

# Enhancing the sustainable management of Senegalo-Mauritanian Aquifer System to ensure access to water for populations facing climate change (SMAS)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10784

**Countries**

Regional (Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal)

**Project Name**

Enhancing the sustainable management of Senegalo-Mauritanian Aquifer System to ensure access to water for populations facing climate change (SMAS)

**Agencies**

UNEP

**Date received by PM**

12/9/2022

**Review completed by PM**

6/2/2023

**Program Manager**

Astrid Hillers

**Focal Area**

International Waters

**Project Type**

FSP

## **PIF** **CEO Endorsement**

### **Part I ? Project Information**

#### **Focal area elements**

**1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
(1/25/2022)

Yes. The project remains aligned with the IW FA strategy.

Comments related to the Project Information table/Part I and table A:

1. Please consider if the project contributes to other Rio Markers , e.g. on biodiversity and LD.
2. Please add the national executing partner agencies with whom OSS will work with.
3. Please revise start and end dates to be 48 months apart.
4. Please populate the column on Focal Area Outcomes in table A.

**(5/10/2023) and (5/16/2023)**

1. Noted for adaptation. Comment addressed.

2. No co-executing partner agency added besides OSS. Who is **the focal point agency** for each country? (the list of agencies below/in the agency response) is noted)

3. and 4. Addressed

**5. Correct the expected completion date to 31 July 2027 to meet the 48 months duration (5/31/2023)**

**Please address comment 5 above:** 5. Correct the expected completion date to 31 July 2027 to meet the 48 months duration

**(6/7/2023)** Please make sure the project start and end dates are such that this the project shows a 48 month duration. While you changed the end date to 31 July 2027, you then need to modify the Expected Implementation **Start as follows: instead of the current 7/1/2023, please modify it for 7/31/2023 in order for it to be 48 months.**

(6/8/2023) Comment addressed.

## Agency Response

### Agency Response 07 June 2023

The expected implementation start date has been amended to read 31 July 2023

### Agency Response 01 June 2023

The Completion date has been amended accordingly in the portal

### Response (5/10/2023)

2. Thank you for identifying this oversight; the national focal point agencies are:

#### Senegal :

? Department of Water Resources Management and Planning (DGPRE)

#### Gambia :

? Department of Water Resources

#### Guinea Bissau :

? General Directorate of Water Resources (DGRH)

#### Mauritania :

? National center for water resources (CNRE)

**5. The expected completion date has now been corrected in the portal to 31 July 2027 to meet the 48 months duration**

## Response (1/25/2022)

1. Other Rio markers: Climate adaptation : #1

Rio markers have now been added in the CEO endorsement document

2. At national level OSS will work mainly with the following institutions, which collaborate with other national partners in their tasks:

### **Senegal :**

- ? Department of Water Resources Management and Planning (DGPRE)
- ? Universit? Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD) de Dakar
- ? Directorate of Horticulture (DH)
- ? National Agency for Integration and Agricultural Development (ANIDA)
- ? Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research (ISRA)
- ? Association of Market Gardening Unions of Niayes (AUMN)
- ? National Agency for Civil Aviation and Meteorology (ANACIM)
- ? National Institute of Pedology (INP)
- ? Research institutions
- ? Rural Drilling Office (OFOR)
- ? Local authorities
- ? Private water production companies
- ? Associations of Borehole Users (ASUFORS)
- ? City of Dakar Municipality

### **Gambie :**

- ? Department of Water Resources
- ? The University of The Gambia (UTG)
- ? National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC)
- ? Local NGOs

### **Guin?e Bissau :**

- ? General Directorate of Water Resources (DGRH)
- ? Universidade P?blica da Guin?-Bissau Amilcar Cabral ? UAC
- ? National electricity and water company of Guinea-Bissau (EEGB)
- ? National Public Health Laboratory (LNSP)
- ? Companies specializing in the field of drilling
- ? Association of Consumers of Goods and Services (ACOBES)

### **Mauritanie :**

- ? National center for water resources (CNRE)
- ? University of Nouakchott Al Asriya
- ? Directorate of Hydraulics
- ? National Water Society (SNDE)
- ? Regional Directorates of Hydraulics and Sanitation - DRHA
- ? National Company of Drilling and Wells
- ? National Office for Rural Water Services (ONSER)

? Local NGOs, such as NGO Tenmya

3. Start and end date (Budget and planning) have been revised to be 48 months apart (4 years)

4. The column **Focal Area Outcomes?** has been added in the table A

#### **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  
(1/25/2022)

Yes, the project structure is overall well defined and appropriate. KM activities are budgeted for overall. The PMC to co-finance ratio rounds to the same as the overall grant to co-finance ratio at roughly 6%.

1. Please clearly mention IW-Learn and allocate at least 1% of the GEF grant to participation in IW-Learn (including drafting at least two experience notes, participating in GEF IW biannual conferences and in regional and/or thematic meetings; maintaining a project website with minimum functionality to link to IW-Learn website features; etc.)

2. PDO: Is "foster institutional capacity" really what is meant or add a verb to "enhance institutional capacity"

3. Please add a sub-component or output for M& E of the project.

**(5/10/2023)**

Comments addressed.

#### **Agency Response**

**Response to (1/25/2022)**

Thank you for the reminder on specifications related to IW-Learn, we have addressed this point.

1. The budget provides for participation to IW-LEARN, including for preparation at least 2 international events, including ?(drafting at least two experience notes, participating in GEF IW biannual conferences and in regional and/or thematic meetings; maintaining a project website with minimum functionality to link to IW-Learn website features; etc.)?

2. PDO : thank you for the suggested clarification a verb has been added to "**enhance** institutional capacity". It has been added in the PRODOC (table B)

3. M&E output : Output 4.1.6 is added under component 4 (component 4: Capacity development, Communication and Knowledge management)

Output 4.1.6. The project monitoring-evaluation system is developed and implemented

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**Co-financing**

**4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2022)

1. Is there a letter from UNEP to confirm its co-finance.

2. Gambia co-finance: this is not in-kind, but per the letter is Public investment. Please correct. Also, please have the government add an explanation as to what the 15 million public investment is made up off (what is it). Is the text given under the table reflected in the letters of co-finance by the government ? This is not visible in the links in table C. What ministry in government is providing this co-finance?

3. Same as above for Guinea Bissau. Also, the co-financing letter indicates a higher amount: 8,750,000. Please explain.

4. Mauritania co-finance: letter indicates this is in-kind and recurring expenditures and indicates a higher amount of 15,000,000. Please review and address. Also, please have the government add an explanation as to what the co-finance is made up off. What ministry in government is providing this co-finance?

5. Senegal co-finance: this is not in-kind, but per the letter is Public investment. Also, the letter indicates a higher amount of 15,000,000. Please review and address as needed. Also, please have the government add an explanation as to what the 12 million public investment is made up off (what is it). What ministry in government is providing this co-finance?
6. OSS: Please ask OSS for an explanation as to what the co-finance is made up off.
7. OMVS: Please provide a letter of co-finance
8. OMVG: Please ask OMVG for an explanation as to what the co-finance is made up off.
9. Please note that all "Type of co-financing" are classified as "In-kind". If so, typically in-kind co-financing is "recurrent expenditures" as opposed to "investment mobilized". If indeed it is Investment Mobilized (as it seems to be due to the explanation in the field "How investment mobilized was identified?") then the "Type of co-financing" has to change accordingly. Please review.

**(5/10/2023)**

1. UNEP letter is noted. Please add an email confirmation that this is in-kind.
2. Gambia. comment addressed.
3. Guinea-Bissau: understood - only 7.75 million are counted as co-finance as only that amount is referring to related projects that time wise align. Addressed.
4. Mauritania; The letter is stating in kind co-finance over USD 15 million (not USD 12.73 million in public investment). Did you attach a previous letter ? **Please address.**
5. Senegal - The change to public investment is noted. There is not additional detail in the cofinance letters but we note the explanations added under table C. For Senegal: **please explain** why only 12 million was listed as co-finance instead of the 15 million stated in the letter of co-finance.
6. OSS: the OSS co-finance is **in-kind** and constitutes **recurring expenditures** as per their letter. **Please change in table C.**
7. OMVS: Is that a CIWA grant to OMVS? **if so , please label as grant and not public investment.**
8. OMVG: **Please label as "in-kind" and "recurring expenditure" as per the letter of co-finance.**
9. Some changes are still needed to align the stated co-finance in the letters with table C. See comments above. **Please attach the correct/final/current letters of co-finance in table C.**

Annex M contains the LOEs only. Also , the current/valid letters of co-finance have to be linked to the co-finance table in the endorsement request. Thank you.

(5/30/2023)

1-5. addressed

6. OSS: Please change to : OSS co-finance is **in-kind** and constitutes recurring expenditures as per their letter.

7. OMVS: Please note as grant and INVESTMENT MOBILIZED

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financier	Type of co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (in USD)
Recipient Institution	The OMVS	Investment Mobilized	Public investment	300,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>300,000</b>

8. on wards: addressed

(6/2/2023) Comments addressed.

Agency Response

**Agency response 01 June 2023**

1. OSS' co-financing was changed to in-kind and constitutes recurring expenditures as per their letter. It has been changed accordingly in the portal
2. OMVS co-financing was changed to grant and INVESTMENT MOBILIZED in the portal as per their letter attached.

**Response (5/10/2023)**

1. The UNEP co-finance letter has been amended to clarify the **in-kind co-finance and has been added to the portal and inserted into the CEO endorsement document.**
2. Gambia. comment addressed.
3. Guinea-Bissau: understood - only 7.75 million are counted as co-finance as only that amount is referring to related projects that time wise align. Addressed.
4. **Mauritania; The letter is stating in kind co-finance over USD 15 million (not USD 12.73 million in public investment). Did you attach a previous letter ? Please address.**



?It might be the previous letter that was attached. Please refer to the revised letter (page 196).  
5. Senegal - The change to public investment is noted. There is not additional detail in the co-finance letters but we note the explanations added under table C. For Senegal: **please explain** why only 12 million was listed as co-finance instead of the 15 million stated in the letter of co-finance.

?It might be the previous letter that was attached. Please refer to the revised letter (page 197).  
6. OSS: the OSS co-finance is **in-kind** and constitutes **recurring expenditures** as per their letter. **Please change in table C.**

? OSS co-finance is in-kind and constitutes recurring expenditures as per their letter. It is stated **recurring expenditures in table C.** Table C and the letter contain the same statement.

7. OMVS: Is that a CIWA grant to OMVS? **if so , please label as grant and not public investment.**

?this has been changed in table C. (the letter is attached in page 199)

8. OMVG: **Please label as "in-kind" and "recurring expenditure" as per the letter of co-finance.**

? It might be the previous letter that was attached. Please refer to the revised letter. It is stating "in-kind" and " Public investment " as per the letter of co-finance (page 200-201).

9. Some changes are still needed to align the stated co-finance in the letters with table C. See comments above. **Please attach the correct/final/current letters of co-finance in table C.**

?in some cases it was the old co-fi-finance letters that was attached. The correct/final letters of co-finance in table C are attached (pages 193 -201).

Annex M contains the LOEs only. Also , the current/valid letters of co-finance have to be **linked to the co-finance table in the endorsement request. Thank you.**

?Annex M contains the LOEs. Also , the current/valid co-finance letters are linked to the co-finance table C. The former ones were linked with the co-finance in the endorsement request.

The co-finance letters have been revised as co-finance from the AfDB was not yet secured.

The internal process with the AfDB is still ongoing. The approval window is RPG Grant/Loan (ADF)/*II*. This expected co-finance is not included here. (see explanation in page 7 ? 8 in the document).

[1] Regional Public Goods (RPGs) projects Grants / Loan (African Development Fund - (ADF)

**Response (1/25/2022)**

1. Yes, UNEP Co-finance letter has been issued and has been uploaded in the portal with the other revised co-finance letters from participating countries.

2. Gambia co-finance: More detail has now been provided in the co-finance letter. It is the Ministry of Fisheries and water resources of Gambia providing this 15 million USD in public investment relating to projects within the greater Banjul area and other area in the Senegalo-

Mauritanian basin. The whole country falls within the project area. The table C has also been adjusted accordingly.

3. Guinea Bissau co-finance: More details have now been given in the co-finance letter. It is the Ministry of Ministry of Energy, Industry and Natural Resources (MEIRN) of Bissau Guinea providing this co-finance and the 7,750,000 public investment refers to ongoing related projects.

The table C has now been adjusted.

4. Mauritania co-finance: it is **public investment**. The table C has been corrected. More details have been given in the co-finance letter.

? It is the ?Minist?re de l'Hydraulique et de l'Assainissement? (Ministry of hydraulics and sanitation) of Mauritanie providing this co-finance. The 12,730,000 public investment is made of ongoing project in the area.

5. Senegal co-finance is **public investment**. Table C has been corrected. More details have been given in the co-finance letter.

? It is the ?Minist?re de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement? (Ministry of Water and sanitation) of Senegal providing this co-finance. The 12,000,000 public investment is made of ongoing project in the area

6. The OSS co-finance is in kind (type investment mobilized) and made of ongoing projects involving the countries in the area

7. ? The OMVS Letter of co-finance is attached

8. OMVG co-finance: it is **public investment**. More details are provided in the co-finance letter.

9. Addressed! The co-finance is "investment mobilized". It was identified through ongoing/overlapping projects in the area. Please refer to revised Co-finance letters.

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[LBS1] Please note that the co-finance letters are not annexed in the CEO-Endorsement. There are the endorsement letters we have at annex M (combined co-finance letters document)

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**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  
(1/25/2022) Yes. Table D is correct.

Agency Response  
**Project Preparation Grant**

**6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
(1/25/2022)

1. Details of PPG use are provide, but that only adds up to 110 K not 150 K (i.e. the amount in Annex C does not match the amount in table F). Please review and correct.
2. Please provide additional detail under line item "PPG Coordinator" to assess that this is an eligible expenditure under the PPG.

**(5/10/2023)**

Please take out the line "UNEP direct cost" as PPG is not to be used for agency expenditures. Thank you for explaining in our last call that the lead PPG consultant was solely performing project preparation tasks. The contract was issued by UNEP as this is a regional project and UNEP was administering the regional contracts under the PPG. No UNEP agency tasks were paid by the PPG.

Comment addressed.

Agency Response

**Response (5/10/2023)**

Thank you for the comment this has been amended in the CEO endorsement document (page 153).

### Response (1/25/2022)

1. This has been addressed, the table has been updated and corrected. The amount adds up to 150 K.

Annex C (page 151)

2. Additional details have been provided: the PPG Coordinator, in charge of the implementation of the PPG Road map and in particular for drafting TORs, executing, monitoring and coordinating the PPG development (ANNEX C,)

### 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  
(1/25/2022)

1. Indicator 1: Please provide the name, ID and IUCN category for the protected area.

2. Indicator 7:

- The # of shared water systems should be 1. not 3.

- Sub-indicator 7.1: Sub-indicators should only refer to the aquifer system (not the Senegal and Gambia rivers )

- Sub-indicator 7.4: as the project has not started and there has not been a previous project contributing to [IW:Learn](#), the value of existing interaction and delivery of key products is none. Please revise the value of 2 and set it to 1 or explain your rating.

**(5/10/2023) and (5/16/2023)**

1. Addressed

2. - Indicator 7.1: Why would the level of the TDA formulation have changed from 1 to 4 at this point. **It should still be 1 as the TDA will be prepared during the project.**

- Indicator 7.4: **Not addressed. See previous review.**

**3. Core indicators and their targets are missing in the results framework.** Core Indicators targets need to be aligned with Results Framework (Annex A). GEF Core Indicators and their targets should be explicitly mentioned in the Results Framework.

(5/30/2023)

1. and 2 - Addressed

3. **Not addressed.** GEF Core Indicators and their targets should be explicitly stated in the Results Framework, i.e. numerical targets (end of project targets) should be clearly included in the "end of project target" column (e.g. CI 1.2: 16 000 ha for the row for output .... and so forth)

(6/7/2023) Core Indicator 11 has jumped by orders of magnitude from PIF Stage (now 16 million which reflect the entire estimated population living in the area of the aquifer area but NOT the direct beneficiaries). The PIF estimate of direct beneficiaries was 163 K people. Direct beneficiaries are those directly benefitting from the project e.g. such as via training or being part of demonstration pilots etc. Please identify a more realistic number. The guidelines provide cues as to how to proceed, but the Agency is best placed to interpret what would approach would work best to estimate the number of beneficiaries. This indicator was missing in the earlier version of this project reviewed which is why it is brought up to our collective attention at this late hour.

After adjusting the number for CI 11 in the core indicator table , please revise the text under the table accordingly AND include Core Indicator 11 with the **end of project target** # of total project beneficiaries clearly in the Results Framework (incl. sex disaggregated numbers).

(6/8/2023)

The adjustment of the Core Indicator to the PIF level is noted. Please assess and adjust at Midterm during implementation and once on the ground demonstrations are designed. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

##### Agency Response 07 June 2023

Core Indicator 11 has been adjusted to align with the PIF core indicator 11. The methodology narrative has also been amended. A new version of the CEO ER/prodoc has been uploaded in the portal with purple highlighted changes

##### Agency Response 01 June 2023

The core indicators are now reflected in the result framework in Annex A.

##### Response (5/10/2023) and (5/16/2023)

2. - Indicator 7.1: Has been amended to 1 as the TDA will be prepared during the project.

- Indicator 7.4: has been revised to the value of 1.

**3. Core indicators and their targets have been added into the Results Framework (Annex A), page 141 to 148 of the CEO ER.**

**Response (1/25/2022)**

1. Core indicator 1: **Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares)** ?Correction has been made: This is the National Park of Diawling in Mauritania: Category II National Park, 9310 WDPA ID; Area = 16 000 ha in Mauritania, with a peripheric area of 56,000 ha. (table E) ?This table has been harmonized with annex F

2. Addressed : Indicator 7

- 1 shared water systems

3. This has been specified: Sub-indicator 7.1: only refer to Aquifer system (not the Senegal and Gambia rivers)

This is referring to the table (Annex F)

- Sub-indicator 7.4: ? see (Annex F) : the value (2) is set to 1

This has been addressed, the value of 2 has been set to 1

**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  
(1/25/2022)

The baseline is overall well described and underpinned by available data and information on groundwater uses and users, root causes and barriers.

1. Gender (pgs 24 - 28): the section is thoughtfully written and points out aspects on how the project will address gender barriers. Please though add some country specific project relevant

facts such as women's rights to land, water rights, inheritance, and access to credit (aiding with business development) in the four countries.

2. What is known on private sector withdrawals (specific large or conglomeration of small entities/farms, mining, other industries) and how they will be engaged in the project - as relevant.

**(5/10/2023)**

1. Comment addressed.

2. Comment addressed at endorsement and the explanation is well noted. Please include information on engagement with the private sector in the inception report and the first PIR.

#### Agency Response

**Response (5/10/2023)**

1. Thank you this is well noted, and dedicated information on engagement with the private sector will be part of the inception report and first PIR

**Response (1/25/2022)**

1. Additional, country-specific information on gender has been added in the section 1.4. BASELINE SCENARIO AND ANY ASSOCIATED BASELINE PROJECTS

A section has been added in the document related to ?Country-level Gender Assessment?

2. Private sector withdrawals in the context of the Senegal Mauritanian Aquifer system (BASM) include large or conglomerations of small entities/farms, mining, and other industries. These withdrawals can have significant impacts on the aquifer's water balance and the sustainability of the resource.

To engage the private sector, the Senegal Mauritanian Basin Organization (OMVS) has established a framework for cooperation between the public and private sectors. This framework aims to promote sustainable water management practices and ensure that the private sector is engaged in the development and management of the BASM in a way that is consistent with the project's objectives.

One example of private sector engagement in the BASM project is the Agricultural Value Chains Support Project (AVCSP). The project focuses on improving the efficiency and productivity of small and medium-sized farmers in the Senegal River Valley by increasing their access to irrigation water. The AVCSP is implemented by the Senegal River Basin Development Authority (OMVS) in partnership with the private sector.

Another example is the Mining and Water Resources Management Project (PAEGRM), which aims to strengthen the capacity of the mining sector to manage water resources sustainably. The project focuses on improving water use efficiency in the mining sector, promoting the reuse of water, and reducing the sector's impact on the environment.

Overall, the engagement of the private sector in the Senegal Mauritanian Aquifer project is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the aquifer and its water resources. Through partnerships and collaboration, the private sector can contribute to the project's objectives while also promoting their own economic interests in a sustainable and responsible way.

During the project preparation phase of this project, 4 different groups of actors from the private sector have been identified which can be engaged in the execution of the project, according to their field of specializations and the activities identified.

During the project inception phase a more detailed assessment of the private sector role and of the ways to engage the different private sector actors in project execution will be conducted.

The involvement of the private sector will be developed from the beginning of the project and in close synergies with OMVS, OMVG and the Regional Working group of the BASM, through a national information and exchange seminars on the project activities.

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

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2022)

1. Under relevant initiatives and investments: Please also list and actually focus mainly on ongoing initiatives while also listing lesson learned from previous work. Do not list project title of ongoing efforts but a sentence or two on how these are forming baseline contributions to the proposed project.
2. Please mention and collaborate with the IUCN implemented Senegal River Delta project.
3. Ditto for the upcoming Corubal project as far as it overlaps with the aquifer area.

(5/10/2023)

**1. This is just done with some very general text; it is not clear that e.g. a GEF 3 project approved in 2005 would be still active; and the lessons learned are very general/generic.**

2. Noted. Comment addressed.

3. Noted. Comment addressed.



(5/10/2023)

3. At this point and aiming to meet cancellation deadline this appears the way to go on an *exceptional base*. Please send the inception report and/or include in the first PIR. Cleared.

#### Agency Response

##### Response (5/10/2023)

Agency response: Thank you this is well noted; special attention will be given in the inception phase and inception report on the mapping of lessons learnt from previous work and synergies expected with ongoing initiatives including clear indication of closed projects.

##### Response (1/25/2022)

1. Additional elements on how these initiatives are forming baseline contributions to the proposed project have been added at the end of each section and lessons learned have been listed.

- Lessons learned from previous work are listed at the end of the section
- More in-depth information on these initiatives, in particular those of ongoing projects, will be collected and assessed through direct exchange with the executing entities, during the project inception phase, as part of the confirmation/update of the baseline for the proposed project.

2. Thank you for this comment. The IUCN implemented Senegal River Delta project has been mentioned and will be integral part of update/validation of the baseline during the inception phase and collaboration, identification of synergies and complementarities with this IUCN implemented Senegal River Delta project will be ensured.

3. The Corubal project, as far as it overlaps with the aquifer area has been mentioned. And during inception the executing agency OSS has foreseen to collaborate with OMVG in order to identify synergies and complementarities with the Corubal project which is Multinational involving 3 SMAS countries (Gambia, Bissau Guinea and Senegal)

**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

osts (1/25/2022)

1. Please reformulate adaptation actions to address resilience to shocks including climate change related extended extreme events. This is to maintain delineation of efforts that are pursued with e.g. LDCF/SCCF finance.
2. When you mention scientific research to improve understanding of the aquifer, can we assume that in fact you are talking about scientifically sound assessments of the aquifer ? GEF in general is not funding research via focal area projects.
3. Please make sure to address gender equality and women's access to decisions and resources within each of the relevant project activities and not as a separate activity/ies. Please reflect this across components as well as the Results Framework.
4. Component 1: TDA (page 38): please make sure that it is understood that the TDA is a participatory and consultative process. It is not a mere technical compilation of data and information and should involve and build on inputs and local knowledge, incl. local agencies, national academics, NGOs, and also private sector where appropriate. The TDA also analyzes the legal, policy and institutional environment with regards to water and natural resources uses, permitting, enforcement, competing regulations and incentives etc. You are already mentioning that it looks at root causes and drivers which has to include an analysis of the policy and institutional and social issues on national levels along with physical factors.
5. Component 2: Please be more clear with what is meant with a "planning tool" for "... efficient allocations". Is the tool the SAP or some model to be built ? Be careful to focus straight on "allocations" instead of analyzing underlying needs of 'water for what' and getting to the needs possibly better through cooperation as well as national reforms and innovations. In a water constraint environment the discussion of 'allocations' tends to run into a stalemate situation.
6. Second, the notion of a clear distinction of actions with national and those with regional benefits is misleading. Happy to discuss this with the team.
7. Component 3:
  - i. Senegal pilot 1: First: Please be aware of and coordinate both with WACA and the Senegal Delta project to build on complementarities and avoid overlaps. Second: The pilot seems to solely focus on technical water saving measures and monitoring the water table to assess positive impacts. How do you avoid that the water saved isn't directly converted into expansion of irrigation ? Please consider setting up some sort of water user association and self monitoring and collective management efforts.
  - ii. Senegal pilot 2: As we understand this pilot tries out recharge pilots to capture excessive rain and flood waters and looking at their efficiency. Please consider involving key stakeholders - e.g. key groundwater users such as the city of Dakar - who if involved could well consider scaling up such efforts if effective.

iii. Does any of the pilots look at benefits of conservation or restoration of groundwater dependent ecosystems ?

iv. Senegal pilot 3 and Gambia Pilot 1: Very good to see a pilot on water quality improvement. Nutrient transport to the ocean in the aquifer is reported in the literature and quantifying this and the impacts on people and ecosystems could lead to important information to inform actions. Other pollutants you list are fluoride, bacterial contamination and salt intrusion (Senegal 3) and iron (Gambia 1). While exploring and evaluating feasible treatment methods to render safe drinking water is mentioned one may wonder why there is not or if indeed there will be an effort to incentivize less use of inorganic fertilizers and improved agricultural methods to reduce over-use and run-off.

v. Overall many of the pilots seems to be overly focused on technical solutions and few consider user cooperation and communal governance or indeed any policy reforms, regulatory, such as zoning measures, changing of incentive systems or the like. This could be a miss of major opportunities for lasting changes. We would urge to consider such aspects alongside the technological measures of water table monitoring, pollutant removal/treatment, etc.

8. Recommendations on transboundary governance: Please pay attention to analysis of governance and institutional realities with regards to conjunctive management on national level as well. If groundwater governance, conjunctive management, intersectoral coordination and policy coherence are weak on national level, then there is little likelihood how this can work on regional level. Recommendations therefore need to tackle both the national and regional level.

9. see also comment on the Results Framework below

10. Budget:

i. Please add a column in the budget template for the "Responsible Entity" for each budget line.

ii. Please add a column for M& E costs (could be a sub-column for the respective M&E sub-component; yet to be created - see comment on table B). Some rows in the budget refer to M&E but do not seem to match the amount stipulated in section 9 totaling \$ 130,000 USD.

iii. Please request the agency to correct the total for component 3 so that we can see the amount

iv. Please quantify the staff time of key staff spent on project management versus time spent on technical tasks. Please also indicate the tasks in the TORs to fall under each and make it clear why which staff is budgeted under what component. Specifically, a regional Manager, a Technical Assistant and a Project Coordinator are being charged across components. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project's execution have to be covered by the GEF

portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. In the case of the Technical assistant and the Secretary these line items should be fully charged to the PMC. Additionally, please provide the TOR for the national coordinators to assess where these are to be charged (i.e. fully or partially to PMC).

v. Office supplies should be charged to the PMC.

1.

**(5/10/2023)**

1. I see what was added on page 40 of the prodoc. Are you working on requesting LDCF/SCCF funds?

Please note that the comment was provided as a previous version of the project document was foreseeing the funding of adaptation plan/s which is no longer the case.

2. Noted. Comment addressed.

3. Additions to the project document and ER are well noted. Comment addressed.

4. Comment addressed.

5. Component 2.1/pg 45 of prodoc. SAP and NAPs are country owned commitments and reflect agreed actions. These commitments and action needs are independent of "the strategic priorities of financial partners". The formulation in the review sheet below is clear, but the text added in blue in the prodoc should be edited for clarity.

6. addressed.

7. In the design of the pilots policy and regulatory efforts need to be looked at. For example, in the Gambia the pilot addressing nitrate content should aim to contribute to addressing the root causes of high nitrate concentrations.

8. Noted and good that this will be addressed during the project. Comment addressed.

9. Noted.

**10. Budget:**

i. Thanks for adding the columns. Please enter a "responsible party" for each and every budget line.

ii. Addressed. Total M&E is 160 K both in Annex E and in the M&E table in section 9 with UNEP contracting the MTR, TE and independent audit.

iii. Addressed.

iv. **Not addressed. Project management & coordination tasks have to be charged to PMC (GEF and non-GEF/co-finance) including therefore part of the costs of the regional project manager and project coordinator** (BTW - these job-titles appear very similar and may be confusing to others as well).

v. Addressed.

## Agency Response

### Response (5/10/2023)

1. For clarification, we are not working on requesting LDCF/SCCF funds for this project.

5. On component 2.1/pg 45 of prodoc, the following text has now been added:

Specifically, a Strategic Action plan (SAP) will consist of a blend of national and regional actions (i.e. policy, legal, institutional reforms, or investments) aimed at addressing the priority transboundary threats and capture the opportunities identified in the SMAS TDA. The SAP will be negotiated taking into account the strategic priorities of the four countries sharing the aquifer and agreed upon and endorsed at ministerial level. Financial partners working in the region will be involved in the process and invited to participate to the partners' and donors' roundtables. The text on in the ProDoc on page 45 has been amended accordingly

7. Yes, in the design of the pilots the policy and regulatory efforts will be addressed, such as the example you mention for the Gambia pilot (addressing the root causes of high nitrate concentrations).

10. i) A "responsible party" for each budget line has been added in the CEO endorsement document

iv.

Thank you for your valuable comments which have given us the opportunity to further clarify the distinction between the Project Manager and the Regional coordinator positions; this has now been reflected in the TOR with description of their respective distinctive tasks. For clarification, we have renamed the position of the regional coordinator to 'RWG Liaison officer and pilots coordinator'.

Regarding the repartitioning of the tasks between project management and technical tasks we have amended the TOR to reflect the following:

The Project Manager will dedicate 15% to administrative and 85% to technical tasks

The RWG Liaison officer and pilots coordinator will dedicate 10% to administrative and 90% to technical tasks

The RWG Liaison officer and pilots coordinator will be actively functioning as Nexus between the RWG and the Executing Agency to ensure the synergies between the ongoing BASM process and the GEF project as well as providing targeted support to the pilots.

#### Response (1/25/2022)

1. Clarifications have been added with respect to considering the maintenance of delineation of efforts that are pursued with e.g. LDCF/SCCF finance. (This has been added on Point 1.5 (page 40))

2. Targeted studies are to feed and guide the TDA process. The project will be working on improving knowledge, not pure research, the assessment will be based on scientific tools such as Database, GIS and Modelling. The expression has been modified to avoid confusion: ?Scientifically sound assessments to improve the understanding of the hydrogeologic features of the aquifer??

3. Thank you for this precision and this has now been addressed: This is reflected across components as well as the Results Framework. More description has been provided in the different parts. (Page 42 to page 56).

4. Yes, thank you for this comment and this has now been elaborated accordingly. Paragraphs have been added to clarify that TDA is a participatory and consultative process. (Page 43-44)

5. Component 2 : -(Points 5 and 6)

**Component 2:** Developing a regional Strategic Action Program (SAP) for the Senegalo-Mauritanian aquifer system and facilitating conjunctive surface and groundwater management

The aim under this Component is to define a Strategic Action Program, by facilitating agreement among countries sharing the aquifer on clear priorities for action at national and regional level (i.e., policy, legal, institutional reforms, and investments) to address the priority issues of transboundary concern identified in the SMAS TDA, and enable the conjunctive management of surface and groundwater resources. (Page 43-44)

Outcome 2.1 Strategic Action Program (SAP) developed and endorsed at ministerial level by the beneficiary countries enables the sustainable management of the transboundary SMAS.

The Strategic Action Program (SAP) will address transboundary concerns through a blend of coordinated national and regional actions. This will be done taking into account the strategic priorities and needs of all stakeholders involved in the process. The SAP will be discussed and approved by the four countries and will also be submitted to different financial partners in order to solicit their support for the proposed actions implementation (page 44)

6. It was intended to explain that the priority actions that will make up the SAP, be these reforms or investments, will consist of 'national' actions involving only one country, and 'regional' actions, involving more than one country. Both type of actions will produce benefits at the basin scale. The text has been adapted in this sense at page 44 of the PD.

### 7. Component 3

You raise an important point regarding the need for effective management and governance mechanisms to ensure that the water saved through technical measures is not simply converted into expansion of irrigation. The establishment of water user associations (WUAs) and other collective management efforts can be effective in achieving this goal. They can be instrumental in promoting water conservation and efficient use practices among water users. Self-monitoring can be an effective tool for ensuring that water saved through technical measures is not converted into expansion of irrigation. By empowering farmers and other water users to monitor their own water use and implement efficient practices, the risk of wasteful or unsustainable use can be reduced. This can also help to build capacity among water users and increase their ownership of the project. Overall, a combination of technical measures, effective management and governance mechanisms, and community-based approaches can help to ensure that the water saved through the pilot project is used in a sustainable and equitable manner, and not simply converted into expansion of irrigation.

**Regarding i) First: a) WACA:** The West Africa Coastal Areas Management Program (WACA) is a Coastal Zone Resilience Investment Project in West Africa funded by the International Development Association (IDA), the Nordic Development Fund (NDF) and the Global Environment Fund (GEF). The objective of WACA is to improve the management of shared resources and risks, integrating climate change, affecting communities and coastal areas in the West African region. The WACA project mainly concerns the western part of the Senegal-Mauritanian basin in Mauritania and Senegal and takes into account the strengthening of the sustainable management and protection of the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve in this area whose activities are financed by the GEF. Scheduled from 2018 to 2023, this regional project from which Mauritania and Senegal benefits is implemented through an integrated and multisectoral approach combining technical assistance and gray and green investments to reduce the risks faced by millions of inhabitants. (Page 49 and Pages 36)

b) The Senegal Delta project: Diawling National Park was created by presidential decree in January, 1991. It covers 16,000 ha along the Mauritanian bank of the Senegal River and its stated aims, developed with support from IUCN, ecosystem restoration and enhancement of local livelihoods. (Page 49 and Pages 36?)

During the inception phase coordination will be established with these two projects to explore synergies, build on complementarities and avoid overlaps. (Page 49 and Pages 36)

**On the second point:** thank you for your valuable comment, this has been rectified.

To avoid that the water saved isn't directly converted into expansion of irrigation will consider including the setting up a ?water users association? or similar entity for self-monitoring and collective management efforts.

(Page 49)

(ii) Indeed, this point is very important, we will take particular attention to engaging with and to raise awareness with the key users in the context of the city of Dakar which is beneficiary of this pilot (supply of water).

?City of Dakar Municipality? has also been added to the list of stakeholders and beneficiaries. (Page 51)

(iii) This direct link has not at this stage not been identified but will be integral part of the information to be gathered as part of the process of the development of the TDA. We expect the TDA to unravel these links between ground water and ecosystems. This is foreseen as part of the implementation of the project during TDA formulation.

iv) Indeed, your comment on needed effort to incentivize less use of inorganic fertilizers and improved agricultural methods to reduce over-use and run-off is well noted. Particular attention on these efforts will be given during the process of development of the TDA and related findings will be included in the SAP formulation. (Page 49)

v) Your comment is well noted and will be raised as part of the inception phase. During the PPG phase the participating countries have been focusing on solving the priority urgent issues. In the inception phase it is foreseen to explore this in more detail and to feed this into the TDA process development phase and be part of the SAP recommended actions.

8. Your recommendation is very relevant and highlights the importance of considering the institutional and governance arrangements at both national and regional levels for effective conjunctive management of groundwater resources in transboundary aquifers like the Senegal Mauritanian Aquifer System.



In order to ensure that the pilot project's success is replicated on a larger scale, it is essential to establish effective institutional arrangements and governance mechanisms that can support integrated water resources management and transboundary cooperation. This can include establishing water user associations or other collective management efforts, as you suggested, to ensure that water saved through technical measures is used in a sustainable and equitable manner.

At the regional level, it is important to establish a clear governance framework and institutional arrangements for transboundary groundwater management and in that sense a comprehensive and participatory approach to governance and institutional arrangements at both national and regional levels are ensured through the fact that this project will be guided by the existing regional governance structures of the Regional Working Group (RWG) for the Basin including the respective River Basin Organisations (OMVS and OMVG).

More specifically, the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) will be defined, setting out clear priorities for action at national and regional level (i.e., policy, legal, institutional reforms, or investments) to resolve the priority transboundary threats and opportunities identified in the SMAS TDA. This enables a clear distinction between actions addressing concerns of purely national responsibility and those addressing transboundary concerns with regional benefits. The project will pay particular attention to the analysis of governance and institutional realities with regards to conjunctive management on national level as well.

9. This has been addressed (please see Responses on Results Framework below) (Page 136)

#### 10. Budget

i) This has been addressed: a column has been added in the budget template for the "Responsible Entity" for each budget line

ii) The budget in the table 5 (Page 102-103) has been adjusted accordingly with the project budget template (page 172). The total in table 5 has been corrected (160 000 USD).

iii. This has been addressed and is corrected on the budget table (page 172).

iv. The tasks in the TORs have been regrouped under the different headings of technical tasks and management/coordination providing justification of the large % of management needed due to this complex multi- country, multi-agency project and coordination with the BASM Regional Working Group (RWG). (Pages 157 ? 165).

Namely this translates into the following:

Project Manager: 80% management vs 20% technical tasks ? The activities cover the four project components.

Regional Coordinator: 80% management vs 20% technical tasks - The activities cover the four project components

Technical Assistant: 30% management vs 70% technical tasks - The activities cover the four project components

The National Focal Point (NFP): 50% management vs 50% technical tasks - The activities cover the four project components

Gender specialist: 100% technical tasks - The activities cover the four project components

The wording has been revised to indicate the tasks in the TORs (Pages 157 ? 165).

The Regional Manager, the project coordinator, the operations technical scientific (Groundwater expert ? technical scientific assistant), The National Focal Point and the Gender specialist, according to their activities/tasks indicated in the TORs will cover the 4 components.

TORs of national coordinators or national focal point and Gender specialist have been provided. The National coordinators, according to their activities/tasks indicated in the TORs will cover the 4 components. They will facilitate the implementation of the activities in the corresponding countries.

Addressed

v. Thank you for this comment, Office supplies has been charged to the PMC

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
(1/25/2023)

Yes, the project's alignment with focal area strategies is well outlined.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023) Yes, well enough outlined.

Agency Response

**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

(1/25/2023) Yes, it is overall explained but it could substantially strengthened if enhanced with some facts and figures from the initial problem statement and baseline showing the dependency on groundwater and trends in water scarcity and pollution which the projects aims to contribute sustainable solutions for both on regional and national levels.

Addressed.

Agency Response

**Response (1/25/2023)**

The text has now been substantially enhanced with additional facts and figures showing evidence of rainfall irregularities, trends in water scarcity and pollution which impact groundwater and ecosystems, thus the living conditions of the populations. (Page 56-60).

**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

(1/25/2023) Yes.

Agency Response

**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

(1/25/2023) yes, information has been provided.

Agency Response

**Child Project**

**If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

**Stakeholders**

**Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase? Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023)

1. Please clarify in each country what the role of local NGOs, communities and stakeholders are expected to have in the implementation of the pilots.
2. Project report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase: The attached document titled Stakeholder Engagement activities seem to only outline the process but does not provide any information on when and how key stakeholders have been consulted during project preparation.

(5/10/2023) Comments addressed.

Agency Response

**Response (1/25/2023)**

1. The lists of ?Stakeholders and beneficiaries? have been provided:

**Local NGOs** play an advisory role in the implementation of the Community Pilot Projects.

Under the Community Pilot Demonstration Projects, NGOs are responsible for:

- ? Provide technical support to local beneficiary communities to assess the potential impact of pilot projects on the environment and communities;
- ? Carry out monitoring and evaluation of the pilot projects in accordance with the monitoring and evaluation plan developed for this purpose;
- ? Conduct periodic monitoring at the demonstration project sites to provide technical assistance and oversee the progress of the projects;
- ? Promote relations, cooperation and synergy with other projects/programs in the intervention area;
- ? Organize, with the support of the SMAS PCU, the National Focal Point, the SMAS Project Focal Point, CNU and local technical services, capacity building workshops and field visits to facilitate the exchange of experiences and develop communication between grantees and other actors;
- ? Facilitate the identification of local partners for project activities;
- ? Consider the project's social and environmental monitoring model in the implementation of pilot projects

**Communities and stakeholders:** The beneficiary Community-Based Organizations (women's groups, farmers' groups, natural resource management groups, etc.) who are the direct beneficiaries of the Community Pilot Demonstration Projects are responsible for:

- ? Implementing the Community Pilot Demonstration Projects;
- ? Establish a management committee for the implementation and monitoring-evaluation of the project at the remote monitoring platform;
- ? Monitor and evaluate the Community Pilot Demonstration Projects using the monitoring and evaluation system designed for this purpose with the support of the NGO;
- ? Ensure the sustainability and the perpetuation of the achievements of the community pilot projects;
- ? Share good practices and lessons learned with other actors

(Page 45-46)

2. A summary has been added to the stakeholders' analysis - based on direct consultations and exchanges with institutional actors, civil society, academia and private sector - carried out in each of the four project countries during project preparation. (Page 133)

#### **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

(1/25/2023) Yes, gender analysis done and identifying relevant differences in the countries.

Please see earlier comment to mainstream gender considerations across all component descriptions and pilots beyond general counting broadly 'participation' by gender.

(5/10/2023) Comment addressed.

#### Agency Response

##### **Response (1/25/2023)**

This has now been addressed with more details provided in the document mainstreaming gender considerations across all component descriptions and pilots. (Pages 40-54)

A section on **Gender** has been inserted under the box (page 26 in the prodoc) (and above the section on ?The Regional Working Group for the protection and sustainable management of the Senegalese-Mauritanian Aquifer Basin (BASM)?).

#### **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

(1/25/2023) Sufficiently well elaborated at endorsement stage for this foundational type project. For now mainly seen as stakeholder.

#### Agency Response

##### **Risks to Achieving Project Objectives**

**Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023) Risks are outlined

1. On water abstraction: will there be interaction with SIIP given the high ambitions of the Dakar declaration on irrigation expansion.
2. Please be more specific on the kinds of institutional and political risks expected and how these will be addressed.
3. re. " little political will for conjunctive water management approach": This should be rated at least as medium unless project preparation has shown existing significant progress and a favorable governance and management environment in the countries on national level.
4. Please expand somewhat on the opportunities and the project's potential role in supporting resilience to future pandemics.

**(5/10/2023)** Comments addressed.

## Agency Response

### **Response (1/25/2023)**

1. Interactions with the World Bank SIIP project is foreseen (Page 87).

Despite these efforts, areas suitable for irrigated agriculture in the Sahel are largely underdeveloped and underexploited. Of more than 2 million ha, only 37 percent (750,000 ha) has been equipped for irrigation, and only 60 percent of the equipped area (428,000 ha) is actually irrigated. Growth in areas equipped for irrigation has slowed from a peak of almost 2 percent per annum between 1961 and 2000, to a more modest 0.8 percent per annum in the past 15 years.

The regional Sahel Irrigation Initiative Support Project (SIIP) aims to address these recurring issues by scaling up the implementation of the irrigation development agenda in six countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal).

This includes implementing improved solutions at a scale sufficient to demonstrate their competitiveness and their expansion potential but remaining within limits set to avoid any substantial harmful environmental impacts. These considerations will be incorporated in the local development plans that will notably be based on necessary due diligence regarding sustainable levels of surface water and groundwater abstraction at the subcatchment level.

The SIIP initiative concerns 2 countries of the SMAS project, Mauritania and Senegal which occupy the largest part (90%) of the basin. Therefore, synergies and complementarities will be taken into account in the SMAS project, in relation to the Dakar declaration.

-

2. To address these risks, the close collaboration with the Regional Working Group will provide a solid framework for collaboration and additionally the following strategies will support the project implementation:

**Building political support by working through the established Regional Working group and its members:** The project is designed to align with the regional and national development priorities and policies, ensuring effective coordination to decision-makers at all levels. This will ensure strong political support and commitment.

**Improving institutional coordination:** The project encourages coordination and collaboration among institutions responsible for water management. Clear roles and responsibilities will be defined, and effective communication channels established.

**Strengthening institutional capacity:** The project will provide valuable complementary technical assistance, training, and financial resources to the existing institutions responsible for groundwater management helping to build their capacity to effectively manage groundwater resources.

**Promoting stakeholder engagement:** The project prioritizes stakeholder engagement and ensures that all stakeholders are involved in decision-making processes building trust and support for the project, and helping ensure that water allocation and management decisions are fair and equitable.

**Establishing effective regulatory frameworks:** Building on the work of the RWG, the project will support the establishment of effective regulatory frameworks for groundwater management, including monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. This can help prevent overexploitation of groundwater resources and ensure sustainable management practices.

Political and Institutional risks, related to changes in administrations and relevant government officials during the long period of project execution, namely , the conflict of Casamance in Senegal has been specified. (Page 88).

3.Thank you for this comment, this is well noted and was changed to medium (page 89) .

4. After the risks table the text has been expanded to be more precise (page 90):

COVID related adaptive management, risks and opportunities:



While the project's expected outcomes will increase the countries' resilience to future pandemics, the project will give particular attention to developing an adaptive management strategy for dealing with the COVID 19 pandemic. ? Etc

Effective management of transboundary aquifers can lead to improved water availability and quality contributing in turn to better public health outcomes. Access to clean and safe water is critical for basic hygiene practices, such as handwashing, which is a key preventive measure in controlling the spread of infectious diseases, including pandemics. Proper management of aquifers, including monitoring and protection of water sources, can help ensure an adequate and reliable water supply for communities, reducing the risk of waterborne diseases and enhancing resilience to future pandemics.

Secondly, transboundary aquifer management will promote regional cooperation and coordination among riparian countries, fostering a collaborative approach in addressing common challenges, including pandemics. In the case of this project the close collaboration with the RWG for the BASM will ensure effective strengthening of this existing framework. Cooperation in water management will facilitate information sharing, data exchange, and joint decision-making, which are essential elements in early detection, preparedness, and response to pandemics. Collaborative efforts can also lead to shared investments in water infrastructure, research, and capacity-building, enhancing the overall resilience of the region to future pandemics.

This text has also been added in the CEO ED (Page 90):

Successful implementation of the project will result in increased resilience against future pandemics in the region. During the project implementation phase, we will prioritize the prevention and management of pandemics in the project area. Proactive measures will be taken in accordance with UNEP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (ESSF), specifically those outlined in Section 4.2 on 'Community Exposure to Health Issues' and 4.7 on 'Emergency Preparedness and Response'.

Transboundary aquifer management can provide opportunities to increase countries' resilience to future pandemics by improving water availability and quality for public health purposes, and by fostering regional cooperation and coordination. Investing in sustainable transboundary aquifer management can contribute to more resilient and prepared communities, better equipped to respond to the challenges of pandemics and other water-related risks.

#### **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

i(1/25/2023)

1. Please explain in more detail the role of the national executing agencies listed in figure 4. What is their engagement in activities on national and local levels. Will they nominate a national counterpart focal point/s and provide in-kind/staff time support to the project?
2. What about local government and communities, NGOs and other stakeholders' roles in the implementation of the pilots. - see earlier comment. Ownership will be important and that means an active role which is likely envisioned but could be better presented here.
3. As mentioned earlier, regional projects and initiatives to be in touch with include:
  - GEF IW Senegal Delta project (IUCN)
  - WACA initiative (WB - Non-GEF and GEF)
  - Cities IAP where Senegal and St Louis are part of

(5/10/2023)

1. Noted. Please add the national counterpart agency as executing partner in part A of the ER.
2. Addressed.
3. Addressed

#### Agency Response

##### **Response (5/10/2023)**

1. National counterpart agencies have been added as executing partners in part A of the ER (page 3).

##### **Response (1/25/2023)**

1. More details have now been provided in the text (page 94):

National executing agencies will be engaged in all project activities on national and local levels. A national counterpart focal point/s will be nominated (it is envisaged that it will be the National Director in charge of water resources management) and provide in-kind/staff time support to the project (such as the expert in charge of Data collection and Database management, hydrogeologist, etc.).

The National Focal Point (NFP) will facilitate the missions of the consultants in the corresponding country, to significantly contribute to the development of the TDA / SAP process, in particular through the activities of the national inter-ministerial committees, the working groups for the development of National Action Plans (NAP) of surface and groundwater conjunctive management, and the National working groups for the formulation of the Strategic Action Program (SAP).

2. The pilot projects will be implemented in collaboration with the local government through the National focal institution who will coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the activities.

Local government, communities and stakeholders' roles are provided in the response of earlier comment and inserted in the document (page 45-46).

3. This is well noted, the project will be coordinating its implementation with the following initiatives (page 34-35 of the document):

- GEF IW Senegal Delta project (IUCN):
- West Africa Coastal Areas Management Program (WACA)
- Cities IAP where Senegal and St Louis are part of (Project Title: Senegal Sustainable Cities Initiative)

#### **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

(1/25/2023) Yes, the project is aligned with national and regional priorities.

Agency Response

#### **Knowledge Management**

**Is the proposed Knowledge Management Approach for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?**

## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023)

1. Please strengthen to be more clear on expected deliverables and approximate (!) timeline for implementing planned knowledge management activities, including for the implementation of the communication plan/strategy once it is prepared as output 4.1.2.; better elaborate the project's KM approach, in alignment with the project's 4th component; and more clearly explain how the project will engage with IW:Learn.

2. For this section of the ER: The first three bullets are clear in this section whereas the last five appear more overarching and lack clarity on e.g. how local and national stakeholders will be engaged and reached.

(5/10/2023)

Additions and elaboration in the component description and section 8/Knowledge Management well noted. Addressed.

## Agency Response

**Response (1/25/2023)**

1. The comment is well noted and elements have now been added in the Knowledge management section and comments and text changed (page 56 and 100)

Potential deliverables for the KM activities of the project will include:

A database of stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities in the project, to be updated regularly.

A knowledge portal or repository that hosts all relevant project documents, including reports, data, and maps.

A series of webinars or training sessions for stakeholders to share best practices, lessons learned, and capacity-building initiatives.

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan that includes clear indicators and targets for measuring progress on KM activities.

A communication plan/strategy that outlines the project's key messages, target audiences, and channels for dissemination, along with a timeline for implementation.

The timeline for implementing these activities will be clearly defined to be achievable, taking into account any constraints on resources or capacity. Regular reviews and updates of the KM activities should be carried out to ensure that they are still relevant and effective.

2. This has been addressed: More details have been given in the text to explain how local and national stakeholders will be engaged and reached. (Pages 97-98)

**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

(1/25/2023)

1. Please note that the prodoc Table of Contents seems refers to the PIF level screen (of September 21). The November 2022 is though noted and in the portal. Risk is ranked a moderate.

2. Is there a simple ESMF to be used for the implementation of pilots including a simple grievance mechanism ?

3. Please fill out the sections on "measures to address identified risks".

**(5/10/2023)**

. 1. The SRIF is uploaded separately in the portal. Noted.

2. Please **comment why** the box to prepare simple/site specific ESMFs for the project sites is not "ticked" which then would also include an appropriate grievance mechanism.

(5/30/2023) Agency report explaining the agency safeguards rules noted. We highly recommend that for any on the ground project sites which may include resource use restrictions (fisheries and/or protected areas) that solid community level grievance mechanisms are put in place.

Cleared.

## Agency Response

### **Response (5/10/2023)**

For moderate risk projects, we allow flexibility ranging from good practice all the way to the ESMP depending on the risk complexity and range. In this case, we considered that good practice be sufficient as it has good gender action plan and stakeholder engagement plan to handle the risks identified. Through close engagement and communication with the local communities on needs, concerns, opportunities, and active involvement, the project can proactively handle the safeguard risks.

This is a moderate risk project and context-specific safeguard risks assessments at the different pilot sites will be planned as part of the executing partners' responsibilities to monitor implementation with close involvement of the respective local communities.

In the SRIF there are 2 of the boxes that were ticked (i) Good practice and (ii) Carry out further assessments (e.g., site visits, experts' inputs, consult affected communities, etc.). For most low-moderate risk projects the good practice approach is deemed sufficient.

For the case of the SMAS project the additional recommendation of carrying out further assessments could also include to prepare simple/site specific ESMFs for the different project sites.

### **Response (1/25/2023)**

The project will ensure due diligence by engaging stakeholders and monitoring and the potential or actual safeguard risks. If needed, we will find relevant safeguard expert to assess the problem and develop a short management plan to proactively respond. The projects grievance mechanism will be aligned closely with the existing grievance prevention measures developed building on UNEPs grievance mechanisms and those of the respective River Basin organizations and the RWG for the BASM.

UNEPs safeguards and Risks Identification Form (SRIF) has been inserted into the project document (ANNEX O - SAFEGUARD RISK IDENTIFICATION FORM (updated version November 2022) and is also attached in the roadmap in the GEF portal.

#### **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

(1/25/2023)

1. Please include a column in the project budget GEF template(Annex E) for M&E and align the budgeted M&E plan with Annex E/project budget template.

2. Please clarify who is the responsible party for the budget for each of the lines in Table 5. Also, the notation of "none" no costs is not clear. Does it mean it is part of the already anticipated staff responsibilities/component or PMC budget?

3. Is the project administering all M& E costs and UNEP staff and other costs are covered by the agency fee and UNEP co-finance ?

(5/10/2023) Comments addressed.

#### Agency Response

##### Response (1/25/2023)

1. A Column has been inserted in the project budget GEF template (Annex E) for M&E, and budgeted M&E plan (page 104-105) is aligned with Annex I/project budget template (page 170-176).

2. Column with responsible party for the budget has been added in the table 5.

The notation of "none" (no costs) means it is part of the already anticipated staff responsibilities/component or PMC budget. (Page 104-105)

3. Yes, the project is administrating all M&E costs and UNEP staff and other costs are covered by the agency fee and UNEP co-finance.

#### 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

(1/25/2023) Overall yes, but the section is a mix of describing benefits and project activities (see e.g. use of apps etc.). Please revise/redraft.

(5/10/2023) Comment addressed.

#### Agency Response

##### Response (1/25/2023)

The socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels have been added to the section in the Project document under the section 1.8. GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS (GEFTF).

The Senegal Mauritanian Aquifer project is expected to provide significant socioeconomic benefits at both national and local levels. At the national level, the project will contribute to economic growth, as improved access to water will enable increased agricultural production, which is a critical source of income and employment for many people in the region. Additionally, the project will reduce water-related health risks and costs, as people will have access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation facilities, reducing the incidence of waterborne diseases. The project will also contribute to the achievement of global environmental benefits by improving water conservation and reducing water scarcity.

At the local level, the project is expected to bring significant benefits to the communities surrounding the aquifer. Improved access to water will reduce the burden on women and girls who often spend several hours a day fetching water, impacting their ability to pursue other activities, including education. Additionally, the project will enhance social cohesion by reducing conflicts between herders and farmers over access to water and providing economic opportunities for marginalized groups such as women and indigenous peoples.

Ownership and management of water resources will play an essential role in ensuring equitable distribution of benefits, especially for marginalized groups. The project should ensure that the public sector has a significant role in water resource management to avoid potential negative impacts on the poor and indigenous peoples.

Mining companies and other industries should pay for water use, and subsidies should be directed towards sustainable practices. This approach will help to avoid negative externalities associated with over-exploitation and contamination of water resources.

The project should also prioritize safety measures for workers and communities in the construction of boreholes and other infrastructure and ensure that benefits from the boreholes are shared equitably among communities.

Finally, the project should consider the knowledge and perspectives of traditional, women, and indigenous peoples in water management, efficiency, and recycling, as well as empowering women as champions and water ambassadors in the communication of water-



related issues. Citizen scientists can play an essential role in monitoring the project's impact on water quality and quantity and gathering information on changes in quality of life resulting from the project. Overall, the project can contribute to sustainable development and environmental goals by improving access to water and promoting equitable distribution of benefits. (Pages 60-61)

## **Annexes**

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

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023) Yes.

#### Agency Response

##### **Project Results Framework**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023)

1. Core indicators are missing in the results framework. Core Indicators targets need to be aligned with Results Framework (Annex A).
2. Pilots: please reassure that the project / the results framework does not only track that these are implemented/delivered and provide adequate access, benefits and participation by gender. To measure community benefits solid baselines need to be established via e.g. household surveys.
3. Please also reassure that the project will rigorously track key parameters and make public the effectiveness of measures - both as related to physical parameters and successes or lessons from governance and participation arrangements. such as e.g. on "physical parameters": e.g. do water savings lead to simply lead to additional uses and therefore not decrease pressures on the aquifer or on governance: "what has been learned from community governance arrangement/water user associations and their effectiveness to regulate water use".

**(5/10/2023)**

**1. Please insert the core indicator target values and not only mention the core indicator number.**

**2. See comment above.**

3. Noted. Addressed.

(6/2/2023) Comment addressed.

#### Agency Response

**Response (5/10/2023)**

The core indicator target values have now been added to the Results Framework.

**Response (1/25/2023)**

1. Outcome indicator 3: the indicator is split in two parts (deleted the word Activity)

a) the following text is added:

?Outcome 3.1: The successful joint implementation of small-scale demonstration measures strengthens transboundary cooperation and feeds into the SAP formulation process, **and meets Core indicators 2,3,4 targets.**? (Page 145-146)

b) Yes, absolutely this will be initiated in the inception period and more specifically when the pilots will be well defined.

Outcome 3.2: Participation of women and vulnerable peoples in the implementation of small-scale pilot projects enables equal access to, and control of water resources, and meets Core Indicator 11 targets. (Page 146)

2. Yes, this point is well taken and will be integral part of the Knowledge management activities (Pages 100-101)

3. Yes, the project will rigorously track key parameters and make public the effectiveness of measures - both as related to physical parameters and successes or lessons from governance and participation arrangements.

The project will have monitoring and evaluation systems in place to track progress towards its objectives, including regular reporting on key indicators. The grievance mechanism will be transparent and accessible to all stakeholders, including affected communities, and will be designed to ensure that grievances are addressed in a timely and effective manner.

#### GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023)

1. Please note that Annex B is cut of and non readable in the portal.
2. Please address the PIF question on the budgeted/approximate amount per pilot.

**(5/10/2023) Addressed.**

#### Agency Response

##### **Response (1/25/2023)**

1. Annex B is now showing on the Portal.
2. 150 000 USD approximately is foreseen per pilot/country.

#### **Council comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
(1/25/2023)

Please address the comment by the German Council member:

*Comment by Annette Windmeisser, GEF Council Member, Head of Climate Finance Division, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, , made on 1/7/2022*

#### **Comment:**

Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:

Suggestions for improvement to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:

? The approach in the project appears to be unique for a transboundary aquifer for which no transboundary organisation has yet been mandated and could serve as a role model. Therefore, we recommend a connection to the Pan-African Groundwater Programme of the African Council of Water Ministers (APAGroP) as well as to the regional organisation ECOWAS and to gain experience and make it available for similar contexts.

? In the long term, consideration should already be given to how the aquifer can be managed across borders. An extension of the mandate and capacities of the river basin organisations OMVS and OMVG would be conceivable. With the OMVS, a training on the integration of groundwater into the management of OMVS was already carried out in 2019.

? In addition, it should be ensured that the OSS has the expertise to carry out such a project. Technical advice may need to be provided.

? Exploring an aquifer requires a high level of technical expertise. Therefore, we recommend the involvement of local and international research institutions.

**(5/10/2023) Please add the Council comments and responses in Annex B. e.g. the German comments and response are not included in Annex B.**

**(5/30/2023) Comment addressed.**

#### Agency Response

##### **Response (5/10/2023)**

The German comments and response are now included in Annex B.

##### **Response (1/25/2023)**

- Indeed, this is a unique approach for a transboundary Aquifer and in fact the relatively recent development of the Ministerial declaration establishing the regional working group of the BASM has provided a foundational framework for transboundary cooperation among the beneficiary countries of the Senegalo Mauritanian Basin. The leadership of OMVS and OMVG has been very much welcome and provides a solid reassurance of future coordination and synergies. OMVS has been proposing to host the Secretariat of the RWG of the BASM and this GEF project will be working with and through the RWG. In this context, this project foresees to reinforce the RWG by establishing a donor coordination roundtable where the synergies and connections with other initiatives (such as APADroP, ECOWAS and others) will be the focus.

OSS is currently conducting a project with AMCOW and is undertaking another initiative with ECOWAS. These two institutions will be kept informed of the ongoing process of this project for their better involvement when the project is executed.

- Yes, this is very much at the core of the objectives of the Regional Working Group of the BASM (attached the Ministerial Declaration) which has been mandated by the Ministries in the Declaration: The Regional Working Group (RWG) is an intergovernmental mechanism which mandate is to provide a framework for consultation, coordination and decision making among the States in the basin for concerted transboundary management of the Senegalo-Mauritanian Aquifer Basin (SMAB) ?. This project will contribute to the reflection and development of options for governance structures of the Aquifer Basin as part of the SAP development process, which again will

be closely coordinated with and through the RWG of the BASM. The facilitators of the RWG include UNECE, Geneva water hub and IGRAC/UNESCO.

- OSS has longstanding scientific and technical experience in a spectrum of groundwater related issues (Knowledge improvement, development of management tools, establishment of consultation mechanism or cooperation framework, etc.), a large network of experts at its disposal to complement and advise?..

OSS has specific programs for shared aquifers and has successfully implemented similar projects in North Africa (North Western Sahara Aquifer System - SASS - shared by Algeria, Libya and Tunisia (1999-2013) and in West Africa (Iullemeden Aquifer System - shared by Mali, Niger and Nigeria (2004-2009)); then Niger basin - Iullemeden-Taoudeni/Tanezrouft Aquifer System (Niger basin-ITTAS (2018-ongoing) shared by Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria) and in East Africa, in the IGAD zone. The staff that will be involved in the project is highly qualified and experienced in implementing this kind of project.

Involvement of local and international research institutions is foreseen not only under the BASM RWG but is part of the OSS network of scientific support. Universities and national research institutions will be solicited. IGRAC is partner of the project.

#### **STAP comments**

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

(1/25/2023) Most have been addressed.

1. Please note the request of STAP to better describe GEBs which coincides with the GEFSEC comment in the review sheet.
2. Please elaborate on lessons learned from previous and ongoing interventions in the region. (e.g. as OSS is also part of the Niger Basin-ITTAS project: are there any lessons to take from this effort which is still under implementation)

**(5/10/2023) Please add these additions to the responses to STAP comments in table B.**

**(5/30/2023) Please add the additional responses provided to STAP comments provided as response to the review on (5/10/2023) and which you provided in the agency response below IN TABLE B.**

## Agency Response

### Agency Response 01 June 2023

The above text as reflected in the 1/25/2023 has been added in Annex B.

### Comments now added

#### Response (1/25/2023)

1.IW GEBs, in terms of increased transboundary cooperation and long-term sustainability of the resources are described in section 1.8, while benefits in terms of adaptation are explained in Annex B.

2.Lessons learned:

The Senegal Mauritanian Aquifer project is builds on previous and ongoing interventions in the region, including efforts by the OSS and other organizations. Lessons learned from these interventions have informed the design and implementation of the project.

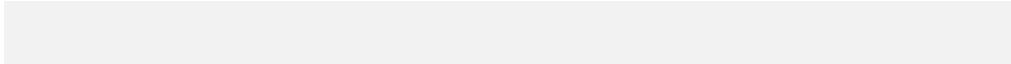
One of relevant project is the Integrated Transboundary Water Resources Management in the Niger Basin (ITTAS) project, which is also being implemented by the OSS. One of the key lessons learned from the ITTAS project is the importance of effective stakeholder engagement and participation. The project has highlighted the need for meaningful engagement with all stakeholders, including local communities, civil society organizations, and government agencies, throughout the planning and implementation process. This has helped to build trust and support for the project and ensure that it is better aligned with the needs and priorities of local communities. Another lesson learned from the ITTAS project is the importance of developing strong institutional frameworks for transboundary cooperation. The project has helped to establish the Niger Basin Authority, which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the basin-wide water resources management plan and promoting cooperation among the different countries in the basin.

More specifically, lessons learnt are:

- ? Where River basin overlaps Aquifer System at transboundary level, Conjunctive Management is the most;
- ? Strengthening cooperation among riparian countries, some of which are involved either for surface water or for groundwater, or both at the same time
- ? In the World, few transboundary aquifer systems benefit the TDA/SAP process. The Conjunctive Management approach is the best way to develop an integrated TDA/SAP and to benefit well to the transboundary Aquifer system

Other lessons learned are provided (page 39):

- ? involving local communities in the management of natural resources is both feasible and beneficial and can have positive impacts on biodiversity and livelihoods;
  - ? in order to build a relationship based on trust, a project must move slowly and carefully. Confidence can only be gained through proving assertions with action, and such results take time.
- ? local community adhesion to sustainable resource use is proportional to the benefits they will reap from it;
- ? local stakeholders often have a longstanding relationship with an ecosystem. Although at times their explanations of certain phenomena may seem farfetched, scientific arrogance should be avoided. Patiently drawing out the experience of observant locals can be highly rewarding;  
local knowledge should be formalised through scientific investigation. Monitoring and participatory research increase awareness and local capacity



**Convention Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**CSOs comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**Status of PPG utilization**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request (1/25/2023) Yes.

Agency Response

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request Duplicate question

Agency Response

**Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

**Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

(1/25/2023) Please address the comments in the review sheet and resubmit. Please get in touch if any clarifications to the comments would aid in the revision.

(5/10/2023) and (5/16/2023). Most but not all comments have been addressed. Please attend to the remaining comments.



**(5/30/2023)** Most but not all comments have been addressed. Please attend to the few remaining comments.

**(6/7/2023)** Please address the revision of start/end date and comment on core indicator 11 and resubmit as soon as possible. Please keep in mind that the cancelation deadline for this project is June 10th.

**(6/8/2023)** The remaining two comments have been addressed and the project is recommended for endorsement.

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>1/25/2023</b>	<b>1/25/2023</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/10/2023</b>	<b>5/10/2023</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/30/2023</b>	<b>5/30/2023</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>6/7/2023</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>6/8/2023</b>	

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**