



Building Community Based Integrated and Climate Resilient Natural Resources Management and Enhancing Sustainable Livelihood in the South-Eastern Escarpments and Adjacent Coastal Areas of Eritrea

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10789

Countries

Eritrea

Project Name

Building Community Based Integrated and Climate Resilient Natural Resources Management and Enhancing Sustainable Livelihood in the South-Eastern Escarpments and Adjacent Coastal Areas of Eritrea

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

6/15/2022

Review completed by PM

10/17/2022

Program Manager

Jason Spensley

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

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

19 October 2022:

Addressed

17 October 2022:

A request for support has been sent to the GEF IT Portal team. This remains to be addressed.

12 October 2022:

if the project is expected to last 7 years please correct the duration to 84 months.

Agency Response

13 Oct 22

Noted with thanks, a request was sent to correct the project duration on the portal.

Noted

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

3 October 2022:

Cleared

24 August 2022:

A - Please be more precise as to where the summary of changes from the PIF to the CER is located. If the response below is referring to the UNDP Prodoc, please note Annex L is titled "FAO and Government Obligations". Further, the GEF CER document does not have an annex L.

22 June 2022:

A) We note there are changes made to some of the Outcomes and Outputs from the PIF to the CER. Please outline changes made to each of the outcomes and outputs, and how they strengthen design of the project. For example, we note the number of outputs under Components 2 and 4 have significantly decreased. Please explain.

B) We regret that the PPG did not produce more operational information. It seems that the first year is going devoted to define the technical contents of the field activities. The PPG did not bring much elements about the ?how?, notably the nature of activities to reach 209,000 ha under 4.3 (SLM) and 15,000 ha under 3.2 (forested land restored).

Agency Response

14/09/2022

Noted. To clarify, the summary was inserted under Part II, item L "Summary of changes in alignment with the project design with the original PIF" in Project Description, just after Para 384 (please see text highlighted in yellow).

5/8/22

A- Please see revised Project Document (also updated in the portal) at: L. Summary of changes in alignment with the project design with the original PIF

B - The PPG faced challenges due to CV19 restrictions. However, as noted, these issues are largely resolved. The project will emplace a spatial planning system supported by a sophisticated monitoring. This system and associated actions will, among other critical elements, better clarify baseline values and annually report on the achievement of precise conservation targets established. Please see response below regarding definition and achievement of Indicators 4.3 and 3.2

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22June2022:

N/A

Agency Response Noted

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

22June2022:

Yes. We note with appreciation the increase in the level of co-financing and number of co-finance courses during project preparation, and that FAO maintained its level of co-financing from the PIF.

Agency Response Noted
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
22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted
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
24 October 2022:

Cleared. We note the CER in the Portal (not just the review sheet) now includes an explanation with further details on activities funded through the Portal, so this can now be cleared, which was not the case earlier.

19 October 2022:

Still there is a lack of details on the activities funded through the PPG. Please specify what HR inputs and contracts imply. In the response, please specify where this additional information has been included in the CER.

12 October 2022:

Please include some level of details on the activities funded through the PPG. What does HR inputs and contracts include?

24 August 2022:

Please revise Annex 3 to reflect the the maximum amount of PPG that can be committed from the LDCF of \$127,700. Please also revise the PPG committed for the Trust Fund accordingly.

22June2022:

We note the indication in Annex C that the PPG from the GEF Trust Fund has been overspent by \$2,629. Please clarify how this will be covered.

Agency Response

20 Oct 22

The agency is confused. Below response from October 13th explains what is covered by HR inputs (including the list of consultants hired...) and contracts (local firm to conduct baseline studies). These are all eligible costs for PPGs. For clarity, the wording HR inputs have been changed to "consultants" and the below explanation has been also inserted in the CEOR request under the PPG utilization report.

FAO will appreciate GEF SEC support to push this ahead and let IA and EA hitting the ground ASAP with no further delays.

13 Oct 22

Noted. The HR inputs cover the costs associated with hiring individual PPG consultants, while the contracts cover the costs associated with hiring PPG consultants through a local firm to conduct the baseline studies. The PPG document indicates the composition of the PPG team as follows: an international GEF Project Design Specialist, a National Lead Technical Project Design Specialist, a Gender and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist, a Crop Production Specialist, a Marine Specialist, a Livestock Management Specialist, a Socio-Economics and Livelihood Specialist, a Climate Risk and Resilience Specialist, a Biodiversity and Wildlife Specialist, a Forestry Specialist, a Soil and Water Conservation Specialist, an Environment and Social Safeguards Specialist.

21 September 2022

A consolidated table was included replacing the initial two separate tables tracking both GEFTF and LDCF portions of the PPG.

5/8/22

The US\$ 2,629 over-expenditure on GEFTF will be covered using the available remaining budget under the LDCF portion.

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

17 October 2022:

Cleared

12 October 2022:

- a. Please include the name of the Protected Area and WDPA ID under CI.1 in the Core Indicator table.
- b. The target under CI.4 in the Core Indicator table is inconsistent with Annex A. Please clarify.

22June2022:

One significant change is the increase of the target under the core indicator 5 of marine habitats under better management (from 1,000 ha to 50,000 ha). This increase should be explained and justified, while the other indicators stayed stable. The nature of activities to reach this target should be clarified.

Agency Response

13 Oct 22

- a. Noted. At the time of conducting this PPG, there are no gazetted protected areas in Eritrea. The project will identify and establish 15,000 ha of protected area to restore degraded afro-montane forest. The protected area to be restored and established by the project will provide habitat corridors given its location between two potential protected areas namely Semenawi-Dehubawi Bahri National Park (WDPA ID: 555721470) and the Buri Peninsula adjacent to the Buri-Irrori Hawakil Marine Protected Areas (WDPA ID: 555721464). Although these two protected areas are not legally designated as such, at the time of conducting this PPG there is ongoing work for these areas to be demarcated and gazette. (This explanation is now added under the CIs Table in the CER).
- b. Noted with thanks, CI.4 figures under CIs table and Annex A are now matching.

5/8/22

Core indicator 5 (marine habitat under improved practices) increased substantially. This was the result of consultations with the Government of Eritrea determining that the entire gulf area should be included within the project's target area. This 50,000 hectare area will deliver a much higher level of GEB than the 1,000 hectares proposed in the PIF and more accurately reflects the scale of habitat, fisheries utilization, and connectivity. The 50,000 hectare area now targeted is the area used by local fishing interests. The included area now captures much more meaningful habitat and species diversity and conservation needs. The area also better reflects connectivity between the upper watershed and estuary.

This result will be achieved through a suite of project interventions as described in the Project Framework, Budget, and Results Framework.

The project will help build sustainable fisheries management in part through the adoption and implementation of the globally recognized Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, assisting local fishing communities to adopt and implement these guidelines to help conservation ecosystem services, promote sustainable fisheries, and secure long term biodiversity conservation benefits.

The project will support the implementation of these guidelines in part through the design and implementation of a comprehensive program for fisheries and marine habitat monitoring and information management system. The effort will be made in concert with the Ministry of Marine Resources along with participating local fishing households.

The project will provide national and international expertise, capacity building and technical inputs required to design, launch and initially implement the monitoring strategy. Monitoring will include catch reports, effort reports, and other issues related to sustainable commercial and subsistence fishing. Monitoring and information management efforts will reach beyond the capture elements of the fishery and monitor and generate information regarding critical habitats, particularly reefs, corals, indicator species, mangroves, and sea grasses.

The approach and methodology will be highly inclusive, supported by local community members hired and trained through the project to conduct surveys and reporting. This level of community engagement is critical to building broad based understanding with regards to marine ecology, conservation, and resilient fisheries that integrates local knowledge along with best international approaches. During PY1, the participatory monitoring strategy will be designed and described. Implementation will commence during PY2.

Spatial planning will fully incorporate protected area management planning. The absence of gazetted protected areas, management plans, and strategic conservation action is a persistent challenge in Eritrea. This is largely due to the fact that Eritrea does not have an organic protected areas law. Regarding Marine Protected Areas, a draft PA proclamation was just finalized and circulated to the relevant stakeholders for comments.

To help address this challenge the project will support the Government to designate protected areas through the land and marine spatial planning process. These spatial plans will delineate protected area boundaries and describe conservation priorities. Management plans for designated conservation areas will be embedded with spatial plans. This will help to make certain that biodiversity conserved as part of a large land/seascape approach to maintaining critical ecosystem-services. This will include Marine spatial planning for enhanced fisheries and aquaculture sustainability.

The project will integrate fisheries management plans (FMPs) for a number of species of commercial and/or ecological importance. The FMPs should be both strategic documents for planning and practical guides for achieving particular objectives (e.g. preventing overfishing, protecting fishers' livelihoods) and targets (e.g. target biomass levels, target fishing mortality rates) by specifying the measures required to achieve them (e.g. restrictions on fishing effort, total allowable catch limits, temporal and spatial closures, minimum specimen sizes and restrictions on gear).

The project will generate marine spatial planning for productive fishery areas focused upon improving management of commercial and subsistence fishing areas. The project will assist to identify locations of high biodiversity value, e.g. reef systems, and associated protected areas. The planning process will include identification of sustainable take levels, refugia, and monitoring of fish stocks to provide more coherent access that sustains fisheries while providing opportunities for increased valuation and food security. This process will shift current open access fishing management towards more rational, structured management.

Work will include supporting participatory diagnostics of the local artisanal fisheries sector and building capacities for fishing cooperatives to engage in and potentially supervise the preparation of fisheries management plans. This will cover the formulation and sustainable financing for initiatives aimed at improving

The project will incentivize improved fisheries management by improving all fishery licencing and/or permitting systems. The license and permit systems will integrate a regular renewal provision the duration of which will be determined during project implementation. The system will have a graduated fee system linked to vessel size and waters fished. This will make certain harvest is better controlled while directing benefits from regulated fishery access towards activities that improve fish stock health and community development. The project will provide equipment support to implement the license and permitting improvements. This will be linked to Component 1 spatial planning, zoning and monitoring.

[1] <https://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scale-fisheries/en/>

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

3 October 2022:

Cleared

24August2022:

These explanations are well noted. Please ensure the relevant text is fully incorporated in the body of the CER and indicate in the CER comment sheet where this has been done in the CER document.

22June2022:

A) Clarification would be welcome on the meaning of SLM, SFM, and landscape restoration to reach the proposed targets under 3.2 and 4.3. Please define these terms and provide examples.

B) In the result framework, output 2.1, paras 227-228: there is a strategic question about the way to provide support and training to smallholder farmers, herders, and fishermen. We take note of the preferred models supported by FAO with the Farmer Field school models. However, there is a strategic question about the role of extension services. The current system is weak. So, it is difficult to figure out how ?a functional extension services training platform? will be delivered under this project, especially on innovative and integrated approaches, including conservation issues. We would like to see a strategic assessment of the existing situation and a discussion on the best alternatives, including the role of third partners

(research institutions, NGOs, private sector) and the development of other peer-to-peer mechanisms.

C) There is still a relatively significant component on KM (\$736,750, decreased at PIF level within the review process) and KM is also considered as a cross-cutting issue. There are several indicators related to the use of the website, number of staff receiving newsletters, handbooks, and best practices, but we are not really seeing the general KM strategy. Some clarification would be welcome.

Agency Response

14 September 2022

Noted with relevant text incorporated and highlighted within GEF CER.

*Details related to CI 3 and CI 4 at GEF CER Part I, under the Core Indicators Table

*Details related to Output 2.1 at GEF CER Part II, Paragraph 248.

*Details related to KM at GEF CER Part II, item 8, Paragraph 3

5/8/22

A-

Indicator 3.2 refers to "Area of forest and forest land restored" under the SLM target. The project design follows GEF Guidelines on Core Indicators state that this indicator should reflect the "area of forest and forest land that is undergoing ecological restoration through GEF-funded interventions. The intent of this Sub-Indicator is to capture the area of forest and forest land in which best practices for ecological restoration are being applied. Example interventions that may be included within this indicator are the creation of forest corridors between protected areas and reestablishment of native forests, among others."

Indicator 3.2 will be achieved through a suite of project interventions. Under Component 1 governance, planning, financing, and informed decision making will guide and monitor forest and forest land restoration activities. Under Components 2 and 3, the project will support direct forest and forest land restoration interventions. Examples are provided throughout the project framework and noted in the project budget and results framework. These include livestock ex-closures, improved livestock management, mangrove restoration, native tree nursery improvement and support for community

engagement to plant and maintain native tree species, etc. Field-training (FFS, AFFS) program members supported by project extension officers will be responsible for maintaining forest regeneration sites. This includes making certain sites are monitored and access enforced to sustain maximum growth of native species. As required, the project under Component 1 will support the creation of by-laws describing management responsibilities. Forest recovery zones will be prioritized based upon the spatial planning, data, and information management actions supported by the project. This will specifically focus on areas where ground and surface water are at risk due to heavy land degradation impacts. The project will support agroforestry practices at the farm level designed to improve soils, provide alternative revenue sources, and greatly assist with reducing land degradation and climate shocks. Farmers will be trained to efficiently manage their agricultural technologies on multi-purpose tree planting and manage the natural regeneration, promoting neglected and underutilized varieties and crop species, improving the utilization of the drought resistant crops. The project will support the restoration of mangroves along the coastal zone of the Gulf of Zula. Component 4 will make certain lessons are captured, communication and knowledge management is effective, and results are sustained and amplified.

Indicator 4.3 refers to 'Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems?'. Again, the project design follows GEF Guidelines on Core Indicators which state that this indicator 'captures the landscape area that is in production (e.g., agriculture, rangeland, and forests) and whose soil, air, and water are managed in a sustainable manner. The project should indicate the details of management practices. Projects should ideally provide GIS files showing the extent of the land under sustainable land management. This Sub-Indicator is distinguished from Sub-Indicator 4.2 by capturing improved practices that benefit physical improvements in the environment (e.g., soil and soil carbon, nutrient recycling, diversity and functionality of vegetation cover, micro-climates, and water). Biodiversity benefits of global importance are captured by Sub-Indicator 4.2.'

Indicator 4.3 will be again be achieved through a suite of project interventions. Under Component 1 governance, planning, financing, and informed decision making will guide and monitor production systems activities directed towards landscapes to be placed under sustainable land management. This will include actions associated with LDN target achievement and monitoring. As noted, GIS capacities will be strengthened to better detail and track SLM. Under Components 2 and 3, the project will support capacity building and physical actions across production systems to designed to achieve sustainable land management. Examples are provided throughout the project framework and noted in the project budget and results framework. These include improved livestock management, better agricultural practices, and improved water resources management. Each of these project supported activities and other capacity building

efforts will benefit from improved extension services and innovative FFS/APFS programming and support. Component 4 will make certain lessons are captured, communication and knowledge management is effective, and results are sustained and amplified.

B -

Functional and effective extension services will be a project legacy.

Under the baseline, extension services are and will continue to be the principal mechanism for capacity building across rural Eritrea. This includes extension officers responsible for animal health and production, fisheries, agriculture and forestry. These services currently face substantial capacity constraints. For instance, each GoE extension officer services approximately 3,500 rural producers. This greatly constrains the country's agricultural growth potential and the ability to proactively identify and adopt resilient production practices.

The MoA has extension staff positioned in each of the four sub-Zobas within the project's target watershed. Very few extension officers are assigned at the village level. Existing extension officers have almost no access to in-service training opportunities, let alone specialized training covering critical issues pertaining to LD, CC, and BD conservation. There is not a formal field school training program established to support design and provisioning of capacity building to local agriculture, livestock, and fishing community members. The FWA responsible for forests conservation and nurseries shares offices with the extension workers at the sub-Zoba levels. Although the MOMR does not have fisheries extension services, they have experience in coastal and marine areas management, including mangrove afforestation of coastal areas.

An MoA animal health centre is located in each Sub-Zoba. These centres are generally poorly equipped and critically short of basic equipment. There is no animal health laboratory. There are 59 livestock extension staff across the entire project area. Only 29 of these individuals have diplomas or higher qualifications. Sub-Zoba Foro has an estimated 62,000 head of domestic livestock served by 5 animal production and health experts.

Approximately 130,000 adults live in the target area and nearly all are engaged in livestock, agriculture or fisheries. According to MOA information shared during the PPG, approximately 700 farmers across the target area benefited from any extension training each year pre-Covid. Most of these beneficiaries were male.

In addition to only reaching to a very small percentage of the tens of thousands of farmers in the target area, existing training programs focus upon increasing production.

Extension agents distribute inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, veterinary medicines and tractor services. There is no formal or informal program in place to effectively and comprehensively address biodiversity conservation, land degradation, and climate change vulnerability across productive livestock, agriculture, and fisheries sectors.

The Ministry of Agriculture understands the urgency of this issue and is engaged. For instance, the MoA recently conducted a Rapid Agricultural Production Situation Assessment (RAPSA) which collected basic data at Sub-Zoba levels to support identification of agriculture and livestock capacity building priorities.

There are large-scale public soil and water conservation works and reforestation programmes regularly implemented. These programs are based on the Eritrean philosophy of self-reliance and popular participation. With regards to conservation, achievements recorded include the enclosure of about 400,000 hectares for enhancing natural regeneration and the afforestation of about 56,000 hectares of degraded landscapes.

These and other commitments provide a strong baseline upon which to build. However, effectively addressing this barrier will require substantial investment in extension services improvement, development and implementation of field schools to build the capacities of farmers, livestock holders, and fisheries interests to successfully identify and adopt pro-conservation and resilient practices, and the implementation of models building upon expanding existing self-reliance and popular participation approaches.

The project's results framework states:

200 extension officers (50% female, 50% male) annually leading field-based training programs covering livestock, forestry, agriculture, and/or fisheries that mainstream SLM/SFM, CCA, BDC

200 extension officers (50% female, 50% male) annually participating in in-service training programs focused upon building SLM/SFM, CCA, BDC mainstreaming capacity.

15,000 persons (50% female, 50% male) within the project area participating annually in field-based training programs covering livestock, forestry, agriculture, and/or fisheries that mainstream SLM/SFM, CCA, BDC

250 fishing vessels agreeing to voluntary guidelines/code of conduct and regular monitoring reporting progressive achievement of BD conservation and CC adaptation targets.

Pathways for achieving these results ? along with delivery of associated GEBs ? are described broadly throughout the project framework and specifically in Component 2, Output 2.1, paragraph 230 and following.

Conservation Extension Services Network: The project will create an extensive network of government and community conservation extension officers tasked with assisting rural households to engage in agriculture, forestry, livestock, and fisheries practices designed to improve biodiversity conservation, SLM, and climate change resiliency.

The project will engage each of the approximately 75 government extension officers currently working across the target area. In addition, the project will recruit at least 150 new community-based extension service agents. These persons will primarily be residents within the project area who will be hired through the project to serve as community liaisons and knowledge leaders.

The project will further launch a community conservation trainer certification program as part of the field training system. This program will identify and recognize community members who have excelled at training programs and are capable of providing further household to household capacity building assistance.

The project's team of international and national experts will provide capacity building services to government and community extension officers tasked with implementing the field training program. The program will build the capacity of extension agents to effectively support farmer, agro-pastoral, and small-scale fisheries field schools to be implemented with project support. All effort will be focused upon building the skills of extension officers necessary to assist the project to achieve intended core and impact indicators.

The project will set in place a comprehensive program for extension services job performance monitoring and reporting. The information provided by the extension officers network will be used to help inform decision-making and effective investment. As such, the information will be fully integrated within Component 1 and Component 4 knowledge management and decision-making framework improvements.

The project will support the Government of Eritrea to operationalize a conservation extension officer classroom training facility. This facility will likely be situated at either the National Agriculture Research Institute ? NARI and/or Hamelmalo College of Agriculture. The facility will be equipped with resources required to initiate and sustain a professional level extension training program.

Field schools will be designed to build capacities required to implement productive sector practices that benefit BD conservation, SLM and CC resiliency. The comprehensive field training program will be designed under Output 2.1 and implemented under Output 2.2.

The project will establish an extension and training facility at each sub-Zoba. Equipped with solar power, these facilities may serve as a centralized location for provision of extension services. These facilities may be used for activities such as community seed distribution and small seed enterprises.

The project will likely facilitate a cooperative farm implement sharing programs for field-training participants, lending shovels, ploughs, and other farm implements to field-training participants. Offering shared access to implements to participating farmers can increase labor efficiencies without requiring each participating enterprise to make sizeable equipment investments. This lowers constraints and hesitancy to adopting progressive and innovative practices. These implements will be managed and maintained cooperatively with oversight initially provided by extension agents. Each of these low cost options are efficient and effective at reducing the risks associated with incentivizing alternative crop production practices.

The project will make certain that organizational structures provide for tangible opportunities for women to participate and lead cooperatives. The project will specifically support the creation of cooperatives designed exclusively for the participation of women targeting resource use and value chain opportunities that are best suited to benefit women in terms of livelihood, resiliency, and empowerment improvement. The project will work closely with the Eritrean Women in Agribusiness Association (EWAA) to build the capacity of this organization to support rural climate resilient enterprises.

C-

Knowledge management is critical to the success of this project, both within the project term as well as to ensure long-term sustainability, amplification and effectiveness. KM is an on-going and debilitating challenge in Eritrea that too often hampers informed conservation decision-making.

To address this issue, the project will establish a comprehensive knowledge management platform supported by a network of data/information conduits and an effective communications system/strategy.

This platform will be web based with a project website established and operational by the first half of PY1. The platform will provide specific entry points for each of the key private sector targets: agriculture, livestock management, and fisheries.

The platform will provide for media that captures training programs and results. This will be linked to innovations including media (e.g., farmers channels), extension services training, and the production of training and awareness materials.

The platform will track and report on progress related to Component 1 monitoring and spatial planning efforts. This will specifically include links to maps and other interactive resources designed to provide private sector actors with knowledge required to make informed decisions and to have knowledge of spatial planning and zonation regulations and requirements.

The knowledge platform will include distribution of monthly electronic summaries of project activities. These summaries will target government, private, and CSO actors with relevant interest in project activities. Summaries will be distributed in both English, Tigrinya and Arabic to provide for greater international attention and knowledge regarding project actions. These summaries will be distributed to GEF-SEC, FAO, other interested donors, and associated projects/investments. This will encourage engagement by these actors to be able track and provide support for project action.

As noted, KM is cross-cutting. The KM platform will be informed by a number of project actions. A few examples of project monitoring that will feed into the KM platform to inform decision making include:

Spatial Planning: The strategic spatial plans will provide a concrete platform to facilitate decision-makers to track, monitor, and report on the results of funded activities. This will offer decision-makers with a clear understanding of what investments and actions work best to reduced degradation, increase climate change resilience and mitigation, and improve livelihood standards. This approach will generate information and models that can then be sustained within each of the target areas and amplified to increase sustainable production practices and reduce degradation.

During project implementation, at least 5 annual monitoring reports documenting implementation progress of spatial plan establishing CCA, SLM, and BDC objectives, priorities, indicators, and monitoring across 207,000 hectares of productive landscape and 50,000 hectares of marine and coastal areas formally adopted and implemented by Government of Eritrea, 2 target Zobas, and 4 target Sub-Zobas.

Forest Monitoring: A tailored methodology for forest monitoring and capacity building will be designed with project support. This methodology along with capacity building will be launched during PY2. Implementation will help to inform and strategically align investments across several portions of this project, including spatial planning and FFS interventions, e.g., reforestation. By project close, the Government of Eritrea ? including Zoba and sub-Zoba administrations ? should be completely self-reliant and capable of supporting advanced forest monitoring.

FAO has supported more than 50 countries in their development of robust National Forest Monitoring Systems (NFMS) and assessments, with the goal of developing reliable forest resource information for application in creating national forest policies, planning and sustainable development. Forest monitoring systems include measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) functions and aim to produce high-quality, reliable

data on forests, including forest-carbon estimates, that are critical to the battle against climate change caused by among others deforestation and degradation of forests. NFMS components include: satellite land monitoring systems (SLMS) and other data collection providing information for activity data (AD); and, National Forest Inventories (NFI) or other data collection providing information on emission factors (EF).

The Open Foris initiative led by FAO Forestry supports multi-purpose forest inventories, data processing and dissemination of results. OF provides a set of free and open-source software tools to facilitate flexible and efficient data collection, analysis, and reporting for field and satellite data. The initiative is a collaborative effort by numerous public and private institutions and hosted by FAO's Forestry Department. Open Foris provides ideal tools for performing fast, accurate and cost-effective assessments. It is highly customizable for the specific data collection needs and methodologies.

Fisheries Monitoring: The project will provide national and international expertise, capacity building and technical inputs required to design, launch and initially implement the monitoring strategy. Monitoring will include catch reports, effort reports, and other issues related to sustainable commercial and subsistence fishing. Monitoring and information management efforts will reach beyond the capture elements of the fishery and monitor and generate information regarding critical habitats, particularly reefs, corals, indicator species, mangroves, and sea grasses.

Agriculture Monitoring: FAO's Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE) is becoming a go-to mechanism for comprehensive and tailored agriculture monitoring and information generation. TAPE is being applied to support numerous GEF initiatives designed to promote integrated LD, CC, and BD objectives at a large landscape level.

TAPE establishes a baseline of agricultural sustainability for project design, monitoring and evaluation, and to diagnose and compare the performance of different agricultural systems over time, at farm and territorial levels. TAPE informs public investment towards more sustainable agriculture and food systems. TAPE provides a framework for governments and public actors to adapt and re-design development programs, rural advisory services and extension programs to properly address sustainable agriculture in the context of sustainable agriculture, including LD, BD, and CC issues.

Rangeland Monitoring: The project will assist the Government of Eritrea to set in place a model livestock monitoring and information management system across the project area. The project will work closely with the Livestock Environmental Assessment and Performance (LEAP) Partnership to design and implement a comprehensive strategy for livestock monitoring across the project area. This includes application and use of LEAP's guidelines for the quantitative assessment of biodiversity and the livestock sector, nutrients monitoring, water foot-printing, and climate change resiliency.

LDN Monitoring: The project will assist the Government of Eritrea to set in place a model land and water monitoring program across the project area. This process will help to inform the achievement of LDN targets. The project will provide technical and initial implementation support for the design of a comprehensive LDN monitoring program for the target area. The monitoring approach will be based upon best UNCCD practices and methodologies integrating FAO's global experience and lessons learned and emerging tools such as Collect Earth.

Vulnerability Assessments: Vulnerability assessments will be carried out annually throughout the project cycle. Assessments will consider climate change, LD and BD vulnerability and risk considering climate change impacts, land degradation, loss of biodiversity as well as livelihoods and natural resource use in the targeted landscape. The vulnerability assessments will in part be informed by the Modelling System for Agricultural Impacts of Climate Change (MOSAICC). MOSAICC produces medium- to long-term projections based on different climate scenarios. Results provide an evidence base for identifying appropriate adaptation strategies, programs and areas for investment. The MOSAICC approach helps users model the impact of climate change on crops; water and forest resources; and the national economy.

Extension Effectiveness: The project will set in place a comprehensive program for extension services job performance monitoring and reporting. At a minimum, all project associated extension officers will submit monthly progress and action reports. These reports will tabulate in comparable data sets the actions of individual extension officers. This will include summaries of field training, progress made towards the project's core and impact indicators, including progress made towards LDN targets and gender performance. The information provided by the extension officers network will be used to help inform decision-making and effective investment.

Field Schools: The field-training program will be closely aligned with the project's knowledge management activities. This will include generating a robust knowledge management and learning platform widely accessible and utilized by field-training participants and extension officers. Part of this effort will be to ensure that lesson learned and advances made are sustained, replicated, and amplified post-project. A key element of this will be making certain potential field-training participants are well aware of the benefits associated with engagement, including improved livelihoods, food security, and maintained ecosystem services.

Field-training participants effectiveness will be closely monitored throughout the project period. The project will annually monitor all field-training participants to track progress with delivery of social, economic, and environmental benefits. This will include annually conducting TAPE analysis as noted. Field-training participants will be queried periodically throughout the annual training program to make certain skills are effectively transferred. Testing results will be reported within the project's APR, mid-term, and terminal evaluation.

Each year, the results of the field-training program will be reviewed by a team of national and international experts recruited by the project. The experts along with field-training participants will review results, including TAPE monitoring, and determine program effectiveness, offer recommendations for improvement, and adapt field-training approaches as required.

The results of this annual monitoring will be summarized and reported in the project's APRs, mid-term review, and final evaluation. The project will cover multiple growing seasons for initial participants. This will greatly enhance the building of lessons learned, inform the knowledge base, provide for proof of concept, and offer opportunities for adaptive management.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

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

24August2022:

Cleared

22June2022:

A) The visual of the Theory of Change is very small and not legible. Please make it larger so it can be read.

B) Please note the comment above on outlining the changes made to Outcomes and Outputs from the PIF to the CER.

Agency Response

5/8/22

A - The ToC visual was enlarged as requested, also uploaded separately to the portal.

B - Noted with thanks.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

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

3 October 2022:

Cleared

24August2022:

Please ensure this elaboration is provided within the GEF CER document itself, and not only the FAO Prodoc.

22June2022:

No. Please further elaborate on the projects expected contribution to global environmental benefits and climate adaptation benefits, building from the minimal information provided in this section at the PIF stage.

Agency Response

14/09/22

Noted. Please see GEF CER, Part II, item J ?Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)?, Paragraph 370 with highlighted text.

5/8/22

Please see revised Project Document at: ?J. Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)?

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

3 October 2022:

Cleared

24August2022:

Please ensure this elaboration is provided within the GEF CER document itself, and not only the FAO Prodoc.

22June2022:

There has been no further elaboration during project preparation. on innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up. Please elaborate on these points in this section.

Agency Response

14/09/22

Noted. Please see GEF CER, Part II, item K. ?Innovativeness, sustainability, potential for scaling up and capacity development.?, Paragraphs 371-384, with highlighted text.

5/8/22

Please see the revised Project Document at: ?K. Innovativeness, sustainability, potential for scaling up and capacity development?

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
22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted
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
22June2022:

N/A

Agency Response Noted
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
22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted
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

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

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

3 October 2022:

Cleared

24August2022:

These explanations are well noted. Please ensure the relevant text is fully incorporated in the body of the CER and indicate in the CER comment sheet where this has been done in the CER document.

22June2022:

Please elaborate on the role of private sector as a financier and/or as a stakeholder, based on further insight and design gained during project preparation, and noting this comment provided at PPG approval: " - Please continue to advance and include opportunities to strengthen opportunities to improve access to finance for investing in climate resilient solutions with the private sector."

Agency Response

14/09/22

Noted. Please see GEF CER, Part II, item 4 ?Private Sector Engagement?, Paragraph 3.

5/8/22

The project aligns with the FAO Strategic Country Framework, specifically Outcome 4: (4) Provide appropriate conditions for promoting value addition, agro-processing, marketing and trade and for enhancing and expanding sphere of activities of the private sector in agricultural development.

The private sector represents the overwhelming majority of the project's target beneficiaries. Each agriculturalist, livestock herder, and/or fishery actor represents a small or medium private, for profit, tax-paying businesses.

Each private sector stakeholder will benefit from the project's investments and, likewise, invest their own labor and business efforts to support project implementation.

Financing improvements will be achieved on multiple levels:

1. The business acumen of target beneficiaries will be improved, particularly capacity to identify value and generate solid business plans to access private financing;
2. The project will assist with the design and implementation of circle banks to increase credit access; and,
3. The project will assist stakeholders to add value and increase cost-efficiencies designed to improve profitability.

The inability of livestock, farming and/or fisheries interests to generate fundable business plans is a major hinderance to access to financing required to escape poverty cycles that lead to increased climate change vulnerability and degradation.

The project will work through extension officers and the cooperative framework to assist individual producers and cooperative members to improve their business planning skills. The project will bridge private sector financiers to agriculture, livestock, and fisheries interests.

The project will build upon FAO tools such as: "Business Planning for on Farm Success" and "Developing bankable business plans: A learning guide for forest producers and their organizations".

The project will strengthen the agribusiness skills of women and youth and to engage in value adding activities to create job opportunities, promote entrepreneurship and enterprise development in the local food system.

The project will work with both National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) and the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) as active stakeholders in project to identify, pilot and upscale agribusiness and MSME opportunities in the targeted areas to support local private sector development.

The project will support the establishment and strengthening of producer associations and cooperatives, including by collaborating and complementing ongoing efforts such as with the IFAD-funded IADP and AfDBs DRSLP.

The Farmer Business School approach will assist farmers to expand financial capacities. The FFS (production) and FBS (business) have complementary objectives and should be jointly implemented for farmers to improve farm management decisions.

The project will build the capacity of government advisory services to support private sector finance and business management.

The project will assist producers to expand market. FAO has developed a number of innovative tools specific to rural value chains that will be used to inform project efforts.

The project will help groups of private sector stakeholders to coordinate production and marketing efforts to achieve economies of scale and realize greater profitability.

The project will set in place a credit access program for participating farmers. As detailed in the project document, a portion of Component 2 financing will be used to assist farmers to reduce financial and social risks associated with adopting innovative practices. This will include support and expansion of effective insurance programming.

A portion of the payments for building ex-closures will be placed into a bank account to be cooperatively managed by field-training (FFS, ADFS) program members. The project will assist to design a circle bank or micro-lending program where participating members can utilize financing to improve their farm or livestock production practices to be more resilient and regenerative.

The project will align with and adopt lessons learned from indicatives such as Inclusive Green Financing Initiative (IGREENFIN). This cross-cutting program targeting Great Green Wall countries is designed to enhance access to credit and technical assistance for farmers, farmers' organizations, cooperatives, and micro-sized enterprise to adopt climate-resilient and low-emission agriculture and agroforestry.

To build capacities to access future investment capital, the project will assist private enterprises to identify investment needs required to support conservation-oriented production and then to work with lenders and government decision-makers to generate innovative funding mechanisms.

The project will support the private sector with value chain mapping and strategy process. For value chains to increase profitability, capacity must exist to bring additional commodities on-line and/or add substantial value to existing commodities. In addition, a market must exist to purchase and value that increase. Neither of these elements exist substantially in Eritrea and particularly in the project area.

FAO's Value Chain Analysis Tool (VCA-Tool) allows users to systematically gather, store and manage data for the implementation of cost-benefit and value-added analyses. Users can build different scenarios and analyse the socio-economic impact of various policies ? such as domestic prices liberalization, opening to international trade, new technologies adoption.

The project will provide the technical and financial assistance required for at least eight women cooperatives (2 in each target sub-Zoba) each engaging at least ten women to launch entrepreneurial projects targeting climate change resilience using nature-based solutions.

The project will support the design and implementation of cooperative production facilities (e.g., community gardens) that specifically target women entrepreneurs. These production facilities will be used as a model to show the potential food security, nutrition, economic, and climate change resilience benefits. Private sector women entrepreneurs will increase their skills in terms of value chain improvements, particularly business planning, financing, and marketing. The project will provide ? based upon structured and strategic plans - equipment and training required to launch and sustain the facilities. The facilities will be a focus for rural women to learn from women. Suitable land for each facility will be provided by the MOLWE and Zoba administrations according to their designated authority. Each facility will have solar power, water access, fencing, and other materials.

In addition, the project under Component 1 will support the creation of sustainable financing strategy that will engage the private sector. Part of this strategy will include working with the private international voluntary carbon market (e.g., South Pole) to identify opportunities for long-term, sustainable financing.

Each of these investments and others outlined in the Project Document will be done to make certain they support the achievement of the projects CC, BD, and SLM objectives and impacts.

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

3 October 2022:

Cleared

24August2022:

These explanations are well noted. Please ensure the relevant text is fully incorporated in the body of the CER and indicate in the CER comment sheet where this has been done in the CER document.

22June2022:

We note some of the COVID related risks indicated in the approved PIF have been removed from the CER. Why was this done? If they are still relevant, please return.

Agency Response

14/09/22

Noted. Please see GEF CER, Part II, item 5 "Risks to Achieving Project Objectives", Para 1.

5/8/22

The PIF was originally submitted in early 2021. At this point in the CV-19 pandemic timeline, vaccines were not yet widely available, in-person meetings and travel were restricted, and even the Delta surge had not yet taken place. The PPG was certainly impacted by CV-19 challenges. These issues are reflected in many of the issues observed by GEFSEC (e.g., "that the PPG did not produce more operational information.") However, as noted in the Project Document, by the close of the PPG period the CV-19 situation had drastically changed. For instance, numerous highly effective vaccines are now widely available. This allowed for a May 2022 in-person project design validation workshop attended by international FAO staff with meetings at both the national and site level.

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

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted
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
22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted
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
22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted
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
22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted
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

21 October 2022:

Cleared

19 October 2022:

The M&E plan total still has a "0" too many in it. It should be \$421,000 instead of \$411,8000 ? please amend.

12 October 2022:

The M&E plan total is \$421,000 instead of \$411,8000 (evidently the last zero is a typo) ? please amend here and in all budget tables.

Agency Response

20 Oct 22

Noted, the typo was corrected, the M&E table was revised in light of the USD 411,800 budget allocated to M&E. This is now consistent across all the tables in the CER.

Noted

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

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

17 October 2022:

Cleared. The PM recommends approving purchase of motorbikes, for the reasons explained by the Agency.

12 October 2022:

a) As per guidelines, Financial specialist should be charged to the PMC portion of the budget. Please review and correct. We note this project has allocated 1.6 million of co-financing to PMC, and 10 million of the co-financing is represented in grants.

b) The use of GEF funds to purchase vehicles is strongly discouraged. Such costs are normally expected to be borne by the co-financed portion of PMCs. We strongly encourage reconsideration, but if desired the Agency can submit a request for an exception detailing the exceptional specific circumstances of the project/program, for consideration.

24August2022:

A) With regards to Annex B "Responses to Project Reviews", STAP comments, some of the FAO responses are not clear. Please review and clarify all FAO responses to the comments. For example:

- "This observation is now integrated within the design and will be future elaborated particularly via Component 1 efforts" Please clarify how it is integrated within the design; within the design of what; and when will be be future elaborated.

- "Details now provided within the project document framework". Please clarify where, specifically, and ensure this is fully reflected in the GEF CER document.

- "Monitoring approach/design substantially enhanced during PPG and reflected in framework". Please clarify and where.

B) With regards to Annex C, please see the comment above on reflecting PPG commitments to be consistent with what was approved.

C) With regards to Annex E on the budget:

- Please provide a detailed breakdown of GEF funds to be used for "Operational support" and ensure each item is charged to Agency Fees, PMC, M&E budget, or elsewhere, as relevant.

- Do we understand correctly that the cost of a part time senior advisor will be \$156,000/year (\$3,000 X 52 weeks)? If so, this seems extremely high. Please also specify what part time means in this case and why this senior advisor is needed in addition to a full time national project coordinator.

- We notice that 18.5% of the GEF finance is programmed for Consultants. This seems quite high. Please consider if there is a way to reduce the GEF amount

. Please provide a breakdown of the largest procurement items, particularly C.2 Conservation Extension Officer Network for \$1.25 m of GEF finance, and C2. Community based PA Management Planning Capacity for \$300,000 of GEF finance.

Agency Response

13 Oct 22

a. Noted. The budget was revised accordingly, the Administrative and Financial Managers are now charged to the PMC portion of the budget.

b. To cover areas and villages not accessible for vehicles, the motorbikes will ensure the mobility needed for the project teams located at the sub-Zoba level in order to deliver technical backstopping and training interventions as stated in the project document. Each one of the 4 local project teams will have about 15 motorbikes to cover 157 target villages within the Sub-Zobas of Adi Keyh, Segeneyti, Senafe and Foro. Without such means of transportation across a complex topography including coastal landscapes and escarpments, the project could fail to deliver the expected results. It was also indicated that Gov. budget does not foresee the purchase of vehicles/motorbikes for projects. These are needed, given the limited resources. Rental options in Eritrea are scarce and very expensive.

14/09/22

A/

The following detailed comments are now included within the STAP response matrix, under the Annexure in GEF CER, ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS.

Regarding Socio-Ecological Systems and Variables:

The project document and framework is predicated upon a better understanding, improvement, and monitoring of the interconnectedness of pastoral, farming, and fisheries practices with associated ecological systems.

The socio-ecological system is detailed within the project document introduction, particularly Section 1.a. (Context); and, Section C (Threats: Root Causes and Drivers). These issues are also presented within the project document's Part II.3 (Gender and Equality and Women's Empowerment); Part II.5 (Risks), and Annex M (Climate Risk Assessment).

Each of these sections and indeed the project document in its totality provide discussion, detail, data, and analysis of the project area's socio-ecological systems.

These sections discuss dynamics ? including potential climate change impacts - and clearly show that ecological integrity in large part determines the security of productive systems.

This analysis helped to inform and prioritize interventions. Factors related to the relevant socio-ecological systems will be fully integrated within the project support decision-making and monitoring structures, e.g., Output 1.2: Output 1.2 Comprehensive informed decision-making programming improvements mainstreams BD, SLM/SFM, and CCA. These factors are also reflected within and will be monitored via the Project Results Framework.

Regarding Spatial Planning and Vulnerability Assessments

Under Component 1, a comprehensive program for data management, monitoring, and analysis will be established. Most details are provided under Output 1.2 Comprehensive informed decision-making programming improvements mainstreams BD, SLM/SFM, and CCA. Under this output, the project will support Monitoring and Information Management Strategies, Data and Information Management Systems, Resource Management Assessments, Land Degradation Monitoring and Information Management Program; Rangeland and Livestock Monitoring and Information Management Program; Agriculture Monitoring and Information Management Program; Fisheries and Marine Habitat Conservation Monitoring and Information Management Program; and an Forest Monitoring and Information Management Program.

Each of this will be linked to a Vulnerability Risk Assessment Program with an Early Warning System platform.

These activities will be used to inform a non-static spatial planning system designed to be adaptive and responsive, growing in sophistication as information comes on-line to inform and improve resource use and conservation approaches, particularly to inform the productive sector to ensure that the ecological integrity required to maintain sustainable livelihoods is secured.

The spatial planning approach ? including methodology ? is discussed in detail under Output 1.3 Spatial planning effectively guides decision-making towards achievement of mainstreamed CCA, SLM/SFM, and BDC objectives.

This output and other associated activities were designed to specifically respond to STAP suggestions.

Regarding Good Monitoring of the Outcomes Progress and Impact

The project has fully integrated several tools to make certain of sound monitoring of progress and impact. This includes a comprehensive and detailed approach for monitoring project progress (e.g., Part II.9 (Monitoring and Evaluation) and Part III.A.1 (Project Results Framework.) The project's Gender Action Plan will also help to inform progress and impact. Additionally, the project's Component 4 (Monitoring and Evaluation, communication and knowledge transfer) will establish a platform for rigorous monitoring of progress, measurement of impact, and cohesive reporting and accountability.

Actions conducted and programs established via project implementation will also enhance good monitoring of the outcomes? progress and impact.

As noted above, Output 1.2 (Comprehensive informed decision-making programming improvements mainstreams BD, SLM/SFM, and CCA) will establish a comprehensive set of tools and programs for monitoring and informed decision-making. These tools ? although designed to endure well-beyond the project period ? will be used during execution to help make certain the project is on-track to deliver intended impacts.

B/

Addressed as noted above.

C/

1 -

Please refer to GEF CER, ANNEX E: Project Budget Table, and the updated budget in Excel format uploaded to the portal.

The "Operational support" BL was replaced by a new BL "NATIONAL EXECUTION SUPPORT SPECIALIST". She/He is responsible for providing capacity development support to the Operational Partners (OPs) and support the implementation and monitoring of OPs Risk Mitigation Plans. This is a full-time position for the first 3 years then part time for the remaining 4 years (See Annex N of the FAO ProDoc).

2-

Yes. This is correct.

The allocation was based on lessons learned via past challenges related to project implementation.

All parties view this project as a strong opportunity to achieve transformational change. FAO and the Government of Eritrea are fully prepared and enthusiastic to support implementation. This includes allocation of technical and project implementation inputs and oversight. This is noted throughout the project framework, e.g., providing substantial technical support for the use and adaptation of FAO's bundle of training resources, monitoring systems and approaches, and other technical tools and expertise extremely well suited to enable this project.

However, as also noted throughout the project document, the context within which this project will be implemented is remote and complicated involving a diverse suite of stakeholders, productive sectors, and diverse ecological factors across a large land and seascape. The programs and tools required to achieve desired impacts and ensure enduring results are innovative, complex, and technically demanding.

As noted in the project's implementation arrangements and reflected in the budget allocations, the national project coordinator will primarily be tasked with project management. This will include support for technical inputs, but realistically a great portion of this person's time will be absorbed by project monitoring and reporting, human resource management, financial management, procurement, inter-government relations, and related tasks.

The project will benefit greatly from the part-time services of a high level technical advisor to provide technical expertise not readily available in Eritrea. This is viewed as a cost-effective and efficient way to help ensure that desired impacts are achieved.

Reaching desired project results will require fully designing and implementing a fairly complex and sophisticated set of actions. This will include making certain that refinement of project interventions following the guidance of the approved CER are designed and implemented to achieve GEBs applying best international principles and practices adapted to fit local conditions.

The project represents an investment of nearly US\$ 15.6 million dollars. Inclusive of co-financing, the total package is valued at nearly US\$ 51 million.

Approximately US\$ 58,000/year over a seven year period represents less than four months per year of professional consultant input at US\$ 600/day. This is considered an extremely low rate of payment for an international level expert tasked with helping to make certain the project benefits from strong and sustained technical inputs.

3-

The total project package is approximately US\$ 15.6 million. Of this, US\$ 2.26 million is allocated for consultants. This is approximately 14% of the total GEF finance. This amount includes the national project coordinator, financial managers, and senior advisor spread across a seven year project implementation period. Approximately US\$ 1.2 million of the total consultant budget is allocated to support national technical field assistants and national technical advisors for each of the key components. These critical resources represent approximately 8% of the total budget, again spread across a seven year project implementation period.

As noted above, this is a relatively large project that sets out to tackle challenges that demand strong and

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

24 October 2022:

Recommended for clearance.

19 October 2022:

Please address the two remaining comments above (PPG more detail needed and typo of an extra 0 in the M&E budget).

12 October 2022:

Please address all the additional comments above.

Additionally, table 'Responses to project Reviews' is off the margins. That autogenerated format that will be posted will also present the tables off margins so the reader will not have the full view. Please adjust.

3 October 2022:

Technically cleared, pending further comments on policy adherence.

24August2022:

Please address the comments and resubmit.

22June2022:

Please address the comments and resubmit.

Agency Response

20 Oct 22

Noted with thanks, the two remaining comments were addressed.

13 Oct 22

Noted. The table (Responses to project Reviews) was adjusted and now appears within the margins.

14/09/22

Noted with thanks.

Noted with thanks.

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3 October 2022:

Cleared

22June2022:

Please ensure each of these Council Member comments made at the PIF approval stage are fully addressed within the body of the CER, and provide a response to each below.

A) Germany welcomes this proposal, specifically, in the context of a German BMZ contribution to the IFAD ?Fisheries Resource Management Project (2017-2023)? in Eritrea, that is also mentioned in the PIF document, as a relevant baseline project.

B) Germany welcomes the integration of seascapes, fishing communities and fishery value chains in the proposal. Although mostly land(degradation)-centred, it is positive to include these ecosystems and value chains into the project design. In particular it is helpful to anticipate possible movements of individuals who use fisheries as the ?last resort? because of pressure from climate change or other factors on the agricultural sector.

C) The ambition regarding the gender equity dimension within the project is not specifically high. We consider it extremely important to reach the project?s goals in the long run. On page 64 of the PIF document the question for a gender-sensitive indicator

is answered with ?TBD?. This might be adequate for this stage of the process but should be followed up.

D) The cultural differences between the agricultural and fisheries sector/communities are expected to be huge. Therefore, analyses should take a differentiated approach to cover specific situations on the ground.

D) Canada believes that caution is needed to demonstrate that this will promote native species, be sustainable and also yield positive biodiversity outcomes. Additionally, the project could include a focus on ?nature-based solutions? along with ecosystem-based and market-driven approaches.

Agency Response

The Project Document (the portal as well) contains responses to Council Comments. Please see below.

Germany -

A. The project is designed to align with and add conservation value to the FRMP. As noted in the Project Document, the current FRMP would benefit from increased emphasis upon the emplacement of conservation safeguards. The Eritrean Red Sea is a highly significant biodiversity sanctuary. Any investment designed to increase exploitation of this globally important resource must be accompanied by clear use parameters.

B. The critical importance of fisheries, as noted by the German member, was increasingly emphasized during the PPG. For this reason, the project expanded the total marine area and fisheries focused investments. Much appreciated.

C. The PPG phase was used to target and more fully address issues of gender. This is now reflected within the project framework, results framework, and gender action plan.

D. In general, differentiated approaches were described and will be explored during project inception to ensure project interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the target communities in the highlands, escarpments and coastal areas. Although coastal families engaged in fisheries are quite often also engaged in agriculture and livestock, differences do exist and merit consideration. Where differences were noted, required adaptive approaches were considered and integrated.

Canada -

This observation is very well appreciated. During the PPG phase, focus and priority was given to biodiversity conservation. ALL investments will only support native and endemic species. This is particularly critical for reforestation efforts. The field school

programs outlined in the Project Framework will emphasize and rely upon nature-based solutions, including regenerative agriculture, forestry, livestock and fisheries.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response Noted

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response Noted

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response Noted

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response Noted

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

22June2022:

Yes

Agency Response Noted

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

22June2022:

N/A

Agency Response

NA

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

22June2022:

N/A

Agency Response NA

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

22June2022:

N/A

Agency Response NA

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

24 October 2022:

Recommended for technical clearance.

19 October 2022:

2 comments remain to be addressed.

12 October 2022:

Please address the set of additional comments above, including about the margins of the table "Responses to project reviews".

3 October 2022:

Recommended for technical clearance, pending further comments on policy adherence.

24August2022:

Please address the further comments and resubmit.

22June2022:

Please address the set of comments and resubmit.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	6/22/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/25/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/3/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/12/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/17/2022	

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations