



Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10787

Countries

Viet Nam

Project Name

Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

10/12/2022

Review completed by PM

3/30/2023

Program Manager

Hannah Fairbank

Focal Area

Biodiversity

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

November 29, 2022, TK:

Yes.

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

March 8, 2023 HF:

All comments cleared.

Please note that for 2.) the second "on biodiversity and ecosystem services" is redundant and should be removed if/when future revisions to documentation are made.

November 29, 2022, TK:

- 1.) Is the project implementation start date incorrect (as the duration of the project is 60 months = 5 years (2023~2028)? Please correct/confirm.
- 2.) Please simplify and shorten outcome 1.1. Currently it is very difficult to understand.
- 3.) Please annex Table 2: Key Gaps in National Policies ON Tourism and Biodiversity in Vietnam, and take it out of the CER for clarity.
- 4.) Multiple tables (Annex E, Annex B and Part A & Part B of Project information) are off the portal margins. This means that when circulated / web posted, the autogenerated CEO endorsement request will be chopped out and valuable project data will not be included. Please correct the table so that they all fit within the portal margins.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) The planned project implementation start date is January 2024 to allow for sufficient runway to follow official internal government approvals processes for international cooperation projects. The duration remains at 60 months (5 years) and therefore, no changes have been made to the text in this regard as both the CEO ER and ProDoc are consistent. Reference is made to the screenshots below from the CEO ER and ProDoc respectively where this has been explicitly noted.

Expected start and completion date in the CEO ER:

PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION			
Project Title: Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature-Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam			
Country(ies):	Vietnam	GEF Project ID:	10787
GEF Agency(ies):	UNDP	GEF Agency Project ID:	6377
Project Executing Entity(s):	Vietnam Environment Administration (VEA) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)	Submission Date:	14 Oct 2022
GEF Focal Area (s):	Biodiversity	Expected Implementation Start	January 2024
		Expected Completion Date	December 2028
Name of Parent Program	N/A	Parent Program ID:	N/A

Expected start and completion date in the ProDoc:

INDP Social and Environmental Screening Category: substantial	UNDP Gender Marker: 2
Atlas Award ID: 00143873	Atlas Project/Output ID: 00131807
INDP-GEF PIMS ID number: 6377	GEF Project ID number: 10787
PAC meeting date: (TBC)	
Earliest possible date to submit to GEF: 16 October 2022	
Latest possible CEO endorsement date: 18 Dec 2022	
Project duration in months: 60 months	
Planned start date: January 2024	Planned end date: December 2028
Expected date of Mid-Term Review: June 2026	Expected date of Terminal evaluation: Sept 2028

2) Outcome 1.1 has been shortened to read: *“An effective national Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services established for multi-level planning on nature-based tourism in high-value biodiversity areas to support the effective coordination and implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP), tourism law and national tourism strategies.”* These changes have been cascaded throughout the CEO ER and the ProDoc for consistency.

3) Table 2 has been removed and included within the CEO ER as Annex I and reference made to in in the preceding paragraph.

4) Margins have been corrected in line with the comment.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

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

March 8, 2023 HF:

All comments cleared.

November 29, 2022, TK:

1.) USAID co-financing letter does not specify the type of co-financing and investment mobilized/recurrent expenditures. Is \$38M USAID co-financing all recurrent expenditure? No investment mobilized? Please clarify/correct.

2.) The USAID project will be implemented 2020-2025, which only overlaps 1-2 years as the implementation of the GEF project will start in 2024. Please confirm and provide description whether \$38M is for USAID project period or only for those overlapping period, if it is for 2020-2025, please reduce the amount proportionate to overlapping 1-2 years.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) Reference is made to the new signed co-financing letter secured from USAID and dated 15 February 2023, which is now broken down by year of which USD 13,092,738.00 will be counted towards co-financing commitments to the GEF-7 Nature-Based Tourism project for calendar years 2024 and 2025. As per GEF guidelines on co-financing, this will be regarded as investment mobilized and is reflected as such in all co-financing tables. Furthermore, all

analysis related to co-financing (i.e., increase in co-financing related to the PIF has been amended, as well as co-financing figures in the infographic in Figure 1.

The decreased amount of co-financing from USD 38,000,000.00 to USD 13,092,738.00 for the years in which both projects will be operational does not impact the value-added the project brings to the table in terms of expanding the SMART patrolling framework in Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park to high-risk landscapes and fast-tracking the set-up and operationalization of this approach in Nui Chua National Park where it currently does not exist.

2) Reference is made to the response to comment 4.(1) and the updates made to all co-financing tables in both the UNDP CER and ProDoc showing the amount of co-financing for 2024 and 2025 respectively when both projects will be operational (USD 13,092,738). The amended co-financing total of USD 105,070,882.23 represents a 14.7:1 co-financing ratio and with Investment Mobilized of USD 95,570,485.15 represents a 13.4: 1 co-financing ratio, and therefore, still exceeds both the ideal 7:1 general co-financing ratio and the investment mobilized to GEF financing of 5:1 for this project.

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

November 29, 2022, TK:

Yes.

Agency Response

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

November 29, 2022, TK:

Yes.

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

April 26, 2023 HF:

Comments cleared.

March 20, 2023 TK:

- 1.) Provided.
- 2.) Cleared.
- 3.) Cleared.
- 4.) Noted, please include this language in the CER.
- 5.) Mid-term target should reflect the result from the ex-act. At the end of the project (2028), the carbon emission reduction shall only reflect the reduction that will be sequestered until 2028? Or mention 15M reduction is for 20 years.

November 29, 2022, TK:

- 1.) Please provide description under the core indicator table.
- 2.) The prodoc has different figure for core indicator 4 than in the CER table (45,802 ha in prodoc vs. 123,326 ha in CER). Please clarify/correct throughout all the documentation.
- 3.) Recognize the GHG emission reduction was added, but need clarification/updating once the core indicator 4 is fixed ? whether it's following prodoc or CER amount?
- 4.) Please explore the possibility of increasing the CI 4.1 target given the scaling up/applicability of the PES work to other areas under this project.
- 5.) Please include the target for the core indicator 6 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated) in the results framework.

Agency Response

Agency Response, April 18, 2023:

4) Reference is made to the additional text added to the description of Core Indicator 6 on page 12 of the CEO Endorsement Request (Section ?E?), noting that the GHG emissions mitigated or avoided are based on the project activities and the EOP ha targets reported in the core indicators 1 and 4, and that if these targets should or could change to realize additional mitigation potential through upscaling, then they will be included during the first PIR as well as during the MTR by re-estimating Core Indicator target 6 using FAO-EXACT.

5) The estimates for 5-year implementation phase and 15-year capitalization phase totaling - 15,704,236 tonnes of CO2 equivalent GHG, is expected at the 20-year period and, as standard practice the mid-term target is not provided in the CI worksheet. Reference is also made to the assumption in the monitoring plan (Annex 27) that *benefits to GHG emissions likely to only accrue by project closure due to the time to set up and operationalize SMART patrols and*

restoration targets are achieved as planned?. Therefore, considering the above, there will be no mid-term target for GHG emissions for this project.

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) This description already exists. Reference is made to the screenshot below which is the accompanying description of the core indicator table in Section E of the CER:

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided.

Notes to Table E above: Core Indicator 1.2 and 2.2: The two PAs to be supported through the project are: Nui Chua National Park (WDPA ID 303041) in Ninh Thuan province and Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park (WDPA ID 10345) in Quang Binh province, covering an estimated 145,414 ha of terrestrial area (22,088 ha in Nui Chua and 123,326 ha in Phong Nha-Ke Bang) and 7,352 ha of marine area (in Nui Chua).

Core Indicator 4.1: The project will also support better integration of tourism development with biodiversity conservation in buffer areas and special-use protection forests adjacent to the two PAs. Measures to improve management effectiveness, including SMART patrols and enforcement activities will be supported in 45,802 ha of buffer zone and special-use protection forest outside the two PAs through improved coordination at the Commune-level with the Commune Peoples Committees to reduce threats on natural resources (e.g., habitat disturbance), reduce market demand of wildlife related products (e.g., behavior change – hence reducing poaching/illegal fishing), and mobilization of sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., private sector engagement/PMES). The total area to be covered is around 45,802 hectares (excluding PAs) as follows: (i) 1,802 ha of protection forest of high-quality biodiversity habitat and likely shelters some of the most endangered species of the park, including two flagship species, i.e., the Silver-backed Chevrotain and the Cao Van Sung's Bent-toed Gecko; and (ii) 44,000 ha (20%) of commune managed areas in the 220,055-ha buffer zone of the Phong Nha-

GEF 7 CEO Endorsement Request - Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature-Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam 11

Ke Bang National Park, which also includes a 1,039 hectare-protection forest located in U Bo and 40 Compartments which is highly valued in terms of its biodiversity.

Project activities will support climate change mitigation co-benefits under core indicator 6 estimated at a mitigation/sequestration potential of -15,704,236 tonnes of CO2 equivalent over the period of 20 years. This includes the direct benefit only through the project's efforts to minimize the level of forest degradation through improved habitats for biodiversity and by reducing threats to habitats outside PAs. The FAO-EXACT worksheet and summary of results and assumptions are provided in Project Document Annexes 15b.

Core Indicator 11: The estimate of direct beneficiaries is 3,000 based on due diligence conducted during the PPG stage, including a total of 1,932 beneficiaries in Ninh Thuan province and 1,068 in Quang Binh province. The breakdown would be around 1,681 male and 1,319 female collectively at Phong Nha-Ka bang national park and at Nui Chua national park and its surrounding landscape.

The project will deliver on these targets by working in the two demonstration landscapes of Nui Chua National Park and Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park. Both NPs are ecologically significant falling within recognized KBAs that contain globally threatened flagship species including green turtle and silver-backed chevrotain (DD), southern white-cheeked gibbon (CR) and Hatinh Langur (EN), among other species (see **UNDP PRODOC Annex 17: Demonstration Landscape Profiles**), that offer revenue generation potential for conservation and communities through nature-based tourism activities.

The breakdown of area coverage for Core Indicators 1, 2, 4, 6 & 11 are given in the Core Indicator Worksheet in Annex F and Results Framework in Annex A. Also see Annex E to this CEO ER: Map and Geographic Coordinates, and **UNDP PRODOC Annex 17: Demonstration Landscape Profiles**.

2) This observation and comment are both incorrect. The amount noted by the reviewer (123,326 ha) is in relation to the terrestrial PA amount under core indicator 1.2 for Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP per the screenshot below and is not related to core indicator 4 in the CER:

Notes to Table E above: Core Indicator 1.2 and 2.2: The two PAs to be supported through the project are: Nui Chua National Park (WDPA ID 303041) in Ninh Thuan province and Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park (WDPA ID 10345) in Quang Binh province, covering an estimated 145,414 ha of terrestrial area (22,088 ha in Nui Chua and **123,326 ha in Phong Nha-Ke Bang**) and 7,352 ha of marine area (in Nui Chua).

Per the screenshot below, the corresponding hectares for core indicator 4 is consistent with the ProDoc at 45,802 ha.:

Core indicator 4 in CER:

4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (Hectares)	45,802
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Core indicator 4 in ProDoc:

Table 32: Project's Contribution to GEF 7 Core Indicators

Project Core Indicators		Expected at CEO Endorsement
1	Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares)	145,414
2	Marine protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares)	7,352
4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas)(Hectares)	45,802
6	Greenhouse gas emission mitigated (tCO ₂ -e)	-15,704,236

Reference is also made to the description of core indicator 4 in the CER per the screenshot below which also notes 45,802 ha:

Core Indicator 4.1: The project will also support better integration of tourism development with biodiversity conservation in buffer areas and special-use protection forests adjacent to the two PAs. Measures to improve management effectiveness, including SMART patrols and enforcement activities will be supported in 45,802 ha of buffer zone and special-use protection forest outside the two PAs through improved coordination at the Commune-level with the Commune Peoples Committees to reduce threats on natural resources (e.g., habitat disturbance), reduce market demand of wildlife related products (e.g., behavior change – hence reducing poaching/illegal fishing), and mobilization of sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., private sector engagement/PMES). The total area to be covered is around 45,802 hectares (excluding PAs) as follows: (i) 1,802 ha of protection forest of high-quality biodiversity habitat and likely shelters some of the most endangered species of the park, including two flagship species, i.e., the Silver-backed Chevrotain and the Cao Van Sung's Bent-toed Gecko; and (ii) 44,000 ha (20%) of commune managed areas in the 220,055-ha buffer zone of the Phong Nha-

The figures in the core indicator table in both the CER and ProDoc also align and are consistent with those specified in the core indicator worksheet (found in Annex F of the CER and Annex 11 of the ProDoc per the screenshot below:

Core Indicator 4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)				(Hectares)
	Hectares (4.1+4.2+4.3+4.4)				
	Expected		Expected		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE	
	77,000	45,802			
	4.1: Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity				
	Sum	77,000	45,802		
Indicator 4.1	Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity				
	Hectares				
	Expected		Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE	
	33,174	1,802			
	Buffer zone of Nui Chua National Park				
	43,826	44,000			
	Buffer zone of Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park				
	Sum	77,000	45,802		

3) There is no change to GHG emissions mitigated (-15,704,236 tCO₂-e), based on the response to the previous comment regarding core indicator 4.1. Reference is made to the EXACT spreadsheet in PRODOC Annex 15b.

4) This is well-noted. Currently the GHG emissions mitigated or avoided are based on the project activities and the EOP ha targets reported in the core indicators 1 and 4. Should these targets change and additional mitigation potential through upscaling are observed then they will be included during the first PIR as well as during the MTR by re-estimating Core Indicator target 6 using FAO-EXACT.

5) Core indicator no. 6 has been added to the Project Results Framework in both the CER and the ProDoc and the numbering of the indicators has been updated as well.

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
November 29, 2022, HF:

Yes.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 29, 2022, HF:

Yes.

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

April 26, 2023 HF:

Comments cleared.

March 20, 2023 TK:

- 1.) Cleared.
- 2.) Cleared. We meant figures in the CER ? now all of them are available.
- 3.) Annex H is still not available ? where can we find it? Please include and clearly indicate.
- 4.) Cleared.

November 29, 2022, TK:

- 1.) Figure 3 ToC Diagram is not attached in the CER. And the figure/table numbers referred in the text (both referring CER text and prodoc) does not match or cannot find in the document ? please correct/include.
- 2.) Please include component texts in the TOC (from Prodoc). In fact, all figures in CER document are unavailable. Please correct.
- 3.) We couldn't find Annex H ? changes to the project design during the PPG phase. Note the CER includes some more additional activities (2.7, 3.5), which is relevant to add. Please correct.
- 4.) Not clear which activities will contribute to core indicator 4.1? Please address.

Agency Response

Agency Response, April 18, 2023:

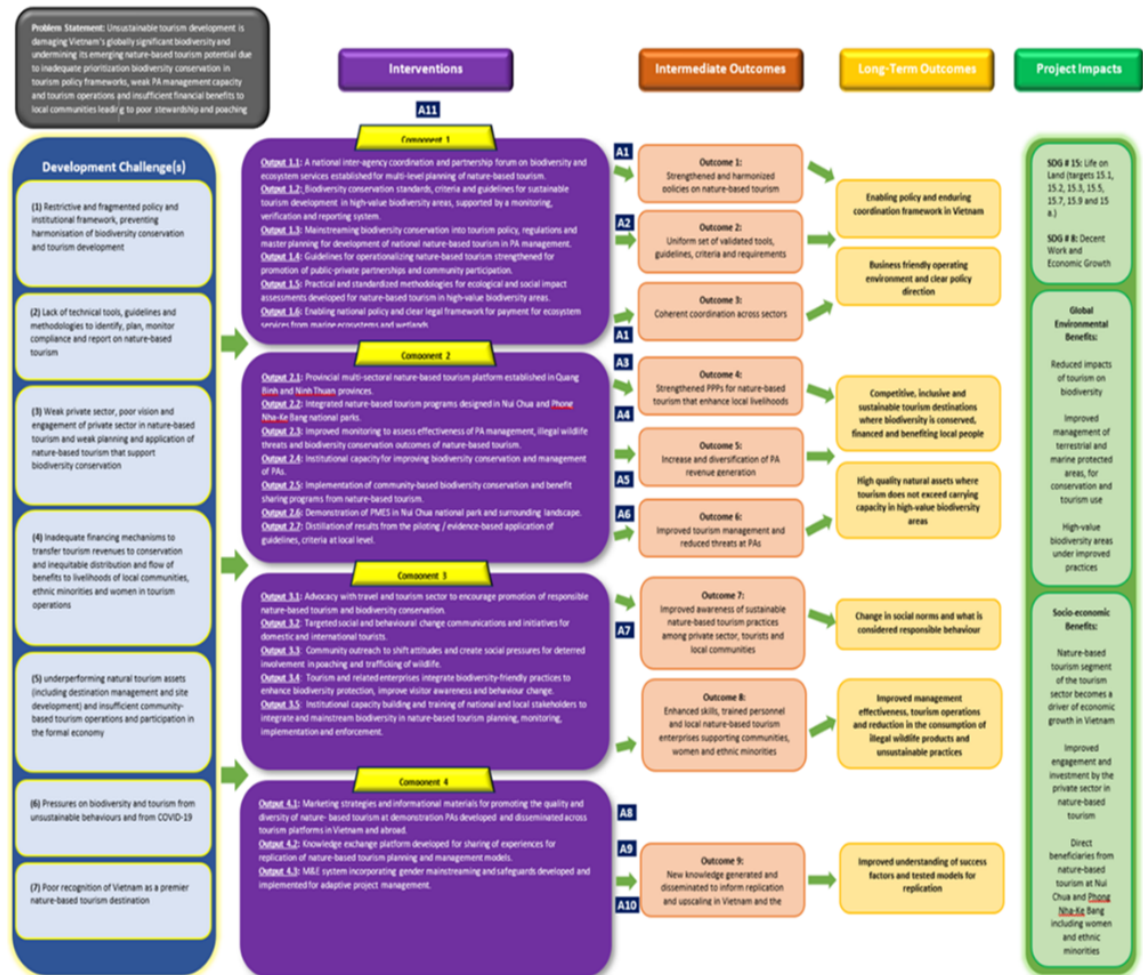
3) Annex H in the UNDP CEO ER document is ?Changes to Project?, which is included in the resubmission and has been added to the portal

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) Per the screenshot below, Figure 3 TOC is present in the CER. References to Figure 3 in the CER and corresponding figure and table in the ProDoc have been updated accordingly to match. A final check was made to ensure all references to figures and tables in both the CER

and ProDoc trace back to the actual title and numbering of a specific figure or table. Regarding the availability of figures, this appears to be a recurring portal issue as screenshots have been provided showing these figures exist.

FIGURE 3: THEORY OF CHANGE DIAGRAM



2) This is standard practice and not everything has been copied over from the ProDoc to manage the overall size and readability of the CER. There are cross-references to relevant sections of the ProDoc within the CER to augment it if needed.

To address this comment however, the following two pieces of additional text have been added for traceability to the CER:

?Due to limited space availability, reference is made to additional and more granular information provided on the Theory of Change in the Project Document, specifically related to the four main impact pathways. Please refer to the sub-heading ?Theory of Change? in Section III: Strategy within the Project Document for details on this.?

AND

?To summarize the above, the Theory of Change is based on four impact pathways: (i) Strengthened enabling framework and systemic guidelines for integrated nature-based tourism; (ii) Demonstration of improved conservation practices in concert with tourism development across different landscape types, improving management practices, reducing

threats and enhancing local livelihoods; (iii) Triggering behavior change among key tourism value chain actors through engagement, sustained social marketing and advocacy; and (iv) Design and implementation of systems to ensure monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and gender mainstreaming to facilitate upscaling and replication. Again, reference is made to the sub-heading 'Theory of Change' in Section III: Strategy, in the Project Document.?

3) Correction to the comment. There were no changes to the activities because the PIF did not articulate any activities, and these were only defined during the PPG. There were subtle changes to and additions to the Outputs to the PIF which are noted in Annex H. Per the screenshot below we have extracted the explanation for Output(s) 2.7 and 3.5 specifically as these were called out in the comments. Please see Annex H for details on other changes and deviations from the PIF and the reasons why.

<p>Output 2.7</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Distillation of results from the piloting / evidence-based application of guidelines, criteria at local level as a feedback loop for refinement.</p>	<p>be overlap. This Output was added to serve as an aggregator of the results from the application of guidelines and criteria developed under Component 1 in order to force the project to explicitly distil results, make recommendations for refinement of policy. While this function was implied / implicit within the PIF, it now forces the project to capture and report on results at the landscape level, which was deemed by the PPG consultations to be an important legacy and precursor to ensuring a feedback loop where learnings are reflected in final project deliverables.</p>
<p>Output 3.5</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Institutional capacity building and training of national and local stakeholders to integrate and mainstream biodiversity in nature-based tourism planning, monitoring, implementation and enforcement.</p>	<p>Output added at the request of the IP to focus on institutional capacity at the national level to differentiate from the scope of Output 2.4 which is at the landscape level.</p>

4) See additional clarifying text in the description under Table E referencing outputs that will contribute to the achievement of core indicator 4.1, as well as clarifying texts in the description of Output(s) 2.3 and 2.4 and in the incremental reasoning in Table 4. The additional clarifying texts have also been ported over and cascaded to the Project Document in the corresponding sections.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 29, 2022, TK:

Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
March 20, 2023 TK:

All comments cleared.

November 29, 2022, TK:

1.) The incremental reasoning doesn't build up from those baseline/co-financing projects from USAID etc. How GEF project is incremental to these baseline projects already in the field? Please revise.

2.) Also, in table 8, USAID co-financing is classified as investment mobilized, which is not consistent with Table C. Please correct one or the other.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) See additional text to the section on the incremental reasoning on pages 62 and 63 of the CER, especially in connection to the benefit of baseline initiatives and the complementarity of co-financing as a springboard for project interventions of the USAID Biodiversity Conservation and Demand Reduction Program being implemented by WWF (also referred to in the co-financing letter as the USAID Vietnam Biodiversity Conservation project). Reference is also made to the description of baseline projects on pages 32 and 33 of the CER where the last sentence or two refers to how the GEF-7 Nature-Based Tourism Project will build on the baseline activities, as well as Table 2 straddling pages 33-34 of the CER.

2) The USAID co-financing table (now table 6) is kept as 'Investment Mobilized' to be consistent with the co-financing table in Section C. and amount has been pro-rated to the number of years the projects will operate in parallel.

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

March 20, 2023 TK:

All comments cleared.

November 29, 2022 TK:

1.) Please revisit CI 4.1 and make consistent with core indicator table.

2.) SDG table is missing the first column. Please correct.

3.) Table 6 includes a column for GEBs, but much of what is included are not GEBs. Please revise.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) Per the screenshots below, core indicator 4.1 in the incremental reasoning table is consistent with the value specified in the CI table in Section E.

Value for CI 4.1 identified in Section E = 45,802 ha

4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (Hectares)	45,802
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Core Indicator 4.1: The project will also support better integration of tourism development with biodiversity conservation in buffer areas and special-use protection forests adjacent to the two PAs. Measures to improve management effectiveness, including SMART patrols and enforcement activities will be supported in 45,802 ha of buffer zone and special-use protection forest outside the two PAs through improved coordination at the Commune-level with the Commune Peoples Committees to reduce threats on natural resources (e.g., habitat disturbance), reduce market demand of wildlife related products (e.g., behavior change – hence reducing poaching/illegal fishing), and mobilization of sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., private sector engagement/PMES). The total area to be covered is around 45,802 hectares (excluding PAs) as follows: (i) 1,802 ha of protection forest of high-quality biodiversity habitat and likely shelters some of the most endangered species of the park, including two flagship species, i.e., the Silver-backed Chevrotain and the Cao Van Sung's Bent-toed Gecko; and (ii) 44,000 ha (20%) of commune managed areas in the 220,055-ha buffer zone of the Phong Nha.

Value for CI 4.1 identified in Table 4 (incremental reasoning) = 45,802 ha

ia and Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks	
	Improved PA management effectiveness covering 145,414 hectares of terrestrial protected areas and 7,352 hectares of marine protected areas (Core Indicators 1.2 and 2.2)
1	45,802 hectares of additionally important terrestrial high biodiversity areas (excluding protected areas) in buffer zone of the two PAs effectively integrating tourism development with biodiversity conservation, to reduce threats on natural resources (e.g., habitat disturbance), reduce supply of wildlife related products through enhanced patrolling, community engagement and enforcement techniques, thereby building trust and disrupting and reducing poaching/illegal activities, as

stnam 68

Global Environmental Benefits	
11	well as minimizing incidences of HWC (Core Indicator 4.1, realized through the activities in Output(s) 2.3 and 2.4 through the description in the "incremental reasoning" column to the right)

For further clarification on CI 4.1, please refer to the response already provided for comment number 7.(2).

2) Reference is made to Table 7 starting on page 68 of the CER mapping project outputs to each of the relevant SDGs and associated targets. There seems to be a recurring issue with the portal as noted in the responses above.

3) This seems to be a confusion due to some error in the GEF portal. The GEBs are included in the incremental reasoning section. Please refer to screenshot above or Table 4, component 2, CER page 62.

In addition to the GEBs articulated in Table 4, reference is also made to the bulleted list of GEBs on page 76 per the screenshot below, which are consistent with the core indicators and aligned to best practice in the documentation of GEBs for similar projects within this domain.

Bulleted list of GEBs in Section 6:

6) Global environmental benefits (GEFTF).

Section III Strategy ('Contribution to Global Environmental Benefits') of the **UNDP PRODOC** is fully aligned with the original Concept Note.

The project will contribute to delivery of global environmental benefits through:

- Reduced impacts of national tourism industry on biodiversity assets – including PAs, critical habitats such as coral reefs and tropical forest, and globally threatened species present in tourism areas;
- Increased financial support for biodiversity conservation from the tourism sector, benefiting PA management and species conservation;
- Increased support for biodiversity conservation within the tourism industry through increased awareness, capacity development and integration of biodiversity into tourism industry standards;
- Improved tourism management and revenue generation benefiting over 145,414 ha of terrestrial PAs at Nui Chua and Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks; benefitting 7,352 ha of marine PAs at Nui Chua National Park; and indirectly benefitting 45,802 ha of adjacent landscapes to the targeted PAs (GEF Core Indicators 1.2, 2.2 and 4.1 respectively);
- Reduction of threats from tourism development to biodiversity through adoption and enforcement of industry requirements, guidelines, standards and impact monitoring at critical sites within the two landscapes;
- Improved nature-based tourism opportunities and options within PAs strengthens revenue generation and management, supporting the conservation of globally threatened species, including Silver-backed Chevrotain (DD), Black-shanked douc (CR), Southern White-cheeked Gibbon (CR), Hatinh Langur (EN), Crested argus (CR), Cao Van Sung bent-toed gecko (EN) and Green turtle (EN);
- Increased recognition and awareness of the need to support for biodiversity conservation within business operations among tourism operators, among visiting tourists and engaged communities through increased awareness, capacity development and sharing of best practices and knowledge management;
- A shift in tourist purchasing preferences away from illegal wildlife and unsustainable and destructive tourism practices, towards supporting demand for pristine and low impact tourism products and services;
- Reduction of 15,704,236 (tCO₂-e) through improved management effectiveness of targeted PAs and improved management of biodiversity in the targeted production landscape (GEF Core Indicator 6.1)

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
March 20, 2023 TK:

Cleared.

November 29, 2022 TK:

1.) If the project decides to consider reviewing innovative financial modalities for funding such activities, it can be added here.

Agency Response

Agency Response March 3, 2023:

1) Reference is made to the last paragraph on innovation on page 79 (spilling over to page 80) of the CER, as well as page 176 of the ProDoc, which outlines the innovative financial modalities being leveraged by the project, including PMES, PFES, PPP and access to microcredit. These will be the primary financial innovations to be introduced, tested and scaled by the project. No additional financial modalities will be leveraged other than those noted above since these were anchored to due diligence and consultation during the PPG, discussed at length with project stakeholders and agreed to be included in the project design.

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

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes.

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

NA

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

March 20, 2023 TK:

All comments cleared.

November 29, 2022 TK:

- 1.) Please review the stakeholder engagement plan and fill-in/update highlights that remain.
- 2.) Considering the comment from the STAP, please consider adding some language on how USAID as a significant co-financier would be engaged in the project.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) The stakeholder engagement plan (PRODOC Annex 7) has been updated and the highlighted text removed. The stakeholder engagement plan has also been updated to include text on how USAID will be engaged on an operational basis for the years in which the project will operate in parallel with it.

2) Reference is made to the following text from the stakeholder engagement plan which has been added to both the CER on page 88 and in the table on page 165. This text is also reflected in ProDoc Annex 7.

?From an engagement perspective, the GEF-7 Nature-Based Tourism Project will not engage with USAID directly per se as it is the donor, but rather will ensure frequent coordination and communication at the operational level with the WWF team implementing it. During the years in which the two projects overlap, the Project Management Unit will ensure that it is plugged into the annual work planning of the USAID Biodiversity Conservation and Demand Reduction Program and vice versa. Seeing that the areas and landscapes in which the two will operate in Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park will be different and that there is no presence at Nui Chua National Park, the risk of overlap and duplication of efforts is negligible. The benefits of coordination however will be to ensure that the SMART patrolling framework is improved over time based on the data collected and to modify priority areas based where high-risk areas are located through evidence of illegal hunting and poaching incidents.?

Reference is also made to the ProDoc on pages 128-130 and pages 158-159 and corresponding pared down text in the CER on both stakeholder engagement and the types of partnerships that will be established. These are the product of extensive consultation and validation and no additional partnerships and engagement with entities other than those mentioned are planned at the design stage.

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
March 20, 2023 TK:

Cleared.

November 29, 2022 TK:

1.) Yes, gender action plan is attached as annex, but the recommendations/ measures should be mainstreamed into the components of the CER. Please do so, including strengthening gender dimensions in project component 2 (Nature-based tourism partnerships benefitting

communities, wildlife and habitats at Nui Chua and Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks: and Component 3 (Capacity building and behavior change for acceptance of value of nature-based tourism and wildlife and biodiversity protection).

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) Reference is made to Table 11 on pages 94-97 of the CER which articulates how gender responsive actions will be mainstreamed into each project Output and who will be responsible for ensuring these actions. To avoid unnecessary duplication and repetition, the following text has been added preceding the description of the activities on page 42:

?To ensure gender dimensions of the project are not only strengthened, but remain a cross-cutting priority of the project, Table 11 herein articulates the gender dimensions of each output across the 4 Components.?

