



Strengthening capacity in the agriculture and land-use as well as energy sectors in Solomon Islands for enhanced transparency in implementation and monitoring of Solomon Island's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10760

Countries

Solomon Islands

Project Name

Strengthening capacity in the agriculture and land-use as well as energy sectors in Solomon Islands for enhanced transparency in implementation and monitoring of Solomon Island's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

3/10/2022

Review completed by PM

7/6/2022

Program Manager

Namrata Rastogi

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

MSP

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

3/25/2022: Yes, the project remains aligned with the PIF. While the amounts allocated for components have changed a bit, the overall amount remains the same. However, please revise Rio Markers as follows - Climate Change Mitigation - 2; Climate Change Adaptation - 1.

5/10/2022: Cleared.

6/3/2022: Under Project Information, please revise the expected implementation start date, completion date and duration as relevant since the implementation start date has already passed.

6/20/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response

13 June 2022: The dates have been revised for project implementation to start in 1 August 2022 and complete on 31 July 2025.

Thanks for the comment. The Rio Markers have been revised

Project description summary

2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: In Table B, please fully fill out the last component - Monitoring and Evaluation - including outputs and outcomes.

5/10/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response The M&E component has been filled with corresponding outcome and outputs

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

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

3/25/2022: The amount in the co-financing letter should match the co-financing amount in the portal document. There is currently a .01 difference. We suggest either changing the amount in the portal document or rounding it off in the portal document.

5/10/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response The .01 difference in co-financing has been adjusted in the portal and in the prodoc

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 3/25/2022: Yes, this is a cost-effective approach and overall amounts match with the PIF. We note that the co-financing amounts have increased from the PIF stage.

Agency Response Thanks for the comment

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 3/25/2022: Yes this has been provided.

Agency Response

Core indicators

7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E? Do they remain realistic?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: The table for Core Indicator 11 - Expected at CEO Endorsement - has not been completed. Please complete and revise the justification as needed.

5/10/2022: This has been provided. Cleared.

Agency Response Action has been taken and Core Indicator 11 - Expected at CEO Endorsement has been filled.

Part II ? Project Justification

1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: The description here states "As of October 2020, the country is in the inception phase of the preparation of the Third National Communication (TNC) and the Biannual Update Report (BUR)." #20 seems to provide a more recent update. Please revise accordingly.

Please check the refence of Table 4 and Table 5 in #19. These seem to be mixed up.

In Section D - Enhanced Transparency Framework - clarify/mention that LDC and SIDS submit their BTRs at their discretion.

5/10/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response

Thanks for the comments.

- The status of TNC and BUR have been updated in consultation with MECDM
- Thanks for the comment on Table 4 and 5. References for each table are provided.
- Clarification regarding BTR submission by LDC and SIDS has been made

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: Please address comments as below:

1. Please change typo here, and in other sections - Biannual Update Report to Biennial Update Report.

2. Please provide a brief description of any processes, or systems that may be in place for tracking support needed and received. Based on the table in the Stakeholder section, consultations with the Ministry of finance indicate that there is some existing tracking tool. Provide additional details, and how the CBIT project will build on this.

3. In table 7, please add National REDD+ Program and the Technology Needs Assessment.

5/10/2022: Comments have been addressed. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. Thanks for the observation. The typo has been corrected to Biennial Update Report throughout the ProDoc

2. More details on existing finance tracking system has been added in portal and prodoc # 81, as well as how the CBIT project will build on the existing prototype. is added in Table 7

3. As suggested, National REDD+ program and Technology Need Assessment are added in Table 7.

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

3/25/2022: Please address comments below:

1. #84 - There seems to be a typo here on the year being stated. Please check if this should be 2024. Accordingly, revisions may need to be made to the TOC.

2. The description here mentions that the CBIT project will support NCs and BURs (e.g. #90). Comment on how this project may contribute to BTRs in Solomon Islands as well.

3. Comment on if this CBIT project will address any QA/QC challenges that have been mentioned.

4. Deliverable 2.1.3.1 mentions that a university/institute will be involved in the trainer or trainer modality. We would recommend strengthening this element, anchoring the training and capacity within a national university/institute through a formal collaboration. Another option to consider a partnership with an international/regional

institute in this regard. Please make adjustments accordingly to the budget to reflect a partnership/collaboration with a university/institute.

5. Comment on how the climate finance tracking element of the CBIT project will learn from the challenges from the existing tracking tool (mentioned in the comment above) and build on it (if relevant).

5/10/2022: For #1 - please check the TOC as the year still does not seem to match. Please make the change as needed.

5/20/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response

17 May 2022 - The revised ToC has been uploaded in the portal.

1. Thanks for the observation. The year is corrected to 2025.
2. How the proposed project will contribute to BTR is added in the proposed alternative descriptions in portal and prodoc paragraph # 84 and 90.
3. The deliverable that will address the QA/QC challenge is added in the portal and Prodoc paragraph# 95.
4. Thanks for the comment. Additional details have been added regarding the MOU between MECDM and Solomon Island National University in the portal and paragraph # 96 of the prodoc.
5. More details on existing finance tracking system has been added in the portal and paragraph # 82, and how the CBIT project will build on the existing prototype is added in Table 7

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: Yes, this has been provided. However, in Table 8 mention that flexibility provisions are provided to LDC and SIDS, and that LDC and SIDS submit their BTRs at their discretion.

5/10/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response An explanation in relation to Table 8 is added for LDC and SIDs for BTR submission in the portal and prodoc paragraph # 102.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: Yes.

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

3/25/2022: Yes.

Agency Response

7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: The description here mentions collaborations with national institutions. Note comment made above in the alternative scenario section. Provide additional details, in the alternative scenario section, including if these have been identified and the nature of such collaborations.

5/10/2022: This has been provided. Cleared.

Agency Response Thanks for the comment. Additional details are added based on the existing system of MOU between MECDM and Solomon Island National University in the alternative scenario section, in the portal and paragraph # 96.

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

3/25/2022: This is a national level project. A map 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

N/A

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

3/25/2022: The stakeholder engagement plan should be further elaborated upon. Please elaborate further on the stakeholder engagement matrix - #3, 4 and 5 specifically - listing CSOs, private sector, associations, academia and others that will be engaged with as part of this project. Clearly outline their roles and responsibilities (with a focus on relevant/AFOLU and energy sectors) and dissemination of information.

For the following table (under stakeholder engagement plan), please provide additional details on the engagement approach - for example, it says that close communication will be maintained by CSOs/private sector but the frequency of engagement is biannual. Additionally, please clarify here if CSOs and private sector is only for knowledge dissemination. The previous table states it is for data collection as well. The two tables should be aligned.

Provide additional details on how the stakeholder engagements informed the design and approach of the project. For example, comment on if additional stakeholders have been included based on these consultations.

There is a typo in this section where there is mention of Vanuatu - please revise and change as needed.

Note that the stakeholder engagement matrix does not include ministries mentioned in the PSC (Institutional Arrangements section) - such as the National Statistics Office. Please make sure these are aligned and match.

5/10/2022: The stakeholder engagement matrix seems to be missing some key stakeholders such as Solomon Island National University. Please check and revise.

5/20/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response

17 May 2022 - Thanks for the observation. The Solomon Island National University and its role has been added in the stakeholder matrix

- Thanks for the comment. Additional information is provided under stakeholder engagement matrix - #3, 4 and 5 focusing on AFOLU, energy, and waste sectors, and dissemination of information.

- Revision has been made under stakeholder engagement plan, and highlighted in yellow colour. Please see the stakeholder engagement plan table.

- Additional details on how the stakeholder engagements informed the design and approach of the project is added in the portal and prodoc paragraph# 116.

- Thanks for the comment. We have checked throughout the ProDoc. Vanuatu is mentioned three times in the document. But, the contexts are not for stakeholders. It is mentioned to describe the surrounding countries of Solomon Island, FAO comparative advantage of CBIT project implementation, and to describe the prototype of finance tracking tool from the USAID funded "Institutional Strengthening for Pacific Island Countries to Adapt to Climate Change" (ISACC) Project.

-Thanks for the observation. Ministries mentioned in the PSC are added under the stakeholder engagement matrix to align with PSC. Please see the stakeholder engagement matrix.

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

3/25/2022: Yes, this has been provided.

Agency Response

Private Sector Engagement

If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: Yes.

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

3/25/2022: Please include climate risk and provide a brief COVID opportunities analysis (we note that a brief mention of COVID risk has been provided).

5/10/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response - Well noted. A brief note on COVID-19 opportunity and climate risk analysis is added in the portal and in paragraph #136 and Table 10.

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

3/25/2022: Provide additional details on how this CBIT project will build on the BUR and NC projects that are underway, and will not duplicate activities. Consider providing this in a table format.

We note that the project requests execution services by FAO. As per GEF guidance, this is to be provided only on an exceptional basis. Also note the guidance provided by COP at COP26 in relation to this. Please pursue other executing arrangements as has been done by other projects in the country.

5/10/2022: This has been well noted. Cleared.

Agency Response

- Additional details are added on how the CBIT project will build on the BUR and NC projects in Table 7

- After detailed discussions between the national counterpart and FAO, it was agreed that the government will be the executing agency for the project. Accordingly, the text in the Institutional Arrangements section has been revised to reflect this in the portal and para # 139 onwards

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

3/25/2022: Mention NAP, TNA, BUR etc. as relevant in this section.

5/10/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response - As suggested, additional information on NAPA, TNA, and BUR is added in the portal and prodoc paragraph # 154-156.

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

3/25/2022: Knowledge Management is a key element of CBIT projects. In this context, provide additional details on how this CBIT project may provide lessons and insights to other SIDS, and leverage regional networks, on transparency. Provide information on which existing platforms will be used for information disseminations, which communication channels will be used, and what KM deliverables will be developed.

Provide details on the "central hub" mentioned and comment on if this is already existing.

Please include a budget, deliverables and timeline and explain how the KM approach will contribute to the project's impact. Additionally include information on plans for strategic communications.

5/10/2022: This has been provided. Cleared.

Agency Response

- Thanks for the comment. Additional information has been added to show which existing platforms will be used for information disseminations, which communication channels will be used, and what KM deliverables will be developed in the portal and prodoc paragraph #157 and #160

- Budget, deliverables and timeline, plan for strategic communication, and how the KM approach will contribute to the project's impact are added, in the portal and prodoc paragraphs # 157 to 161.

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

3/25/2022: This has been marked as low. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

3/25/2022: The M&E budget is on the higher side for this project. Consider reducing the budget.

5/10/2022: We note the revision of the M&E budget. However, the budget still remains high. Please provide a rationale and/or consider revising this further.

5/20/2022: This is well noted. Cleared.

Agency Response

17 May 2022 - The M&E budget has been further reduced, as suggested.

Thanks for the suggestion. The budget has been revised downwards as provided in the attachment

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

3/25/2022: Yes, this has been provided.

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: Annex E: Budget has been provided. Please see comment in the alternative scenario section related to the budget and make adjustments as relevant.

5/10/2022: This has been provided. Cleared.

6/3/2022: For the Budget table:

1. Finance/admin/operations assistants are charged to both components and PMC, please only charge to PMC. We note that all co-financing is in-kind so there may be not enough co-financing to cover the increased PMC. Please provide justification for increased PMC under GEF funding accordingly in the Portal.

2. Similarly, office furniture and IT accessories, Printers, Laptops and Office operations costs are being charged to both components and PMC, please only charge to PMC. We note all co-financing are in-kind so there may be not enough co-financing to cover the increased PMC. Please provide justification for increased PMC under GEF funding accordingly in the Portal.

3. The budget table currently shows that FAO is responsible for some limited execution services. As per discussions and through the review process, it was agreed that FAO will not provide any execution services. As a result, please align the current budget table with this understanding, i.e. apart from MTR, TE and audit/spot check, please remove other items currently under the responsibility of FAO in the budget table.

6/29/2022: We note the clarifications provided. However, please provide additional clarifications.

1. Please provide TORs for staff costs which are charged across components and PMC, with clear indication of relevant deliverables and outputs under both components and PMC (now there are TOR for the Finance/Admin Associate but not very clear on contribution to project components, and there is no TOR for the Admin Assistant).

2. We also note the clarification provided under #3 on procurement services. However, please provide explanation of how the tax/duty-free goods can be transferred to the Government without incurring duty/tax that Government agencies are responsible for. Additionally, please confirm that this is the reason that the government is requesting FAO to undertake limited execution functions?

7/6/2022: Clarification has been provided.

Agency Response

4 July 2022

1. TOR have been strengthened and uploaded separately in roadmap.

2. *FAO will not procure on behalf of the Gov those approximately 16k of non-expendable procurement. Budget has been amended accordingly. There seems to be a minor misinterpretation, as the tax exemption status applies to all procurement of all executing agencies based on the Host Country agreements or project specific legal agreements FAO signs with Governments. So tax exemption applies in all cases. The Government requested FAO to handle these minor procurement services because FAO has demonstrated on previous occasions, with other projects in Solomon Islands, its ability to deliver quality services in a timely and cost effective manner through*

international vendors/suppliers. However, as this may not suffice as a justification, FAO will not provide this support?.

13 June 2022:

1. The project staff will perform tasks that contribute to all components of the project, hence their costs have been charged accordingly. As co-financing is provided in-kind, project management staff costs is charged to the GEF funds. Justification is provided in the portal under the co-financing description
2. As all co-financing is in-kind, the one-time cost of non-expendable procurement for the project management office has been charged to the GEF funds, across the components and the PMC.
3. Well noted. Accordingly, the services to be provided for communication and knowledge materials are now transferred to the **government**. However, for the other items like the IT equipment and Software, laptops, etc, FAO can support the government in procuring high quality equipment in a cost effective manner, due to its tax/duty free status. This is based on our recent experience in another GEF project in Solomon Islands where FAO procured IT equipment which were of better quality and standard, and cheaper compared to local rates.

The budget has been adjusted and a revised version has been uploaded and pasted in the portal

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: This has been provided. However, please include the CBIT indicators - "Quality of MRV systems" and "Qualitative Assessment of Institutional Capacity for Transparency" (as per the CBIT Programming Directions).

5/10/2022: Please include appropriate ratings and the scale as elaborated in the Programming Directions for the two CBIT indicators.

5/20/2022: We note that the CBIT indicators have been included. However, the rating/scale has been provided only for the baseline. Please add for both mid-term target and final target.

5/27/2022: Cleared.

Agency Response

23 May 2022 - The scale/rating has been added for the mid-term and final targets.

17 May 2022 - Thanks for the comment. Appropriate ratings and scale for the two CBIT indicators have been added in the portal and the prodoc

- As suggested, CBIT indicators are added in Annex A1: Project Results Framework

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 3/25/2022: This has been provided. Cleared.

Agency Response

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 3/25/2022: This has been provided.

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

N/A

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 N/A

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 N/A

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

3/25/2022: Please address comments.

5/10/2022: Please address remaining comments.

5/20/2022: Please address remaining comment.

5/27/2022: PM recommends technical clearance.

6/3/2022: Please address remaining comments.

6/20/2022: PM recommends technical clearance.

7/6/2022: PM recommends technical clearance.

6/29/2022: Please address comments.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	3/25/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/10/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/20/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/3/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/29/2022	

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations