



First Biennial Transparency and Fourth National Communication Report (BTR1/NC4)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10733

Countries

Cook Islands

Project Name

First Biennial Transparency and Fourth National Communication Report
(BTR1/NC4)

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

10/26/2020

Review completed by PM

Program Manager

Satoshi Yoshida

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

EA

Expedited Enabling Activity req (CEO)

Part 1: Project Information

Focal area elements

Is the enabling activity aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as indicated in Table A and as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 6, 2022: We note the below response.

April 14, 2022: The project has changed its scope. Previous comment cleared. While noting the new timeline, both NC4 and BTR1 seem to be submitted in the end of 2025. As TNC was submitted in 2020, NC4 should be submitted in 2024 in line with the four-year cycle. Please provide justifications. Further, please provide a rationale of submitting BTR1 in the middle of the two-year cycle (2024 and 2026).

11/24/2020: Yes, the project is aligned with the climate change focal area strategy.

Please correct the Duration so that it matches the expected start and end dates (in this case it would be 45 months).

Agency Response

May 6, 2022

The CKI submitted its First NC in Oct 1999, Second NC in Apr 2012 and Third NC in July 2020, 12.5 and 8 years apart. Under the proposed project the CKI plans to submit the NC4 under a combined modality with the BTR1 at the end of 2025 consistent with the anticipated timeline required for the approval of the funding request, project implementation, capabilities and decisions 1/CP.21, para 90 and 18/CMA.1 para.4 providing flexibility to Least developed countries and small island developing states to submit first BTR at their discretion, i.e., later than by Dec 2024.

4/4/2022

The project proposal is resubmitted with revisions in project duration. The project duration is 44 months.

12/14/2020:
Corrected in the GEF portal and PIMS+
Project description summary

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
April 14, 2022: The revised table is appropriate in terms of achieving the project objective.

11/24/2020: Yes, the project design in Table B is clear and appropriate.

Agency Response
Co-financing

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
May 6, 2022: Comment cleared.

April 14, 2022: In-kind co-financing amount of \$100,000 from the government is expected. The Co-financing letter's title is NC4, which needs to be revised.

11/24/2020: Cofinancing is not required for Enabling activities, however, an amount of \$150,000 including \$100,000 in-kind from the Government is listed.

Agency Response
May 6, 2022

The title of In-kind co-financing letter amounting to USD\$100,000 has been revised to match the title of the EA (First Biennial Transparency and Fourth National Communication Report (BTR1/NC4)).

GEF Resource Availability

Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 14, 2022: The revised amount is in line with the policies.

11/24/2020: Yes, the proposed GEF financing in Table D is in line.

Agency Response

Are they within the resources available from:

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 11/24/2020: The project is requesting resources from the climate change set-aside.

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 11/24/2020: The project is requesting resources from the climate change set-aside.

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 14, 2022: Yes.

11/24/2020: The project is requesting resources from the climate change set-aside. This amount is available to support this project.

Agency Response

Is the financing presented adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 11/24/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

Part 2: Enabling Activity Justification

Background and Context.

Are the achievements of previously implemented enabling activities cited since the country(ies) became a party to the Convention?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 14, 2022: This section is still valid.

11/24/2020: Yes, this is well elaborated.

Agency Response

Goals, Objectives, and Activities.

Is the project framework sufficiently described?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 6, 2022: Comment cleared.

April 14, 2022: The previous comments are not relevant as the scope of the project has been significantly changed.

On 1.1.3, the tracking of NDC implementation is not mentioned in the headline, and information on indicators to do so is not described in this section.

11/24/2020: Yes, however, please address comments below:

- In the description for output 1.8 it says the NC will be submitted to the UNFCCC on September 2023 while elsewhere it lists the date as June 2024. Please clarify.

- Please comment on the expected timelines for the two reports, considering the last National Communication took 6 years from GEF approval to submission to the UNFCCC. How will this project cut down the implementation time by so much, especially considering the added workload of preparing a BUR in between. We have

seen is difficult for some countries to carry out activities for both reports at the same time.

- Please comment on the Cook Islands' decision to prepare a BUR at this stage considering the new requirements under the Paris Agreement (with the understanding that SIDS and submit at their discretion). It will be important that the BUR is developed and submitted to the UNFCCC ahead of December 2024 in order to benefit from the ICA process, yet experience with other countries has shown that the first BUR usually suffers multiple delays.

- Please comment on the Cook Islands' plans for preparing a BTR, noting that if it aims to submit one by December 2024 (although it is up to its discretion), it may have to request top-up financing after submission of this first BUR to the UNFCCC to attempt to submit a BTR through the NC that will be supported in this project per the guidelines that the GEF has recently prepared. Alternatively, the Cook Islands may wish to prepare a BTR after submission of both its first BUR and fourth NC as a stand-alone project (for submission for example in 2026).

Agency Response

May 6, 2022

Output 1.1.3 is revised to cover the tracking of NDC implementation explicitly in the headline.

4/4/2022

The project proposal is resubmitted with revisions in the project scope. The project is requesting funds for the preparation of NC4/BTR1 reporting. The overall structure of the project components and outcomes is revised.

12/14/2020:

Information corrected in the description for output 1.8. Anticipated date of the Fourth NC to the UNFCCC is June 2024.

Previous experience of the TNC preparation has strengthened institutional, technical and scientific capacity to undertake the Fourth NC and BUR in a timely manner. A dedicated team in Climate Change office with dedicated local experts working in this space and ongoing training have added confidence and assurance of a timely delivery and improved quality of reporting.

While recognizing existing challenges, thanks to the synergies, combining NC and BUR into one project should create a space for concentration of efforts, skills and expertise, rationalize the use of resources and create enabling environment for preparing these reports in a more efficient and effective way.

The Cook Islands will be preparing its first BUR. Inter alia, it is considered an opportunity to learn and prepare for the anticipated reporting under the ETF of the PA - BTRs, through strengthening capacities and building necessary institutional knowledge

and processes. The Cook Islands expects to submit its first BUR by Dec 2023, well before 2024 in order to capitalize on the International Consultation Analysis ICA process as well. Therefore, the Cook Islands will be better prepared and confident to launch into the BTR with lessons learnt from the BUR/ICA experience.

To capitalize on this project experience and continuing the momentum, the Cook Islands is planning to prepare the BTR as a stand-alone document after submitting the Fourth NC and BUR. The implementation of the BTR is expected to start in 2024 year. Plans, modalities and timing on submitting the first BTR will further depend on the progress and results of this project activities as well as timely access to financial support. Options proposed in the GEF guidelines will be carefully assessed and the request for BTR funding will be submitted accordingly in due course.

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

April 14, 2022: The section is still valid.

11/24/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

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

April 14, 2022: The section is still valid.

11/24/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

Monitoring and Evaluation.

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 14, 2022: EA project does not need a budgeted M&E.

11/24/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

Cost Effectiveness.

Is the project cost effective?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 14, 2022: Yes.

11/24/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

Cost Ranges

If there was a deviation in the cost range, was this explained?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

April 14, 2022: The revised cost is still within the maximum costing.

11/24/2020: There has been no deviation.

Agency Response

Part III. Endorsement/Approval by OFP

Country endorsement

Has the project been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 6, 2022: Comment cleared.

April 14, 2022: Yes. However, the title of the project in LOE is different from the project title. Please revise.

11/24/2020: Yes, Mr. Nga Puna has endorsed the project.

Agency Response

May 6, 2022:

The title on the letter of endorsement has been revised to match the project title - First Biennial Transparency and Fourth National Communication Report (BTR1/NC4).

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4/4/2022

The new endorsement letter, dated 30 March 2022, is uploaded in the portal.

Response to Comments

Are all the comments adequately responded to? (only as applicable)

GEF Secretariat Comment N/A

Agency Response

May 6, 2022

Please refer to the responses above.

Other Agencies comments?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

STAP Comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO Endorsement/approval recommended?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

May 9, 2022: Comment cleared.

May 6, 2022: The previous comments cleared. We still do not see the checklist. Please upload it in the document section.

April 14, 2022: Please address the comments above, in particular the discrepancy on the project title. While we received this resubmission on April 13, please prepare the next resubmission at the earliest possible timeline, as the project needs to be circulated to the Council.

11/24/2020: Please address comments above. In addition, we note that the expenditure category is not showing on the Annex A: Project budget table that was pasted onto the Portal. Please fix. Also please reorganize so that it is in order of these expenditure categories as in the example in the Guidelines document (Appendix A: Indicative Project Budget Template, p. 46).

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	11/24/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/14/2022	5/6/2022
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/6/2022	5/7/2022
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations