



Guinean Forests (GEF-8 Amazon, Congo and Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Program)

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11142

Countries

Regional (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone)

Project Name

Guinean Forests (GEF-8 Amazon, Congo and Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Program)

Agencies

CI, FAO, IUCN

Date received by PM

4/12/2023

Review completed by PM

5/16/2023

Program Manager

Mohamed Bakarr

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Project Type

PFD

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Program Information

a) Is the Program Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The information is incomplete. Please provide missing details, including potential EAs and a commitment deadline.

05/15/23

There are still issues to be addressed as follows:

- Program Duration ? 60 months not adequate since the program needs a longer duration than the CPs. Please adjust.
- Program Commitment Deadline ? This is the date by which all CPs must be CEO endorsed. And should be at most 18 months from anticipated Council Approval date.

05/17/23

All addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

All the Child project Executing Agencies have been added in the PFD

5/16/2023

Program Duration changed to 72 months and Commitment Deadline changed to December 2024.

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

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes, but LD is not included even though the the program will tackle "forest landscape degradation". Please address.

05/15/23

LD is now included.

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Land Degradation included in the project information table and project Taxonomy table

Annex E: Rio-markers updated to include desertification 1

2. Program Summary

a) Does the program summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the program objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected outcomes?

b) Is the program's geographical coverage explicit, as well as the covered sectors? Does the summary explain how the program is transformative or innovative?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The summary is good, but not adequate. For example, there is no reference to establishment of a ?platform? or ?forum? that will foster regional dialogue and alignment of regional actions. With just a focus on coordinating four countries, it is difficult to picture what the ?Guinean Forest Biome? would look like after the program is implemented. Please clarify how the proposed approach will inform and influence whole-of-biome approach beyond just supporting the participating countries.

05/15/23

This has been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Language added to the PFD Program summary:

Noting the institutional gap at the biome level with respect to policy alignment focused on forest management, the program will explore development of a regional policy coordination body; in doing so, the GFIP will help advance the ECOWAS Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa, and help impacts endure and expand throughout the biome beyond program implementation.

3 Indicative Program Overview

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

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Overall, the Program Overview is very well articulated and clear. The program component and outcomes are appropriate and in line with aspirations for safeguarding biome integrity. Gender dimensions, KM and M&E are all considered and appropriately funded. PMC financing is within GEF policy guidelines.

There are a few issues that need to be addressed, such as follows:

- 1) The program objective statement is not written in a way that allows to measure progress given its core focus is on inputs: "to invest". It may be more appropriate and results-oriented to instead turn the focus toward, such as "To protect and improve the effective governance of"? Please address given the IP will be evaluated against its objective at completion. It may help to qualify more specifically in what way the health of the planet will be sustained in the program objective statement. Please address given the IP will be evaluated against its objective at completion.

2) The link with and engagement by people and their impact (positive or negative) on the forest is not captured. How would the program foster engagement with local communities and change the incentives to destroy the forest into benefits that entice people to protect and manage the forest?

05/15/23

These have been addressed, but following issues need to be corrected:

- Program Objective ? The statement needs to be consistent throughout. Some places still have ?sustain? instead of ?contribute to?
- Program overview table ? Please check Outcome 3.1 for correct wording ? ?access to livelihoods??
- Program Rationale under Program Outline ?
 - a. First para is repetitive or appears garbled in the portal
 - b. The text does not include an acknowledgement of the fact that some threats are transboundary in nature, such as for example bushmeat hunting and artisanal miners moving between countries.

05/17/23

All addressed now.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

The objective of the Program has been revised: To protect and improve the effective governance of the Guinean Forests in-order to maximize global environmental benefits, sustain the health of the planet and flow of vital ecosystem services that underpin human well-being.

Paragraph added under the PFD's Program Summary and ToC

narrative: Economic empowerment of communities through investment in nature-based local livelihoods and enterprises coupled with participatory land use planning, strengthening community governance of natural resources including expansion of OECMs, and overall, mainstreaming gender in the proposed program interventions will entice local communities to protect and manage the forest hence deter further encroachment and destruction.

5/16/2023

Program objective changed throughout.

We feel this wording is correct. Outcome 3.1 reads "Outcome 3.1: Improved sustainability of productive sectors in forest landscapes?". This relates to work with private sector partners to catalyze adoption of sustainable practices. The wording serves to distinguish this Outcome from work with communities in Outcome 3.2 ("Improved inclusive and equitable access to local livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprises?"), which explicitly addresses access to livelihoods.

- a. A sentence has been deleted.
- b. Notably, some of the threats mentioned above are transboundary in nature, such as, unsustainable logging and fishing, bushmeat hunting and trade and artisanal mining where miners move between countries.

4 Program Outline

A. Program 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 program design?

b) Has 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 program outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?

c) Is the baseline situation and baseline projects and initiatives well laid out and how the program will build on these?

d) Have lessons learned from previous efforts been considered in the program design?

e) For NGL, is there a brief description of the financial barriers and how the program ? and the proposed financial structure- responds to these financial barriers.

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The PFD provides a strong rationale for a programmatic approach in view of conserving and connecting primary forests in the Guinean Forest biome of West Africa. The whole-of-biome approach is consistent in this regard, and a focus on Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea as core participating countries, including transboundary linkages, reflects their importance for safeguarding integrity of the biome. The baseline scenario, however, paints a dismal picture without much evidence and data, with words such as "insufficient", "lack of", "weak", and "limited". Please clarify how the various barriers are interlinked from a systems perspective, including the extent to which they should be prioritized for

transformative change. What are the prospects that these barriers can be addressed through the proposed approach, including expectations of the different stakeholders? What lessons from previous efforts can be drawn on in this regard?

05/15/23

This is now addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

The text in this section has been expanded at various points to address this input.

5 B. Program Description

5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the program logic, including how the program design elements are contributing to the objective, a set of identified key causal pathways, the thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust solution and listing the key assumptions underlying these?

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

c) Are the program components described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the program 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? Have the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline programs been described? Is the program incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)?

e) Are the relevant levers of transformation identified and described?

f) Is there an adequate description on how relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) will contribute to the design and implementation of the program and its components?

g) Gender: Does the description on gender issues identify any differences, gaps or opportunities linked to program objectives and have these been taken up in component description/s?

h) Are the proposed elements to capture, exchange and disseminate knowledge and lessons learned adequate in order to benefit future programs? Are efforts for strategic communication adequately described?

i) Policy Coherence: How will the program support participating countries to improve, develop and align policies, regulations or subsidies to not counteract the intended program outcomes?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The program is reasonably well described, and the description includes a ToC, with narrative and assumptions. The GEF incremental reasoning is described relative to the components and outcomes targeted for investment. There are a few inconsistencies to address:

1) Issue of financing and access to finance - In the text, limited financing for protected area management is mentioned as a key driver. However, we would expect to also see the lack of financing or lack of access to financing were also a concern for sustainable livelihoods. The lack of financing and access to financing both for protected area management and sustainable livelihoods should be the main driver justifying the component 4 on policy engagement to improve incentive, equitable enabling conditions for forest conservation and management. Please address and better emphasize these aspects of lack of financing or lack of access to financing also for sustainable livelihoods. This justification and this component are critical if the Guinean Forests IP want to be positioned as a potential vehicle for deep transformation of primary forest conservation, including with the support of future Positive Conservation Partnerships, Project Finance for Permanence, or Forest Landscape Investment Packages, currently discussed with strategic donors (Libreville agenda).

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•2) Great to see reference to other relevant initiatives and investments in the region. It would be useful to describe how the IP platform will align and engage with these opportunities to leverage them for transformative change. What specific mechanism(s) will be used from design phase to program implementation?

3) Theory of Change - The overall ToC is consistent with IP vision for transformative governance of the forest biome, including the need to align the protection effort with sustainable management and restoration at scale. Component 3 highlights land uses outside protected area but does not provide adequate explanation of how this will add value to the goal of achieving biome integrity, such as through increasing habitat connectivity. Please address.

•Note: Please consider using another format in the portal as the ToC diagram is not readable, while it is readable in the program document. Some numbers are mentioned in the desired situation with GEF targets ? please cross-check with the text in the portal and the program document, the table with the core indicators, and the result framework.

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4) The transformation levers have been well articulated, but no reference is made to specific metrics that will be considered for their assessment and monitoring as part of the overall program delivery. Please clarify and consider including this in the M&E section as well.

5) The regional work under the IP should also play the critical role of fostering a whole-of-biome approach toward integrity of this critically threatened ecosystem. That means looking beyond just coordinating country child projects to promoting regional integration that involves all other countries as well as relevant stakeholders. Please clarify this. Furthermore, the sustainability of the proposed coordination platform should be reviewed during the project preparation. Please confirm.

05/15/23

These have been addressed. Please note and adjust the following:

- Table 5 ? Best to only include Liberia, Guinea and SL since they are the ones with CPs.

- Figure (Theory of Change) is still very hard to read in the portal and link is provided in the Agency Comments below instead of in the document.

- Table 6 ? What about biome-level or program-level indicators for the levers?

05/17/23

All addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

1) See below

Barrier renamed and paragraph updated. Refer to the following barrier: *Lack of financing and access to financing for sustainable livelihoods by local communities.*

Barrier renamed and paragraph updated: Refer to the following barrier: *The lack of financing and access to financing for protected areas and sustainable landscape management.*

Description of Component 4 has been updated to include this point.

The paragraph on *Financial leverage?* under the levers of transformation has been updated.

2) See below:

Added the following language: The Executing Agency for the Regional Child Coordination Project under the GFIP will be responsible for ongoing consultation and coordination with these related regional initiatives, supported by CI GEF Agency's Director for Project Management and Technical Oversight in Africa. During the PPG phase for the Regional Child Coordination Project, related regional initiatives will be engaged through direct outreach in the form of consultative interviews as well as workshops, building on initial engagements conducted while preparing the PFD. Engagement objectives will be to agree on modalities for ongoing alignment during implementation, identify ways to coordinate knowledge management, and explore opportunities for co-financing and coordinated investments. Critical areas for strategic alignment will include support for a permanent regional policy coordination mechanism, and work on sustainable financing solutions at scale. Additionally, during the implementation phase, The Program Steering Committee (PSC) will continually provide guidance on how the IP platform should align and engage with these opportunities to leverage them for transformative change.

3) Added the following assumption to clarify the intent of Component 3: Sustainable land use outside protected areas can contribute to integrity of the biome through reduced impact through deterring encroachment and unsustainable exploitation of forest resources, on habitat, enhanced habitat connectivity, and maintenance of ecosystem services. *[Also added this language to the Component description.]*

Target numbers in the ToC updated. **CIGEF:** Upload this PPT version of the Theory of Change [HERE](#)

4) The section on transformation levers now includes text on assessment (added Table 6: Measuring Levers of Transformation). This has also been added to the M&E section.

5) Reinforced this message further by adding:

?The regional coordination child project is thus critical for ensuring that the program addresses the biome as a whole, by engaging and convening stakeholders throughout the biome, especially government stakeholders in pursuit of regional policy alignment.?

Yes. The following sentence has also been added: ?Sustainability of the proposed coordination platform will be reviewed during the project preparation?

5/16/2023

- Other countries dropped from Table 5
- A ppt presentation has been uploaded with a clear version of the Theory of Change
- for Table 6, as explained in the text preceding the table: ?As seen in Kehrer (2020), transformational processes may not lend themselves readily to measurable indicators. Assessing transformational change in complex systems may be better captured through

qualitative questions that guide periodic analysis of whether and how project design is contributing to transformational change. In addition, some of the planned program outcomes also are indicative of incremental contributions to transformational systems change. Table 6 below applies the Kehrer (2020) framework to capturing the transformational levers described above.?

For this reason, capturing the levers through qualitative learning questions in Table 6 rather than ?indicators? as such is a more credible approach, reinforced by the existing outcome indicators that are relevant to particular levers. Nevertheless, in the accompanying revised Table 6 we have added some candidate indicators in case it is deemed necessary to have them regardless of the above remarks.

5.2 Program coherence and consistency

a) How will the program design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and allow for adaptive management needs and options?

b) Is the potential for achieving transformative change through the integrated approach adequately described? How is the program going to be transformative or innovative? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

c) Are the countries or themes selected as child projects under the program appropriate for achieving the overall program objective?

d) Are the descriptions of child projects adequately reflective of the program objective and priorities as described in the ToC?

e) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate to meet the program objectives?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The proposed approach of supporting country-level, transboundary, and biome-wide actions will create pathways for achieving coherence and consistency in program implementation. The countries selected are key for anchoring those pathways as well as building momentum to mobilize others for biome-wide actions and for achieving impactful outcomes at scale..

- Regional Project: we acknowledge with thanks the proposed collaboration with the Congo IP. However, we recommend setting aside resources for collaboration beyond the Congo with the other CFB IP regions for global KM actions. Please, correct.
- Regional Project: at the crossroad of financing and KM aspects, we would like to see a reference on ?Project Finance for Permanence? (PFP). A PFP approach may be the easiest path towards an future Forest Climate Investment Partnership.
- There is a section on the transboundary collaboration between Guinea-Liberia and Sierra Leone: Please include the mention of this work under each child project for the

considered countries: these aspects should be integrated in the child projects and not addressed as another layer.

- Guinea: the added value of the Green List is not demonstrated in the context of OECM. We are not sure that it is justifiable to use GEF resources for this activity. Please, use the cofinancing.
- Liberia: the work on transboundary aspects with Sierra Leone and Guinea should be better highlighted.
- Nigeria: to be removed. Be careful as removing Nigeria is going to impact the breakdown of resources between the different focal areas and change the percentages to apply to the coordination platform.

05/15/23

These have been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Added the following to the Knowledge Management section: ?Responsibilities of the Regional Child Project also will include coordination of the program?s knowledge management activities with those of other projects, including related initiatives in the region (e.g., PAPFor, WABiLED, and the FAO-ECOWAS Global Forest Transformation for People and Climate Project), as well as Country level projects under the Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes IP to align global knowledge management efforts. Concrete arrangements for such coordination will be pursued during the PPG phase for the Regional Child Project but are anticipated to include cross-posting of knowledge products, joint production of syntheses of related experiences, and participation in joint learning events.?

Reference to PFP approach added as captured in the point above and on the description of Outcome 5.1; mentioned under financial leverage lever of transformation and description of Component 3

Guinea:

Paragraph under Component 1 adjusted to show the link between OECM and IUCN?s
In addition to the above:

the IUCN Green List Standard is for effective area-based conservation, including OECM. The Standard describes good governance, sound design and planning, effective management, and measuring conservation outcomes. The Standard can be used to benchmark METT assessments, but also OECM recognition using tools and guidance linked to CBD Decision 14/8.

The key letter in OECM is ?E? for effectiveness. Their persistence will rely on enhancing governance and recognizing them in an existing legal framework that supports, not undermines, their effectiveness over time.

If required, IUCN can provide reports / documents on the use of IUCN Green List for OECM, as well as references to parallel GEF projects that take the same approach.

Liberia:

Added language to the Liberia PFD description: ?As detailed in the concept note, work on transboundary management of forest landscapes with Guinea and Sierra Leone will include installing multi-country technical committees to coordinate management, enforcement, and community development activities, as well as joint efforts to pursue sustainable financing to support continued transboundary collaboration.?

5.3 Program Governance, Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Programs

a) Are the program level institutional arrangements for governance and coordination, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has a program level organogram / diagram been included, with description of roles and responsibilities, and decision-making processes?

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

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

A program governance and coordination narrative is included with accompanying figures. However, the structure addresses only the "internal" program coherence, and does not consider the critical need to engage "externally" with other entities and initiatives to help ensure that whole of the program is greater than just the parts. Please clarify how the latter will be embedded to create ownership of the IP beyond those countries and partners involved directly with the program. How will they be engaged to foster collaboration, leverage new opportunities, and create synergies for greater value-added.

05/15/23

These have been addressed. However, it is still hard to see what changes were made in Figure 2 to reflect governance beyond just coordination. Please address and upload a separate file that is easier to read.

05/17/23

Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

The paragraph below has been added in the Governance section:

These governing bodies will be responsible for a) the strategic technical and operational oversight of the program, including decision-making for the realization of the program's near-term and long-term objectives, and b) ensuring the Program is greater than the parts by extending ownership of the GFIP beyond the countries, entities, and initiatives that are directly involved. The latter will be achieved as follows:

The Program Steering Committee (PSC) and the Regional Communications Committee will amplify the visibility of the program on regional and international platforms and in the process attract and identify countries, entities, and initiatives that are not directly involved in the Program.

The Advisory Group comprising experts in the field from universities, the private sector, CSOs, and NGOs will be pertinent in identifying entities and ongoing or upcoming initiatives that could add value to the program and recommend opportunities for collaboration and synergy.

Overall, The Guinean Forests Program Management with support from the Regional Coordination and Technical Project Unit will be responsible for leveraging and holding follow-up discussions with Countries, and entities identified above to devise ways of collaborating, leverage new opportunities, and create synergies.

Added the following points under the Regional Coordination and Technical Project Unit

Leverage and hold follow-up discussions with countries, entities, and initiatives that are either directly involved in the Program or not involved in the program and devise ways of collaborating, leveraging new opportunities, and creating synergies

Action recommendations from the Guinean Forests Program Management, PSC, and the Advisory Group

5/16/2023

The Program will be governed by The Guinean Forests Program Management, two (2) committees, and one Regional Coordination and Technical Project Unit - with distinct roles that complement each other. The 2 committees will be embedded in the regional coordination project's implementation structure and will be led by CI (supported by the Executing Agency) to undertake their functions. These governing bodies will be responsible for a) the strategic technical and operational oversight of the program, including decision-making for the realization of the program's near-term and long-term objectives, and b) ensuring the Program is greater than the parts by extending ownership of the GFIP beyond the child project countries and entities, and initiatives that are directly involved. The latter will be achieved as follows:

The Program Steering Committee (PSC) and the Regional Communications Committee will amplify the visibility of the program on regional and international platforms and in the process attract and identify countries, entities, and initiatives that are not directly involved in the Program.

The Advisory Group comprising experts in the field from universities, the private sector, CSOs, and NGOs will be pertinent in identifying countries, entities and ongoing or upcoming initiatives that could benefit from the program and add value to the program - and recommend opportunities for collaboration and synergy.

Overall, The Guinean Forests Program Management with support from the Regional Coordination and Technical Project Unit will be responsible for leveraging and holding follow-up discussions with "non-program" Countries and entities identified above to devise ways of collaborating, leverage new opportunities, and create synergies.

During the PPG Phase, CI will explore additional co-financing from various sources including from the Fund proposed at Libreville for the Positive Conservation Partnership (PCP).

5.4 Program-level Results, Monitoring and Reporting

a) Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified? Does the PFD describe how it will support the generation of multiple environmental benefits which would not have accrued without the GEF program?

b) 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/GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)?

c) Are the program'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?

d) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the program at the global, national and local levels sufficiently described?

e) Is the described approach to program level M&E aiming to achieve coherence across child projects and to allow for adaptative management?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The GEBs have been identified and the PFD provides a clear description of their generation will be supported, including approach to achieving coherence across child projects. Please address the following:

1) Please paste content of the M&E section inside the main template in Portal for ease of access by GEFSEC and external stakeholders. Separately, Annex I on the M&E

Framework does not elaborate on the planned Program M&E structure, which needs to be articulated in the dedicated M&E Section of the template. Please adjust.

2) Core Indicators.

1.2 on Terrestrial Pas under improved management. Please list the names, WDPA IDs and IUCN categories of the PAs as available. Annex C on Program Location and Annex H on Child Project Information seem to indicate at least part of the information is available.

4.5 on OECMs. Please indicate the hectares of OECMs to be supported and any other information as available: Name, WDPA ID.

6. The expected results of 16m is lower than the 24m stated in the Program rationale section. Please adjust where appropriate for internal consistency. In the Core Indicator section, kindly add the Anticipated start year of accounting and Duration of accounting, as appropriate and available.

o No methodological explanation is provided under the Core Indicators section. Please consider adding elements or cross-references content in Annex I as appropriate.

ANNEXE. Rio Markers. As indicated earlier, the Program indicates no contribution to the Desertification Rio Marker. Please consider revising as appropriate given some of the program objectives relate to this aspect since the IP will also tackle "forest landscape degradation."

05/15/23

These have been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Pasted the M&E Framework in the PFD. Refer to the section: OTHER.

Ignore the standalone M&E document

The Program M&E structure has been elaborated and Program indicators added ? This included under the M&E Framework (PFD: Section title OTHER)

Double checked information in the GEF Portal since tis info was provided in the 1st submission. Refer to the Program Core Indicator sheet [HERE](#)

4.5 This information is not available at this juncture; we propose to delve deeper into this during the PPG phase for the child projects.

6. The estimated greenhouse gas emissions mitigated has decreased to 3.5 million. This estimate has been updated throughout the document(s). The following text was added to the Core Indicator section: ?Rough estimates of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (Core Indicator 6) were produced for a 20-year period, beginning in 2025. Improved estimates will be computed during the PPG phase using the Ex-Ante Carbon-Balance Tool (EX-ACT) Tier Standard Edition, developed by FAO.?

The Excel Program core indicator updated to capture 2025 as the start year of computation and 20 year duration

Methodology of how Core Indicators were calculated have also been pasted in the program core indicator worksheet (starting from row 253)

Annex E: Rio-markers updated to include Desertification 1

5.5 Risks to Achieving Program Outcomes

- a) Are climate and other main risks relevant to the program identified and adequately described? Are mitigation measures outlined and realistic? Is there any omission?**
- b) Are the key risks and mitigation measures that might affect implementation and the achievement of outcomes adequately rated?**

- c) Are environmental and social risks and impacts adequately screened and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The PFD includes a description of climate and other relevant risks to the program. The analysis is strong on the mitigation measures, but does not summarize program-level risks. Please elaborate further on this aspect for context.

05/15/23

These have been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Descriptions of risks have been elaborated in the risk table.

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

6.1 a) Is the program adequately aligned with Focal Area and IP Elements, and/or LDCF/SCCF strategy?

***For IPs: is the program adequately aligned with the Integrated Program goals and objectives as outlined in the GEF 8 programming directions?**

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

b) Child project selection criteria: Are the criteria for child project selection sound and transparently laid out?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes. Please delete all reference to Nigeria with respect to child project.

05/15/23

Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Nigeria removed.

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

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes. For the K-M GBF Targets, there is a clear section where contributions are described. But if the Program is not specifically measuring outputs and outcomes directly related to these targets, then there is no need to claim that the IP is contributing to those Targets. Therefore, the Program must either use Program Level Indicators that are created to track outputs and outcomes related to the GBF Targets or use the GEF Core Indicators to track outputs and outcomes related to the GBF Targets. In this regard, please note and address the following:

1) All the IPs are contributing to Targets 20, 21, 22 and 23. First, the existence of the IP Coordination Grant and its function should address Targets 20 and 21 to some degree but the Lead Agency should make this assessment after having reviewed the Target language and the planned actions of the Coordination Grant. Contribution to the Targets 22 and 23 through the GEF policies on participation and IPLCs.

2) The Guinean Forests Integrated Program (GFIP) will help maintain globally significant biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services through the following Global Environmental Benefits:

Protected Areas: Create 258,804 ha of new PAs; improve management of 1,386,713 ha of PAs; (GBF TARGET 3) establish sustainable management in 470,800 ha. It is not clear whether this is outside of the protected areas boundary, this will influence how it is tracked vis a vis the GBF Targets, please clarify. However, it appears that this is in the productive landscape, and therefore would be linked to GBF TARGET 10 and 11.

Restoration: Restore 65,000 ha of degraded land (GBF TARGET 2)

CO2 sequestration: Absorb and sequester an estimated 24 million Mt CO2e through improved landscape management and forest protection, climate-smart agriculture, and restoration (GBF TARGET 8)

3) Please correct target 19 and 20 in the following para: ?The GFIP directly will contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by advancing Goals A and B (relating to conservation and sustainable use respectively), and particularly Targets 1-5 (spatial planning, biodiversity conservation, and management, including the 30x30 target), 8 (climate change), 9-11 (sustainable use and management of biodiversity and ecosystem services), 14 (policy and planning), 18 (perverse incentives), 19[MTZ1] (~~finance~~ ~~capacity building~~), 20 (~~capacity building~~ ~~financing~~), 21 (data availability), 22 (IPLCs) and 23 (gender).?

4) In the draft ME Framework of the IP, the following contributions to specific GBF TARGETS will be measured at the outcome and output level:

Outcome 1.1: Updated and expanded data and information base available # of databases functional and accessible to stakeholders (GBF TARGET 21)

Outcome 4.1: Improved policy framework for inclusive, participatory land-use planning # of new policy instruments relating to land-use planning officially adopted/endorsed by relevant government agencies (GBF TARGET 1 and 14)

Outcome 4.2: Improved policies to foster inclusive an economic environment conducive to forest conservation, e.g. incentives, reduction of perverse subsidies # of new policy instruments relating to economic enabling conditions for improved forest management officially adopted/endorsed by relevant government agencies (GBF TARGET 14 AND 18).

Outcome 5.3: Sustainable financing strategies formulated # of sustainable finance strategies prepared and implemented # of donor coordination meetings convened (GBF TARGET 19)

5) There is no evidence in the IP that any investments will be made towards the implementation of GBF Targets 4, 5, 9. Targets 4,5, and 9 are very specific targets that would require a level of monitoring not yet apparent in the draft ME Framework. Therefore, at this point, please delete these targets in the text. If output or outcome level indicators are eventually developed to measure contributions to these targets they can be added later.

05/15/23

These have been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

The detailed guidance is much appreciated; new & updated tables have incorporated this input.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The policy requirements section has been completed with reference to the narrative section as required. However, there are a few issues to be addressed as follows:

1) On Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment - It is preferable to refer to gender-responsive when the reference is something that requires action or concrete outcome. Gender-sensitive is applicable mostly to data or awareness-raising, sensitization efforts. Please review the use of gender-sensitive in the project and replace with gender-responsive when there is an action or concrete outcome expected. Some examples (not exhaustive) noted in the review include: A gender-sensitive human and institutional capacity development strategy and action plan will be developed ?; Gender-sensitive land tenure rights and policies; or Gender-sensitive programming. Please use "gender-responsive" in these contexts rather than gender-sensitive.

2) References to provision of financial and technical assistance to communities, or support to access livelihood opportunities/enterprises (e.g., referred to in Outcome 3.1: *Improved sustainability of productive sectors in forest landscapes, and Outcome 3.2: Improved inclusive and equitable access to local livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprises*) must ensure women as target beneficiaries.

05/15/23

These have been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

1. The following sections were modified to reflect ?gender responsiveness?:

?Innovation and learning: Collection and dissemination of knowledge and best practices, informing gender-responsive land use/spatial planning, design of governance arrangements, support for alternative livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprise, and policy reform and alignment.? (ProDoc page 19)

?To ensure that these levers of transformation ultimately advance sustainability and scale, the GFIP will pursue system-wide, country-driven, and gender-responsive capacity development across people, organizations, institutions, and policies.? (ProDoc page 23)

?A gender-responsive human and institutional capacity development strategy and action plan will be developed at both the programmatic level and for the individual child country projects.? (ProDoc page 23)

?One example is the facilitation of steps toward improved, gender-responsive land tenure rights and policies, others include developing and updating land management policies and establishing or supporting landscape-level and national coordination mechanisms focused on forest conservation and management.? (ProDoc page 27)

?Investments by child projects will include gender-responsive programming to strengthen local community capacity to participate in sustainable value chains (with attention to, for example, post-harvest care, processing, packaging, marketing, and business management, noting different gender roles within rural production systems).? (ProDoc page 31)

?In Component 4, the program will encourage child projects and governments to advance gender-responsive policies and policy frameworks on participatory land-use planning, land tenure, and economic incentives for conservation.? (ProDoc page 47)

?It will also serve as a platform (through the Regional Child Project) to exchange good practices, successful case studies, and lessons learnt on gender-responsive land-use planning, forest conservation, and sustainable livelihoods.? (ProDoc page 47)

2. Adjustments have been made to sections that referred to provision of financial and technical assistance to communities, or support to access livelihood opportunities/enterprises, as follows:

?Altering this dynamic will require overcoming limited knowledge of and access to competitive, sustainable income-generating alternatives; addressing this barrier also will require identifying means by which to overcome limited financing for investment in sustainable livelihoods, including attention to the impact of gender on access to finance.? (ProDoc page 8).

?Through the country child projects, the program will establish and strengthen the protection of key forest biodiversity areas through incentives for community-based conservation, such as providing gender-responsive technical and financial assistance to support the development of conservation-compatible, climate-smart livelihoods and enterprises, with all activities designed to incorporate gender considerations.? (ProDoc page 26)

Indicators for the Outcome 3.2 were also modified to better reflect how the program will target women in the efforts related to of financial and technical assistance to communities, or support to access livelihood opportunities:

?# of people (disaggregated by sex) involved in new sustainable alternative livelihoods, including women, youth, and those from disadvantaged groups?. (Annex I page 4)

?# of nature-friendly enterprises (including those led/owned by women, youth, and/or IPs, or with gender transformative potential) accessing new sources of financial/technical support.? (Annex I page 4).

7.2 Environmental and Social Safeguards

Have safeguard screening document and/or other ESS document(s) attached and been uploaded to the GEF Portal? (annex D)

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes

Cleared

Agency's Comments

8 Other Requirements

Knowledge Management

8.1 Has the agency confirmed that a project level approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been included in the PFD?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The description includes a specific consideration on learning and knowledge exchange across the program, but does not address the need for aligning such effort with other existing entities or initiatives in the region. Please clarify and address how KM efforts will for the program will be linked to those of other initiatives described elsewhere in the PFD.

05/15/23

This has been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Added the following language in the KM section: ?Responsibilities of the Regional Child Project also will include coordination of the program?s knowledge management activities with those of other projects, including related initiatives in the region (e.g., PAPFor, WABiLED, and the FAO-ECOWAS Global Forest Transformation for People and Climate Project), as well as Country-level projects under the Amazon Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes IP to align global knowledge management efforts. Concrete arrangements for such coordination will be pursued during the PPG phase for the Regional Child Project, but are anticipated to include cross-posting of knowledge products, joint production of syntheses of related experiences, and participation in joint learning events.?

In the project Governance section, a paragraph has been added describing how relevant entities and initiatives that are not directly affiliated with the Program will be engaged continually

9 Annexes

Financing Tables (Annex A and Annex H)

9.1 GEF Financing Table:

a) 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):

Country STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

All STAR financing amounts for the countries are confirmed and in line with GEF policies. Please address inconsistencies in the Annex as per comments made with respect to country LoEs. In addition, please correct the following:

1) for Liberia, change "International Waters: IW IP Global Platforms" to "**International Waters: IW IP Contributions**"

2) delete all financing for Nigeria since the country has decided to officially withdraw from the IP

05/15/23

The following need to be addressed:

1. Child projects: Nigeria was withdrawn. Please confirm Guinean child project doesn't have to be reduced. Total allocation for Guinean child project now stands at \$5,833,330.

2. Guinea child project: the Sources of funds table in Portal include both CI and IUCN as co-implementing agencies for this child project while the Financing table and PPG table only include IUCN. The LOE indicated only IUCN. Please revise the Sources of funds table to only include IUCN for consistency.

05/17/23

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

LOEs are now higher than the portal to ensure it goes through. The only inconsistent letter is for Sierra Leone. The maximum amount allowed for PPG is \$150k, and therefore the tables in the portal have been revised accordingly without changing the total envelope of funding

This has been updated

This has been done and numbers have been updated

5/16/2023

1. Correct. Total allocation for Guinean child project now stands at \$5,833,330.

2. That is an error. CI has been omitted and only IUCN is captured

Non-STAR Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Non-STAR IP amounts for countries have been appropriately allocated to the countries.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's Comments N/a

Agency's Comments

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's Comments N/a

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments N/a

Agency's Comments

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's Comments N/a

Agency's Comments

IP Set Aside

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The IP set aside has been appropriately justified for the regional coordination child project.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

IP Contribution

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

IP contributions have been fully accounted for.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

For Child Project Financing information (Annex H)

b) Are the IP Matching Incentives amounts correctly calculated according to the country STAR focal areas? allocated amounts? Are the IP contributions aligned with the Program? The allocated amounts (including Agency Fee) match those in LoE?

c) Project Preparation Grant Table: Are the IP Matching Incentives amounts correctly calculated according to the country STAR focal areas? allocated amounts? The allocated

amounts (including PPG Fee) match those in LoE? Is the requested PPG within the authorized limits set in Guidelines? (pop up information?) If above the limits, has an exception been sufficiently substantiated?

d) Sources of Funds Table: Are the allocated sources of funds for each and every one of the three STAR Focal Areas within the Country's STAR envelope by the time of the last review?

e) Indicative Focal Area Elements Table: (For IPs) The selected Indicative Focal Area element corresponds to the respective IP?

f) (For non-IPs) The selected Indicative Focal Area Elements are aligned with the respective Program?

g) Co-financing Table: Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing provided and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

The IP matching incentives have been correctly calculated and PPG amounts are within authorized limits. There are several important issues that need to be addressed with regard to child project financing information:

1) After the PFD submission deadline, the Government of Nigeria officially notified GEFSEC of its decision to withdraw from the IP. Hence all GEF financing associated with the country should be removed.

2) An updated spreadsheet will be shared with information found in the Letters of Endorsement (LoEs) *vis-?-vis* the information in Portal. In that spread sheet **red color** you will find the fields that are inconsistent. As you know, the figures in Portal can be lower than those in LoE, so there is no need to do anything on these ? but it can't be higher (some cases are higher by cents ? this needs to be amended because the total Agency Fee is higher by 2 dollars or so). Some fields are easier to be changed in Portal (i.e. Title or Executing Entity). However, the financial information needs to be carefully reviewed.

3) In finalizing the number, please remove the cents and round the figures down ? otherwise, the submission may not go through due to the validations.

4) As lead agency for the IP and the GEF Agency for two of the countries (Liberia and Sierra Leone), please consider possibility of co-financing from the Fund proposed at Libreville for the Positive Conservation Partnership.

05/15/23

These have been addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

1) Nigeria removed

2) This has now been updated.

3) The financing information has been reviewed and updated in the portal to remove cents. As mentioned, the main inconsistency is with Sierra Leone, since the PPG was higher in the LOE, and it can only be up to \$150k. Cents have now been removed.

4) This is noted. Due to the time constraint, we will look into this during the PPG Phase. The sentence below has been added in the PFD and the Liberia and Sierra Leone concept notes.

?During the PPG Phase, CI will explore additional co-financing from various sources including from the Fund proposed at Libreville for the Positive Conservation Partnership?

9.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG): if PPG for child projects has been requested: has the PPG table been included and properly filled out adding up to the correct PPG and PPG fee totals as per the sum of the child projects?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

PPG was requested for all child projects, but adjustments to the actual amounts are needed as indicated in "child project financing" above.

05/15/23

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Adjustments were made to ensure the information goes through the portal and cents removed. Overall, adjustments have been done per GEFSEC guidance on May 9th, 2023: percentages for focal area for the coordination child project have been amended to original

9.3 Sources of Funds for Country STAR Allocation

Does the table represent the sum of STAR allocations sources utilized for this program?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes, but inconsistencies need to be addressed as indicated above.

05/15/23

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

These have been addressed by removing Nigeria and recalculating the coordination child project allocation to the different focal areas - per GEFSEC guidance on May 9th 2023: percentages for focal area for the coordination child project have been amended to original

9.4 Indicative Focal Area Elements

For non-IP Programs

Does the table contain the sum of focal area elements and amounts as per the sum of the child projects?

Secretariat's Comments N/a

Agency's Comments

9.5 Indicative Co-financing

Are the indicative amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequate and reflect the ambition of the program? Has the subset of co-finance which are expected to be investment mobilized been identified and defined (FI/GN/01)?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes. Please note that grant is normally classified as ?investment mobilized?. Please review and re-classify amounts stated as ?recurrent expenditures?, to ?investment mobilized?.

05/15/23

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

Nigeria was the country that had added grants as recurrent expenses. Since, they have now been removed this has been resolved.

Annex B: Endorsements

9.6 Has the program and its respective child 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's Comments

04/26/23

Yes all participating countries have issued LoEs that are officially signed by the designated OFP.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Please ensure the LoEs are uploaded as required.

05/15/23

Cleared

Agency's Comments

5/9/2023

No action required

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

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes

Cleared

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Program Locations

9.7 a) Are geo-referenced information and maps provided indicating where the program interventions will take place?

Secretariat's Comments

04/26/23

Yes

Cleared

Agency's Comments

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes* (*only for non IP programs)

9.9 a) Does the program provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.

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

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

Secretariat's Comments N/a

Agency's Comments

Additional Annexes
10 GEFSEC Decision

10.1 GEFSEC Recommendation
Is the program recommended for clearance?

Secretariat's Comments
04/27/23

Not yet. Please address all comments.

05/15/23

Not yet. Please address remaining issues raised in questions 1, 3, 5 and 9.

05/17/23

Yes. All comments have been addressed now. PFD is recommended.

Agency's Comments

10.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency(ies) during the child project development.

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

10.3 Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	4/26/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/15/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/17/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		