

Strengthening integrated transboundary source-to-sea management of the Ruvuma River Basin and its coastal zones to ensure ecosystem health and livelihood security

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID
11410

Countries
Regional (Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania)

Project Name
Strengthening integrated transboundary source-to-sea management of the Ruvuma River Basin and its coastal zones to ensure ecosystem health and livelihood security

Agencies
IUCN

Date received by PM
2/7/2025

Review completed by PM
8/5/2025

Program Manager
Astrid Hillers

Focal Area
International Waters
Project Type
FSP

PIF
CEO

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/2025)

1. Please provide the definite executing agencies and delete "anticipated" (which likely dates back to PIF stage). Also, delete modifiers such as "in behalf of" which should be explained not here but in the section on institutional arrangements as relevant.
2. Wetlands International has been identified as co-executing agency during PPG but is not listed. Please address.

Please ask GEF Portal IT support if these changes provide a challenge.

(7/1/2026)

1. and 2. Comments addressed.

Cleared.

Agency Response1 & 2 - thank you for the comment. We have listed Wetlands International as co-executing agency.

b) Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/2025)

1. CCM is indicated as a significant objective. Please provide a Core Indicator 6 target accordingly.

(7/1/2026)

1. This is reasonable and is aligned with the project design.

Cleared.

Agency Response

Thank you for the comment. This has not been measured within the PPG phase as it was not an indicator that we identified during the development of the ProDoc. We noticed that the CCM was selected as a significant objective, however throughout the ProDoc and the Results Framework,

Core Indicator 6 was never indicated (6.1- Carbon sequestered; 6.2- Emissions avoided). We have now removed CCm as a significant objective.

2. Project Summary.

- a) Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected outcomes?**
- b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/2025)

1. The project indeed is providing GEBs and co-benefits across biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, land degradation reduction, and sustainable forest management. As this is not a focal area project, the formulation of spanning "Focal Areas" is confusing.

(7/1/2026)

Addressed.

Agency Response Thank you for the comment - removed.

3. Project Description Overview

- a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?**
- b) Are the components, outcomes, and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?**
- c) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?**
- d) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**
- e) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/2025)

1. The project description overview should simply list the project objective in the first row which should be consistent with the project description and Results Framework. (i.e. please do not add an entire paragraph here but only a concise, clear and measurable PO). There may in fact just have been an error in uploading as this para in place of the PO is in fact a duplicate of the project summary.

2. Please mention participation in IW:LEARN in Component 5

3. Please move the M&E related output (currently 5.3) into the M&E budget.

4. PMC is within 5 %. Please maintain the same proportionality of the ration of [grant to co-finance (sub-totals)] for the ratio of [PMC GEF amount to co-finance amount].

5. There is no need for a justification (of what?) under the project summary, unless there is a request for e.g. PMC above the 5% standard.

(7/1/2026) and (7/14/2026)

1. Addressed.

2. Addressed in the project document. It would have been nice to see it in the Project Overview table as well, but it is noted in the the component description in the prodoc.

3. addressed.

4. NOT ADDRESSED: $\$65,127,731/\$6,775,055= 9.61$ Please have the same relation between the PMC GEF grant of 346,963 and co-finance to this PMC.

-> in Sum: PMC is not proportionate between GEF financing (5%) and co-financing (0.5%),

5. Please revise the PMC to 5.0% of both GEF financing and co-financing (it is currently 5.1 %)

6. Please fill in project **outcome and output for M&E** under the component table:

Monitoring and Evaluation		Project Outcome	Project Output			
M&E	Technical Assistance			GET	213,663.00	2,159,536.00
				Sub Total (\$)	6,775,055.00	65,127,731.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
	GET	346,963.00	312,749.00			
	Sub Total(\$)	346,963.00	312,749.00			
	Total Project Cost(\$)	7,122,018.00	65,440,480.00			
	Share PMC over Sub-total	5.1%	0.5%			

(7/30/2025)

4. Proportionality is now revised. Addressed.

5. PMC is 4.99 %. Addressed.

6. M&E outcomes and outputs have been added. Addressed.

Cleared.

Agency Response

Thank you for the comments.

1. Project Objective included, Project Summary erroneously included prior has now been removed.

2. Included.

3. 5.3 moved as M&E budget.

4. Addressed.

5. Removed.

28/7/2025

1. Addressed.

2. Addressed in the project document. It would have been nice to see it in the Project Overview table as well, but it is noted in the the component description in the prodoc. **We have added this in the Project Description.**

3. addressed.

4. NOT ADDRESSED: $\$65,127,731/\$6,775,055= 9.61$ Please have the same relation between the PMC GEF grant of 346,963 and co-finance to this PMC.

-> in Sum: PMC is not proportionate between GEF financing (5%) and co-financing (0.5%), **We have edited the PMC amount and the co-financing ratios.**

5. Please revise the PMC to 5.0% of both GEF financing and co-financing (it is currently 5.1 %) **We have edited the PMC amount and the co-financing ratios.**

6. Please fill in project **outcome and output for M&E** under the component table: **Added.**

4. Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?

b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?

c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/2025)

1. On policy harmonization: you mention the need to harmonize policies (which in fact?) across the three countries and also assure that these are in synch with regional policies. In addition, are there inconsistencies in policies and incentives across sectors that also need addressing?

(7/1/2026)

1. Addressed.

Agency Response

Thank you for the comment. We have provided some examples of policies that would need harmonisation in the CEO Endorsement Request. A more detailed description is included in Section 3.1.3 of the ProDoc.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?

b) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?

c) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and

critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

d) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?

e) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?

f) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?

g) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this FSP/MSP)?

h) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?

i) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and description/s?

j) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

k) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?

l) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/21/2025) The project design is overall well described and is based on strong country commitments as evidenced e.g. by the MoU signed by all countries to engage in the development of a basin agreement. It also includes a number of innovative elements around community engagement, Source-to-Sea management, and e-DNA analysis, as well as energy efficient small scale irrigation among other. Building on the IUCN led BRIDGE process is another strong building block for cooperation and engagement of the private sector which is not an easy effort in mostly rural basin areas.

1. Please replace the current ToC image in the ER with a less "fuzzy" version of it that makes it more easily readable. The narrative in fact does though explain the hard to read image in figure 1 and outlines the ToC in detail. It is also acknowledged that the same figure is also in the agency prodoc and well readable there. Please - as mentioned earlier - provide a clear project objective either here or at least in the ResultsFramework.

2. Please assure that Gender Considerations are integrated across the design and implementation of all relevant components (incl gender differentiated indicators and targets provided in the Results Framework).

3. Please explain the relation between output 1.3 Gender Action Plan and the the ESMF to the documents that have been developed during PPG. See also comments later on the submitted Gender Action Plan.

4. Comp. 3.1 Please note that the SAP has to be signed by at least one project relevant Minister from each country.

5. Comp 3.1. Co-development of finance models with the private sector. Please indicate potential private sector actors (and name them) based on the PPG consultations.

6. Comp. 4 (4.1 to 4.3) The component and sub-components provide an array of innovative but also by sheer variety and number of suggested activities and deliverables an ambitious set of efforts. On

the other hand not many of these are actually reflected in the Results Framework of this component. Please clarify which of these are deliverables of the project and anchor these in an appropriate format in the Results Framework. Certainly some sort of budget is behind the community based efforts to indicate at least a certain type/# of these. Also, clear items in 4.2. and 4.3. such as the establishment of resource policies and laws and the development and implementation of forest and wetland management plans should be listed.

7. Comp. 4.1 Please confirm that none of these efforts will proceed without an ESMF including having locally based and appropriate grievance mechanisms in place.

8. Comp. 4.3 Please specify what policies have to be harmonized across countries and why? What about cross-sector policies within each country (see earlier comment - please only answer once).

9. Comp. 5.1 Please take note that a Source-to-Sea guide is under preparation lead by UNECE and with participation of a number of GEF partners. In addition, well before the end of 2025 IW:LEARN will provide a 'how to guidance' on how to integrate source-to-sea management in the TDA and SAP and its process. Please utilize these guidance in project implementation.

10. Comp. 5.1 Mechanisms for knowledge and experience sharing at local, national, regional and international levels. It may be useful to consider moving the Transboundary Freshwater Diplomacy Database here. (just a suggestion)

11. Comp. 5.1 Please include active participation in IW:LEARN and set aside at 1 % of the GEF grant incl. for participation in GEF International Waters Conference, relevant regional and thematic workshops and consultations, delivery of experience (as experience notes, stories, or other media as guided by IW:LEARN), and a website that includes IW:LEARN compatible elements. Please show the IW:LEARN line item in the budget.

(7/1/2026)

1. Addressed.

2. **Not addressed.** It is not evident that gender is considered and the roles of especially women assured in the description of the outputs and activities across components 2, 3, 4, and 5. Please integrate key aspects in the component text/description of activities (in addition you may also refer to the gender action plan sections relevant to each component.)

3. **I do not see this** in component 1.3 . Can you please explain where this is indicated ?

4. **Not sufficiently addressed.** Addressed in the Results Framework but the text of Component Activity 3.1.1 in the prodoc only mentions that the SAP needs to be endorsed by Member States. Please be specific - as per the previous comment - that this means the signature of at least one relevant Minister from each of the countries.

5. Addressed.

6. **Not sufficiently addressed.** Outputs/Activities described in components 4.2. and 4.3 are still not adequately captured and tracked in the Results Framework.

7. Noted.

8. Section 3.1.3 noted. **Please make a cross-reference to this section** in the project sub-component text.

9. **Please footnote these documents in 5.1** linked to the sentence: "Emphasis will be placed on generating guidance tools for the application of the source-to-sea framework and the WEFEX nexus application, based on the practical experience made during the implementation of the project."

10. **Unclear.** Please provide the page number in the prodoc and RF where the TFDD update is included (not only the TDA inclusion in the TFDD).

11. Noted.

(7/30/2024)

1. Previously addressed.

2. Gender: Not sufficiently addressed. There is mention of gender in a rather generic way in the outputs of the prodoc, but gender aspects are very seldom mentioned or described in the activities nor is there reference to the respective sections of the gender action plan. Furthermore, there is no mention of gender or vulnerable groups in the project description of the endorsement request or reference to the gender action plan.

3. Addressed.

4. Addressed.

5. Previously addressed.

6. This is now addressed better. Cleared.

7. Previously addressed.

8. Section 3.1.3.2 is noted and the TDA SAP process provides an opportunity for agreeing on further actions for cross-sector policy coherence. Cleared.

9. Noted.

10. Remains unclear. The Transboundary Freshwater Diplomacy Database/TFDD update is a key tool for greater KM base of transboundary waters and a small component to update the global TFDD database was highlighted as priority by IUCN (James Dalton). The current prodoc only mentions that e-DNA, TDA and a compendium of practices are somehow to be integrated/referenced in the TFDD. Please address (in the project description and RF) and budget for it.

11. previously addressed.

(8/5/2025)

2. Gender: addressed.

10. TFDD: addressed.

Cleared.

Agency Response

Thank you for the comments.

1. ToC image re-uploaded in higher resolution, however there may be a glitch/override on the GEF portal side which is reducing resolution (thus, 'fuzzy').

2. The CI 11 is included in Component 4 and 5 but captured with its correct title: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment (which indicates the gender differentiated indicator and target)

3. Done, this has now been indicated.

4. Done, this has now been indicated.

5. The success of Component 3.3 depends on identifying and mobilising private sector actors whose operations intersect with key land, water, and biodiversity systems throughout the Ruvuma River Basin. Project Preparation Grant (PPG) consultations and subsequent stakeholder mapping have revealed several private entities with the operational footprint and incentive structures to engage in co-developing nature-positive finance models. We have indicated potential actors in the results framework. A more detailed description is included in section 3.4.2.5 of the ProDoc.
6. Done, this has now been indicated.
7. Yes, it is confirmed (ESMF).
8. A detailed description is included in Section 3.1.3 of the ProDoc. To avoid making the Results Framework more extensive, the specific policies are not detailed there, but instead in the ProDoc.
9. Noted.
10. Noted, moved.
11. Noted, included.

28/7/2025

1. Addressed.
2. **Not addressed.** It is not evident that gender is considered and the roles of especially women assured in the description of the outputs and activities across components 2, 3, 4, and 5. Please integrate key aspects in the component text/description of activities (in addition you may also refer to the gender action plan sections relevant to each component.) Gender and especially the role of woman and communities is now addressed in components 2, 3, 4 and 5. As such, the results framework and the ToC have also been updated to reflect these changes
3. **I do not see this** in component 1.3 . Can you please explain where this is indicated? Output 1.3 now changed to: Enhanced gender mainstreaming and mitigation of environmental and social risks and impacts at local, national and Basin level, building directly on the Gender Analysis and Environmental and Social Screening conducted during the PPG phase

Activity 1.3.2 now change to: Develop and operationalize an Environmental and Social Mitigation Framework (ESMF) to manage significant environmental and social risks and impacts of the Ruvuma Project across the intervention sites. This will build on and finalise the draft ESMF and initial screening undertaken during the PPG phase, ensuring continuity and alignment between project design and implementation safeguards.
4. **Not sufficiently addressed.** Addressed in the Results Framework but the text of Component Activity 3.1.1 in the prodoc only mentions that the SAP needs to be endorsed by Member States. Please be specific - as per the previous comment - that this means the signature of at least one relevant Minister from each of the countries. This has now been specified in the project document, under the activities section.
5. Addressed.
6. **Not sufficiently addressed.** Outputs/Activities described in components 4.2. and 4.3 are still not adequately captured and tracked in the Results Framework. This has now been revised in the project document, and on the portal.
7. Noted.
8. Section 3.1.3 noted. **Please make a cross-reference to this section** in the project sub-component text. This has now been cross-referenced.
9. **Please footnote these documents in 5.1** linked to the sentence: "Emphasis will be placed on generating guidance tools for the application of the source-to-sea framework and the WEFE nexus

application, based on the practical experience made during the implementation of the project." It is now indicated as a footnote that when these documents are available they will be used as guidance.

10. **Unclear.** Please provide the page number in the prodoc and RF where the TFDD update is included (not only the TDA inclusion in the TFDD). In the prodoc is specified in page 66 and in the RF in page 11, under output 5.1.

11. Noted.

(7/30/2025)

2. Gender: Not sufficiently addressed. There is mention of gender in a rather generic way in the outputs of the prodoc, but gender aspects are very seldom mentioned or described in the activities nor is there reference to the respective sections of the gender action plan. Furthermore, there is no mention of gender or vulnerable groups in the project description of the endorsement request or reference to the gender action plan.

Project Description, components, activities and outputs have all been updated, as well as the gender action plan.

For the ProDoc:

- Project Description: Now includes clear references to gender equality, vulnerable groups, and the Gender Action Plan.
- A new Output is added (Output 2.2)
- Component Descriptions (1?5): Gender mainstreaming integrated throughout, reflecting specific actions, participation goals, and benefits for women and vulnerable groups.
- Outputs (e.g., 1.3, 2.2, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3): Revised to incorporate gender-responsive targets, actions, and references to the Gender Action Plan.

For the Gender Action Plan (GAP):

- Expanded to include concrete targets, gender actions, indicators, responsibilities, and costs.
- Includes new content on gender entry points for all relevant outputs and activities.
- Updated Section 4 with a full table capturing gender integration across project outputs.
- TFDD (Output 2.2): Now includes specific actions to incorporate gender-sensitive TDA findings and three case studies on women's role in transboundary governance

10. Remains unclear. The Transboundary Freshwater Diplomacy Database/TFDD update is a key tool for greater KM base of transboundary waters and a small component to update the global TFDD database was highlighted as priority by IUCN (James Dalton). The current prodoc only mentions that e-DNA, TDA and a compendium of practices are somehow to be integrated/referenced in the TFDD. Please address (in the project description and RF) and budget for it.

The TFDD has now been updated with a Output 2.2 is a new output added to the RF (with its associated baseline and targets), ensuring that the TFDD is embedded in the project design. Output2.2: Transboundary Freshwater Dispute Database (TFDD) updated to reflect key project findings through formal collaboration with Tufts University, ensuring continuity, accessibility, and uptake of knowledge products.

? Output 2.2 and its activity is added to the narrative section of the project activities

? The ToC is updated to reflect these changes

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project

a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?

b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in

support of the request?

c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25)

The institutional arrangements are sufficiently detailed in the project document. IUCN has no execution role in the project. Coordination with ongoing project and initiatives is sufficiently detailed at this point. Key partners from these are recommended to be invited to the project inception workshop.

1. The main executing agencies (i.e. these that hold the funds) are GWPSA and Wetlands International (WI). WI is not listed in the general project information table - please address.
2. Policy review (upon resubmission) will advise if modified LOEs or other correspondence from the OFPs is needed due to the addition of WI.

(7/1/2025)

1. Addressed.
2. TBD via policy review.

Agency Response Thank you for the comments.

1. WI is now included.
2. Noted with thanks.

5.3 Core indicators

a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)?

b) Are the project's targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?

Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25)

1. CI 2: Please provide IUCN categories for all.
2. CI 7:2: Please explain the rating of this as "3" at endorsement stage.

(7/1/2025) and (7/14/2025)

1. Please include the METT score under the CIs. 1.2 and 2.2
2. Addressed

(7/30/2024)

1. and 2 Addressed.

Agency Response

Thank you for the comments.

1. CI 2 Information is filled under CI 2, except 2.1 since the plan is not to focus on creating new MPAs but to strengthen existing MPAs.
2. CI 7.2 By the time of implementation we expect to have a regional legal agreement signed by all participants and a RMI in place.

28/7/2025

1. Please include the METT score under the CIs. 1.2 and 2.2

METT scores have been included.

Selous Game Reserve (now part of Nyerere National Park): METT scores over time have varied, generally ranging between **50?65%**, with incremental improvements linked to GEF-funded projects and the World Bank's **Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth (REGROW)** project. **We have included 57% as the average score.**

Niassa Special Reserve: METT score reported at **55% in 2018**, improving from **~45% in 2013**, due to co-management with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). Notably, in 2021, Niassa became the first site in Mozambique to pilot the IMET (Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool), a more advanced successor to METT supported by BIOPAMA. This IMET process involved ANAC and conservation partners such as WCS and aimed to generate real-time management diagnostics. **We have included 55% as the score.**

Zomba Malosa Reserve: There is no publicly available METT score or formal protected area management effectiveness assessment recorded for Zomba-Malosa Forest Reserve. However, the site has been the subject of several academic and programmatic evaluations under the Improved Forest Management for Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (IFMSLP), which promoted co-management and participatory forest governance. **We have included the national average of 50%**, based on a regional study covering Eastern Afromontane hotspot protected areas reported an average METT score of approximately 49.8% for assessed sites in Malawi.

Mnazi Bay?Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park: There is no publicly available METT score specifically reported for the Mnazi Bay?Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park, Tanzania's first marine protected area established in 2000. While the park was included in early METT pilots and later assessed under the Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool (IMET) in 2021, no numerical score has been formally published. Nonetheless, the site has been subject to extensive evaluations under GEF- and UNDP-supported marine conservation initiatives, with a focus on participatory zoning, fisheries management, and community engagement. **We have included the national average METT score of approximately 40%**, based on studies covering over 90 protected areas across Tanzania, including both terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

2. Addressed

2. **Noted. So this has been signed already?** If not, please rate the value at endorsement lower and update/increase e.g. at MTR.

Updated.

5.4 Risks

a) **Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?**

b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?
c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25) Risk ratings appear reasonably assesses and risks and mitigation measures described.

(8/5/2025) The overall risk rating as "moderate" is explained and aligns with the safeguards rating.

Agency ResponseThank you.

5.5 For NGI Only: Is there a justification of the financial structure and of the use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency ResponseNA

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(3/21/25) Yes.

Agency ResponseThank you.

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(3/21/25) Yes.

Agency ResponseThank you.

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(3/21/25) Yes.

Agency ResponseThank you.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(3/21/25) Yes.

Agency ResponseThank you.

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25)

1. Yes, but it does not provide much of a gender analysis as background. The Gender Action Plan should be costed and provide correlation to the project components.

(7/1/2025)

1. Not acceptable. GEF policies require the provision of a **Gender Action Plan** (including its costing to assure implementation across components). Gender is currently not mainstreamed in the component descriptions either (**see earlier comments**) and it is not transparent how well women will be included and what targets are set to this effect.

2. Please see earlier comments re the lack of mainstreaming of gender considerations in project design. As per GEF Guidance, gender needs to be mainstreamed throughout the project description, components and outputs, based on the Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan. Examples of entry points include: i) gender responsive regulations, instruments and plans, that take into account and tackle the legal and cultural restrictions that women suffer - Outputs 1.3, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2 and 4.3; ii) ensuring women's meaningful participation in decision-making platforms - Outputs 1.1,3.3 and 4.1; iii) ensuring that financial mechanisms and pilot programming actively target women and address the lack of access to financial and technology knowledge, Outputs 3.3 and 4.2.

3. The Agency also is requested to ensure that gender-specific results and lessons learned in empowering women and addressing gender inequalities are captured in the KM component.

4. Please ensure that the RF includes gender-specific indicators that should be developed in the Gender Action Plan (e.g., number of women in management bodies, number of women benefiting from the trainings, number of women participating in the financial trainings, number of women led cooperatives working with the private sector, etc.)

5. Under M&E, please reflect that reports submitted (MTR and TE) include gender-specific results and progress in the implementation of the gender action plan.

(7/30/2025)

1. Please address. The Gender Action plans has been updated with targets and is costed. **YET, as per the earlier email on the project description, the activities should better include gender aspects and/or refer to the relevant gender action plan sections.**

2. **Please address.** Same as above

3. Addressed.

4. Addressed.

5. Noted in 7.3.4 and KPI for at least one of the components.

(8/5/2025)

The comments have been addressed: the gender action plan and project description have been revised and gender considerations in design and targets and costing for mainstreaming of the gender action plan now been included.

Cleared.

Agency Response

We have enhanced the Gender Action Plan as part of the ESMP. Gender Action Plan costed accordingly under Local Consultants.

28/7/2025

1. Not acceptable. GEF policies require the provision of a **Gender Action Plan** (including its costing to assure implementation across components). Gender is currently not mainstreamed in the component descriptions either (**see earlier comments**) and it is not transparent how well women will be included and what targets are set to this effect. **Gender is now integrated into the project outcomes, outputs and targets. Gender Action Plan is improved with clear details on gender actions, indications and costing.**

2. Please see earlier comments re the lack of mainstreaming of gender considerations in project design. As per GEF Guidance, gender needs to be mainstreamed throughout the project description, components and outputs, based on the Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan. Examples of entry points include: i) gender responsive regulations, instruments and plans, that take into account and tackle the legal and cultural restrictions that women suffer - Outputs 1.3, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2 and 4.3; ii) ensuring women's meaningful participation in decision-making platforms - Outputs 1.1,3.3 and 4.1; iii) ensuring that financial mechanisms and pilot programming actively target women and address the lack of access to financial and technology knowledge, Outputs 3.3 and 4.2. **Thank you for this guidance, this is now included.**

3. The Agency also is requested to ensure that gender-specific results and lessons learned in empowering women and addressing gender inequalities are captured in the KM component. **Thank you for this guidance, this is now included.**

4. Please ensure that the RF includes gender-specific indicators that should be developed in the Gender Action Plan (e.g., number of women in management bodies, number of women benefiting from the trainings, number of women participating in the financial trainings, number of women led cooperatives working with the private sector, etc.) **Thank you for this guidance, this is now included.**

5. Under M&E, please reflect that reports submitted (MTR and TE) include gender-specific results and progress in the implementation of the gender action plan. **This is now specified in the results framework and in the M&E section 7 of the project document.**

(7/30/2025)

1. Please address. The Gender Action plans has been updated with targets and is costed. **YET, as per the earlier email on the project description, the activities should better include gender aspects and/or refer to the relevant gender action plan sections.**

2. Please address. Same as above

Response to 1&2:

Project Description, components, activities and outputs have all been updated, as well as the gender action plan.

For the ProDoc:

- Project Description: Now includes clear references to gender equality, vulnerable groups, and the Gender Action Plan.

- A new Output is added (Output 2.2)

- Component Descriptions (1?5): Gender mainstreaming integrated throughout, reflecting specific actions, participation goals, and benefits for women and vulnerable groups.

- Outputs (e.g., 1.3, 2.2, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3): Revised to incorporate gender-responsive targets, actions, and references to the Gender Action Plan.

For the Gender Action Plan (GAP):

- Expanded to include concrete targets, gender actions, indicators, responsibilities, and costs.

- Includes new content on gender entry points for all relevant outputs and activities.

- Updated Section 4 with a full table capturing gender integration across project outputs.

- TFDD (Output 2.2): Now includes specific actions to incorporate gender-sensitive TDA findings and three case studies on women's role in transboundary governance

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25) Yes, please see project document pg. 87

(7/14/2025)

It is well noted that the project has provided a stakeholder engagement strategy. However, this strategy is generic and only provides stakeholder engagement per category. Please provide further details on which NGOs, CBOs and communities will be engaged in project implementation and their specific roles related to project components and outcomes

(7/30/2025)

Section 6 of the prodoc has been enhanced and specific groups and roles indicated. Addressed.

Agency Response

Further stakeholder engagement documentation is available in the roadmap section.

28/7/2025

It is well noted that the project has provided a stakeholder engagement strategy. However, this strategy is generic and only provides stakeholder engagement per category. Please provide further details on which NGOs, CBOs and communities will be engaged in project implementation and their specific roles related to project components and outcomes **The SEP has been updated.**

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25) Yes, Rated as moderate which is consistent with the risk table.

(7/14/25)

ESS:

1. In the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, please provide more detailed information on the specific Indigenous Peoples the project will engage with. Clarify how engagement will take place, and how consultation processes or Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) mechanisms will be implemented. While some of this information is already included in the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS), it should be further elaborated and made more specific within the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

2. The Overall Project/Program Risk Classification is listed as 'Moderate' (Also ESS), while the 'Key Risks' section assesses the risk as 'Low'. Please ensure consistency between these sections/docs to maintain coherence across the document.

(7/30/2025)

1. Addressed.

2. Addressed.

Agency Response

Thank you.

28/7/2025

ESS:

1. In the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, please provide more detailed information on the specific Indigenous Peoples the project will engage with. Clarify how engagement will take place, and how consultation processes or Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) mechanisms will be implemented. While some of this information is already included in the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS), it should be further elaborated and made more specific within the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. **The SEP has been updated.**

2. The Overall Project/Program Risk Classification is listed as 'Moderate' (Also ESS), while the 'Key Risks' section assesses the risk as 'Low'. Please ensure consistency between these sections/docs to maintain coherence across the document. **The Key Risks section indicates moderate in both portal and agency project document. We hope this is not a portal issue.**

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

**8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: Is the proposed GEF financing (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):
STAR allocation?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(7/1/2025) yes

Agency Response

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(3/21/25) Yes.

Agency ResponseThank you.
LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response
8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)
a) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25)

1. Please revise to align with the Eligible Expenditure Items listed in Table 1 of the GEF project cycle guide.

(7/1/2025) and (7/14/2025)

1. Please provide more details and information about PPG activities spending. E.g. please provide **short detail** of purpose of travel, meetings (which type of) and consultancies.

(7/30/2025)

1. Please make the items in the table in the column of "Project preparation activities implemented" more descriptive (e.g. what meetings ; what consultancy purpose; travel for what/by what group). If needed split consultancies (or other items) in more than one line (e.g in case there has been more than one consultant contract)

(8/5/2025)

Annex D PPG utilization: the total amount spent plus the amount committed should add to the total PPG of USD 200 K. Currently the numbers do not add. Also, please fill in the third column for all line items (with negative or positive USD figures - as applicable; several budget lines have been overspent, while others are underspent).

Please address!

(8/11/2025) Thank you for revising this. We understand that the last column in the portal does not accept negative numbers and therefore some fields are blank. The totals now add up to 200 K. **Cleared.**

Agency Response

Thank you for the comment, revised.

28/7/2025

1. Please provide more details and information about PPG activities spending. E.g. please provide **short detail** of purpose of travel, meetings (which type of) and consultancies.

This has been included under the budget notes as there is no dedicated portal space to expand on the PPG activities.

(7/30/2025)

1. Please make the items in the table in the column of "Project preparation activities implemented" more descriptive (e.g. what meetings ; what consultancy purpose; travel for what/by what group). If needed split consultancies (or other items) in more than one line (e.g in case there has been more than one consultant contract)

This has been included in the PPG use table (Annex D) and costs have been split. Pasting here for ease of reference:

The expenditure of GEF PPG funds was as follows:

? Travel: The funds were used to cover for travel expenses for the IUCN PPG Team, Project Partners, Member States and other key stakeholders including from NGOs and academia:

o in-country: Malawi ? Blyntrye, Machimba, Mozambique: Nampula & Lichinga and Tanzania: Mtwara, Ruvuma and Dodoma

o Regionally: Dar es Salaam (regional inception workshop), Lilongwe (regional validation workshop)

? Meetings: in-country and regional meetings were organized during the PPG phase as part of stakeholder consultations:

o Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Regional Inception Workshop (October 2024)

o Mtwara and Ruvuma, Tanzania: Stakeholder consultations (November 2024)

o Blanyre and Machinga, Malawi: Stakeholder consultations (November /Dec 2024)

o Nampula, Lichinga, Mozambique: Stakeholder consultations (November /Dec 2024)

o Lilongwe, Malawi: Regional validation Workshop (February 2025)

? Consultancy: The following consultancies were administered:

o Proposal package: Preparation of Proposal package (ProDoc, GEF CEO Endorsement and other relevant documents including GAP) for GEF

o Environmental and Social Management Plan

(8/5/2025)

Annex D PPG utilization: We tried to address this; however, in the "amount committed" column, it is not possible to input negative numbers using a minus sign. We have therefore matched the "amount committed" figures by indicating the consultancy commitments remaining.

The minor overspending (USD 500 or less in some cases) on certain travel budget lines is to be expected when implementing a regional PPG of this nature, but is balanced through underspending on other lines. Now the total committed amount matches the total PPG amount, and any extra expenditure is expected to be absorbed by IUCN.

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?

Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25)

1. Please link the letters of co-finance to the co-finance table to facilitate review of the letters.
2. Please review items with very high amounts for "recurrent expenditures". Amounts of USD 5 - 50 million in in-kind/recurring expenditures may want to be reviewed and explained why this appears realistic and either be re-categorized as "investment mobilized" or reduced.

Further comments will be provided after resubmission of the ER which will have addressed the above.

(7/1/2025)

1. Letters have been linked.
2. **Please split in-kind and cash co-finance for Tanzania** as per the letter of co-finance.
3. Please provide additional information on the kind of in-kind IUCN support via the IUCN Southern and Eastern Africa Regional Office. Is this via other projects aligned to the project components? is it Staff time (which seems high at USD 5 million)? can you please explain?
4. The GWP co-finance letter indicates **cash co-finance** not in-kind. Please revise.

(7/30/2025)

1. Previously addressed.

2. Not correctly addressed:

i. There are three line items in the letter of co-finance from Tanzania that are indicated as cash/investment mobilized. Please add these three (and not only one).

ii. Only list the two line items indicated in the letter as recurrent expenditures/in-kind in the table (i.e. USD120,390.86 + USD. 185,000.67).

iii. Please indicate all in-kind co-finance as recurrent expenditures and not as investment mobilized (e.g. for Mozambique, Tanzania and IUCN in kind contributions).

3. The reply is exceedingly vague. Is there any way to respond this more specifically? Staff time would be 'in-kind'/recurrent expenditures whereas project investments that are aligned may better be classified as grant/investment mobilized if applicable..

4. GWP co-finance is indicated as cash. Please classify as 'grant' and 'investment mobilized'.

5. Wetlands International co-finance is per the letter "in-kind" and hence "recurrent expenditure". Please revise.

6. Same for the WaterNet co-finance. Please revise the table.

(8/5/2025)

1. previously addressed
2. Addressed.
3. Noted
4. Addressed
5. and 6. addressed

Agency Response

Thank you for the comment.

1. Done on the portal.
2. Based on the definitions presented in the https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_FI_GN_01_Cofinancing_Guidelines_2018.pdf the amounts qualify as recurrent expenditures.

28/7/2025

1. Letters have been linked.

2. Please split in-kind and cash co-finance for Tanzania as per the letter of co-finance. Split, and cash is indicated as 'other' as cash is not an option in the type of financing. Or should this be marked as grant?

3. Please provide additional information on the kind of in-kind IUCN support via the IUCN Southern and Eastern Africa Regional Office. Is this via other projects aligned to the project components? is it Staff time (which seems high at USD 5 million)? can you please explain? IUCN co-financing is derived from complementary projects ongoing or planned in Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania, also via staff-time.

4. The GWP co-finance letter indicates **cash co-finance** not in-kind. Please revise. **Cash is indicated as 'other' as cash is not an option in the type of financing. Or should this be marked as grant?**

(7/30/2025)

1. Previously addressed.

2. Not correctly addressed:

i. There are three line items in the letter of co-finance from Tanzania that are indicated as cash/investment mobilized. Please add these three (and not only one). **Edited the lines to indicate amount that is cash / investment mobilized, and that is in-kind / recurrent expenditure, provided a justification in the section below on the portal.**

ii. Only list the two line items indicated in the letter as recurrent expenditures/in-kind in the table (i.e. USD120,390.86 + USD. 185,000.67). **Edited the lines to indicate amount that is cash / investment mobilized, and that is in-kind / recurrent expenditure, provided a justification in the section below on the portal.**

iii. Please indicate all **in-kind co-finance as recurrent expenditures** and **not** as investment mobilized (e.g. for Mozambique, Tanzania and IUCN in kind contributions). **Edited.**

3. The reply is **exceedingly vague**. Is there any way to respond this more specifically? Staff time would be 'in -kind'/recurrent expenditures whereas project investments that are aligned may better be classified as grant/investment mobilized if applicable. **IUCN co-financing amended to reflect in-kind contributions from staff-time and assets, equipment & office utilities.**

4. GWP co-finance is indicated as cash. Please classify as 'grant' and 'investment mobilized'. **Edited.**

5. Wetlands International co-finance is per the letter "in-kind" and hence "recurrent expenditure". Please revise. **Edited.**

6. Same for the WaterNet co-finance. Please revise the table. **Edited.**

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) If ? and only if - this is a global or regional project for which not all country-based interventions were known at PIF stage and, therefore, not all LOEs provided:

Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(3/21/25) It was endorsed at PIF stage and letters uploaded and reviewed.

Agency ResponseThank you.

b) Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestSee above.

Agency ResponseThank you.

c) Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestSee above.

Agency ResponseThank you.

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?

b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)

c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?

d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25)

1. Please provide the **project objective** in the Results Framework.
2. While the sub-indicators are shown across the RF within relevant components and outputs, please also include the main core indicators WITH THEIR TARGETS (and not only the CI name). thank you.
3. See earlier comments (under the question of project description). on better capturing outputs from the project description in the Results Framework to allow transparent monitoring of results.
4. Please capture gender differentiated indicators and targets in the results framework.

(7/1/2025)

1. addressed.
2. Done, **but please move upfront**. It is not clear why all CIs are under component 4.
3. Noted but please see earlier comments for e.g. component 3 and 4.
4. **Not really**. There is no indication if the one the ground measures set targets for women participation and % of beneficiaries of e.g. community based projects.

(7/30/2025)

Comments addressed. Cleared.

Agency Response

Thank you for the comments.

1. Done.
2. Included.
3. We have updated the RF.
4. Captured.

28/7/2025

1. addressed.

2. Done, **but please move upfront**. It is not clear why all CIs are under component 4. **Done, they are now presented under project objective and not under each component**

3. Noted but please see earlier comments for e.g. component 3 and 4. **Addressed in other specific comments.**

4. **Not really**. There is no indication if the one the ground measures set targets for women participation and % of beneficiaries of e.g. community based projects. **The results framework now includes gender-specific indicators. GAP has also been uploaded in the Roadmap section.**

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(3/21/25) Yes.

Agency Response Thank you.

Annex G: GEF Budget template

8.8 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?

b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

or(3/21/25)

1. Please list which executing entity is the responsible party for each budget line. IUCN is the implementing not executing agency.

2. Please provide a budget that can be correlated to the project deliverables by component. Currently the provided budget is only providing disbursement categories and not a project budget. For example:

i. please provide separate budget lines for each project staff and show which component/s each person is charged to, including which persons or percentage of time is charged to PMC or M&E.

ii. Vehicles are expected to be provided via co-finance (e.g. governments/executing agencies). They are only GEF funded in exceptions and need justification for such exception and specifics to be presented to GEFSEC and require explicit approval by the GEFSEC PM.

iii. please provide details for main consultancies (individual/firm) by component and allow for a way to assess the average daily rates budgeted for national and international consultants.

iv. Please provide an annex with TORs for project staff including their time spent on technical and/or administrative/management/coordination with the latter to be charged to PMC.

v. please provide some detail to over 700 K for field equipment as well as grants/sub-grants. This is not to say these costs are unreasonable but the budget needs to provide explanation of the nature of these by component.

vi. Travel and transportation - is this related to workshops, movement of staff in or across countries ? As there are already budget lines for workshops these presumably include associated costs.

vii. Similar for office supplies. Please spell out what is included. (note: It would also be good to see in the letters of co-finance what is provided in this regard by governments and executing partners).

viii. Field work (total of USD 1.6 million: please provide separate lines for each component. A USD 1.6 million lumpsum cannot be approved as it does not provide means to assess if these budget figures are justifiable.

(7/1/2025) and (7/14/2025)

1. Done.

2. Thank you for the update

i. A Project Coordinator, a Finance and Procurement - Officer (GWP-SA), Finance and Procurement Officer (WI), and an Admin Assistant (Government) should be charged 100% to PMC but not to project components, please revise the budget.

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)									Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Sub-Total	M&E	PMC			
Salary and benefits / Staff costs(Project manager(s) and Technical coordinator(s))		77,360.00	96,280.00	149,500.00	167,000.00	108,160.00	598,300.00	55,000.00	175,700.00	829,000.00	[Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency/1]	
	Project Coordinator	59,160.00	78,080.00	96,300.00	96,300.00	59,160.00	389,000.00		46,000.00	435,000.00	GWP-SA	
	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Officer							55,000.00		55,000.00	WI	
	Communications Officer					30,800.00	30,800.00		13,200.00	44,000.00	GWP-SA	
	Finance and Procurement - Officer (GWP-SA)	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	27,500.00		27,500.00	55,000.00	GWP-SA	
	Finance and Procurement Officer (WI)	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	27,500.00		27,500.00	55,000.00	WI	
	Admin Assistant (Government)	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	36,000.00		24,000.00	60,000.00	WI	
	Driver			35,000.00	52,500.00		87,500.00		37,500.00	125,000.00	WI	

ii. the provision of vehicles by government in all three countries is noted. One vehicle for the new regional office is needed. As Vehicle purchase is strongly discouraged from GEF financing, please explore co-financing to cover for this budget item.

iii. Consultancy costs provided and procurement methods for competitive bidding noted (pg. 110 of prodoc)

iv. split to PMC and M&E is adequate.

v. Details now provided in the uploaded budget

vi. update in the budget is noted.

vii. Done.

viii. Done. This is now split into e.g. goods and subgrants etc.

3. There are differences between the budget table and the Portal's component table as follows, Please revise to make them match.

	Budget table	Portal's component table	Difference
Component 1	378,860	392,099	-13,239
Component 2	1,448,080	1,448,080	0
Component 3	1,804,375	1,804,375	0
Component 4	2,471,125	2,471,125	0
Component 5	445,713	445,713	0
M&E	235,165	213,663	21,502
PMC	338,700	346,963	-8,263
Grand Total	7,122,018	7,122,018	0

(7/30/2025)

1. Previously addressed/

2. i. Admin and finance officer positions are now charged to PMC. M&E officer is correctly charged to PMC. Project Coordinator TORs provide detailed overview on the distribution of technical work for each component versus management/coordination efforts and correspond to the budget allocation.

ii. The explanation for the vehicle is noted. Transport costs in form of vehicles/drivers for the ground activities in each of the countries are provided as in-kind co-finance by the respective governments. The need for one vehicle for the newly to be established regional institution is justified. **Establishment of the regional institution will be a notable success of GEF support. It is very common that such basin organizations require an initial support by grant finance for staff and running of the office - including one vehicle and driver - until it is expected that country contributions are established and these and other finance ramp up to cover the core costs of a new regional basin institution. Therefore, the provision of such vehicle is supported by the GEF IW team PM. Cleared.**

iii - viii previously addressed.

3. Not addressed! Please assure that the GEF component by component budget figures, sub-total, M&E, and PMC costs in the portal Project Overview Table and the Uploaded GEF budget table match. Currently there remain to be discrepancies.

(8/5/2025)

1. and 2. Previously addressed.

3. Numbers now match. Addressed.

Agency Response

Thank you for the comments.

1. EEs have been included.

2. We have uploaded an updated Budget annex.

i. Done, and updated TORs have been collated and submitted as one document in the roadmap section.

ii. IUCN acknowledges GEF's encouragement for countries to contribute vehicles as part of co-financing, but based on requests from participating countries it seeks GEF approval to

purchase a project vehicle using GEF funds. While each of the three countries will contribute a vehicle for national use, the GEF-financed vehicle would enable coordination and monitoring across the expansive Ruvuma Basin. It would also support the newly forming Ruvuma Joint Water Commission (JWC) based in Mtwara, which currently lacks a dedicated budget. Given the five-year duration and potential for continued use under GEF-9, purchasing is more cost-effective than renting.

iii. Included.

iv. Included.

iv - viii. Included budget notes.

28/7/2025

1. Done.

2. Thank you for the update

i. A Project Coordinator, a Finance and Procurement - Officer (GWP-SA), Finance and Procurement Officer (WI), and an Admin Assistant (Government) should be charged 100% to PMC but not to project components, please revise the budget. This is indicated, see budget notes sheet on the Budget Template. Revised ToR for Regional Project Coordinator

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)								Sub-Total	M&E	PMC	Total (USDeq.)	Responsible Entity
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5								
Salary and benefits / Staff costs(Project manager(s) and Technical coordinator(s))														[Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency]1
	Project Coordinator	77,360.00	96,280.00	149,500.00	167,000.00	108,160.00	598,300.00	55,000.00	175,700.00	829,000.00				
	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Officer	59,160.00	78,080.00	96,300.00	96,300.00	59,160.00	389,000.00		46,000.00	435,000.00				GWP-SA
	Communications Officer					30,800.00	30,800.00		13,200.00	44,000.00				GWP-SA
	Finance and Procurement - Officer (GWP-SA)	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	27,500.00		27,500.00	55,000.00				GWP-SA
	Finance and Procurement Officer (WI)	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	27,500.00		27,500.00	55,000.00				WI
	Admin Assistant (Government)	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	36,000.00		24,000.00	60,000.00				WI
	Driver			35,000.00	52,500.00		87,500.00		37,500.00	125,000.00				WI

ii. the provision of vehicles by government in all three countries is noted. One vehicle for the new regional office is needed. As Vehicle purchase is strongly discouraged from GEF financing, please explore co-financing to cover for this budget item. Addressed. Country co-finance on transportation is covering vehicles for use at the national level (Malawi -1, Mozambique ? 1, and Tanzania ? 1). One vehicle will be procured using GEF resources for use by PMU and the regional Joint Water Commission for Ruvuma. This is because the JWC is just being created and therefore will over time, but not at start-up, be able to mobilize additional co-finance and increasing country contributions to cover all core costs such staff, offices and transportation). See CEO ER (institutional arrangement, procurement plan paragraph), also ProDoc - section 10.2 Annex 2 - Procurement Plan. Also, cost analysis has been conducted which support the idea of buying a project vehicle rather than hiring.

iii. Consultancy costs provided and procurement methods for competitive bidding noted (pg. 110 of prodoc)

iv. split to PMC and M&E is adequate.

v. Details now provided in the uploaded budget

vi. update in the budget is noted.

vii. Done.

viii. Done. This is now split into e.g. goods and subgrants etc.

3. There are differences between the budget table and the Portal's component table as follows, Please revise to make them match. **The figures have been harmonised.**

	Budget table	Portal's component table	Difference
Component 1	378,860	392,099	-13,239
Component 2	1,448,080	1,448,080	0
Component 3	1,804,375	1,804,375	0
Component 4	2,471,125	2,471,125	0
Component 5	445,713	445,713	0
M&E	235,165	213,663	21,502
PMC	338,700	346,963	-8,263
Grand Total	7,122,018	7,122,018	0

(7/30/2025)

3. Not addressed! Please assure that the GEF component by component budget figures, sub-total, M&E, and PMC costs in the portal Project Overview Table and the Uploaded GEF budget table match. Currently there remain to be discrepancies. **Edited.**

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.9 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.

b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.

c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation

Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(3/21/25) The project is overall well designed and provides a number of innovative elements.

Please respond to the comments provided. The budget needs considerably more detail and ability to transparently correlate the disbursement categories provided to component deliverables.

Once resubmitted, additional comments may result. The endorsement package will then also be reviewed for GEF policy adherence. With addressing the current comments we hope that much less items remain on the side of the policy review.

(7/1/2025) and (7/14/2025) review comments: Please address the remaining comments and resubmit. Please be aware of the tight time line for needed review after resubmission, clearance, and processing of the endorsement before the August 9 cancelation deadline.

(7/30/2025) Please address the remaining comments and resubmit.

PLEASE NOTE: to speed up the review process and give you max. time to address comments I am sending this back to you with just review from my/the IW PM side. After resubmission, the final will

be reviewed by all relevant colleague at GEFSEC. This may (or may not) result in other comments on the resubmission.

When resubmitting, please also provide a complete prodoc with all its annexes merged into one pdf file for uploading on the GEF website once endorsed.

(8/9/2025) All but one comment (on PPG figures) is addressed. Please address and resubmit **as soon as possible**.

Noted: the prodoc was submitted including most annexes. Your email is noted and filed in the system with regard to those annexes not included as this would violate either IUCN or EA policies (or both).

(8/11/2025) The last comment has been addressed. The project is technically cleared and recommended for endorsement.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request(8/9/2025) We want to point out that the FPIC procedure of the ESMP is not explicitly referred to in the endorsement document and the prodoc. Please ensure that the inception report as well as PIRs report on the consultations with IPLCs and the participatory implementation of the FPIC procedure for all relevant on the ground activities. Please also assure that the participatory process of consultations and engagement with IPLCs is specifically reviewed in the MTR and TE.

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	3/21/2025	6/19/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	7/1/2025	7/28/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	7/30/2025	8/4/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/1/2025	8/11/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)		