes of the project in itself (component 1) is to strengthen the operational capacities of the rather nascent regional institution which will require to strengthen both its technical capacities as well as capacities to administer funds to be able to execute projects in the future.

In terms of *sustainability*: We welcome that funds have been budgeted for to allow dialogue and commitments of countries to ramp up country contributions to a level that core staff positions (to be defined by the countries) can be maintained past project closure while others will likely for now remain dependent on future project needs and finance. Please provide comparators in salary levels of senior staff in comparison to other SADC RBOs plus a comparison between senior staff and the ED/ES of LIMCOM. Balanced finance in the region will be important. Furthermore, please provide clarification that consultant figures (of up to 900,- per day) are in line with UNDP norms for the region.

4. Thank you for the update of the organogram. It would be helpful to indicate which of the positions/functions are either fully or partially funded by the project and which are not (in bold ?). On page 75 - heading: Role of UNDP - please add language along the lines from your response to Part II question on Coordination that UNDP "will have no executing function as defined by the GEF; i.e. it will not execute or be paid by any project grant funds and only be funded (in terms of GEF funds) by the GEF project fee. 100% of the project execution as defined by the GE will be done by GWP SA."

**(10/26/2021 and 11/1/2021)**

1. In table D, please select IW under "Programming of Funds" (see PIF). It is marked as "N/A" at this point.

2. In follow up of comments above:

i. Thank you for indicating the split of responsibilities and hence budget allocation of the project coordinator function to PMC with 20 %. Please note that some her/his technical assistance functions are referring to project management functions which would need to be moved to project management costs (PMC) e.g. such as ensuring



indicators in the results framework are monitored; undertaking project planning and monitoring against the workplan; monitor project progress and make corrections; perform regular progress reporting, among other). Please adjust the TORs accordingly and separate more clearly her/his technical duties versus Project Management duties and then adjust the % time spent split accordingly. Project management duties need to be charged to PMC (GEF or non-GEF co-finance).

ii. Please do the same for BOTH the finance/admin/procurement officer and admin and financial assistant positions and clearly indicate which part and responsibilities of these positions are charged to component 1 and describe why/to do what with regard to overall capacity building to LIMCOM (i.e. beyond this project and its management) and which part of staff time is charged to PMC as regular management of the GEF project. Currently their TORs would suggest that these positions would fall entirely under PMC (especially the assistant position).

iii. Please confirm that 50 % of the Finance/Admin/Procurement officer is financed from co-finance and not the GEF grant.

**(11/15/2021)**

1. Comment addressed.

2. Thank you for separating duties of the finance/admin/procurement officer - who is only 50 % paid via the project GEF grant - and the admin & financial assistant into their work to put an overall financial management and procurement system in place (beyond this project) that will enable LIMCOM in future to be able to directly receive and administer donor finance versus admin functions for the current GEF grant which have to be charged to PMC.

We also note that the TOR for the project technical lead (the project coordinator) has been revised and now a greater percentage charged to PMC while the majority of her/his work is to perform technical work as outlined in the TOR in alignment with the description of the project component .

**Cleared.**

Agency Response

**UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

1. The comment on dialogue and cooperation with partners is noted with thanks.
2. The table developed at PIF stage that shows linkages between LIMCOM's IWRM Plan ? 2018-2022 and other regional / national donor-supported initiatives has been updated and added as a new Annex 18 to the UNDP Prodoc; this table will be updated by LIMCOM during the project implementation
3. Annex 7 has been uploaded to the Portal. As noted in Annex 7, the project coordinator position is primarily technical and requires providing technical leadership to ensure effective delivery of project outcomes, outputs and activities; for this reason, and 80% of the PC's salary has been charged to Components 1-5. The PC also will undertake some general project management activities (with a great deal of support from the LIMSEC and GWP SA teams), and the remaining 20% of the PC's salary has therefore been charged to PMC (See page 156 of the prodoc and page 2 of Annex 7).
4. The Project Organization Structure has been modified to show that Project Assurance functions (including the M&E Programme Manager at UNDP South Africa) are Oversight functions, and that the Project Management Unit / LIMSEC functions (including project M&E) are Project Execution functions. (See page 76 of the prodoc). In addition, all project M&E functions are part of the Terms of Reference of the Environment and Water Resources Management Specialist within the PMU (as described in Annex 7); text has been added to the Project Organization Structure clarifying this role. Finally, a footnote clarifying the term "implementing partner" as used by UNDP versus GEF has been added to the diagram of the project organization structure (See page 75 of the prodoc).

20 August 2021

2. Annex 18 (attached) has been revised to show the partners at the level of specific IWRM Plan Activities
3. Salaries of Executive Directors of other RBOs within SADC (e.g. LIMCOM, ZAMCOM) range between USD 9,000 ? 10,000 per month; the proposed salaries of the professional positions funded by this project are as follows: USD 4,000 per month for the Communications & Knowledge Management Officer; USD 5,000 per month for the Environment and Water Resources Management Specialist; USD 6,000 per month for the Senior Technical Advisor; and USD 7,000 per month for the Project Coordinator. Also, UNDP South Africa has confirmed that the consultant pay rates are commensurate with higher UNDP band rates for senior professional consultants and also build in allowances for the highly variable exchange rates and current inflationary environment in the region.
4. A note has been added to show that positions/functions fully or partially funded by the project are shown in Italics in the organogram. In addition, the requested text on UNDP's role has been added in paragraph 170 (p.75 of the Prodoc)

3 November 2021

1. IW has been selected in table D, under "Programming of Funds"
- 2.i) Several functions in the Project Coordinator's TOR have been recategorized under PMC rather than Technical Components. In addition, the budget allocation for the Project Coordinator's salary has been revised so that PMC now covers 25% of the PC's salary, and the technical components now cover 75% of the PC's salary
- 2.ii) Technical responsibilities have been added in the ToR of the Finance/Admin/Procurement Officer and the Admin and Financial Assistant positions to

reflect their contribution to overall capacity building to LIMCOM and percentages of their salaries charged to component 1 and PMC have been added.

2. iii) 50 % of the Finance/Admin/Procurement officer is not financed from the GEF grant

#### 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  
(7/8/2021) 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  
(7/8/2021) Indicator 11: Please explain how the 1 million **direct beneficiaries** have been calculated. This does not seem to align with the scope and ha indicated for the expected pilots.

(10/5/2021) thanks for adjusting core indicator 11 to only list **direct** beneficiaries.  
Cleared.

#### Agency Response

##### UNDP Response, 17 August 2021

The correct figure for direct beneficiaries is 800, as provided in Table E in the GEF CEO ER (see page 5), in the Results Framework in both the GEF CEO ER (see page 33) and the UNDP Prodoc (see page 64), and in the Core Indicators worksheet (Annex F in the GEF CEO ER (see page 54) and Annex 13 of the UNDP Prodoc. Also, there is a footnote under Table E in the GEF CEO ER that explains that "The target figures for direct beneficiaries are based on estimated # of beneficiaries at the SLM pilot sites in

each of the countries (see page 6). During project implementation, the project will establish monitoring mechanisms to confirm and/or fine-tune the precise number of direct beneficiaries from project activities.) The correct figure has now been put into the GEF Portal.

## 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  
(7/8/2021)

Yes, overall this is described sufficiently.

1. Pressure on groundwater resources: The Ramotswa and Tuli Karoo basins are mentioned. Please mention and build on the the work by IWMI , UNESCO and others here and/or in the relevant component description.

e.g. <https://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/success-stories/striving-for-a-groundwater-secure-future-in-the-limpopo/>

2. Please elaborate on the extend and causes of periodically occurring fish kills mentioned and how will the project set a path to improve the situation.

(10/5/2021)

Comments overall addressed. In addition, the Joint Basin Survey in combination with the TDA will aid in clarifying the root causes and drivers. **Cleared.**

## Agency Response

**UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

1. Additional text referring to pressure on groundwater resources has been added to the section on global environmental problems (see page 10 of the prodoc), and additional text on cooperation with and learning lessons from the IWMI-led Ramotswa project has been added under Output 5.1.2 in the Alternative Scenario (see page 43 of the prodoc).  
2. Fish kills in the Limpopo River Basin are primarily due to two factors: 1) reduced oxygen levels in aquatic ecosystems due to agricultural chemicals as well as increased sediment loads that kill fish and even crocodiles (e.g. in the Kruger National Park)[1]<sup>1</sup>; and 2) temperature changes in water bodies due to climate change related impacts. Fish kills are expected to be reduced through the following project interventions: i) the Joint

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Basin Survey that will develop river health indicators for the basin that can help countries to develop better water quality standards; ii) development of the Strategic Action Program which will include interventions to address ambient water quality; iii) incremental improvements in water quality from the piloting of sustainable land management practices; and iv) liaising with riparian member states to ensure that all applicable environmental and water related policies and statutes are observed and that compliance is monitored (see page 23 of the prodoc).

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[1]

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261216309\\_Global\\_fish\\_Kills\\_Causes\\_and\\_Consequences](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261216309_Global_fish_Kills_Causes_and_Consequences)

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(7/8/2021) Partners and baselines projects are described in the UNDP prodoc - pages 43 to 50.

**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

(7/8/2021)

Overall the project document and details are elaborated in detail and the project logic/TOC and strategy/approach laid out very well in the UNDP prodoc.

Please address/respond to the following:

(Note: Points raised under section I/question 2 re table B will not be repeated here)

- Component 2.1.3: On what baseline efforts will the sediment monitoring and transport modeling build on ? Both sampling and modeling are inherently expensive. How has the budget been derived and how does it compare to comparable scope/efforts in other basins?

- Component 2.1.6: Cross-sector development scenario development: I just want you to be aware of a GEF global project which developed stakeholder driven scenario tools and modeling frameworks to evaluate a number of bottom up driven future development scenarios and trade-offs between water-energy-land use and ecosystems. The tools developed could be useful in this context. See ISWEL.org or contact the task team: <https://iiasa.ac.at/web/home/research/iswel/ISWEL.html> . IW-learn will further aid in dissemination and training as with other tools developed via GEF global projects.

- Output 2.2.1 - TDA: Please explain how the content and process for the development of the "Limpopo Atlas - Challenges and Opportunities" differs from the TDA. Please also provide reference to the TDA methodology on the IW-Learn website and briefly explain the TDA process in a few words. It is important to be clear that this is a bottom up, participatory process designed to bring a wide range of stakeholders together and build trust and dialogues while exchanging views and agreeing on common data and derived information.

- Output 3.1.1 - the write-up stresses that the IWRM plan will have **specific stress reduction targets** (which is also key to SAPs). This is well appreciated (!) Would it be useful to include this within one of the bullet points on 3.1.1. activities to not lose that point?

- Please briefly explain how you envision to engage with the private sector (and what scale of private sector actors ? This could range from farmer associations to large industries - all with very different interests, roles and modes of engagement)

- Output 3.1.4: The language that the "SAP will likely include interventions that will not eligible for GEF funding support" reads odd. It most certainly will and countries in general aim for a larger sustainable development path which not only is beyond GEF eligibility but also financial envelope of typical GEF projects.

- Please explain the "SAP investment plan" (pg. 39 prodoc) and provide a reference to GEF IW-Learn guidance and examples to aid in SAP development. Please also make sure that 'sector based investment plans' do not lose the need for a systems approach and integration across sectors (while most country and development finance admittedly remains to a large degree in sectoral silos).

- Component 4 - Implementation pilots: excellent to see that there is solid attention to monitoring the effectiveness of interventions and document site specificities in order to allow transfer and/or upscale to other sites and/or learn from less effective interventions. As stated this will also provide a base for possible implementation of PES schemes. Experiences from a number of water funds in the LAC region and a few in Africa could be interesting to draw from here.

- 4.1.2 - Please be careful to not only build on ESG type private sector partnerships. Also, please be mindful where mining companies are responsible to finance site rehab and where public grants should be used for.

(10/5/2021)

1. The existing information on sedimentation listed in the response is very sketchy and mostly outdated. Modeling without data isn't an option and accuracy of remote sensing data is more indicative and may aid to identify erosion hotspots to some degree. As you mentioned this activity may realistically just that and lead to further agreed future action needs in the SAP and IWRM plan. If there is to be some conceptual model (?) it needs to be clearly identified beforehand what data and information any sediment transport model can meaningfully build on. The aim to increase capacities for sampling and data collection may be the main one initially.

2. - 4. Comments addressed.

5. Private sector: there are some actors listed as private to be confirmed or deleted here, such as water utilities (some may be private) and municipalities.

6. Sufficiently addressed, but please note that there can also well be large infrastructure that deliver transboundary benefits but are not eligible for and/or beyond GEF finance.

(10/26/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

7. - 9. Comments addressed

Cleared

#### Agency Response

##### **UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

1. Output 2.1.3: The baseline for sediment monitoring is the assessment described in the LIMCOM Monograph, which consisted of a quantitative analysis of sediment transport data and mass balance. The total average sediment outflow from sub-basin areas within the Limpopo River basin was computed at selected river gauging stations and dam locations, although it must be noted that little information existed for Botswana, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Sediment yield values were obtained from past studies, e.g. the Joint Limpopo Basin Study (1991). Data for Massinger Dam was obtained from

a 2002 Sedimentation Study, while for some stations sediment load data was based on field observations. The rest of the sediment loads were estimated based on an analytical framework. The project's sediment modelling will build on this baseline and largely rely on combining distributed field observations and/or sediment data, and linking this to regional erosion studies[1],[2]<sup>2</sup>,[3]<sup>3</sup>, using a combination of remote sensing and modelling techniques, validated by comprehensive field assessments in selected sites.

The scope of the modeling framework will be carefully tailored to the critical management issues of the LRB, and will be linked to specific objectives for sediment modeling as defined in consultations with stakeholders. The objective of the project is not to establish a highly mechanistic, fine resolution sediment modeling framework, but rather to develop a conceptual framework which responds to the conditions of data availability, existing expertise, and capacity and sustainability considerations. The project will give a clear recommendation of how LIMCOM can then build on the framework in subsequent project phases. This approach will enable the sediment monitoring and modelling to be undertaken with a fairly limited budget (the proposed budget allocation for sediment monitoring is similar to that of the GEF-funded OKACOM project) (see page 31 of the prodoc). Furthermore, the project will develop its approach while taking into account the following considerations:

- i. Building local capacity for sediment surveys and monitoring while taking into account sustainability issues for continuing this work post-project ? i.e. identifying and using as much existing local capacity as possible and building the information base that will enable the setup of the modelling framework;
- ii. Activities will be implemented in partnership with WaterNet network institutions with an interest in sediment science, who can then potentially bring in complementary expertise for advancing the work towards the same targeted outcomes. Research institutions may also come on board with their own instruments and field equipment. WaterNet has already committed some resources towards the project, and it will also support national institutions who are mandated with erosion and sediment monitoring in their countries.
- iii. The type of modelling will be informed by what is available in the basin, with a clear focus on the management questions to be answered. To help frame the decision on which kind of model to adopt, expert consultations will take place at project start, involving identifying and consulting sediment modelling experts to discuss potential modelling approaches as well as potential constraints such as: inadequate data, existing capacities, geographic characteristics of the landscape, and resource limitations.

2. Output 2.1.6: Thank you for the reference information to the GEF global project.

3. Output 2.2.1: The Limpopo Atlas is a description of the 'state of the basin' to motivate policy action for sustainable development. The Atlas describes the impact of environmental change in the basin, providing visual representations of the information described in the Limpopo monograph, and is intended for use by policy makers, technical staff, planners and the general public to raise awareness, influence decision-making and generate action. The process used to develop the Atlas followed the causal chain analysis framework ? Drivers State Pressure Impact Response (DSPIR) to frame a participatory discussion with stakeholders. The TDA shows the details of the scientific basis in more detail than the Atlas, and includes an evaluation of how the system responds to different development scenarios to inform optimal scenarios to guide the Strategic Action Programme process. The TDA also goes into the root causes impacting the state of the environment (e.g. environmental degradation and socio-economic impediments) and how this can be responded to under different scenarios of

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development. Additional text describing the TDA process has been added under Output 2.2.1 in the UNDP Prodoc (see page 33).

4. Output 3.1.1.: Reference to specific stress reduction targets in the IWRM plan has been added to the bullet points under Output 3.1.1 in the UNDP Prodoc (see page 36).

5. Private Sector Engagement: With regard to private sector investment in the SAP Investment Plan, the project expects to engage with a wide range of potential investors, including water utilities, dam operators, farmers (small and large) who are dependent on water supplies, downstream municipalities, and mining operations. Mechanisms for engaging with these diverse actors might include through their participation in the TDA process (i.e. working with private sector actors in developing data, expertise, models, studies, etc.) and their participation in the SAP process (i.e. participation of private sector actors as stakeholders in the negotiation of the SAP to ensure that their perspectives are represented, and full engagement in preparation of the SAP investment plan, in particular in identifying short, medium and long-term private sector investment opportunities that can provide economic returns while also addressing key threats to the basin related to private sector operations (e.g. industrial wastewater treatment, increasing irrigation water use efficiency, increasing fertilizer use efficiency, increasing municipal water use efficiency, etc.). Additional text in this regard has been added under Output 3.1.4 in the UNDP Prodoc (see page 38).

6. Output 3.1.4: The text under Output 3.1.4 has been revised to state "As with other SAPs, the SAP will likely include selected interventions that deliver largely national (vs. transboundary) benefits that will not be eligible for GEF funding support".( see page 38). It is important to note that the SAP, like all SAPs, will include actions that deliver multi-country/transboundary benefits as well as national only benefits and that any SAP implementation project that may follow would target GEF resources principally to actions that deliver transboundary benefits.

7. SAP Investment Plan: Additional text describing the SAP Investment Plan and reference to a previous successful SAP investment plan has been added under Output 3.1.4 in the UNDP Prodoc (see page 38). Reference to GEF IW-Learn guidance and examples on SAP development has been added as a footnote under Output 3.1.1 in the UNDP Prodoc (see page 36).

8. Component 4: Comments noted with thanks

9. Output 4.1.2: Text has been added under Output 4.1.2 clarifying that "no GEF resources will be utilized for mining site rehabilitation, which is the responsibility of mining companies under relevant national legislation (See page 41). Where mining issues/threats pertain, the TDA and SAP will endeavour to identify and quantify these with an aim towards identifying policy and regulatory improvements and investment needs". With regard to partnerships with private sector actors, the project's partnerships will go beyond Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) approaches related to company rankings for investors. Instead, the project will also pursue partnerships where EIAs and SEAs are undertaken of SLM-related activities (e.g. land rehabilitation of mining / agriculture / grazing areas) carried out by private actors; their findings are incorporated into the corporate strategies / operations and budgets of those private sector partners; and their implementation is monitored closely by relevant government authorities.

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[1] Le Roux, J.J., Morgenthal, T.L., Malherbe, J., Pretorius, D.J. and Sumner, P.D., 2008. Water erosion prediction at a national scale for South Africa. *Water Sa*, 34(3), pp.305-314.

[2] Rooseboom, A., Verster, E., Zietsman, H.L. and Lotriet, H.H., 1992. The development of the new sediment yield map of southern Africa. *Water Research Commission Report*, 297(2), p.92.

[3] Le Roux, J.J., 2015. *Sediment Yield Modelling in the Mzimvubu River Catchment: Report to the Water Research Commission*. Water Research Commiss

20 October 2021

1. The baseline for sediment monitoring is described in the LIMCOM Monograph, which consisted of a quantitative analysis of sediment transport data and mass balance. However, the existing data described in the Monograph is quite dated and needs to be updated with more contemporary data, which will be done through local capacity building and cooperation with WaterNet and other institutions involved in sediment data collection.

The scope of the modeling framework will be carefully tailored to the critical management issues of the LRB, and will be linked to specific objectives for sediment modeling as defined in consultations with stakeholders. The modeling framework to be utilized remains to be determined and will be based upon realistic expectations of the type, volume and quality of data that can be acquired, as well as the available capacity of the involved institutions. This approach will institutionalize sediment transport data collection toward building consistent time series, consolidated from the pilot sites, that at a later stage can assist in the establishment of sediment transport rating curves correlated with flow discharge. The objective of the project is not to establish a highly mechanistic, fine resolution sediment modeling framework, but rather to develop a conceptual framework which responds to the conditions of data availability, existing expertise, and capacity and sustainability considerations. This approach will enable the sediment monitoring and modelling to be undertaken with a fairly limited budget (the proposed budget allocation for sediment monitoring is similar to that of the GEF-funded OKACOM project; see p. 30 and 31 of the UNDP Prodoc). The project will give a clear recommendation of how LIMCOM can then build on the framework in subsequent project phases, and this initial data collection and monitoring exercise will serve as input to possible proposed SAP/IWRM plan actions to enhance and optimize the overall sediment monitoring and modeling framework going forward.

Furthermore, the project will develop its approach while taking into account the following considerations:

i. Building local capacity for sediment surveys and monitoring while taking into account sustainability issues for continuing this work post-project ? i.e. identifying and using as much existing local capacity as possible and building the information base that will enable the setup of the modelling framework;

ii. Activities will be implemented in partnership with WaterNet network institutions with an interest in sediment science, who can then potentially bring in complementary expertise for advancing the work towards the same targeted outcomes.

Research institutions may also come on board with their own instruments and field equipment. WaterNet has already committed some resources towards the project, and it will also support national institutions who are mandated with erosion and sediment monitoring in their countries.

iii. The future conceptual model will be informed by what will be made available in the basin, with a clear focus on the management questions to be answered.

5. The text describing private sector actors has been corrected; water utilities and municipalities have been removed

6. Noted with thanks.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(7/8/2021) Yes, the project is well aligned with the GEF IW strategy which is clearly elaborated in the project design.

**Cleared.**

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(7/8/2021) Baseline contributions and increment are clearly laid out.

Please see earlier comment to consider adding a table (Annex?) depicting synergies of the various national and especially regional initiatives, incl. those funded via CRIDF, USAID, GIZ and others. This has been very valuable at PIF stage to assure complementarity of support e.g. for flood forecasting, e-flows, and conjunctive management strategies.

(10/5/2021) Addressed in earlier comment and Annex 18 added. **Cleared.**

Agency Response

**UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

The table developed at PIF stage that shows linkages between LIMCOM's IWRM Plan ? 2018-2022 and other regional / national donor-supported initiatives has been updated and added as a new Annex 18 to the UNDP Prodoc; this table will be updated by LIMCOM during the project implementation.

**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

(7/8/2021) 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

(7/8/2021) Transboundary cooperation and aiding the development of a sustainable institutional framework for cooperation is in itself a complex and innovative approach. There is no blue print that is identical from one basin to the other and this project is making a concerted effort to learn from experiences in other basins in the region and beyond southern Africa.

In addition, the pilot projects serve the purpose to quantify effectiveness to allow scale-up and innovative finance for the region through a possible PES scheme(s) and at the same time showing early cooperation benefits from the engagement in a regional project lead by LIMCOM.

**Cleared.**

Agency Response

**UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

Noted with thanks

**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  
(7/8/2021) 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  
(7/8/2021) Yes. There is a stakeholder engagement and gender action plan in place.

(11/1/2021) ): It looks like you forgot to tick the relevant boxes on which stakeholders have participated in consultations during the project identification phase. Please address.

(11/15/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

Agency Response

3 Nov 2021

Boxes are ticked in the portal

**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

(7/8/2021) Yes, there is a gender action plan in place analyzing both legal and customary gender differences and barriers for engagement of women. The pilots will still be developed in detail during implementation and possibly put in place ESMFs as needed and with a gender differentiated approach.

**Cleared.**

Agency Response

**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

(7/8/2021) Yes. There will be some yet limited engagement with the private sector. The engagement is mainly within a corporate stewardship approach and partnering on small scale land rehabilitation measures. A couple of questions/comments on envisioned engagement with the private sector in the TDA and SAP development and in the pilots were raised earlier in the review already.

(10/5/2021) Also responded to in earlier comment. **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

(7/8/2021) There is an extensive risk section provided outlining the risks and mitigation strategies.

- Risk 2/... consistent LIMCOM membership engagement is assessed as "low". This risk seems higher given e.g. the limited funds of member states provided to LIMCOM. The project will engage with countries to ramp this up which in itself is not easy and will likely only slowly come into place once benefits of LIMCOM become more tangible to countries. Please reconsider the rating.

- Risk 4/ lack of intersectoral coordination. Drawing parallels from other basins and countries risk may still rather seen as *moderate* than *low* even with the risk mitigation efforts outlined.

- Risk 7/COVID related - please indicate flexibility in the project to address likely needs of remote work (e.g. needs to provide remote internet access/dongles, ..) and training for staff and counterparts on remote project supervision and M&E tools/options which have been widely rolled out in many agencies and learning from DRM and FCV experiences.

- Please include/summarize climate risk to the project and mitigation strategies in the risk section.

(10/5/2021) Comments have been addressed. **Cleared.**

#### Agency Response

##### **UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

1. The overall rating for Risk 2 has been changed from Low to Moderate (see page 146 of the prodoc)

2. The overall rating for Risk 4 has been changed from Low to Moderate (see page 147 of the prodoc)

3. The challenges and risks associated with project implementation during the Covid-19 pandemic, including mitigation strategies to address these challenges and risks, are described in the Risks Table in both the UNDP Prodoc and GEF CEO ER. Additional text has been added to the risk mitigation strategy explaining that in the case of continued challenges from the pandemic in the sub-region, the project will be prepared to support PMU staff and key partners (e.g. LIMSEC staff) with remote internet access options, and in the case of travel restrictions, local consultants will be recruited to support international consultants responsible for the Mid Term Review, Terminal Evaluation, and other technical consultancies in terms of ground data collection, physical meetings with stakeholders, etc. During project inception, UNDP will assist the project team in accessing remote project supervision and M&E tools/options that have been rolled out in various development agencies (including those developed for DRM ? Disaster Risk Management; FCV countries ? Fragile, Conflict and Violence programs) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic (See page 57 of the prodoc).

4. Climate risks and risk mitigation strategies are in the Risk section (see Risk 8 on page 150 of the prodoc)

#### **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**

(7/8/2021)

- Coordination with other initiatives: Overall yes, there is coordination with other development partner financed related support to LIMCOM and there are plans for a development partners forum to institutionalize and enhance that cooperation.

- Implementation arrangements: Please clear up language on "execution" and "Implementation" which UNDP and GEF use differently and hence in the endorsement package and prodoc there are a couple of confusing points due to the different use of terminology. In that vein, please confirm that UNDP will have no (GEF speak) executing function, i.e. will not execute or be paid by any project grant funds and only be funded (in terms of GEF funds) by the GEF project fee.

(10/5/2021) Please refer as well to the earlier comment on the organogram and roles.

**Cleared.**

#### **Agency Response**

**UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

Language on project execution and implementation has been clarified. Also, UNDP confirms that it will have no executing function as defined by the GEF; i.e. it will not



execute or be paid by any project grant funds and only be funded (in terms of GEF funds) by the GEF project fee. 100% of the project execution as defined by the GE will be done by GWP SA.

**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  
(7/8/2021) 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  
(7/8/2021) Yes, this has been elaborated and is described in a distinct component including cooperation with IW-Learn, other basin organizations and development partners.

**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  
(7/8/2021) Yes. In addition ESMFs for the project pilots will be developed as needed.

**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  
(7/8/2021) Yes.

Cleared

(11/1/2021) Please note that the Budget Section under Section 9 show an M&E budget of \$ 180,000 while the budget table under Annex E of the Endorsement Request (in the portal) show zero M&E budget. Please revise.

(11/15/2021) Comment not addressed. Please request a call to explain this if the comment was not clear enough. Again, please make sure that the listed M&E budget of 180 K in the M&E section (section 9) of the ER is shown in the M&E column of the budget table in Annex E.

(11/19/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

Agency Response

The correction has been made in the portal.

18 November 2021

The M&E budget has been corrected in the portal to reflect the total of \$174,574 and this figure been added in the budget table under Annex E of the Endorsement Request in the Portal to correct the error of zero M&E 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**

(7/8/2021) This is a regional project and an early and first GEF engagement in the Limpopo basin. The benefits from regional cooperation will take time to be tangible on national and local levels. Implementation pilots are therefore part of the project to provide both early and visible benefits from a LIMCOM lead project as well as serving as a base for possible PES scheme/s to address serious erosion problems in parts of the basin.

**Cleared.**

**Agency Response**

**UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

Noted with thanks.

**Annexes**

**Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

(7/8/2021) Yes.

**Cleared**

**Agency Response**

**Project Results Framework**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

(7/8/2021)

- Indicator 1/target for direct beneficiaries is not aligned with core indicator 11 value in the ER. Please adjust core indicator 11 to align with the project results FW.

- Indicator 5 - as mentioned before to reduce ambiguity please reword to 'SAP completed and endorsed by at least one Minister from each basin country'.
- Indicator 10/TDA - are you tracking the involvement of female vs male stakeholders in the TDA process and their roles in the process (e.g. female/male scientists; NGO reps; government agency reps etc.) ?
- Indicator 15 - please track which of the farms are either owned or headed by female leads of households
- Indicator 17 - Please include participation in IWCs; project website establishment and sharing of experience notes

(10/5/2021)

Comment 3. Please note your cited text which is puzzling: " Data Source / Collection Methods: ?List and number of participants during TDA development activities segregated by gender?. *However, it does not anticipate measuring the exact gender breakdown among specific sub-groups such as scientists, NGO reps, etc.*" This is contradictory as written. Collection gender disaggregated data means that participation within groups needs to do just that: record involvement by gender within groups such as NGO reps, scientists etc. (!) Please address.

Comment 4. the response is well noted. Please reflect this in the results framework.

(10/26/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

#### Agency Response

##### UNDP Response, 17 August 2021

1. Regarding indicator 1, the values in the Results Framework and the Core Indicators (under Table E in the CEO ER and in the Core Indicators worksheet) are aligned.
2. Regarding indicator 5, the requested change has been made (see pages 64 and 67 of the prodoc).
3. Regarding indicator 10, Indicator 1 in the Gender Action Plan states ?The TDA has disaggregated socioeconomic information for the watershed by sex, ethnicity, and age range, and includes an analysis of the impacts of the division of work between men and women, and a gender analysis in the quality of natural resources, land degradation and contamination of land and water resources?, and the indicator includes the following under Data Source / Collection Methods: ?List and number of participants during TDA development activities segregated by gender?. However, it does not anticipate

measuring the exact gender breakdown among specific sub-groups such as scientists, NGO reps, etc. (see page 112 of the prodoc)

4. Regarding indicator 15, baseline information on which farms are either owned or headed by female leads of households will be established at project start and tracked throughout the project.

5. Regarding participation in IWCs; project website establishment and sharing of experience notes, these have been added as a new Indicator 18 in the Results Framework (see page 68 of the prodoc).

20 October 2021

3. The project team has confirmed that the project will in fact collect data on the gender breakdown of specific sub-groups.

4. The requested text has been added to Indicator 15 in the Results Framework (p. 67 of the Prodoc and p. 36 of the CEO ER).

#### **GEF Secretariat comments**

#### **Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

see other entry fields in the portal.

<nothing needed here; cleared>

#### **Agency Response**

#### **Council comments**

#### **Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

Annex B: Canada, Germany, UK and US: comments have been mostly addressed.

- UK comments on cooperation and synergy needs among development partner support are crucial to keep in mind and development of the International Development Partners Forum by LIMCOM appears to a conscious step in this direction.

- Sustainability and increase of country contributions to sustain LIMCOM staff beyond the ES - see earlier comments and need to budget for dialogue with countries and learn from other basins on how to structure country contributions (even or differentiated options) and go about a gradual ramp up of contributions to cover the core costs of the LIMCOM secretariat.

- Co-finance: all letters have been signed and can be - as per request of Germany - attached to the submission and circulated for transparency.

- Germany also requested to review the risk section which is part of the endorsement request which will be circulated to Council for four weeks.

- All funds will be executed by GWP-SA in behalf of LIMCOM while building up LIMCOM' capacity for financial management, procurement and coordination. No funds will flow directly to either of the governments.

(10/5/2021)

1. UK comment on sustainability: aligns with GEFSEC comment on salaries which can be reflected here as well. Please also add the fact that there now is provision of budget to support country dialogue and commitment to ramp up finance by the end of the project in order to cover core costs and positions for the secretariat. Please therefore expand your response here .
2. Given the number of files (incl prodoc annexes) that will need to be circulated, please address our earlier comment to bundle all co-finance letters plus any additional clarification on the type of co-finance in ONE file to simplify Council review of the documentations.
3. Canada: is asking for the difference between TDA and *freshwater health* survey. Please explain the difference and complementarity between the 'Joint Basin Survey' (which is funded) and the TDA.
4. US - comment 1: Please refer in your answer to Annex 18 which aids as well to show the coordination between US AID and GEF/UNDP finance.

(10/26/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

#### Agency Response

##### **UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

1. The UK comments on cooperation and synergy are noted with thanks.
2. Regarding country contributions to LIMCOM, this was responded to earlier in the document.
3. Regarding co-financing letters, noted with thanks
4. Regarding the risk section, noted with thanks
5. Regarding execution of funds, UNDP confirms that no funds will flow directly to either of the governments. UNDP also confirms that all funds will be executed by GWP-SA on behalf of LIMCOM while building up LIMCOM' capacity for financial management, procurement and coordination; if this capacity building enables LIMCOM eventually to execute some project activities, UNDP will conduct a HACT assessment of LIMCOM prior providing any project funds to LIMCOM through GWP

**20 October 2021**

1. As detailed in the response to comment 3 on GEF Resource Availability (p. 5-6 of this document), the proposed salaries of the professional positions funded by this project are well below the salaries of Executive Directors of other RBOs within SADC. Also, additional text regarding project support and budget allocations to support country dialogues and the LIMSEC Financial Sustainability Plan has been added to the response to the UK's comment (p. 41 of the CEO ER).

2. All co-financing letters and e-mails clarifying the type of co-financing have been merged in one file and uploaded to the portal (Annex 17).

3. A Joint Basin Survey (JBS) can be viewed as a sub-set of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) process. The JBS constitutes the groundwork mechanism for generation of robust data and information (*biophysical and socio-economic ? current focus is on biophysical*) on the status of basin ecosystems, which feeds into the comprehensive TDA, a process that is inherently analytical in nature. The JBS is a process of gathering vital data on carefully selected biophysical ecosystems parameters/indicators across the entire spectrum of a given river basin system, to ascertain the health / status of the various land and waterscapes, encompassing the transboundary river basin being surveyed. The JBS should be designed to focus on assessing only biophysical parameters or indicators that are critically relevant for ecosystem functioning status of various land and waterscapes, gauged against internationally established standards (e.g. WHO water quality standards; Ecosystems Integrity Status; IUCN Habitat Fragmentation, etc.). Biophysical surveys require undertaking physical and biological measurements of changes taking place over time, related to specific indicators, and using internationally established measurements and analytical procedures, normally framed in the form of monitoring practices. In this regard, an initial JBS is normally used to establish a baseline to comprehensively monitor changes over time. The JBS also facilitates harmonization of monitoring practices across riparian states. On the other hand, the TDA will make use of the information gathered through the JBS to scientifically and technically assess emerging water related environmental issues and challenges, using a causal chain analytical framework. The causal chain analytical framework is much broader in scope, as it considers basinwide, national, regional and global scales, and includes socio-economic, political, policies and institutional contextual settings. The purpose of conducting the TDA, therefore, is to scale-up the relative importance of both, immediate and root sources and causes of transboundary water problems, and to identify potential prophylactic and remedial actions. It should be noted that cases exist where Joint Basin Surveys are embedded within the TDA process, typically in basins with very limited availability of reliable baseline data and information. Due to time and resource constraints, these types of surveys are conducted in the form of a rapid resource assessment procedure, consequently becoming limited in scope and with reduced statistical significance of collected data.

The above text has been added to the Annex B of the CEO Endorsement Request (response to comment from Canada). p. 42-43

4. The response to the US comment has been updated with reference to Annex 18, P. 43

#### STAP comments

##### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(7/8/2021) Please note that the STAP matrix requests contact with STAP before endorsement. Please upload in the Portal any such email exchange with STAP.

(10/5/2021) Comment addressed. **Cleared.**

Agency Response

**UNDP Response, 17 August 2021**

The STAP has been contacted by email and the exchange has been uploaded in the Portal

**Convention Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request None.

Agency Response

**CSOs comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request None.

Agency Response

**Status of PPG utilization**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
(7/8/2021) PPG utilization status is provided in the endorsement request.

**Cleared.**

Agency Response

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
(7/8/2021) Yes, 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

(7/8/2021) The project is not yet recommended for endorsement, but is overall well designed. Please address comments and resubmit soonest. Please contact me/GEFSEC for any questions.

(10/5/2021) Please address the few remaining comments and resubmit.

(11/1/2021) Please address a few remaining issues in the comments (of 10/26/2021 and 11/1/2021). Please get in touch for any clarifications.

Note: this project requires four week circulation to Council prior to endorsement (with a cancelation deadline in December). Please merge the UNDP prodoc and all its annexes in one pdf file to facilitate circulation to Council. We do have to create links for the ER , the prodoc with all latest versions of annexes (if needed you can upload one file for the prodoc and file merging all annexes, but we cannot send 18 separate links for the annexes). Thank you.

**(11/15/2021)** Please address the couple of comments that you forgot to address in the resubmission.

In resubmitting please upload the endorsement request and the revised prodoc with all annexes WITHOUT any track changes/coloring as these will be circulated to Council. Thank you !

**(11/19/2021)** Comments in the review sheet have been addressed. The project is technically cleared and recommended for endorsement.

#### **Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>7/8/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/5/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>11/1/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		

#### **CEO Recommendation**

#### **Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**

**Background.** The Limpopo River Basin (LRB) shared by Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe is home to an estimated 18 million people and includes major urban centers such as Gaborone, Francistown (Botswana), Pretoria, parts of Johannesburg and Polokwane (South Africa) and Bulawayo (Zimbabwe). The Limpopo River Basin also hosts unique protected areas and biodiversity hotspots, such as the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, comprising the Kruger National Park in South Africa, the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique, and the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe. Access to water is of strategic importance to social and economic development in all parts of the Basin. The greatest water users by sector in the four Limpopo River riparian states is irrigated agriculture (approximately 50% of the total water demand), followed by municipal water supply (24%) and mining and industrial use (7 % each). Water allocation between upstream and downstream areas and among urban and rural users is an essential challenge for the sustainable management of the Limpopo River Basin with increasing climate variability and change adding to already high seasonal and inter-year variability of water and frequent floods and droughts. The project is providing foundational GEF support for cooperation among the four countries in the Limpopo basin.

**The project.** The four countries signed an agreement for cooperation in the basin and establishing LIMCOM in 2005. The GEF support is based on the LIMCOM IWRM plan and its priority actions in order to support the countries' Shared Vision of a 'dynamic, prosperous and sustainable river basin for all'. Interventions combine the support for enhancing LIMCOM's institutional capacity and sustainability, the formulation of a Transboundary Diagnostic (updated Basin Monograph) and a long-term strategic action program/IWRM plan together with prioritized national implementation plans, as well as aims to mobilize public and private interests to finance implementation. Furthermore, the project supports sediment monitoring and modeling and innovative pilots to address sediment management; a joint basin fresh-water health survey and cooperation and learning exchanges with other SADC region RBOs.

**Innovation, Sustainability, and Scale-up.** The firm commitment to the establishment of LIMCOM by the four countries and backing of the cooperation by SADC provides a credible basis for the sustainability of LIMCOM and the project interventions. The project also will aim to promote a 'Source to Sea' approach through awareness raising and promoting dialogue with stakeholders in the TDA development that LIMCOM haven't interacted with in the past, e.g. the Nairobi Convention. This will be the first attempt to provide an institutional linkage between the Limpopo River basin ecosystem (LIMCOM) with the Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystem (Nairobi Convention) in a source-to-sea context and will build on scientific knowledge to be collected during the TDA development process. Furthermore, sediment reduction demonstration projects are expected to result in quantifiable evidence to support potential environmental and transboundary benefits from this type of investments and provide experience to incentivize replication and upscaling across the basin.