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
March 20, 2023 TK:

Cleared. Understand the limitation and we appreciate the inclusion of such consideration.

November 29, 2022 TK:

1.) The project should also consider or engage private sector that might benefit from the improved environmental services (better water quality for beverage company? etc.) for their operation for PES scheme.

2.) Engagement with local financial institutions or development agencies/financial institutions for innovative financial solutions for project sustainability. Now the investment options are heavily relying on government grants/funds.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) The project did consult extensively during the design phase with a range of private sector entities, including several targeted sessions with tourism enterprises as part of the initial due diligence in November - December 2021 and again in early March 2022. A strategic decision was made early on in the formulation of the project - through consultation and based on increasing the project's likelihood of success - to leverage, test and augment partnerships with whom the National Park Authorities already had historical relationships. To this end, reference is made to Section 4 of the CER on private sector engagement and the tiers of private sector engagement. Please also see Table 12 for a list of private sector entities that the project will first use as a springboard.

As a matter of principle, private sector entities will be invited to participate in project activities in Year 1 through public tenders to develop a PPP partnership with an intention to develop operations that will contribute to improved ecosystems services resulting from the PMES scheme established by the Public Private Partnership. All prospective private sector partners engaged during implementation will undergo UNDP's private sector engagement risk assessment as per UNDP's Due Diligence and Partnerships with the Private Sector Policy (2013).

Notwithstanding the above, the following text has been added to both the CER and ProDoc to address the reviewer's comments:

Activity 2.1.3:

?This activity will also include a mini-study on private sector partners for PMES that might benefit from the improved environmental services.?

And

Section 4 of the CER related to tier 3 private sector partnerships:

4. Private Sector Engagement.

The project will engage with the private sector on the following three fronts:

- The first tier of private sector engagement will be in relation to the project's governance where private sector entities that will be invited on a rotational basis to participate within the project's governance structures, specifically the BES Platform operationalized under Output 1.1 and the provincial multi-sectoral nature-based tourism platform established under Output 2.1;
- The second tier of private sector engagement will include partnerships with those private sector entities with whom each national park already has an ongoing relationship and ongoing program through concessions within the national parks. The project will engage, consult with, and solicit input from these companies on the definition of new nature-based tourism guidelines, criteria and requirements under Component 1. Private sector entities will be invited to participate in project activities under Component 2 (Output 2.2 and 3.4) via competitive tender(s) for the development and management of the demonstration nature-based tourism products and services; enhancement of biodiversity criteria within existing and development of new certifications for nature-based tourism offerings, as well as nurturing community- and women-owned businesses and absorption of local communities and ethnic minorities in tourism operations or any other service opportunities that may emerge within demonstration sites. Furthermore, tour operators will be encouraged to feature nature-based tourism offerings enterprises in their itineraries (Output 4.1), and international online travel agents for inclusion of nature-based tourism enterprises on their and the project's platforms (Output 4.2).
- The third tier will include private sector tourism firms, professional tourism associations or outdoor activity / adventure companies from beyond the project demonstration landscapes who can be engaged in the commercial operation of ~~or investments into nature-based products and services (e.g. investors in accommodations, sustainable transport, supplies, services or outdoor recreational activities),~~ **or that might benefit from improved environmental services relating to PMES** within the demonstration landscape but have yet to forge relationships

2) Earlier versions of the project design did include innovative financial tools from financial institutions but was deemed to be extremely complicated given limited success with these types of modalities in other projects based on stakeholders' experience. Notwithstanding and given the GEF Secretariat's concerns on this it has been re-introduced as part of activity

2.2.5. As part of innovative financial tools, we will explore options with financial institutions and the feasibility of small-scale loans to aspiring entrepreneurs.

Reference is made to the following text added to activity 2.2.5:

?As part of this activity the project will explore revolving microcredit mechanisms through engagement with private sector financial institutions whereby local communities can borrow to participate in forest protection and conservation through innovation and entrepreneurship, and will orient itself towards the creation of commune-based and women-owned small business and enterprises. As an additional financial service, the project will provide support to develop community-based business and family spending plans for aspiring entrepreneurs to enable access to existing microcredit offered through the Bank for Agriculture, Rural Development and Vietnam Bank for Social Policy. These banking institutions provide credit to applicants who have a solid strategy anchored to a good business plan.?

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
March 20, 2023 TK:

Cleared. Thank you, now we see them.

November 29, 2022 TK:

1.) ?Other risks? are not in the annex ? only in CER. Please make consistent.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) ?Other risks? are indeed included in both the CER and in the ProDoc per the screenshots below. Again, this seems to be related to a portal issue noted in the aforementioned responses:

Screenshot of 'Other risks' from CER starting on page 106:

Other Risks				
Insufficient interest from and willingness to take risks in investing in new forms of tourism, especially considering recent economic downturn caused by the pandemic	Institutional	I = 5; L = 3 SUBSTANTIAL	identified, take steps to remedy or mitigate the problem Per Annex 7: Stakeholder Engagement Plan , the project has been cognizant of the centrality of the private sector ownership and buy-in to its core objective. The PPG has held consultations with private sector entities, especially those with whom the national parks already have a relationship to communicate a compelling business case for their involvement. Participation in and turnout to these consultations has been remarkably high, underscoring their interest and understanding of the potential of the	NPD

Screenshot of 'Other risks' from ProDoc starting on page 139:

Other Risks				

Description of Risk (Brief description of the risk)	Significance / Type (Risk category)	Impact and Likelihood ¹⁷²	Mitigation Measures
Insufficient interest from and willingness to take risks in investing in new forms of tourism, especially considering recent economic downturn caused by the pandemic	Institutional	I = 5; L = 3 SUBSTANTIAL	Per Annex 7: Stakeholder Engagement Plan , the project has been cognizant of the centrality of the private sector ownership and buy-in to its core objective. The PPG has held consultations with private sector entities, especially those with whom

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
April 26, 2023 HF:
Comment cleared.

March 20, 2023 TK:

There has been no change in the coordination section per se ? but understand partners are mentioned in the stakeholder engagement section.

November 29, 2022 TK:

Please include how the project will coordinate with other co-financing partners ? USAID, WB.

Agency Response

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) The only co-financing partner not already involved in the project's governance is USAID. The World Bank as noted above is not a co-financing partner.

Reference made to the response provided in 7. Stakeholders (2). regarding how the project will engage with and coordinate with USAID. Reference is also made to the significant due diligence and analysis in ProDoc Annex 18: Tourism Landscape Report - Annex 1 for details of partner baseline activities and complimentary initiatives and how the project will leverage what has already / what will come out of these, and how they feed into each component.

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

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

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

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

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

April 26, 2023 HF:
Comments cleared.

March 20, 2023 TK:

Please document this status in the CER and include explanation for the delay. When a final version of ESMF is available, please update in the GEF portal.

November 29, 2022 TK:

ESMF (Annex 8a) document is in draft ? please attach final version.

Agency Response

Agency Response, April 18, 2023:

The project is now fully cleared by UNDP's safeguards team. The final versions of the safeguards related documents are included in this resubmission package and uploaded to the GEF Portal.

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) All environmental and social safeguards documents, including ESMF, are currently under UNDP's internal review and QA process for full clearance. Once these documents are fully cleared by UNDP's SES team, the final versions will be submitted to GEFSEC. UNDP requires full safeguards clearance before the project implementation starts.

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

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

Agency Response

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

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 26, 2023 HF:

All comments cleared.

March 20, 2023 TK:

1.) Still some tables (budget - significantly, risk table - slightly) are over the margin. Please fix with ITS's help if needed, otherwise the Council will not have access to the complete budget information during the circulation period, neither any other person will have access to the complete budget information whenever the document is posted on the website.

2.) Cleared.

3.) Please check and confirm those TORs are added in the prodoc.

November 29, 2022 HF

1.) Please: ensure the budget in the CEO endorsement request Portal entry fits within the borders of the page. Currently it goes well beyond the right-hand margins. Upload a separate budget in the documents tab.

2.) Please exclude any cents stipulated in the financing tables and leave rounded numbers instead.

3.) Project Coordinator and Chief Technical Adviser are charged across components and PMC. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project's execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. However, most of the co-financing is represented in-kind or public investment, so one understands that the challenges

to cover the staff positions with co-financing resources. In these cases, Terms of Reference for these positions showing the specific contribution (deliverables) to the components are required. It was not possible to find out the Terms of Reference in the ProDoc, neither in the Annexes. Please include them in the resubmission.

Agency Response

Agency Response, April 18, 2023:

- 1) The margins have been corrected for the budget and risk tables accordingly.
- 3) All annexes have been appended to the ProDoc as separate files and are not included in the ProDoc itself. Reference is made to the TORs. See Annex 6 ?Annex 06 - PIMS 6377 Overview_of_technical_consultancies_subcontracts_050922_clean? for details.

Finance (Rio Markers)	<input type="checkbox"/> Nationally Determined Contribution
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paris Agreement
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Development Goals
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation 1
	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation 2
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation 1
	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation 2

- 2) There seems to be some issue with the portal. Please see the screenshots below, the references are marked with red circles. Please note that any reference to page numbers in the CER are already and also accompanied by specific Section and Table numbers. This way, responses to STAP comments are easily identifiable either on the portal (via Section references) or in MS Word (via page numbers or Section references).

proposal can be revised during the PPG phase of project development and that some elements such as the Theory of Change (ToC) can also be stress-tested and finalized during the early stages of project implementation (i.e., the project inception phase). The major issues that were identified as part of our review can be grouped into three categories: i) a noticeable level of inconsistency between and within the various elements of the project (i.e. between the

pathways, assumptions, and drivers and GEBs. iv) Reference is made to Section 6 of the CER articulating the GEBs in bullet format on pages 76-77, together with the analysis in Table 4 of the CER noting the incremental reasoning and pathways for the achievement of those Global Environmental Benefits. Furthermore, the detailed narrative preceding the TOC on pages 67-71 (in the UNDP Project Document notes the four impact pathways for achieving GEBs.

Section 6 of the CER
Table 4 of the CER

PIF review comments	Response	Relevant sections of project documentation
reviewers were surprised to observe a significant level of disconnect between the project components, outcome, and outputs on the one hand and the project objective on the other. The project objective appears to state quite clearly that the project aims to promote BD conservation and sustainable livelihoods	broadly discussed with key stakeholders during the PPG phase and addressed via corresponding Outputs and Activities not reflected in the original Concept Note. The objective has been mapped to the main elements of the project's Outcomes and Outputs and captures the main pillars of the project; from the integration of conservation into tourism, awareness raising, the creation of stronger linkages between	CEO ER (7) innovativeness, sustainability, and potential for scaling up.

STAP Comments on Outcomes		
The outcomes when examined on their own stand-up well to scrutiny are well-aligned with the outputs and are supported by a good set of indicators. However, as it was observed above these are not as closely aligned with the project objective as it should be expected.	With respect to the STAP's concern regarding the alignment of the Outcomes to the project objective please see responses above on "STAP Comments on the Project Objective" and "STAP Comments on the Project Components for a description of traceability and how these hang together in a cohesive package of interventions".	UNDP PRODOC Annex 11: Core Indicators (see indicator 6) CEO ER Section E: Project's Target Contributions to GEF 7 Core Indicators
The planned outcomes do not encompass any climate adaptation benefits.	Climate mitigation benefits were considered and included in the project design. It is expected that the project will lead to a direct reduction of -15,704,236 tCO ₂ -e over a 20-year period.	UNDP PRODOC Annex 15b: tCO ₂ e Estimates Details and Key Assumptions ProDoc Annex 15b

concerns stated above.		
The project proposal includes a very detailed and rich baseline section, which provides an informative overview of a wide range of initiatives funded and implemented by the Govt. of Vietnam as well as a number of interventions funded by international institutions and donors.	An exhaustive list of partner initiatives has been included in the PRODOC with the salient ones that will constitute the baseline have been noted, including relevant GEF projects and investments on which the project will build.	UNDP PRODOC Section III – Alignment with GEF 7 Focal Strategy – see summary table of partner baseline initiatives CEO ER 2) The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects – Table 3 UNDP PRODOC Annex 18: Annex 18: Tourism Landscape Report - Annex 1
The baseline provides a good basis for	Please see responses provided above regarding	N/A

STAP Comments on 5. Risks		
Yes, the proposal includes a risk section, which in our view considered all the main factors and identified all the relevant risk categories and appropriate mitigation actions.	Risks have been significantly enhanced in comparison to those articulated in the Concept Note and include both project risks, SESP risks, COVID-19 risks and climate risks.	UNDP PRODOC Section IV Results and Partnerships – Risks CEO ER 5. Risks

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

- 1) The margins have been corrected.
- 2) Decimal places of the dollar amounts have been rounded accordingly.
- 3) Reference is made to changes in Annex 6 (specifically to the CTA, NPM and Provincial Technical Coordinator roles and accompanying TORs) to articulate how each of the respective roles will be funded, whether partially or wholly covered by PMC, in addition to technical components. There are no proposed changes to how these roles are funded or their dollar amounts, based on consensus discussions between the GEF Agency and the implementing partners.

Agency Response [May 2nd, 2023]:

1) **Issue with the highlighted text:** All highlights in the CER and the ProDoc are removed; the clean files are uploaded and resubmitted via the portal.

2) **Issue with the tables and graphics:** Removed most of the tables and graphics. But, instead of splitting these files into separate attachments, the references to Project Document figure/table/page numbers are made except for Theory of Change and the Project Conceptual Model, which are attached as a separate file. The maps and the budget table are included in the portal entry. Please note in the portal-generated PDF file, maps sometime are transposed to the PDF file due to some technical problem with the portal software.

3) **Issue with the margins and legibility:** All sections, tables etc. now are within the margins in the portal. A PDF file was generated to double-check, and it now looks fine. But please note that the PDF file still has 164 pages. The file is legible but given the font size, zoom to 150% at least maybe required to read comfortably. Due to the amount of information compressed in the Theory of Change and the Project Conceptual Model, they are not legible in the Project Document either, therefore, these two schematics are included as attachments in the portal submission.

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

Agency Response

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

Agency Response

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 26, 2023 HF:

Comments cleared.

March 20, 2023 TK:

- 1.) Please revise the CCA marker in the CER to 1. It is still 0.
- 2.) Cleared. Overall, responses include reference to page numbers of the CER, but there is no page number in the portal. Please indicate in responses the **section number** instead of page number for the STAP questions? Thank you.

November 29, 2022 TK

1. On climate adaptation benefits question, please revise. It is climate mitigation benefits. Also, if the project is addressing climate change adaptation, please revise rio markers for CCA.
2. Links between component ? GEB needs further clarification.

Agency Response

Agency Response, April 18, 2023:

1) Reference is made to the drop-down menu in the portal, as well as both CER ?Annex G: GEF Project Taxonomy Worksheet? and ProDoc ?Annex 12 - PIMS 6377 GEF_7_Taxonomy_April2023?, where the Rio marker for Mitigation and Adaptation have been updated to ?1?. Please see screenshot below:

Finance (Rio Markers)

- Nationally Determined Contribution
- Paris Agreement
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Climate Change Mitigation 1
- Climate Change Mitigation 2
- Climate Change Adaptation 1
- Climate Change Adaptation 2

2) There seems to be some issue with the portal. Please see the screenshots below, the references are marked with red circles. Please note that any reference to page numbers in the CER are already and also accompanied by specific Section and Table numbers. This way, responses to STAP comments are easily identifiable either on the portal (via Section references) or in MS Word (via page numbers or Section references).

Agency Response, March 3, 2023:

1) CCM is a co-benefit, please refer to Core Indicator for the project CCM benefits. Therefore CCM Rio Marker is 1. For CCA, due to the inherent nature of this project, some CCA co-benefits will be achieved especially in building climate resilience of the communities and the ecosystems. Therefore, CCA Rio Marker is also 1.

2) Per the screenshot below, please see additional clarifications related to GEBs in the response to the stap comment in question. Please also refer to the response to the reviewer in question 6(3.) above regarding the appropriateness of the GEBs noted in the project design.

<p>substantial issues, which should be addressed as early as possible in the next stage of project development. Given the nature of the issues to be addressed, STAP recommends that this proposal can be revised during the PPG phase of project development and that some elements such as the Theory of Change (ToC) can also be stress-tested and finalized during the early stages of project implementation (i.e., the project inception phase). The major issues that were identified as part of our review can be grouped into three categories: i) a noticeable level of inconsistency between and within the various elements of the project (i.e. between the project objective on the one hand and the project outcomes and outputs on the</p>	<p>augmented on the basis of the STAP's subsequent comments map to each of the main pillars of the project and not just environmental benefits per se; iii) A ToC that has been completely revamped with accompanying narrative on the main impact pathways, assumptions, and drivers and GEBs. iv) Reference is made to Section 6 of the CER articulating the GEBs in bullet format on pages 76-77, together with the analysis in Table 4 of the CER noting the incremental reasoning and pathways for the achievement of those Global Environmental Benefits. Furthermore, the detailed narrative preceding the TOC on pages 67-71 in the UNDP Project Document notes the four impact pathways for achieving GEBs.</p>	<p>TOC on pages 67-71</p> <p>UNDP PRODOC Table 23: TOC Assumptions</p> <p>Section 6 of the CER</p> <p>Table 4 of the CER</p>
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Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

Agency Response

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 29, 2022 TK:

Yes

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

NA

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 NA

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 NA

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 28, 2023 HF:

Unfortunately some of the tables/graphics are still not readable in the Portal-generated version of the CEO endorsement request and the document is now 245 pages long. In order for this to be circulated to GEF Council for review, please do the following:

- 1.) Remove all highlights from the CER document and the ProDoc. We need clean copies to go to Council please.
- 2.) Remove any table or graphic that is not mandatory to have in the Portal entry of the CER itself, and instead include it as an attachment in the documents tab of the portal. Please clearly label the file when uploading. The current CER is 245 pages and it is very difficult to read many of the tables in the pdf of the document.
- 3.) Ensure that all remaining sections are well within the margins and are formatted legibly in the Portal-generated PDF of the CER prior to resubmission.

Please resubmit promptly given this project must pass Council 4 week review and be CEO endorsed prior to June 18, 2023.

March 2023:

No, not at this time. Please address the comments in the review sheet and resubmit promptly. Please note this project will be cancelled on June 18th, 2023 if not CEO endorsed and the project must undergo 4 weeks of GEF Council review prior to endorsement, therefore the project must be PM recommended and circulated to Council by the first week of May, latest. Thank you.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	11/29/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/30/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/26/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations