

Accelerating investment in nature-based solutions (NBS) to help address climate adaptation in Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10961

Countries

Global

Project Name

Accelerating investment in nature-based solutions (NBS) to help address climate adaptation in Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

Agencies

World Bank

Date received by PM

4/28/2023

Review completed by PM

6/22/2023

Program Manager

Tshewang Dorji

Focal Area

Climate Change

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you!

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 GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Please refer to comments under section 3, part II (Project Justification) and accordingly address it.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you, below mentioned comments were addressed

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: It was noted that the co-financing amount has reduced from the PIF stage. Please clarify.

In addition, please provide supporting documentation of the co-financing

GEFSEC, 6/16/2023: Thanks for increasing the co-financing and providing the documentation.
Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you. The co-financing is \$92.5 million, which is more than identified at the submission stage. A co-financing letter is provided.

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 GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes.
cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Updated, GEFSEC, 6/12/2023: The sum of the activities add up to \$110,000 USD and not 100k. Also total in column ?Amount Committed? is missed. Please correct and also include the total for the amount committed.

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: Yes. cleared

?

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you, the PPG section is updated to address these comments.

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Much appreciated for enhanced figure for core indicator 1 & 4. Kindly strive for further improvement during project implementation as well. However, it was noted that core indicator 3 been reduced by half. Please clarify.

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: Cleared with understanding that the actual number will be updated during the MTR

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you for your comment. As we are not going to work directly with client governments but through the IDA projects that we support, we identified a realistic value for the number of

policies we could support through IDA investments and capacity building. However, we expect the actual value may exceed the target. If necessary, this number will be updated at MTR.

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: This is well articulated in the main project document, known as Project Appraisal Document (PAD). cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: This is well elaborated as the annex to PAD. Cleared with request for minor clarification on the number of projects that has potential for NbS under the IDA20. Para 11 of the PAD says 52, while the relevant annex says 62. It will be useful to have consistent number.

GEFSEC, 6/16/2023: Thank you. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you. We have adjusted the figures so that paragraph 11 reflects the same number as annex (62).

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: The proposed alternatives are generally fine. However, please provide the following clarification

1. Please align the proposed project outcomes under the Table B of the CEO Endorsement Request with interventions proposed under various pillar of the PAD.
2. As this project will explore alignment of LDC's climate, environment and development aspirations at a strategic portfolio level, it will be useful to provide clear indication on how the project will explore financing option under GEF-8 LDCF country allocation to complement IDA resources for adaptation impacts in LDCs
3. As noted in the various sections of the PAD, the term NbS refers to whole suites of interventions. In order to develop practical applications of the NbS intervention on the ground for adaptation outcome, it would be useful to consider prioritizing some of the common NbS approaches in the Agriculture, water and energy sector, while anticipating demand driven nature.
4. Also, note with appreciation that NbS has many benefits, including on biodiversity conservation and arresting land degradation. This benefits can be tracked as co-benefit. Building adaptation and resilience to the impacts of the climate change needs to be front and center of this project and may wish to reflect in the PDO indicators accordingly.
5. Under the pillar 1, activity 1.1, it is unclear who are the target audience for technical guidelines, guidance notes on best practices, and policy notes. Please clarify how this will be useful for the stakeholder, including local level and the government functionaries.
6. Welcome Activity 1.2, for developing business case for NbS. Fully agree on the needs of analytics, including CBA and capturing ecosystem valuation to support the business case. However, we would appreciate bit more details on the plans to explore innovative financing of NbS for adaptation.
7. On pillar 2. Please provide further elaboration on track 1 and track 2 support, and how these two support streams are interlinked. Also, please clarify what does "Just-in-time" support mean?
8. Thanks for recognizing importance of capacity building, communication and outreach on the NbS for adaptation for breaking down silos and improve policy coherence at the national level. Therefore, kindly ensure that Activity 2.2 and pillar 3 is comprehensive to address this barrier.
9. Under each pillars, it will be useful to understand who will directly receive the support from the project. For example, if the support is targeted for country team, who are the team (WB team, govt, local stakeholder etc?)

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: Thank you. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you for your comments, please see our responses below (updated project document is submitted for your review, with track changes and clean version):

1. The proposed project outcomes under Table B of the CEO Endorsement Request are adjusted to align with the project pillars as in the PAD.
2. The project team continuously monitors the IDA pipeline and communicates with the Task Team Leaders of each IDA Project in LDCs and with LDCF Secretariat. TTLs will be encouraged to keep communication with the LDC Operational Focal Points on proposed relevant IDA interventions which might be eligible for LDCF support. One of the project's goals is to generate interest in and potential pipeline of the IDA/LDCF blended funding in countries supported by technical assistance and capacity building. Please see page 19 of the PAD. Relevant and highly aligned with LDCF Strategy IDA projects will be offered training on GEF/LDCF project cycle and procedures.
3. Thank you for your comment. We will work with the team specialists from selected sectors (agriculture, urban, water, environment, energy, and transport) within the World Bank, and build on the NBS scan tools and guidelines that the Global Program for NBS (GPNBS) has developed. For instance, GPNBS published A Catalogue of Nature-Based Solutions for Urban Resilience, which provides guidance on the initial identification of potential NBS investments. This guidance document can be used and modified to help supported LDC projects identify relevant opportunities for implementing NBS based on country context and vulnerabilities. In addition, We created Annex 10 with a table highlighting common NBS interventions, the relevant sectors, function, and benefits using the Catalogue. Please see pages 72-74.
4. Thank you for your comment. We agree about the importance of climate change and other benefits of NBS. Due to the nature of the Project, which will contribute to advancing NBS investments through IDA investments, the indicators are designed to measure the impact on investments that include NBS (indicator 1) and can contribute to biodiversity (indicator 2) and adaptation (indicator 3) objectives. Support will only be offered to IDA Projects which have the potential for NBS interventions, can provide benefits for nature, and have a direct positive impact on adaptation and resilience. This will be ensured through the selection process described in Annex 8 of the PAD.

Even though indicators are limited to directly attributable outputs from the support to be provided to IDA investments, the benefits generated from the NBS investments that are generated from this Project will be (i) reported on as part of Project management, (ii) disseminated through the communications activities, and (iii) compiled as case studies under Pillar 3.

In addition, we have added Annex 10 with a list of NBS interventions, their functions (e.g., flood reduction, heat reduction), and benefits, including biodiversity, human health, job creation, etc. Please see pages 73-75 of the PAD.

5. Thank you for your comment. The target audience includes development professionals and practitioners, as well as LDC governments and line ministries. The details have been added to paragraph 39 (please see page 18 of the PAD), and a new table was added on section IV. Beneficiaries providing detailed information on the audience for each Pillar.

6. A financing specialist has been identified to support the team in developing the financing solutions that are needed for the context of LDCs. This will build on previous academic research done by the specialist on the opportunities and bottlenecks for implementing NBS in LDCs. Specific tools will be tailored to each country and/or region, in coordination with the local governments and technical specialists. (These details have been added to the PAD in paragraph 45)

In addition, the project will examine methods to attract other sources of funding from the private sector, such as assisting with grant request preparation, presentations to donors, and identification of potential firms and experts, among other support. Please see paragraph 44 (page 19 of the PAD).

7. Just-in-Time support refers to rapid technical assistance provided to IDA projects and other Bank interventions that require short-term and targeted advice urgently. This happens, for example, when a government requests advice on NBS options to consider as potential investments. (Detail added to PAD in paragraph 46.)

The tracks were designed to target project funds directly into IDA investments. In this sense, Track 1 support will channel most of the funds under Pillar 2 (77 percent of the total for Pillar 2) solely to IDA20 projects under preparation to ensure they incorporate NBS investments. Track 2 will complement this by supporting other activities, for example, early engagements with governments to bring forth opportunities for NBS, or to incorporate NBS activities into Projects that are already under implementation.

8. Thank you, this is noted and will be incorporated in the detailed design of the Capacity Building Strategy and the Communications and Knowledge Management Strategy.

9. We have added a table that outlines beneficiaries per pillar in section IV Beneficiaries, please see pages 24-25 of the PAD. In addition, please note that the World Bank works with the governments through local specialists and teams, and this Project will work through them for engaging local authorities and other stakeholders.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Updated, GEFSEC, 6/12/2023: It is well noted that the project has carried out a baseline stakeholder assessment and provided information on participation of stakeholders and the role of core partners. However, the project does not elaborate on any consultations with civil society organizations in project design or any expected roles of civil society in project implementation. Please provide some justification on the above and the role civil society as ?partner executor of collaborative activities?.

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: Thank you. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you. The team recognizes the relevance of civil society organizations, primarily at the national and local levels. This will be done at a country level following Bank procedures, with the support of the task teams and social specialists of each IDA project supported. We will additionally request IDA Projects that acquire our support to engage in further consultations with Civil Society Organizations. Please note that there is already demand to receive our support from IDA projects which are working closely with Civil Society Organizations and we expect to engage with these organizations in the context of the IDA projects either through capacity building/training elements or through the technical assistance part.

The Project aims to accelerate NBS in, at least, 20 countries out of 46 LDCs, and potentially more. In each of these cases, the civil society organizations will be different and face different contexts. This is why the participation of civil society in each case will be tailored and done through the IDA projects under preparation in each country to incorporate NBS among their investments.

When doing this, the Project leverages into the preparation process of each IDA project, which are already following strict World Bank social and environmental procedures. This includes rigorous and ample participatory processes and specific standards for Stakeholder engagement and information disclosure.

For additional details, please refer to
<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/837721522762050108-0290022018/original/ESFFramework.pdf>

Relevant section in the CEO Endorsement request is updated to reflect this information

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
GEFSEC, 5/31/2023:

GEFSEC, 6/12/2023: Please provide the following clarification

1. There are no references or linkages made to gender/women's empowerment in the Pillars and Outputs sections of the current document. In line with good gender mainstreaming

practice, please integrate / reference gender-responsive actions in the Project Description Summary/Project Components table (Pillars 1-3), as defined in the section on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (and in the Gender Strategy).

2. For ease of reference to the public, please include key elements of its Gender Strategy (Annex 4) in the Section on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (public document and in the Portal).

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: Thank you. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

1. The Gender Strategy is included in the project document, as Annex 4 of the Project Document. As requested, a copy of it has been uploaded to the GEF platform and it can be found in the updated version of the project document.

As advised, we have added a description of gender-targeted activities in the Pillars: Activities 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, and 3.2. A gender expert will be hired to support the implementation of the Gender Strategy, and gender-relevant activities will be implemented in coordination with GPNBS, FOLUR, PROBLUE, and PROGREEN.

The gender aspects will be covered as follows:

Pillar 1 ? Gender targeted tools/products. A gender expert will be hired to support this. Pillar 2 ? Priority will be given to IDA projects that have a high potential for contributing to addressing gender gaps.

As described in Annex 4, tailored capacity building will be offered for gender + NBS + LDC issues.

Pillar 3 ? The role of women in managing landscapes and NBS interventions will be highlighted through the comms strategy.

In addition, please note that all World Bank projects go through a compulsory gender tagging exercise under the supervision of a gender expert who advises and reviews the gender relevant activities of the project. IDA investments that have positive gender tagging are prioritized to receive support from this Project.

2. thank you, this information is added

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. Mostly as stakeholder. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes. cleared.

Update, GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: As approved by the manager during PIF approval, the implementing agency will be assuming executing functions

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes and cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes and cleared.

Updated, GEFSEC, 6/12/2023: Please provide the project's results framework which includes key KM and communications related deliverables.

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: Thank you. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you. The project results framework was updated to include key KM and communications related deliverables:

Presentations held at global/regional events to promote NBS - 8

Knowledge exchange events held on NBS, including technical webinars ? 12

Annual progress report developed and submitted ? 4

Organization event held in coordination with LDC Climate Group ? yes

Newsletters, blogs, and feature stories published - 20

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

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes and cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

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

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes and cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Yes and cleared.

Agency Response

6/13/2023

thank you!

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/31/2023:

Agency Response

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: The project has not fully addressed comments from Germany, especially with regards to the importance of consulting local/indigenous communities. Please address it.

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: Thank you. Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

The response to Germany council member is updated to address your comment as follows:

Thank you, we are in full agreement about the importance of local and indigenous communities. This is reflected throughout the narrative of the Project Document, including the introduction; the design of the communications, knowledge management and training

activities; the beneficiaries and sustainability sections; and the analyses performed for designing the Project (see Annex 2).

The team would like to point out that this Project aims to accelerate NBS in, at least, 20 countries out of 46 LDCs, and potentially more. This will be done by tapping into IDA projects under preparation in each country to incorporate NBS among their investments. When doing this, the Project leverages into the preparation process of each IDA project, which are already following strict World Bank social and environmental procedures. This includes rigorous and ample participatory processes, and specific standards for Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities, among many others. Please note that the consultation and participation of local and indigenous communities is led by the local team in charge of each IDA project, including the social experts assigned to it, so that each one will be tailored to the local context and needs. In addition, we would like to point out that this Project will not finance NBS activities themselves in all the countries, instead, it will serve as cofinancing to promote NBS investments.

For additional details, please refer to
<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/837721522762050108-0290022018/original/ESFFramework.pdf>

To report on this, we will encourage the supported Projects to enhance their participatory processes and request information on IPLCs in the proposals requesting our support. This will help to ensure that the proposals supported by this Project will provide adequate attention to the needs and interests of IPLCs.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/31/2023:
Addressed. Cleared.

Agency Response
6/13/2023

Thank you!

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response
Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you!

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/31/2023: Cleared

Agency Response

6/13/2023

Thank you!

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

6/1/2023: Not yet. Please address the above comments and all other possible policy comments

6/12/2023: Not yet. Please address the above mentioned comments.

GEFSEC, 6/21/2023: The project is ready to be recommended for CEO endorsement.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	6/1/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/12/2023	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

As mentioned during the PIF approval process, the world's 46 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are the most vulnerable to the consequences of climate change. They face significant risks from climate hazards due to least capability to shield themselves from its impacts. Innovative, cross-sectoral solutions are needed to adapt to climate change and protect development gains. Nature-based solutions (NBS) offer a cost-effective approach to adaptation that can also integrate development challenges, align climate change mitigation, biodiversity, and green recovery agendas.

This project will leverage the World Bank's cross-sectoral Global Program on NBS for Climate Resilience (GPNBS) to increase the uptake of NBS for addressing climate resilience in LDCs. In particular, the project aims to capacitate LDCs to consider opportunities to leverage LDCF with International Development Association (IDA) resources. In this regard, the project is targeting to achieve at least 57 IDA 20th replenishment (IDA20) lending projects with NBS element, leveraging at least \$200 million, while training 500 people (50% Women) on accessing and designing investments that incorporate NBS for climate adaptation. The project also expects to directly benefit 5,000 (50% women) while strengthening 10 policies that better incorporate and facilities NBS in LDCs.