

Umbrella Programme for Preparation of National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Update Reports (BURs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10167

Countries

Global (Burundi, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Benin, Dominica, Viet Nam, Yemen, Pakistan, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Suriname, Uganda, Fiji, Gambia, Mauritania)

Project Name

Umbrella Programme for Preparation of National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Update Reports (BURs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

2/27/2020

Review completed by PM

Program Manager

Milena Vasquez

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

EA

Non-Expedited Enabling Activity req (PIF)

Non-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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion

3/11/2020: Yes, the enabling activity is aligned with the climate change enabling activity objectives.

Agency Response

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion

3/11/2020: Overall the project structure and design is appropriate. However, we have the following comments:

- We note that in the summary of changes made, the Gambia report that is no longer being supported was actually its Fourth National Communication not its NC3.
- Under consistency with national priorities, we note that there is reference to CBIT projects in Burundi, Senegal, and Somalia for which there is no submitted CBIT concept. Please remove this reference. Also, we note that Pakistan does in fact have a CBIT proposal submitted.
- Also under consistency with national priorities, we note that the UNEP-GEF TNA Phase IV project also includes Somalia. Please add. We note that Rwanda has submitted its Round 2 TNA too so the checkmark could be replaced by "Round 2" for consistency. We also note that Kuwait has not submitted a TNA so the checkmark should be removed.
- Under Component 2, we suggest to adjust the timeline allotted for the preparation of the BUR projects and NC/BUR projects to enable sufficient time for submission based on recent discussions with the agency. In order to allow up to 6 months for internal approval processes and submission to UNFCCC, we suggest limiting the report preparation time to 14 months and 26 months (or at least lower than the proposed 20 and 32 months). This should enable countries to finish the reports with sufficient time to account for delays in submissions and still maintain the target submission date.
- In Annex A: project results framework, we note the target deadlines for BURs and NCs under the program. We suggest splitting the target into submission and completion to have additional data points to track completion and potential submission delays.

5/15/2020:

- Comment cleared.

- Comment not cleared. Changes were not made to the table regarding CBIT projects on the portal.
- Comment not cleared. Changes were not made to the table regarding TNAs on the portal.
- Comment cleared.
- Comment cleared.

6/15/2020: All remaining comments cleared.

Agency Response

- **UNEP: 27/04/2020**

The summary of changes made, (Pg. 5): - Error Corrected. The CEO ER now reflects the correct information for not only the Gambia, but Fiji and Dominica as well. All the three Countries have NC3 funds and were requesting for NC4 resources.

- **Under consistency with national priorities:** - The CBIT references and the TNA references have been corrected (page 9).

- **Suggestions to adjust timelines under Component 2:** - Considering that many of the countries supported under this programme are LDCs and SIDS, (14 out of 18 countries in total), UNEP will continue to support and encourage all Countries to shorten their project cycle especially during the period of PIP preparation. The text in this section (pg.13) has therefore been revised to cater for the different national circumstances as follows: - *'14-18 months for BURs projects; and 24-28 months for NCs and NC/BUR combined projects.'*

- **Proposed revision on Annex A on splitting the target into submission and completion dates:** - Our response on this relates to the previous comment on varied national circumstances. The following changes have been made in the Doc., to incorporate the technical completion and submission timelines: -

- o Annex A has now been revised to include completion and submission targets (pages 34 and 37).
- o Annex H: Workplan – pg. 63
- o Annex I: Supervision Plan – pg. 64

UNEP's COMMENTS: - 11/06/2020

Done. Reference to CBIT and TNA have been updated in the portal (page 9). Table II. (iii) Reports and Assessments Prepared by Countries under Relevant Conventions

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: Yes, co-financing of \$40,000 in kind from UNEP has been confirmed. Co-financing from the recipient countries in-kind is expected and will be recorded and reported by the agency, but for now it cannot be confirmed. As co-financing is not required for EAs, this is cleared.

Agency Response

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: The project budget has increased to \$10,110,480 due to the change in participating countries and reports to be supported. The amount continues to be in line with the amount allowed for each NC and BUR this umbrella program will support. This change represents an increase of 2% and therefore is in line with policies as a minor amendment.

Agency Response

Noted

Are they within the resources available from:

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: Yes, the amount requested is available in the climate change focal area set aside.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: Yes, the financing is adequate and cost-effective.

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

Goals, Objectives, and Activities.

Is the project framework sufficiently described?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: Yes.

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: Each country will carry out a comprehensive stakeholder analysis and mapping while they prepare their Project Implementation Plans and each executing agency will hold a project inception workshop where the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders will be mapped out. Annex G specifies key arrangements and CSO participation. Comment cleared.

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: During the preparation of their Project Implementation Plans, countries will include a gender analysis. These plans also include budget lines to include specific support to linkages between gender and climate change priorities. Comment cleared.

Agency Response

Monitoring and Evaluation.

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

3/11/2020: Yes, however, we note that financial audits have been included in the M&E budget. These are part of the PMC. Please revise.

5/15/2020: There seems to have been confusion over this comment. We just wanted audits to be removed from Annex F: M&E budget and workplan, as according to GEF guidelines, financial auditing falls under execution functions funded by the GEF under the PMC and not part of the M&E budget. The way audits were included in the original budget submitted was fine (please revert back).

6/15/2020: Comment cleared.

Agency Response

UNEP: 27/04/2020

Revision made.

The project duration has been slightly shortened, resulting in reduced number of annual Audit cycles for the NC and NC&BUR projects from 5 to 4 cycles. This has decreased the total Audit costs from US\$ 205,000 initially proposed to US\$ 170,000 in the revised package.

This Audit costs has now been included under the PMC, resulting in the PMC being more than the recommended 10% of each project's sub-total. The PMC proposed has taken into consideration (i) project duration as well as (ii) the lowest funds needed to sustain project personnel and other overhead costs. We therefore request GEF's approval of this, as any further reduction of the PMC will negatively impact the ability of the participating countries to execute these projects.

The costs proposed is as follows; -

Project Type = Revised PMC	Description of PMC Budget Breakdown
BUR Project = US\$ 39,500	Project Duration: - Yr. 2020 – Yr. 2023. No. of Annual Audits: - 3 annual Audits @ \$2,500 = US\$ 7,500 Other PM related costs: US\$ 32,000
NC Project = US\$ 55,450	Project Duration Yr. 2020 – Yr. 2024. No. of Audits: - Reduced from 5 to 4 annual Audits = US\$ 10,000 Other PM related costs: US\$ 45,450
Combined NC/BUR Project = US\$ 87,450	Project Duration Yr. 2020 – Yr. 2024. No. of Audits: - Reduced from 5 to 4 annual Audits = US\$ 10,000 Other PM related costs: US\$ 77,450

We have also noted that the GEF NC & BUR Policy documents[1]¹, that Parties refer to during the PIP preparation, excludes the Audit costs from the PMC. We therefore request your guidance/update on this Policy Doc, which is posted on the UNFCCC website.

[1] The BUR and NC guiding Policy documents had the Audit costs separated.

https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_Policy_Guidelines_for_the_financing_of_Biennial_update_reports_for_Non-Annex_1_Parties.pdf

UNEP: 11/06/2020

Updated. Audit costs have been excluded from Annex F – pg. 59 on Monitoring and Evaluation; and we have reverted to the way Audits were included in the original budget breakdown as presented in PG. 55 – 58.

Cost Effectiveness.

Is the project cost effective?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

Cost Ranges

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: As this project is an umbrella program supporting a large number of SIDS and LDCs it is requesting an additional 3% of the project cost (equivalent to \$294,480) to provide additional execution support to these 14 countries as necessary. Cleared.

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion

3/11/2020: The new countries that are part of this project are Guinea-Bissau, Kuwait, Rwanda and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Letters of endorsement from these countries have been submitted and checked against the GEF database. We also note that there is now a new OFP for Pakistan, yet the correct OFP endorsed it at PIF.

5/15/2020: Noted.

Agency Response

[UNEP: 27/04/2020](#)

[Letter of Endorsement from the new GEF OFP of Pakistan, Ms. Naheed Shah Durrani dated 13th April 2020 attached](#)

Response to Comments

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

GEF Secretariat Comment

3/11/2020:

Project Execution Arrangements:

- We note the request from Afghanistan and Yemen for additional execution support from UNEP. This is cleared.
- However, we also noted a letter of request for additional execution support to Kuwait. Under Institutional framework for project implementation, the executing entity for Kuwait is shown to be the Kuwait Environment Public Authority, yet in the following page (p. 28 in ProDoc) it mentions UNEP will support project work in Kuwait. This is not consistent and it is not cleared. Please revise.
- We note that Annex G incorrectly includes information for project execution arrangements for Fiji and not Kuwait. Please fix.

Submission of previous reports: We confirm that all participating countries in the amended program have submitted their previous reports. Cleared.

Detailed information per country: additional information per country on institutional arrangements, CSO engagement, and coordination with other ongoing activities has been provided in Annex G. Cleared.

5/15/2020:

Project Execution Arrangements: Information regarding Kuwait has been updated throughout. Comment cleared.

Agency Response

[UNEP: 27/04/2020](#)

- **Annex G** has now been updated with Kuwait's institutional arrangement, and Fiji have been excluded.

- **Annex G. & Information on project implementation for Kuwait is now consistent.** Information on Institutional Arrangement updated to show the collaboration between the Kuwait Environment Public Authority and the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia - throughout the Project Document – pg. 27, pg. 61. 5. Additional information in Annex G, for Kuwait updated as well, in pg. 16 – 19.

Other Agencies comments?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

3/11/2020: Yes, comments from the US, Canada and Germany have been adequately addressed. We note there is an additional comment from Norway-Denmark that was not included, yet it does not require a response. Please add it to the table nonetheless.

https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/work-program-documents/GEF_C.56_compilation_council_comments_2.pdf

5/15/2020: Comment cleared.

Agency Response

[UNEP: 27/04/2020](#)

The comment from Norway-Denmark have been added to the table in Annex 2 (pages 41-42).

STAP Comments

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 3/11/2020: N/A

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO Endorsement/approval recommended?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

3/11/2020: Not yet. Please address comments above.

5/15/2020: Please address remaining comments.

6/15/2020: All remaining comments cleared. P.M. recommends technical clearance.

Review Dates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

Response to Secretariat comments

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

The objective of this project is to support 18 governments (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Benin, Dominica, Fiji, Gambia, Mauritania, Pakistan, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Suriname, Uganda, Viet Nam, Yemen, Burundi) to prepare and submit National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Reports (BURs) under the UNFCCC. The project is in line with GEF's climate change mitigation focal area strategy objective 3 - *Foster enabling conditions to mainstream mitigation concerns into sustainable development strategies*.

The goal of the project is to continue supporting developing countries in preparing NCs and BURs in a coordinated manner, using the umbrella program approach to streamline project approval and funds disbursement. Considering that countries are in different phases of NC and BUR preparation, the GEF funding will support SNC, TNC, NC4, NC5 and/or BUR1, BUR2 or BUR3 preparation. Ten countries are requesting support for NC preparation (Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Vietnam); four countries are requesting support for BUR preparation (Azerbaijan, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Uganda); and four countries (Afghanistan, Kuwait, Benin and Yemen) are requesting to combine NC and BUR preparation.

The project has 3 components:

- i. Preparation of Project Implementation Plans (PIPs) for NCs and BURs
- ii. Preparation of NCs and BURs
- iii. National stakeholders' involvement and institutional arrangements for preparation of subsequent BUR and NC

It will support assessments of national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, GHG mitigation, and vulnerability and adaptation to climate impacts. Further, 14 of the 18 countries the program is supporting are LDCs and SIDs, which will receive enhanced administrative and technical support.