

Strengthening governance and ecosystem connectivity for biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods in the Dja landscape

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11242

Countries

Cameroon

Project Name

Strengthening governance and ecosystem connectivity for biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods in the Dja landscape

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

6/28/2024

Review completed by PM

11/21/2024

Program Manager

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Project Type

FSP

CEO

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 19, 2024

Yes

Agency Response

b) Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

October 24, 2024

Addressed.

July 19, 2024

The reasoning of the CFB IP is based on BD and CCM being the two principal objectives of the IP approach.

Now, depending on the region and the considered country projects, the ratings can be adjusted. Here, LD is also selected as principal objective. It is potentially possible, but please provide the rationale. However, having three focal areas considered as principal objectives may also reflect a lack of focus of the project and a risk of dispersal of resources in too many directions. Please, provide the rationale for the three selected focal areas as principal objectives.

Agency Response

11 September 2024

We acknowledge comments from the GEF Secretariat on LD. LD is now rated as a significant objective, NOT as principal objective. Furthermore, the description of LD drivers (expansion of agro industries, illegal logging and slash-and-burn subsistent farming practices etc.) is found from pages 8-10 in section A - project rationale. The degraded forest areas already earmarked by the project for FLR activities is 10,000 ha for restoration using agroforestry techniques, NTFPs etc.

2. Project Summary.

- a) Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected outcomes?**
- b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?**
- c) [If a child project under a program] Does the project summary include adequate and substantive link with the parent program goal and approach?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 4, 2023

Addressed.

October 24, 2024

Thanks for the improvement of the summary. There are however still elements complete or correct:

- Please update the carbon value (45,328,170).
- There is still no mention that this project is part of the GEF8 Congo Forest IP. The ToC is adjusted from the PFD one, and the levers of transformation are not mentioned. Please, correct.
- Thanks to its inclusion in the Congo Forest IP, the project benefited from additional resources, especially for KM and exchanges and coordination with other country based projects, and the Regional Coordination Project (RCP). We would please like to see these aspects included in the summary.

July 19, 2024

- The way to use the GEF8 templates for CEO endorsement is visibly not understood: The document is far much too long and is taking too many directions that weaken all the demonstration. The CEO endorsement needs a serious cleaning. Please, refer more accurately to the questions and the guidance under each section. The sections A and B should be developed on a reasonable number of pages (the guiding notes say 3-5 pages), not 45 and 31 pages.
- We appreciate the deep knowledge of the writers who definitely have a huge knowledge on the region and Cameroon. However, in some cases, it does not help: the way you provided long texts, long sentences, mixing generalities and long descriptions is at the origin of repetitions and multiple diversions which do not help understanding the rationale and the reasoning to the proposed result framework. Please, a deep revision and simplification are needed.
- General comment: we remind that the GEF finances additional activities to contribute to the generation of global environment benefits. It means that we need to understand 1) the starting point (the baseline) and 2) the activities from cofinancing partners in view of 3) justifying the added value of proposed GEF activities. Several aspects related to the baseline and cofinancing are available, but not put in a dynamic context to figure out the added value of GEF activities. The general impression is that some sub-components, outputs, or activities, look like isolated or stand-alone aspects without connection to the baseline and cofinancing. All the information is probably there (we do not need more information, we need a much shorter document), but this is the reasoning that needs a deep revision. A better reasoning will bring modifications to some outputs and activities. These changes will bring modifications to the budget.

There are different elements of information in the summary and the text that are not consistent:

- 10% of women beneficiaries in the text vs. 50% in the Core Indicator 11. Please, correct and justify the choice, develop the actions to promote gender responsiveness.
- The final carbon targets are ten times those proposed at concept level (358,684,452 tCO₂e of GHG emissions mitigated). These values need to be double-checked and explained (assumptions, reasoning, and values). For information, with these numbers, Cameroon would represent more than the two-thirds of the carbon targets from all the other regions (5 regions and 33 countries). We can reasonably think there is one or several mistakes in the estimation. Please, correct.
- Structure of the document: It is surprising to find the **Incremental Reasoning** after the description of **Project Outcomes, Outputs and Activities**. Actually, it contributes to the perception that there is a problem of reasoning in the project design: The reader needs to understand the incremental reasoning (=justifying the added value of GEF financed activities on the top of the baseline situation and in complement of cofinancing opportunities) before reading the description of outcomes, outputs, and activities. Several outputs and activities seem out of context, stand alone, without being connected to the existing baseline, cofinancing opportunities, or even the context of the Congo IP and its Regional Coordination Project. Please, see the revisions below on the outcomes, outputs and activities.

Agency Response

28.10.2024

Concerning the Carbon Value in the project Summary: This has been updated and now read 45,328,170.

Concerning the reference to be made: (i) in the Project summary, on the participation of this project in the GEF8 Congo Forest IP, and (ii) on transformation levers in the ToC: The Project Summary and ToC diagram have been updated accordingly.

Concerning the reference to be made in the project Summary on KM, exchanges and coordination with other country-based projects, and the Regional Coordination Project (RCP): The project summary has now been updated accordingly.

11 September 2024

- The Project Rationale section has been revised and pages substantially reduced to recommended limits of the CEO Endorsement guidelines (5.5 pages). Similarly, Section B have now been reduced to a reasonable number of pages (6 pages).

- In reference to baseline and co-financing of ongoing projects, this has been specifically addressed in the Baseline scenario (section A project Rationale) and Section B - project description (specifically in outputs description), and put in a dynamic context to figure out areas where the GEF resources shall provide the additionality, as follows:

o In section A: Baseline on Policy, institutional frameworks, CSOs (including ACDEF -Cameroon, APIFED, TF-RD, Repaleac, Aiwo, etc.), relevant investments (from CBI funded Ebony Project, etc.) are provided from pages 8-10. Relevant Investments is complemented with Table 2. Overview of relevant initiatives/projects and linkages to the project, to be found in the following sub section: ?Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project? (Table 2). The above baseline, which include significant co financing is linked to the output?s description and the proposed budget.

o In Section B: Outputs description is now aligned with information provided in Section A and in Table 2.

- In reference to the comment on the 10% of beneficiaries, we appreciate the comments of the reviewer, the 10% has now been corrected to read 50% of women as beneficiaries as mentioned in the Core Indicator 11 (page 48).

- The Carbon calculations using the EXACT tool have been corrected with some modifications of the assumptions. The revised assumptions can be found in the file titled: Appendix EX-ACT Results GEF8 Dja landscape project.

- Concerning the structure of the document, we would like to refer to the revised CEO endorsement document with presentation of the different project components, outcomes, outputs and activities

where the added value of GEF financed activities on the top of the baseline situation and in complement of cofinancing opportunities, is clearly articulated.

- The Project Rationale has been fundamentally reviewed to articulate the main issues recommended in CEO endorsement document guidelines with global environmental problems, underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context and relevance to the project.

3. Project Description Overview

- a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?**
- b) [If a child project under a program] Is there a project Theory of Change that is aligned and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?**
- c) Are the components, outcomes, and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?**
- d) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?**
- e) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**
- f) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 18, 2024

Addressed.

November 15, 2024

We take note that the pmc represents exactly 5% of the technical budget.

However, the cofinancing ratio for technical components is 1:9.5, while the cofinancing ratio for pmc is 1:8.

Per policy and guidelines, the spirit of GEF projects is to have a comparable ratio for the technical components and pmc. We can acknowledge specific situations, but you need to justify them. Moreover, a large part of cofinancing is expressed as investments mobilized" It seems that the cofinancing ratio for pmc may be improved. Please, correct or justify.

November 12, 2024

Addressed.

October 24, 2024

To be reviewed with a revised budget

July 19, 2024

- In view of reducing the text of the main requested chapters (to 3-5 pages each as requested in the template), please focus the problem analysis to the considered Dja landscape in the TRIDOM transboundary area. Remove the generalities at the country level, as the project does not propose a national approach and will not respond to all these elements. The general framework is interesting, but the information is applicable to the whole country and not enough accurate to help in the reasoning. Please, modify and deeply shorten the information. We also remind that the concept was already approved, at this stage, we need a justification of the detailed result framework, the activities, and the changes with the initial concept, but all generalities we find in books, literature, or are borrowed from other projects, are not needed. Please, reduce the quantity and increase the quality of information.
- Remove the repetition and the expressions, as 'Congo forests are the Lungs of Africa'? This expression is scientifically weak, not referenced, and actually pretty wrong.

Theory of Change

- The ToC should be a local translation of the Congo IP PFD's Toc applied to the context of Cameroon and the Dja landscape. In the proposed document, the ToC is developed out of the Congo IP and does not refer to the four IP levers of transformation. Please, revise and better anchor this project in the Congo IP.

Project Components

Component 1

- Outcome 1. Local governance for integrated and sustainable landscape management: please confirm there is no duplication with other investments either from the government or partners (WWF for instance). It seems that the local plans are already financed with existing multi-stakeholder platforms. Explain the added value (and not duplication) of the proposed outcome.
- The project will invest in reinforcing decentralized local management institutions?. Please, explain the role of the GEF, the role of domestic finance and the Sustainability of the approach.
- UNEP has developed and currently implement several projects in the region and specifically in Cameroon on land-use planning at landscape level. We would like to see how you will integrate the lessons from past and current on-going projects. The section on lessons and best practices should be significantly improved for all components. Please, revise.
- We understand that consultative platforms and mechanisms to facilitate knowledge and experience exist, but are weak. Please, demonstrate how this project will do better?
- Formulation of Activities: 1.2.1 Advocate? 1.2.2 Advocate 1.2.3 Strengthen women leadership capacities? 1.2.4 Strengthen? 1.2.5 Facilitate? These formulations are not enough accurate at the scale of activities. They are not specific, measurable, reachable, identified in the time, or accessible (SMART). It is impossible to associate these activities to the budget to figure out the value for money or even to evaluate these activities later. Please, correct.

- The comment is applicable to all activities in the result framework. For the time being, we are not able to connect the activities with the different budget lines. We should be able to do it at the next round. Thanks.

- We make the assumption that this information is available to a certain extent as the budget includes very specific amounts from few thousands dollars to more than 3.3 million USD. It is difficult to discuss these amounts without more accurate information on the activities. Please, revise.

Component 2

- At this stage, we should find an information to understand the reasoning and the coherence between the principal objective of the project, its outcomes, components, outputs, and activities. All scientific information, references, numbers should be transferred to the description or the problem analysis. It will be a way to reduce the length of the document.

- 2.1.3. ?Reinforce collaboration between landscape technical partners and other stakeholders to participate in biodiversity conservation (PA, inter zone) and monitoring efforts?: the formulation is too general to represent an activity the GEF can finance. Please, adjust or remove.

- Output 2.2 on restoration and output 2.3 on OECM: there is a problem in the analysis of the baseline situation, the activities from partners, and proposed activities for this project. We are not at the stage to do more studies on landscape restoration and agroforestry, but based on GEF5 and GEF6 lessons and current GEF7 activities under the Congo IP in Cameroon, there are opportunities to replicate or scale up existing initiatives in the surrounding of the Dja. Please, revise the justification.

- Allow us to remind that the GEF7 Congo IP project put 1.1 million of USD with CRELICAM/Taylor Guitars and there are opportunities both for reinforcing the experience in the nine current villages and extend the approach further. This request was expressed to us by the authorities at two regional workshops in Douala and Kinshasa. Please, revise. Report the revision in the budget too.

- The only study on this experience that might be financed is to assess the feasibility to the approach to the Ebony tree range area, including in Southern Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of Congo, and Central Africa. It should be financed by the regional coordination project. If you are interested in studies on this topic, you should have started to exchange with the Congo Basin Initiative, including UCLA, IITA, and the University of Yaounde. There are very probably opportunities, but the project does not have to start from scratch - this kind of analysis is expected at PPG.

- We wonder if activities 2.1.2 (Map migratory corridors for large wildlife), 2.1.5 (Tools for monitoring forest cover, biodiversity, carbon stocks and agricultural productivity), and 2.3.3. on climatic, forestry and agro-economic data) are well placed in the component 2, rather than in KM or M&E. Please, justify and demonstrate there is no duplication.

- We recommend completing the justification of 2.1.5 with the regional coordination project that is involved in methodological tools, as well as the GEF MSP with IUCN, FAO, UNFF, Griffith University on mapping and GIS tools for primary forests. Please, revise

- 2.1.4. Develop human rights protocols to protect the rights of IPLCs: Aren't these aspects taken in the safeguards? Please, confirm or modify.

- Several projects, beyond the GEF, are addressing community forest plans. Please, well justify the need for GEF to add such activity than the 2.2.3 to ?Provide technical assistance in the revision and

implementation of community forests management?. Beyond the formulation (which is not a activity, see comment above), this activity may be a replication of several projects and partners.

- Output 2.1.3: We are very pleased to see an output on OECM. However, this intention is not reflected in the Core Indicator 4.5 on OECM. Please, revise.
- The formulation of activities 2.3.1 (Identify and recommend conservation actions for HCVs and other critical conservation sites for consideration as OECMs and alignment with SDGs) and 2.3.2 Carry out NCA of identified HCVs and critical conservation sites including their contributions to climate change effects) is not convincing. We need more about the reasoning to justify these activities (beyond reformulation). Especially 2.3.3 on NCA in critical sites: this activity is just not credible without more context (please, remind that the GEF is involved in WAVES and now GPS, with Columbia University in the NCA project).

Component 3

- There are not enough practical elements to figure out what partnerships with the private sector, IPLCs, the notion of green enterprises may succeed. Please, provide the starting point (baseline), the role of cofinancing, and the added value of GEF resources on this topic. Please, share the experience of UNEP in this field, especially in the Congo. We would be pleased to eventually see a role for the UNEP Financing Initiative.
- Output 3.4 about a gender responsive financing mechanism: several options are mentioned (PES, carbon finance, trust fund?), based on a general knowledge on financing mechanisms. However, to take only one example with the PES, the experience at the GEF shows that when service providers, service beneficiaries, and the type of transaction are not identified at the concept level, there are few chances to see any PES in place at the end of the project. So, all the proposed text is a theoretical note, but not applied to the current landscape and the considered project. Please, revise.

Activity 3.4.3: Do you think that this project is the best place for developing protocols under the Carthagén and Nagoya protocols? There are specific projects for that. We are seeing a risk of dispersal of resources in too many directions, with too many consultant reports, without enough empowerment and actions on the ground. Please, correct.

Component 4

- Output 4.1 ?Applied research studies including on gender and IPs executed and results disseminated?: on the margins, we can authorize some activities related to applied research under certain conditions. However, the GEF has been defined to generate global environment benefits. Please, clarify why the GEF should be involved in these studies.
- Activity 4.1.1 ?Carry out a baseline study on the state of landscape, forest restoration and other targeted applied?. In our understanding, this study was expected at PPG level: Is there a need at this stage? Please, confirm and/or correct.
- In the description of the output, it is written that ?the project will set up database for monitoring and information dissemination at landscape, national and global levels?? We need to better understand the intention as the GEF does not want to be associated in this project to develop new database or

instruments that are not well defined (baseline, cofinancing, sustainability) or that will become GEF dependent for sustainability. Please, revise and see potential synergy with existing tools and database, as OFAC does.

Agency Response

16.11.2024 ? Response to comments of 15.11.2024

- In relation to the co-financing ratio for PMC, it has now been corrected, and the ratio is now comparable.

04.11.2024 - Response to comments made on 28.10.2024

GEF Budget format has been revised, and Bank fees have been removed.

28 October 2024

GEF Budget format is has been attached

11 September 2024

- Concerning Text reduction: Generalities at the country level have been removed as recommended. The problem analysis is now focusing on the Dja landscape.
- The expressions: "Congo forests are the Lungs of Africa" is no longer found in the text.

Concerning the Theory of Change:

- The ToC now read as a local translation of the Congo IP PFD's Toc applied to the context of Cameroon and the Dja landscape (see page 26).
- The ToC intervention logic which can be found from pages 26-27, now clearly apply and integrate (in components) all four system transformation levers of the GEF-8: Governance and policies, multi-stakeholder dialogues, Innovation and learning, and Financial leverage

Component 1

Concerning the following comment:

- "Outcome 1. Local governance for integrated and sustainable landscape management: please confirm there is no duplication with other investments either from the government or partners (WWF for instance). It seems that the local plans are already financed with existing multi-stakeholder platforms. Explain the added value (and not duplication) of the proposed outcome".

Our response: there will be no duplication of project investments in landscape governance but rather complementarity. Under GEF 7, WWF is supporting the development of a Local Land Use Management and Sustainable Development Plan (PLADDT) in 2 councils: the Ngoila and the Mintom councils. Almost 9 more councils around the Dja Biosphere reserve needs LMB to avoid resources misuse and depletion. While these PLADDT will be developed in the coming years under GEF 7, the value addition of the GEF 8 investment will be to set up Municipal Landscape Management Commission (MLMC) as institutional multistakeholder bodies embedded in the councils' structures, which will enable collaborative assessment of the implementation of PLADDT and other landscape initiatives. With support of Rainforest Alliance, the project will build on the results and lessons achieved under the GEF 6 COBALAM project in setting up MLMC complemented with an intermunicipal Landscape Management Bodies (LMB) at landscape level. The requested GEF grant will neither support the development of PLADDT, nor the PCD (Council Development plan), but will analyze the existing ones, identify options for the conservation and sustainable management of the Dja landscape and set up/or strengthen multistakeholders decentralized local management institutions to support their implementation.

Concerning the following comments:

- The project will invest in reinforcing decentralized local management institutions?. Please, explain the role of the GEF, the role of domestic finance and the Sustainability of the approach.

- - UNEP has developed and currently implement several projects in the region and specifically in Cameroon on land-use planning at landscape level. We would like to see how you will integrate the lessons from past and current on-going projects. The section on lessons and best practices should be significantly improved for all components. Please, revise.

Our response: The GEF Grant investment will take advantage of existing regulations related to the functioning of municipalities and collaboration among them to institutionalize the multi stakeholders' coalitions at local and landscape level for their sustainability. It will also advocate and invest for better involvement of women and social minorities groups in this local governance bodies to secure their rights and benefits. Under Output 1.1 (and activity 1.1.3), the project will develop a long-term funding mechanism for the MLMC/LMB with the participation of municipalities and other stakeholders including finance institutions and other government actors such as the Ministry of Decentralization and the Special Fund for equipment and intercommunal intervention (FEICOM) with whom a dialogue is ongoing under the COBALAM project to invest in sustainable landscape management in the municipality with priority management zones.

This project will also benefit through the activities proposed in output 2.3.3 derived from NCA and ILUMP methodologies developed by USFS in GEF 7 Regional project.

Concerning the integration of lessons from past and current on-going projects: As mentioned above, the results and lessons achieved under the GEF 6 COBALAM project will be used to set up MLMC and LMB). More lessons and best practices of the GEF 6 COBALAM project have been added in the text where appropriate. Additionally, lessons learnt from implementing the GEF 7 projects in Cameroon in the Dja, as well as from other UNEP GEF 7 Projects across the region, will be capitalized and captured in the execution of this project (see description under Output 1.1)

- Overall:

In component 1: This project will build on past and ongoing initiatives on LUP carried out by different partners: WWF, AWF, ZSL and MINEPAT-PADI-DJA project on participatory land use planning and management in northern Dja. It will also build on the GEF6 COBALAM experiences related to the creation of Landscape Management Boards (LMB) at the level of Local councils.

The project will also build on ACDEF Cameroon work with the local stakeholders, especially the IPLCs, which put a strong emphasis on the bottom-up participatory land use planning and management model that allows IPLCs to appraise the spatiotemporal distribution of available lands and resources for improved local governance, and which serves as the basis for ascertaining access rights;

- In component 2: The project will replicate and upscale lessons learnt, best practices and success models from initiatives such as the work of CBI with the ebony project on improving the livelihoods of IPLCs through NTFP. It will build and create synergies with the following NGOs : WWF, ZSL, AWF, working on wildlife corridor protection and habitat connectivity, OECMs, FLRs and other related activities in the inter zone.

- In Component 3: The project will build on experiences of the Ebony project in training of beneficiary groups in FLR techniques, AAFEBEN project on NTFPs transformation. The project will capitalize on ongoing initiatives with NTFP and cocoa value chains implemented by international and local partners in the landscape; Rainforest Alliance, Tropical Forest and Rural Development, ACEDEF that is working with local associations in NTFP value chains for black pepper; okok; rondelle; quatre-c?t?; djansang and Moabi. The project will collaborate with these partners to upscale and replicate NTFP value chain models to other suitable sites in the landscape. Still in Component 3: The project will capitalize on budding initiatives with private sector, being piloted by partners such as WWF (Jengi Tours and Ebo Tours on Ecotourism), Rainforest Alliance on Cocoa Certification ? TELCAR Cocoa). With support from UNEP finance initiative, the Dja landscape project will capitalize on these initiatives to build IP&LCs-private sector partnerships in the domain.

Concerning the following comment: ?We understand that consultative platforms and mechanisms to facilitate knowledge and experience exist, but are weak. Please, demonstrate how this project will do better?

Our response: The KM component of the project is cross cutting. The lessons learnt in ILUMP, inclusive and gender responsive LUP processes including other best practices will be shared with the stakeholders through multi stakeholders? consultative platforms and other avenues. Concerning the consultative platform, this project will do better, as outlined above, by developing a long- term funding mechanism for the MLMC/LMB with the participation of municipalities and all relevant stakeholders including finance institutions.

As outlined under Output 1.1: this project, with support from Rainforest Alliance, will engage with the Cameroon Special Fund for Equipment and the Intercommunal Intervention (FEICOM) and the Ministry of Decentralization, to invest in sustainable landscape management and their governance structure. It will develop a long- term funding mechanism for the MLMC/LMB with the participation of municipalities and other stakeholders including finance institutions and other government actors. This project will do better, because the review of existing land management tools at municipal level will be done through collaboration with councils, the design of local regulatory and policy environment for the establishment of landscape management board (LMB) and municipal landscape management commission will be based on the Free, informed and prior consent of the municipal council, and others traditional authorities, and training, capacity building programs will be provided to ensure the effective functioning of these tools. All these info have been provided under Output 1.1.

Concerning the following comment:

- ?Formulation of Activities: 1.2.1 Advocate?1.2.2 Advocate 1.2.3 Strengthen women leadership capacities?.1.2.4 Strengthen? 1.2.5 Facilitate? These formulations are not enough accurate at the scale of activities. They are not specific, measurable, reachable, identified in the time, or accessible (SMART). It is impossible to associate these activities to the budget to figure out the value for money or even to evaluate these activities later. Please, correct.

Our Response: Activities under output 1.2 have been reformulated

Concerning the following two comments:

- ?The comment is applicable to all activities in the result framework. For the time being, we are not able to connect the activities with the different budget lines. We should be able to do it at the next round. Thanks?.

?We make the assumption that this information is available to a certain extend as the budget includes very specific amounts from few thousands dollars to more than 3.3 million USD. It is difficult to discuss these amounts without more accurate information on the activities. Please, revise?.

Our response: The overall budget has been reviewed taking into account revised activities and proposed activity portfolio of executing partners. The revised budget is now aligned with output description/activities.

Component 2

Concerning the following comments:

- ?At this stage, we should find an information to understand the reasoning and the coherence between the principal objective of the project, its outcomes, components, outputs, and activities. All scientific information, references, numbers should be transferred to the description or the problem analysis. It will be a way to reduce the length of the document.

Our response: All scientific information, references, numbers have been removed from Section B of the CEO document.

- Concerning comment related to: 2.1.3. ?Reinforce collaboration between landscape technical partners and other stakeholders to participate in biodiversity conservation (PA, inter zone) and monitoring efforts?: the formulation is too general to represent an activity the GEF can finance. Please, adjust or remove?. ?

Our response: It has been removed from the Workplan.

Concerning the following three comments:

? Output 2.2 on restoration and output 2.3 on OECM: there is a problem in the analysis of the baseline situation, the activities from partners, and proposed activities for this project. We are not at the stage to do more studies on landscape restoration and agroforestry, but based on GEF5 and GEF6 lessons and current GEF7 activities under the Congo IP in Cameroon, there are opportunities to replicate or scale up existing initiatives in the surrounding of the Dja. Please, revise the justification?:

?Allow us to remind that the GEF7 Congo IP project put 1.1 million of USD with CRELICAM/Taylor Guitars and there are opportunities both for reinforcing the experience in the nine current villages and extend the approach further. This request was expressed to us by the authorities at two regional workshops in Douala and Kinshasa. Please, revise. Report the revision in the budget too?.

? The only study on this experience that might be financed is to assess the feasibility to the approach to the Ebony tree range area, including in Southern Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of Congo, and Central Africa. It should be financed by the regional coordination project. If you are interested in studies on this topic, you should have started to exchange with the Congo Basin Initiative, including UCLA, IITA, and the University of Yaounde?. There are very probably opportunities, but the project does not have to start from scratch - this kind of analysis is expected at PPG?.

Our response: Output 2.2 has been revised and now include the following with activity 2.2.1 Develop and implement participatory restoration plans for agricultural farms, fallow lands and degraded areas in community forests to support long-term production and income generation for local communities in the landscape. We are grateful for the comment provided by the reviewer on CRELICAM/Taylor Guitars and the opportunities both for reinforcing the experience in the nine current villages and extend the approach further. Output 2.2 (activities 2.2.3 and 2.2.4) and Output 2.3 (activity 3.1.2) as now described now provides the opportunity to build upon their work under GEF 7 with WWF and scale up under this GEF 8 project.

Concerning the following comment:

?We wonder if activities 2.1.2 (Map migratory corridors for large wildlife), 2.1.5 (Tools for monitoring forest cover, biodiversity, carbon stocks and agricultural productivity), and 2.3.3. on climatic, forestry and agro-economic data) are well placed in the component 2, rather than in KM or M&E. Please, justify and demonstrate there is no duplication?.

?We recommend completing the justification of 2.1.5 with the regional coordination project that is involved in methodological tools, as well as the GEF MSP with IUCN, FAO, UNFF, Griffith University on mapping and GIS tools for primary forests. Please, revise?.

Our response: To avoid duplication, under activity 2.1.2, The project will rather organize field testing and operationalize tools developed by the GEF regional coordination project to map migration corridors. Furthermore, previous activity 2.1.5 (Tools for monitoring forest cover, biodiversity, carbon stocks and agricultural productivity) is now placed under output 4.1 (activity 4.1.3) where ONACC (The National Observatory on Climate Change) will be tasked to test and adapt, tools (developed by the RCP and other project) for monitoring forest cover, biodiversity, carbon stocks and agricultural productivity.

Concerning the following comment:

?2.1.4. Develop human rights protocols to protect the rights of IPLCs: Aren't these aspects taken in the safeguards? Please, confirm or modify?.

Our response: We thank the reviewer for their comment. Indeed this aspect of human rights protocols is effectively already captured under 1.2.5 Develop and operate a grievance mechanisms, safeguard of community rights and compliance to human rights protocols. Therefore Activity 2.1. 4 has been deleted.

Concerning the following comment:

? Several projects, beyond the GEF, are addressing community forest plans. Please, well justify the need for GEF to add such activity than the 2.2.3 to ?Provide technical assistance in the revision and implementation of community forests management?. Beyond the formulation (which is not a activity, see comment above), this activity may be a replication of several projects and partners.

Our response: The value addition of the GEF in the update of community forest plan is to support the rolling out of carbon measurement as part of training and data collection during the update of community forests management plans to generate data for biodiversity and carbon financing and to report on change in community forest carbon stock over time. The activity on management plans is now under output 3.4 (activity 3.4.3) and is justified by the need to mobilize additional investments for sustainably managed community forests. There is an additional activity (activity 3.4.3) under Output 3.4 to update of the manual for the management of community forest to consider new forest and fauna law published on the 24th July and new development including biodiversity and carbon benefits.

Under Output 2.2, we have the following activity 2.2.5 Provide technical support to the network of community forests (located in non-permanent forest domain) in Mintom to access sustainable forest management certification and set up a legal and certified timber shop for better market access and reduce illegal logging. The rationale behind this activity is that:

despite the market opportunities in the artisanal logging sector with the community forestry sector, these opportunities are not exploited by the investors in the domestic markets. The local timber trade market is not properly structured and make it difficult for national woodworkers engaged in sustainable wood products markets to have access to legal and sustainable timber. Existing functional models of private sector partnership with local communities such as Taylor Guitar ebony project are rare. The project will seek to upscale and replicate the model to cover other communities and wide range of NTFPs. The project will facilitate the organization of meetings between community-based forest enterprises and national woodworkers and investors from the logging and agro industrial sectors. The objective is to establish mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance sustainable value chains that ensure long term protection of the forests and generation of significant incomes for the wellbeing of the communities and sustainable development in the region. Therefore, to support full implementation of these partnership, the project will provide technical assistance to set up a legal and certified timber shop for better market access and reduce illegal logging.

Concerning the following comment:

?Output 2.1.3: We are very pleased to see an output on OECM. However, this intention is not reflected in the Core Indicator 4.5 on OECM. Please, revise?.

? The formulation of activities 2.3.1 (Identify and recommend conservation actions for HCVs and other critical conservation sites for consideration as OECMs and alignment with SDGs) and 2.3.2 Carry out NCA of identified HCVs and critical conservation sites including their contributions to climate change effects) is not convincing. We need more about the reasoning to justify these activities (beyond reformulation). Especially 2.3.3 on NCA in critical sites: this activity is just not credible without more context (please, remind that the GEF is involved in WAVES and now GPS, with Columbia University in the NCA project)?.

Our response: As mentioned in the baseline scenario sub section of the CEO Endorsement (page 10), this project is expected to capitalize through lessons learnt and best practices from GEF FAO project which supported community forestry in the littoral, center and south regions. The innovation of this project was mapping HCVs within community forests for protection and assessment of carbon stocks within other portions of the community forest.

For output 2.3, OECM is not yet reflected in the Core Indicator 4.5, because: Cameroon just recently approved the concept of 30x30 in line with CBD target 3. Consequently, there are no OECMs approved by the government yet. Officially designated OECMs sites are classified with IUCN code. In the case of Dja project, the project will proceed with identification and mapping of OECMs sites using IUCN approved methodology. Their official designation will be done following recommended procedure. This language is reflected in the following activities under output 2.3 as follows:

2.3.1. . Identify and recommend conservation actions for HCVs and other critical conservation sites for consideration as OECMs and alignment with SDGs

2.3.2. Carry out NCA of identified HCVs and critical conservation sites including their contributions to climate change effects

2.3.3. Develop best practices and guidelines for the upscaling of the OECMs.

On activities 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.3.3, we want to emphasize that this project is about building connectivity between existing PA network in Dja landscape and the inter zone which is vastly under pressure from logging and other extractive activities. Activity 2.3.3 is very critical as the NCA would provide practical framework that can be used for monitoring biodiversity, climate status and trends, and would contribute significantly in the maintenance of ecological connectivity between PA and the Inter-zone.

Any attempt to redress current trends in deforestation although still relatively stable requires combination of strategies and actions among which are the above mentioned activities. Until date, there is little done in forest landscape restoration in Dja landscape despite increasing areas of degraded forests. Not many logging companies are mapping and protecting HCVs in their concession despite existing regulations on this.

Component 3

Concerning the following comment:

?There are not enough practical elements to figure out what partnerships with the private sector, IPLCs, the notion of green enterprises may succeed. Please, provide the starting point (baseline), the role of cofinancing, and the added value of GEF resources on this topic. Please, share the experience of UNEP in this field, especially in the Congo. We would be pleased to eventually see a role for the UNEP Financing Initiative.

Our response: As mentioned under Component 3 (page 18), the green enterprises development in the Congo basin between the private sector and the IPLCs is still at embryonic stage. However, there are budding initiatives being piloted by partners such as WWF (Jengi Tours and Ebo Tours on Ecotourism), Rainforest Alliance on Cocoa Certification ? TELCAR Cocoa). In the pipeline, there is GIZ Green Economy project funded by EU-Nature Sud-Est and and ZSL-BLF project that would support private-IPLCs partnership in Green Enterprises. With support from UNEP finance initiative, the Dja landscape project will capitalize on these initiatives to build IP&LCs-private sector partnerships in the domain. These experiences along with the success of the GEF 6 COBALAM project have been integrated in Component 3 description. Regarding UNEP experience in the Congo Basin, this can be illustrated through ongoing projects managed by Rainforest Alliance on Cocoa Certification ? TELCAR Cocoa.

Concerning the following comment:

?Output 3.4 about a gender responsive financing mechanism: several options are mentioned (PES, carbon finance, trust fund?), based on a general knowledge on financing mechanisms. However, to take only one example with the PES, the experience at the GEF shows that when service providers, service beneficiaries, and the type of transaction are not identified at the concept level, there are few chances to see any PES in place at the end of the project. So, all the proposed text is a theoretical note, but not applied to the current landscape and the considered project. Please, revise.

Activities

Activity 3.4.3: Do you think that this project is the best place for developing protocols under the Carthagen and Nagoya protocols? There are specific projects for that. We are seeing a risk of dispersal of resources in too many directions, with too many consultant reports, without enough empowerment and actions on the ground. Please, correct.

Our response: Concerning the PES, we recognize that service providers and the beneficiaries were not identified at the concept stage. In addition the regulatory or institutional for PES is under development. However, considering the huge potentials of carbon stocks in the Dja Landscape and the donor interest (EU, Wildlife Works Carbon -WWC), there is a strong baseline to explore opportunities for the development of Carbon projects. Therefore, for a more focus of the project, all actions related to REDD+, PED and ABS have been removed. The project will focus under output 3.4, on supporting the development of regulatory framework for climate action to support the financing of carbon/biodiversity credits projects that benefit local communities in the Dja landscape.

Component 4

Concerning the following comment:

?Output 4.1 ?Applied research studies including on gender and IPs executed and results disseminated?: on the margins, we can authorize some activities related to applied research under certain conditions. However, the GEF has been defined to generate global environment benefits. Please, clarify why the GEF should be involved in these studies?.

Our Response: Output 4.1 has now been reformulated to read:

Applied research studies to support locally led and landscape level nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation executed and results disseminated

Concerning the following two comments:

? Activity 4.1.1 ?Carry out a baseline study on the state of landscape, forest restoration and other targeted applied?. In our understanding, this study was expected at PPG level: Is there a need at this stage? Please, confirm and/or correct?.

?On activity 4.1.1 The existing data and information on state of the landscape and FLR is incomplete. A comprehensive and up to data assessment of state of the landscape is required to facilitate LUP processes and other important management actions?.

Our response: We agree that we don't need additional study on forest restoration at this stage. To address this concern, all activities under output 4.1 have been reformulated. Activity 4.1.1 now reads:

4.1.1 Test and adapt the FIA and develop in partnership with the HCVN and partners a technical platform for carbon measurement in community forest to improve accessibility for communities to collect, compile and analyze biodiversity and carbon data and to support community-based carbon/biodiversity credits projects

Concerning the following comment:

?In the description of the output, it is written that ?the project will set up database for monitoring and information dissemination at landscape, national and global levels?? We need to better understand the intention as the GEF does not want to be associated in this project to develop new database or instruments that are not well defined (baseline, cofinancing, sustainability) or that will become GEF dependent for sustainability. Please, revise and see potential synergy with existing tools and database, as OFAC does?.

Our response: The project will no longer set up database, as it will be GEF dependent for sustainability. Instead, it will collaborate with other initiative to test and adapt existing tools that can support carbon/biodiversity/landscape data collection to support results and impacts monitoring as part of Output 4.1 Applied research studies to support locally-led and landscape level nature based solution for climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation.

4. Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?

b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and

how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?

c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
October 24, 2024

Addressed.

July 19, 2024

Baseline projects

- Deeply revise the way to present the baseline projects.
- There is no interest to have an endless list of projects of very various sizes, sometimes closed more than 10 years ago. Please select the projects the GEF8 investment will focus, remove the old projects or those who did not generate satisfying outcomes (Interest PNDP and PSFE? No mention of the GEF component; Interest of the GEF5 FAO project?)?
- We would have been pleased to see a better/real collaboration with EU financed projects ? maybe involve the RCP? to be developed.
- Table of projects: you included a project that was cancelled before its end (GEFID 9155). What is the interest?
- Please, check the number of land-use planning instruments at landscape levels in all these projects... It might be useful to include an analysis of lessons and best practices. Without such assessments, you may design planning instruments either already existing or that do not work for institutional or structural reasons? Please, complete.

Stakeholders

- In the description of stakeholders, please streamline and simplify (there are two sections on CBI for instance).

Agency Response
11 September 2024

Concerning the following comment:

?Deeply revise the way to present the baseline projects.

- There is no interest to have an endless list of projects of very various sizes, sometimes closed more than 10 years ago. Please select the projects the GEF8 investment will focus, remove the old projects or those who did not generate satisfying outcomes (Interest PNDP and PSFE? No mention of the GEF component; Interest of the GEF5 FAO project?)?.

Our response: As already mentioned above, in reference to baseline and co-financing of ongoing projects, this has been specifically addressed in the Baseline scenario (section A project Rationale) and Section B - project description (specifically in outputs description), and put in a dynamic context to figure out areas where the GEF resources shall provide the additionality, as follows:

o In section A: Baseline on Policy, institutional frameworks, CSOs (including ACDEF -Cameroon, APIFED, TF-RD, Repaleac, Aiwo, etc.), relevant investments (from CBI funded Ebony Project, etc.) are provided from pages 8-10. Relevant Investments is complemented with Table 2. Overview of relevant initiatives/projects and linkages to the project, to be found in the following sub section: ?Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project? (Table 2). The above baseline, which include significant co financing is linked to the output?s description and the proposed budget.

In Section B: Outputs description is now aligned with information provided in Section A and in Table 2.

Additionally:

- Information on baseline projects Dja landscape has been updated by removing outdated projects and a column added on the Programmatic synergies with Dja landscape project (see Table 2).

Concerning the following comment:

? We would have been pleased to see a better/real collaboration with EU financed projects ? maybe involve the RCP? to be developed?.

? Table of projects: you included a project that was cancelled before its end (GEFID 9155). What is the interest?

Our response:

- During the project design phase, there were consultations with EU and EU funded projects (GIZ, AWF, EFI) to build programmatic synergies. In terms of, how collaboration will take place with Financed projects:

Under Component 1, Output 1.1: this output led by Rainforest Alliance for its implementation, will work closely with a number of partners including AWF to design and operationalize inter-institutional LMB at municipal and landscape level. A Sub-grant will be issued to AWF to (i) expand geographic scope, extend capacity building to additional communities and protected areas, invest in technology: Utilize advanced monitoring tools (TRACTSITES) and technologies to improve data collection and analysis within identified corridors to improve the management of species and habitats

in the landscape, use data from mapping out corridors to develop guidelines for corridor management in the landscape and support MINFOF and partners for its application, and organize sensitization campaigns to indigenous people and local communities to improve their understanding of the new laws. This is reflected in the Workplan and the budget on the following outputs and activities: Output 2.1 activities 2.1.1, 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 on wildlife monitoring tools, techniques and management of wildlife corridors, and sub grant to AWF to deliver on output 3.1 (activities 3.1.4).

- The GEFID 9155 was suspended and is undergoing revision to integrate pertinent activities and safeguards before its re-launching by the GoC and UNDP. The interest to mention it here is that: it will focus on the TRIDOM landscape, which include the Dja segment. The Dja project will seek synergies with this project on the issues (safeguards and others) that is being integrated into its design.

Concerning the following comment: Please, check the number of land-use planning instruments at landscape levels in all these projects... It might be useful to include an analysis of lessons and best practices. Without such assessments, you may design planning instruments either already existing or that do not work for institutional or structural reasons? Please, complete.

Our response: As recommended, a new activity under component 1 is added and reads as follows:
1.3.1 Analyze existing land use planning instruments at municipal level (PLADDT, PCD, LMP etc), identify options for the conservation and sustainable management of the Dja landscape and develop monitoring tools to support their implementation

Concerning the following comment:

?Stakeholders

- In the description of stakeholders, please streamline and simplify (there are two sections on CBI for instance)?.

Our response: Stakeholders list has been updated and streamlined in the document.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?

b) [If a child project under a program] Is the Theory of change aligned with and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region? [If a child project under a program] Does the description include how the alternative aligns with and contributes to the overall program goal and approach?

d) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been

selected over other potential options?

e) **Incremental/additional cost reasoning:** Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?

f) **Other Benefits:** Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?

g) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?

h) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this FSP/MSP)?

i) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?

j) **Gender:** Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and description/s?

k) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

l) **Policy Coherence:** Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?

m) **Transformation and/or innovation:** Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? [If a child project under an integrated program] Are the specific levers of transformation identified and described? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
Addressed.

July 19, 2024

Project benefits

The project benefits are developed in several parts, with very qualitative information, sometimes in very long sentences, or mixing elements that are not directly related. For instance:

- ?Global environmental benefits will also emerge from capacity building of stakeholders in sustainable management forest practices, conflicts resolution mechanisms, multi stakeholders? dialogues, implementation of human rights protocols, benefit sharing mechanisms, setting up and administration of local forest based enterprises on NTFPs and other natural resource use initiatives and collaborative management processes??
- Or just after ?The project will complement other ongoing biodiversity-enabling activities, generate and share knowledge and experiences, and lessons learnt through multi stakeholders? platforms and with regional and national child projects. Finally, the GEF financing will play a catalytic role, which will increase the capacity of Cameroon to meet its obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Please, revise and focus on the questions asked for each section. More straightforward responses are expected.

- Figure 8: tree problem: The figure is not readable, please update.
- Figure 11: not readable either. Please, update.
- Figure 12 is missing.
- The text on ECOFAC and AWF is not complete. to remove or to be completed.

Gender

- We appreciate the reformulation of outcomes and outputs to better integrate gender responsiveness.
- Now, the intention should be translated into actions and targets. The number of female beneficiaries is low and the plan to target female beneficiaries is not explained. Please, revise.

Transformation, Sustainability & innovation

You wrote "Finally, the project has to invest in long term innovative funding mechanisms through carbon financing to ensure long term financing of biodiversity conservation, sustainable economic growth and development in the project area. Some of the post project funding mechanisms are described below, and will be explored under Output 3.4". However, to our knowledge, the minimum has not been done to allow this project succeed in this field of long term innovative funding mechanisms. Thank you for the general synthesis on existing mechanisms, as PES, trust funds, carbon finance, etc. However, at the scale of the GEF portfolio, the experience shows that IF beneficiaries, service providers, transaction mechanisms, and origins of funds, are not identified at concept level, THEN, there are few chances that such innovative mechanisms can be operational before the end of the project. We would have welcome such idea, but if the correct work has not been done during the PPG, this will not just happen. Correct or adjust.

Agency Response

11 September 2024

Project benefits

In reference to comment on project's benefits, the section has substantially streamlined to focus on qualitative information on the subject

The project's global and local environmental benefits have been reviewed and better articulated in the text. Please, refer to sub section: Project Benefits on page 12. In nutshell, this project will deliver global environmental benefits which include ensuring sustainability and growth of globally significant biodiversity targeting emblematic species such as forest elephants, and western lowland gorillas, giant pangolins, etc. in the inter zone. The conservation of these endemic species is not only

important to Cameroon, but also worldwide, since they are endangered and emblematic. GEF 8 interventions will therefore mitigate the global biodiversity losses from deforestation through planned forest restoration activities, protection of HCVs and wildlife corridors in the vast inter zone. Other global environmental benefits of the project will include sustaining ecosystem and landscape integrity, soil conservation, habitat consolidation, and maintenance of forest and vegetation cover. The benefits from carbon offsets recalculated using EX-ACT tool. The recalculated carbon offset is carbon offset of the project is -45,328,170 tCO₂-e and without the project is 54 034 545 tCO₂-e.

- Figure 8 was not a Tree Diagram but a map, however it has been dropped.

- Figure 11 has been dropped and there was no figure 12.

- The texts on ECOFAC and AWF have been restructured.

GENDER

The outcomes and outputs were reformulated to integrate gender responsiveness activities. The ratio of female to male beneficiaries has been revised to 50% as in the core indicators.

Transformation, sustainability and innovation

We appreciate the comments of the reviewers. As already mentioned above concerning the PES, we recognize that service providers and the beneficiaries were not identified at the concept stage. In addition, the regulatory or institutional for PES is still under development. However, considering the huge potentials of carbon stocks in the Dja Landscape and the donor interest (EU, Wildlife Works Carbon -WWC), there is a strong baseline to explore opportunities for the development of Carbon projects. Therefore, for a more focus of the project, all actions related to REDD+, PES and ABS have been removed. The project will focus under output 3.4, on supporting the development of regulatory framework for climate action to support the financing of carbon/biodiversity credits projects that benefit local communities in the Dja landscape.

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project

a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?

b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?

c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).

d) [If a child project under an integrated program] Does the framework for coordination and collaboration demonstrate consistency with overall ambition of the program for transformative change?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 12, 2024

Terms of reference for the Project Director: in addition to the coordination and administrative tasks, we are seeing the technical profile who is needed to prepare, deliver, and monitor the outputs under the different components, ensure the compliance of all technical agreements with adequate provisions, provide technical support, accompany each contracting party, ensure collaboration at landscape level (integration), and propose adaptive management strategies. We accept the financing under different technical components in addition to pmc. Cleared.

- We take note of the need for site managers and their specific role for integration and inclusivity. Cleared.

- We take note of the explanations and the changes in the partnerships with the different partners. Cleared.

October 24, 2024

- to be reviewed with a single version of the budget.

July 19, 2024

Project arrangements

- The Project Coordination Group, with 17 entities (without potential additional national partners) do not seem realistic and operational. Please, revise

- What is the interest of site managers, paid by the project, and then who will stop their activities when the project close? These positions would be better seen covered by the cofinancing and especially the Ministries in charge (Environment or Forests depending on their focus).

- Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this child project? Please, respond to the question

- In our understanding, based on discussions with the team from the Ministry at the Regional Workshop in Douala in 2022, following a visit of the Minister around the Dja NP, and again in March 2023 in Kinshasa, we understood that the Authorities wanted to replicate and scale up the agroforestry experience from CBI initiated by CRELICAM/Taylor Guitars and supported by the GEF7 Congo IP project with WWF-US.

- Our understanding was to see the GEF8 Congo IP project supporting the scaling up of an experience that works, with the RCP supporting a feasibility study at the scale of the Ebony tree range area covering Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Central Africa Republic.

- However, the proposed activities and related budgets are not at the expected level. To be discussed and revised.
- We need to understand more accurately the level of intervention of the different selected partners. There is a risk of dispersal in dividing the resources in so many partners and with so huge differences (Rainforest Alliance: 3.183m; ACDF: 1.728m; ZSL: 402,750USD, 508,944 USD again with Rainforest Alliance, AWF: 367,000 USD; CBI: 113,000; PCLG: 108,500; multiple CSO: 407,000 USD; ONACC: 149,500
- APIDEF is often mentioned in the project analysis about value chains. Replications are proposed, but we do not see the budget implications. Please, clarify.
- Aside actions on the ground, the budget includes several consultancies for relatively high amounts and experts on the same subject that sound as duplications and need to be justified: restoration opportunities/221,500 and Forest Restoration Expert for 86,500 USD and Technical assistant on Restoration for 576,000 USD; Conservation and OECM/134,500 USD; Indigenous Specialist and Indigenous communication both for 77,420 USD.

Agency Response

04.11.2024 - Response to comment of 28.10.2024

GEF version of the Budget format is attached.

28 October 2024

Single version of the GEF Budget format is attached.

11 September 2024

Project arrangements

Concerning the following question:

- The Project Coordination Group, with 17 entities (without potential additional national partners) do not seem realistic and operational. Please, revise
- What is the interest of site managers, paid by the project, and then who will stop their activities when the project close? These positions would be better seen covered by the cofinancing and especially the Ministries in charge (Environment or Forests depending on their focus).
- Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this child project? Please, respond to the question

Our response: The project teaming arrangement has been reviewed to make it adapted to field context as illustrated in the organogram. The project Coordination Group now include national partners.

As to the role of the Site Managers: We believed that their role is very critical for the success of the project, institutional ownership, coordination and reporting; supporting the application of project principles in the achievement of project roles, ensuring the representativeness of women indigenous & peoples in project activities and benefits; supporting information production tailored to respond to local needs; guiding the use of resources on the ground and finally; identifying services providers and partners in the implementation.

Furthermore, the ToRs of Site managers has been reviewed (see annex 5e) to reflect the supervisory and coordination role in the field and reporting to the National Director.

The GEF Agency is the IA for this project, and will not play an execution role.

Concerning the following question:

? In our understanding, based on discussions with the team from the Ministry at the Regional Workshop in Douala in 2022, following a visit of the Minister around the Dja NP, and again in March 2023 in Kinshasa, we understood that the Authorities wanted to replicate and scale up the agroforestry experience from CBI initiated by CRELICAM/Taylor Guitars and supported by the GEF7 Congo IP project with WWF-US.

- Our understanding was to see the GEF8 Congo IP project supporting the scaling up of an experience that works, with the RCP supporting a feasibility study at the scale of the Ebony tree range area covering Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Central Africa Republic.

- However, the proposed activities and related budgets are not at the expected level. To be discussed and revised

Our response: The answer to this question has already been provided in the ?Agency Response? section under Component 2.

Concerning the budget related to scaling up the Ebony tree experience, it has been substantially increased from \$113,000 previously to now \$ 1 million.

.

Concerning the following comments:

- We need to understand more accurately the level of intervention of the different selected partners. There is a risk of dispersal in dividing the resources in so many partners and with so huge differences (Rainforest Alliance: 3.183m; ACDF: 1.728m; ZSL: 402,750USD, 508,944 USD again with Rainforest Alliance, AWF: 367,000 USD; CBI: 113,000; PCLG: 108,500; multiple CSO: 407,000 USD; ONACC: 149,500

- APIDEF is often mentioned in the project analysis about value chains. Replications are proposed, but we do not see the budget implications. Please, clarify.

- Aside actions on the ground, the budget includes several consultancies for relatively high amounts and experts on the same subject that sound as duplications and need to be justified: restoration opportunities/221,500 and Forest Restoration Expert for 86,500 USD and Technical assistant on Restoration for 576,000 USD; Conservation and OECM/134,500 USD; Indigenous Specialist and Indigenous communication both for 77,420 USD.

Our response: The list of consortium partners includes national and international NGOs with earmarked activities and allocated resources based on their respective technical expertise. As mentioned above, there is no risk of dispersal, as the decision to engage with these partners is based on (i) the baseline and 2) the co financing cofinancing from these partners.

As to APIFED: There is now within the budget, a subgrant planned to be earmarked to APIFED to deliver on output 1.2.1. on awareness raising to mobilize women and men representatives in local governance structure and outputs 3.1 (activity 3.1.1) and 3.2 (activity 3.2.5) to support the uptake of sustainable agriculture practices and NTFP in the municipality of Djoum.

As to the consultancies: The list of specific consultancies has been reviewed to avoid duplication. The total consultancy cost for the duration of the project now add up to \$ 250k. The consultancies related to restoration opportunities, conservation and OECM have been removed, as it is already part of the sub grant to be issued to CBI Ebony project.

5.3 Core indicators

- a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)? [If a child project under a program] Is the choice of core indicators consistent with those prioritized under the parent program?**
- b) Are the project's targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable? Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 18, 2024

Addressed.

November 15, 2024

Please, insert the METT scores for the PAs in the CI1.

November 4, 2024

Addressed.

October 24, 2024

- We take note of the significant reduction of carbon gains from 358,684,452 tCO₂e of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions mitigated to 45,328,170. Please, reflect this change in all the documents, including the summary where the big number remains.

July 19, 2024

Core indicators

- Please, provide the METT scores for the three considered PA.
- - 1 million ha under 4.2. please, explain and justify.
- 4.3 (SLM?) and how did you set up a target of 1 million ha?
- There is a missed opportunity to report on OECM (CI 4.5): if there are conservation activities out of protected areas under 4.2 and 4.3, they should be reported on 4.5. Please, revise, and define OECMs.
- - From 33 million tCO₂e at concept level to 358,684,452 tCO₂e of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions mitigated: Please, confirm your assumptions and reasoning and details of carbon calculations. There is probably a mistake in the reasoning or the calculation. Please, correct.
-
- - Beneficiaries: on one hand, there is a total target of 12,500 of female (50%): you need to explain the actions you will put in place to reach 50% of women. It is an ambitious target, but not credible without further explanation. Please, complete.
- On the other hand, in other parts of the text, among the 25,000 beneficiaries (including Baka indigenous minority) including Baka indigenous minority, it is mentioned that about 10% of the beneficiary population in the project area will be women and the indigenous Baka... Please, correct and make the information coherent. The mention of 10% of women as beneficiaries seems very low and miss the expected ambition of reducing gender inequality. Please, clarify and adjust the number of female beneficiaries.

Agency Response

16.11.2024 ? Response to comments of 15.11.2024

- The METT scores for the PAs have been inserted in the CI1.

28 October 2024

Concerning the revised Carbon emission mitigation potential, the project summary has now been updated accordingly.

11 September 2024

Core indicators

On core indicators, METT scores are as follows:

- Dja Biosphere Reserve: 41
- Mengine Gorilla Sanctuary : 34
- Ngoyla Wildlife Reserve : 52 (as of 2022)

See: Appendix 13a GEF7-BD-TrackingTool-Protected Area Projects, Appendix 13b METT-Score _Ngoyla Reserve_ Wildlife Reserve

- In reference to the 1million ha, it is the estimated surface area of Small holders plantations, community forests, council forests, agroindustry?s and forest concessions, as originally outlined in the Expression of interest submitted for this project. The project under output 2.2 and the following activity will aim to achieve this objective:

2.2.1 Develop participatory restoration plans for agricultural farms, fallow lands and degraded areas in community forests to support long-term production and income generation for local communities in the landscape ensuring the both the inclusion of women and youth and the use of transformative approaches

- As to concerns about missed opportunity to report on OECM (CI 4.5), and the following statement: if there are conservation activities out of protected areas under 4.2 and 4.3, they should be rereported on 4.5. Please, revise, and define OECMs

Our response: A response has been provided above under Component 2 / output 2.2.

Concerning the following comment:

? From 33 million tCO₂e at concept level to 358,684,452 tCO₂e of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions mitigated: Please, confirm your assumptions and reasoning and details of carbon calculations. There is probably a mistake in the reasoning or the calculation. Please, correct.

Our response: For the carbon calculations, there were errors on surface area to be considered and assumptions made. In the new calculations on page 20 (figure 4) under Project Rationale, the carbon-mitigation potential of the project is estimated at -45,328,170 tCO₂.

The estimated carbon offset of project is -45,328,170 tCO₂-e and without the project is 54 034 545 tCO₂-e . Over the 20-year accounting period of the project, estimated annual carbon-balance ranges between -359 747,38 tCO₂-e (1st year) and -2 518 231, 69 tCO₂-e (20th year) while the cumulative

carbon-balance per year ranges between -359 747,38tCO₂-e (1st year) and ? 42 809 938,73 tCO₂-e (20th year) for a total surface of 718 676 ha.

The assumptions considered for the calculation are the followings:

- The assumptions made for the Dja Biosphere Reserve, Mengame Gorilla Sanctuary, and Ngoyla Wildlife Reserve are based on the anticipated improvements in forest degradation and management resulting from the project. It is assumed that the project will have a positive impact on the overall management of these protected areas, reducing the level of degradation from "Low" to "Moderate?".
- For the targeted area under restoration in the Dja Biosphere Reserve (DBR) and its extended forest landscape: 10 000 ha. The previous land use in this 10,000 ha area was annual crop cultivation. The project aims to afforest and reforest an area of 10,000 hectares. Without the project, no afforestation or reforestation activities would take place. By introducing afforestation and reforestation to this area, the project is expected to enhance carbon sequestration, improve local biodiversity, and contribute to overall landscape restoration.
- For the 1,000,000 ha: The project will train and support municipalities managing council forests, community forest managers, agricultural producers and other land users for the implementation of improved production practices on about 1,000,000 ha of lands in the Dja landscape. Through these activities, the project will provide a substantial foundation for improved land use practices, with potential for carbon sequestration. However, the effect is not direct. Hence it is not included in the carbon balance calculations.

Concerning the following two comments:

?Beneficiaries: on one hand, there is a total target of 12,500 of female (50%): you need to explain the actions you will put in place to reach 50% of women. It is an ambitious target, but not credible without further explanation. Please, complete.

- On the other hand, in other parts of the text, among the 25,000 beneficiaries (including Baka indigenous minority) including Baka indigenous minority, it is mentioned that about 10% of the beneficiary population in the project area will be women and the indigenous Baka... Please, correct and make the information coherent. The mention of 10% of women as beneficiaries seems very low and miss the expected ambition of reducing gender inequality. Please, clarify and adjust the number of female beneficiaries?

Our response: In reference to beneficiary women populations, this was an error with the estimate. It is 50% of 12,500 of the beneficiary population. The proposed project activities in all four components are gender responsive particularly components 3 and 4. The projects not only aims at empowering women to participate in decision making bodies output 1.2 in particular but also their direct participation in natural resource management through NTFP value chains as earmarked in most of the activities of component 3.

The error in beneficiary populations has been rectified as in above explanations on percentage of women beneficiary. The beneficiary population is 12,500 inhabitants and not 25,000.

5.4 Risks

- a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?**
- b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?**
- c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
November 18, 2024

The rating has been revised in the portal and is now coherent with the ESF.

July 19, 2024

Addressed.

Agency Response

5.5 For NGI Only: Is there a justification of the financial structure and of the use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy?

b) [If a child project under an integrated program] Is the project adequately aligned with the program objective in the GEF-8 programming directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Addressed.

July 19, 2024

- The text should include a justification based on the GEF8 programming strategies and the GEF8 IP Congo. Please, check the documents.

Agency Response

11 September 2024

In reference to GEF8 programming strategies, the alignment of the project with GEF8 programming is articulated in the text in the sections A and C in particular of the proposal. Please refer to section C page 52-54.

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 19, 2024

Yes

Agency Response

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Addressed.

July 19, 2024

Alignment of the project

- The table related to the KMGBF is welcome.

- However, the text is too long and an important aspect is missing: The anchorage in the Congo IP and the alignment with the GEF8 CFB IP is missing. It is not a good sign for a project developed by the Congo IP Lead Agency (see GEF8 programming strategies, p41-50 and the Congo IP PFD). Please, revise.

Agency Response

11 September 2024

In reference to the narrative on project alignment, this has been revised and shortened.

As to the alignment with the GEF 8 CFB IP, it is anticipated that, the project contribute to the following transformations of the natural system:

- Expanded protection of the CFB primary forests by means of protected areas and OECMs.
- Increased understanding and valuing of natural capital.
- Expanded forest-friendly production.
- Improved policy coherence and institutional and legal frameworks that support primary forest conservation;
- Increased contributions to global environmental conservation and Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

This language is reflected on page 20 as follows:

In view of the above, the project will actively contribute to Expected Global Environment Benefits of GEF-8 strategy through the following Core Indicators as follows:

- CI 1. Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (million ha)
- CI 4. Area of landscapes under improved practices (million ha)
- CI 3. Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (million ha)
- CI 6. Greenhouse Gas emissions mitigated (million metric tons of CO₂e)

Additionally, the GEF8 Strategy also suggests that project and program design should include ?transformational levers?, This is now clearly captured in the intervention logic of the project from pages 26-27.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Yes

Agency Response

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 19, 2024

Yes

Agency Response

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 19, 2024

Yes

Agency Response

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 19, 2024

Yes

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: Is the proposed GEF financing (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
December 3, 2024

Cleared

- Comment on cofinancing: The informal English translation of the PADI letter is included and logged in the Documents Tab.

- Comments on gender:

1. A correction has been brought to the text and the expression ?gender-transformative stakeholders? has been removed.

2. The wrong expression 'gender-led' has been replaced by 'women-led': We can now read 'Component 3 will address the barrier of insufficient women-led green enterprises and incentives for indigenous peoples and local communities and women to conserve biodiversity and adoption of sustainable land use management practices'.

3. In the result framework, the expression has been modified following the suggestion from the reviewer. We can now read 'perception of satisfaction of inclusive gender'. The Means of verifications have also been revised with 1) Surveys and Questionnaires across different gender groups, 2) Report from focus group discussions with participants from different gender groups, and 3) One-on-one interviews providing detailed insights into individual experiences and satisfaction levels.

4. The Output 2.1.1 has been reformulated as follows: 'Number of local stakeholders, including women, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, who have strengthened capacities and improved collaboration with partners for the conservation and monitoring of protected areas and buffer zones, in accordance with human rights protocols'.

5. The M&E Plan (Appendix 6) has been revised to show how the Gender Action Plan (GAP) is effectively integrated into the M&E framework and that its progress will be systematically monitored and reported during the MTR and TE.

- In Reference to comment related to the budget table in the CEO Endorsement Request portal view which is off the margins: A revised budget table has been attached.

- About the staff:

o The position of Project Director/Team Leader will be appointed by the government and will serve as the institutional anchor of the project. Its costs have been removed from the budget.

o The GEF/UNEP experience in Cameroon has shown the importance to have a position of Project Technical Coordinator over the project lifetime. The position is maintained, charged to the project components and pmc. The costs have however been significantly reduced to US\$ 7,000 per month (as opposed to \$10,000/month).

o The total costs are now \$504,000, representing 4.7% of the project budget (against 9% in the previous version of the budget for the two initial positions).

I agree with these revisions showing a significant effort of budget reduction but maintaining the technical support that is needed.

December 2, 2024

Quality control: Please, address the following items:

1- On Co-financing (comment provided by Omid): Please request the agency to submit an English translation of letter of cofinancing for the PADI Dja as the source of cofinancier.

2- On Gender (comment provided by Verona): Please ask the Agency to review and amend some gender-specific references that are unclear, vague or difficult to operationalize. Agency may also wish to provide explanations of what these terms mean should they want to retain the reference. Some examples are below (not exhaustive):

- Under TOC, there's a reference to "gender-transformative stakeholders". It is unclear what this means.

- ?Component 3 will address the barrier of insufficient gender led green enterprises. Did they mean women-led? Or enterprises led by other genders? If the latter, can they identify these enterprises led by other genders?

- There are references in the RF of indicators worded as:

?Perception of satisfaction of inclusive gender?. Again, not clear what this means. Maybe rephrase to ?perception of satisfaction of different gender groups?? Again, it depends on what they are trying to capture here. Under this indicator, the means of verification is: Reports of Indigenous and local communities ? This does not capture the term gender.

Another indicator in RF: 2.1.1 Number of people inclusive gender per local stakeholders. This is not a familiar phrasing. Explanation is needed on what this means. Or it has to be revised.

Please ask the Agency to reflect in M&E how the GAP is going to be monitored and reported on in MTR and TE.

3- The budget table in the CEO Endorsement Request portal view (which is the document that must be circulated to Council) is off the margins (see below and attached). The Agency needs to amend this with ITS's assistance as needed.

Please upload the budget table here.

Appendix G: Indicative Project Budget Template

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USD)				Sub-Total	Total
		Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4		
		Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4		
Works						0	
Goods	Desktop equipment and accessories				0	0	
	6 laptops for technical expert for data collection and monitoring					0	
	---					0	
Vehicles	Vehicle (2)	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	90,000	
	Vehicle fuel & maintenance	20,250	20,250	20,250	20,250	81,000	
	Vehicle insurance	2,250	2,250	2,250	2,250	9,000	
Grants/ Sub-grants	---					0	
Revolving funds/ Seed funds / Equity	---					0	
	Subgrants to RA on overall technical assistance to the Project and deliver on outputs 1.1, 1.2 & 1.3 on Local governance for integrated and sustainable landscape management, activities (1.1.1; 1.1.2; 1.1.3; 1.2.1; 1.2.2; 1.2.3; 1.3.1; 1.3.2; 1.3.3); output 2.1 (activity 2.2.1); output 2.2 (activity 2.2.5); outputs 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 to support sustainable production practices to reduce agricultural-led deforestation (Activities 3.1.3; 3.1.4; 3.2.1; 3.2.2; 3.2.3; 3.2.4; 3.3.1; 3.3.2) and output 3.4 and 4.1 adapting tools and regulation for biodiversity/carbon financing in community forests (Activities 4.1.4; 4.1.5)	1,108,225	244,763	1,152,934	417,312	2,923,234	
	Sub-contract to ALDEF for delivering the following Outputs and Activities (Output 1.1, activities 1.1.2 and 1.1.3 in coordination with Rainforest Alliance; Output 1.2, activities: 1.2.1 in coordination with RA; Output 1.3, activities: 1.3.3 in coordination with Rainforest Alliance; Output 2.1, activities 2.1.2; Output 2.3, Activities 2.3.1, 2.3.2 2.3.3 on OECMs; Output 3.2, activities 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 in coordination with RA and MINEPA; Output 3.3, activities 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 in coordination with RA;	251,643	400,000	348,357		1,000,000	

4- In the Review Sheet you cleared the positions for Project Director/Team Leader *and* the Project Technical Coordinator

Salary and benefits / Staff costs	Project Director / Team Leader National Stakeholders mobilisation and Natural Resources Management Specialist (MINEPDED)	53,000	72,000	72,000	22,000	219,000	69,000	288,000	MINEPDED
	Project Technical Coordinator / Advisor (National or International)	144,000	144,000	144,000	144,000	576,000	0	576,000	MINEPDED
	Project Monitoring and Evaluation Expert		0	0		0	86,400	86,400	MINEPDED
	Gender, Safeguards and Indigenous peoples' specialist	19,355	19,355	19,355	19,355	77,420		77,420	MINEPDED
	Communication Officer	19,355	19,355	19,355	19,355	77,420		77,420	MINEPDED

Terms of reference for the Project Director: in addition to the coordination and administrative tasks, we are seeing the technical profile who is needed to prepare, deliver, and monitor the outputs under the different components, ensure the compliance of all technical agreements with adequate provisions, provide technical support, accompany each contracting party, ensure collaboration at landscape level (integration), and propose adaptive management strategies. We accept the financing under different technical components in addition to pmc. Cleared.

- We take note of the need for site managers and their specific role for integration and inclusivity. Cleared.

- We take note of the explanations and the changes in the partnerships with the different partners. Cleared.

After assessing the TORs (attached, though they are hidden as an attachment in a document namely All appendixes) of the Project Director/Team Leader *and* the Project Technical Coordinator, we detected several overlaps. Both positions cost nearly \$870K (close to 9% of the project financing), which we consider are very expensive. Please encourage the Agency to either merge the two positions in one or to cover part of these positions with co-financing resources (other non-UN Agencies only use one managerial/technical position with a cost of \$350 K).

July 19, 2024

Yes

Agency Response

03 December 2024 Response to Quality control Review Comments of 02.12.2024:

- In reference to comment #1 (provided by Omid), requesting to submit an English translation of the letter of Co-financing for the PADI Dja: an informal translation in English of the letter is provided and is uploaded in the table of co-financing.

- In reference to comment #2 (provided by Verona) on Gender as follows in the following 5 specific sub-points (blue highlights):

? Under TOC, there's a reference to "gender-transformative stakeholders". It is unclear what this means.

Response: Reference to gender-transformative stakeholders has been removed, and the entire sentence now reads as follows:

The project results are well monitored and reported, landscape coordination is effective and lessons learned are shared among ~~gender-transformative~~ stakeholders, this will foster gender responsive multi stakeholders? collaboration, up scaling and replication of success models across landscapes, and the national and Congo Basin levels, and knowledge-based policy formulations, institutional and management instruments.

ALSO SEE ATTACHED REVISED CEO ENDORSEMENT

? ?Component 3 will address the barrier of insufficient gender led green enterprises. Did they mean women-led? Or enterprises led by other genders? If the latter, can they identify these enterprises lead by other genders?

Response: We thank the reviewer for their comment. We meant ?Women-led?. The entire sentence now reads as follows:

Component 3 will address the barrier of insufficient women-led green enterprises and incentives for indigenous peoples and local communities and women to conserve biodiversity and adoption of sustainable land use management practices.

ALSO SEE ATTACHED REVISED CEO ENDORSEMENT

? There are references in the RF of indicators worded as:

?Perception of satisfaction of inclusive gender?. Again, not clear what this means. Maybe rephrase to ?perception of satisfaction of different gender groups?? Again, it depends on what they are trying to capture here. Under this indicator, the means of verification is: Reports of Indigenous and local communities ? This does not capture the term gender.

Response: References in the attached RF of the ?perception of satisfaction of inclusive gender? along with the Means of verifications have been revised. See Green Highlighted texts. See Green highlighted texts in the RF.

? Another indicator in RF: 2.1.1 Number of people inclusive gender per local stakeholders. This is not a familiar phrasing. Explanation is needed on what this means. Or it has to be revised.

Response: Output 2.1.1 is now reformulated as follows: ?Number of local stakeholders, including women, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, who have strengthened capacities and improved collaboration with partners for the conservation and monitoring of protected areas and buffer zones, in accordance with human rights protocols?.

? Please ask the Agency to reflect in M&E how the GAP is going to be monitored and reported on in MTR and TE.

Response: The M&E Plan (Appendix 6) has been revised to show how the Gender Action Plan (GAP) is effectively integrated into the M&E framework and that its progress will be systematically monitored and reported during the MTR and TE (see Yellow Highlights in the Table: Costed M & E plan).

- In Reference to comment # 3 related to the budget table in the CEO Endorsement Request portal view which is off the margins: A revised budget table has been attached.

- In reference to comment #4 as follows: "After assessing the TORs (attached, though they are hidden as an attachment in a document namely All annexes) of the Project Director/Team Leader and the Project Technical Coordinator, we detected several overlaps. Both positions cost nearly \$870K (close to 9% of the project financing), which we consider are very expensive. Please encourage the Agency to either merge the two positions in one or to cover part of these positions with co-financing resources (other non-UN Agencies only use one managerial/technical position with a cost of \$350 K?".

Response: The budget is now revised. The position of Project Director/Team Leader will be appointed by the government, and will serve as the institutional anchor of the project. It will therefore be covered by co-financing resources, while the position of Project Technical Coordinator is charged to the project components and PMC.

We brought the CTA cost down to US\$ 7,000 per month (as opposed to \$10,000/month) to meet the reviewer budgetary recommendation to significantly lower down the cost for this position. To ensure the successful implementation of our 6-year GEF 8 project in Cameroon, it is crucial to have a highly qualified and experienced CTA during the project lifetime.

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestYes

Agency Response

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

a) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 19, 2024

Yes

Agency Response

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?

Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestYes

Agency Response

8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 20, 2024

Addressed.

November 19, 2024

The letter from ZSL is logged in the Documents Tab. However, please insert it in the table of cofinancing letters as you did for all the others.

In addition, please, explain in the notes below the table the conversion rates between British Pounds and US Dollars. Thanks.

Civil Society Organization	REPALEAC	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,700,000.00	
Civil Society Organization	REPALEAC	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3,300,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	ONACC	Grant	Investment mobilized	5,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	ONACC	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3,000,000.00	
Civil Society Organization	ZSL	Grant	Recurrent expenditures	4,833,023.00	
Total Co-financing(\$)				101,796,356.00	

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing
The co-financing figures have been updated. In brief, the project now shows a total co-financing of USD 101,796,356, from which USD 68,451,667 is in kind / recurrent expenditures and USD 33,344,688 is in grants / investment mobilized.

November 18, 2024

Not addressed.

November 15, 2024

- Please, the letter of cofinancing from Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) mentions that the in-kind cofinancing mean "recurrent expenditure", while you mentioned "investment mobilized". Please, correct, or justify.

- The letter of ZSL is lacking. Please, provide the letter.

Agency Response

November 20, 2024 ? Agency response to comment on November19, 2024

The letter from ZSL is now inserted in the table of cofinancing letters.

Please note that ZSL co-financing which is 73,684,547 was converted into USD using the currency converter on URL address "Currency Converter | Foreign Exchange Rates | OANDA" in the month of September 2024.

In addition, please note that PADI-Dja co-financing which is XAF 6,000,000 was converted into USD 8,333,333 as per the conversion in the co-financing letter.

19.11.2024 ? Response to Nov 18 comment

The in-kind cofinancing (recurrent expenditure) from the MINEPDED has now been corrected in the portal.

The ZSL co-financing letter has been uploaded in the portal.

In addition, provision to support scaling up best practices, building Networks and Partnerships and implementing cash Transfers for Restoration activities among villages inside and outside the proposed landscape, has been provided in the budget (4a), and reflected in the CEO Endorsement, the workplan, and the procurement plan.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) If ? and only if - this is a global or regional project for which not all country-based interventions were known at PIF stage and, therefore, not all LOEs provided:

Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestAddressed at PFD level

Agency Response

b) Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestAddressed at PFD level

Agency Response

c) Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestAddressed at PFD level

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?

b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)

c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?

d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

e)[If a regional/global coordination child project under an integrated program] Does the results framework reflect the program-wide result framework, inclusive of results from child projects and specific to the regional/global coordination child project? [If a country child project under an integrated program] Is the child project result framework inclusive of program-wide metrics monitored across child project by the Regional/Global Child project?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestAddressed.

Agency Response

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Yes

Maps and coordinates available.

Agency Response

Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Documentation and Rating

8.8 Have the relevant safeguard documents been uploaded to the GEF Portal? Has the safeguards rating been provided and filled out in the ER field below the risk table?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 18, 2024

Addressed.

November 15, 2024

The ESF is available, with a rating of "moderate risks".

The overall risk classification is "low".

Please, make the ratings coherent.

B. ESS Risk Level² -

Refer to the UNEP ESSF (Chapter IV) and the UNEP's ESSF Guidelines.

- Low risk☐
- Moderate risk☐
- High risk☐
- Additional information required☐

5	H	H	H	H	H
4	M	M	H	H	H
3	L	M	M	M	M
2	L	L	M	M	M
1	L	L	L	L	L
#	1	2	3	4	5

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
	Low		

Agency Response

16.11.2024 ? Response to comments of 15.11.2024

- The overall risk classification now reads as moderate as per screenshot below.

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
<div><div>Medium/Moderate</div></div>			

Annex G: GEF Budget template

- 8.9 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?
- b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?
- c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 15, 2024

Addressed.

November 14, 2024

Please, double check the budget in the portal and the annex in the project document.

The modifications are not reflected. Please address the comment in the budget.

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here. ⓘ

Title

Appendix 4a GEF budget format CAR GEF 8 Child Project 04

November 12, 2024

We take note of the explanations for the need of two vehicles. The need is demonstrated. We cleared the request. However, the cost of \$120,000 seems high, as the average cost for a Hilux double cabin in Kinshasa is around USD40,000, 45,000 maximum. The maintenance costs

seem also high (\$120,000). And \$60,000 for insurance is not acceptable either. The maximum budget for two vehicles should be USD90,000. An amount of USD 90,000 should be the maximum for maintenance, fuel, and insurance of the two vehicles. Please, revise.

October 24, 2024

- We are sorry, but it is not possible to check the revised budget, as there are two different versions budgets logged in the portal, with very different numbers. Which one is the right one? We invite the Agency to load only one budget (in a GEF format, in excel) and remove the second one.

August 17, 2024

Budget

- In the excel budget, please complete the entity who will manage the funds.
- Vehicle: 120K USD + 90KUSD + 18USD: is it for 2 ou 3 vehicles ? The purchase of vehicles is a sensitive subject with guidelines and policies: Please, provide the number of vehicles provided by the Ministries, by the cofinancing, executing partners, and if possible the GEF Agency ? The GEF may complete additional vehicles, if the need is demonstrated. It is not the case for the time being.
- Some budget lines are very high: with Rainforest Alliance (3.3 million) and ACDF (1.7 million). More details are expected to understand the value for money.
- Please, describe the line on OECM for 134.5 K USD.
- We did not find mention in the text and the description of the activities of the Sub-contract with PCLG / IIED of 108.5K US. Please, clarify.
- We do not see the added value and the sustainability, to not say the interest of the Sub-contract with AWF to develop a database to monitor livelihoods and biodiversity (28.5KUSD).

We need clarifications on multiple consultations and staff positions that may be a source of duplication.

- Please, clarify the need for a Sub-contract to WWF to support the implementation, management, and capacity building of project's Safeguard System (Safeguard system, comprised of policies, standards and procedures, guidance, capacity-building processes, and a grievance redress mechanism) of 271 KUSD? It seems a duplicaiton with what UNEP is supposed to deliver at CEO endorsement and there are several positions related to thee tasls, Please, clarify and revise.
- Consultant for Carry out studies on restoration opportunities in the Dja landscape (221 KUSD): We are seeing a duplication with a staff position on forest restoration (85.4 KUSD).
- Consultant to Identify and recommend conservation actions for HCVs and other critical conservation sites for consideration as OECMs (134.5 KUSD): interests and costs?

- Carry out studies to analyse options in community-based carbon/biodiversity finance projects (49 KUSD): interests and meaning?
- Gender, Safeguards and Indigenous peoples? Expert And Specialist Communication and Indigenous people Engagement Duplication? Each 77.42 KUSD
- Two site manager? Definition? Interests? cofinancing?
- 3 Drivers? Please, clarify and justify (see the item on vehicle: the same questions are applicable: role of domestic finance, cofinancing, executing partners, GEF Agency...).
- The costs of some items is raising questions, as well as the differences of budgets among the different executing partners. The weaknesses in the incremental reasoning and the connections between the different sections, associated to the problems of formulation of the activities make difficult to figure out the value for money of activities and the justification of the different amounts. We are sure these difficulties will disappear at the next round when the project document will have been streamlined, revised, and shortened. Please, justify these amounts and provide a better detail of budget items .
- 221KUSD? Consultant for Carry out studies on restoration opportunities in the Dja landscape?
- 402 K USD ? Sub-contract with ZSL for identify migratory corridors, landuse planning within the interzone and pilot carbon mechanisms?
- Connection with CBI and 113K USD for a Sub-contract with CBI to support and capitalize on Ebony's project experience?
- There is potentially a missed opportunity for restoration of x ha of agroforestry parklands, counting as OECMs in the surrounding of the Dja NP. It seems that the CBI has developed an expertise and practices that should be used and scaled up around the targeted landscape. Please, revise.
- We take note of a 367K\$ contract for AWF. Please, provide the expected Outcome, Results, and nature of activities.
- All Office and Telephone Costs should be assigned to pmc (144KUSD)
- Please, explain and clarify the budget line of 115KUSD for Project Coordination Outreach and Meetings, Field missions logistics for technical delivery on components? What does that mean?
- We are seeing a budget line of 25 KUSD for "Lessons learned" : You need to detail the KM strategy. This budget seems low.
- M&E Plan including, Inception meeting, baseline measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators: + 57,652KUSD in all components? to be clarified.
- Please, explain the Audits in all technical components? 39,999 USD

Agency Response

15.11.2024 ? Agency response to comments of 14.11.2024

- In reference to budget in the portal and the annex in the project document, the corrected version of the budget has been uploaded.

The comments made by the GEF Sec on the budget was addressed in our response on 13 November 2024 below.

13 November 2024: (Response to comments of 12 November 2024)

Concerning the cost for two vehicles: it now reads \$90,000.

Concerning the Vehicle insurance cost: it now reads: \$ 9,000

Concerning the vehicle fuel and maintenance: it now reads \$81,000.

Both the vehicle insurance, fuel and maintenance add up to \$90,000

These changes are now reflected in the budget.

28.10.2024

Concerning the different versions of the budget: The correct version is now uploaded in the portal.

11 September 2024

Budget

Concerning the following comments:

- In the excel budget, please complete the entity who will manage the funds.
- Vehicle: 120K USD + 90KUSD + 18USD: is it for 2 ou 3 vehicles ? The purchase of vehicles is a sensitive subject with guidelines and policies: Please, provide the number of vehicles provided by the Ministries, by the cofinancing, executing partners, and if possible the GEF Agency ? The GEF may complete additional vehicles, if the need is demonstrated. It is not the case for the time being.
- Some budget lines are very high: with Rainforest Alliance (3.3 million) and ACDF (1.7 million). More details are expected to understand the value for money.

- Please, describe the line on OECM for 134.5 K USD.

- We did not find mention in the text and the description of the activities of the Sub-contract with PCLG / IIED of 108.5K US. Please, clarify.

Our response:

- Referring to the entity managing the budget, this information is provided in the GEF Budget template.

- Concerning purchase vehicles (see appendix 7), the project will buy two vehicles to be deployed in the field precisely in Mintom and Lomie. The project area is vast more than 4million ha, two administrative regions and 11 sub divisions. Moving from one administrative to the other is very difficult. The project area is covered by dirt roads necessitating several hours of travel. Moreover, the existing vehicle fleet within the Ministry are for different projects. There are some vehicles that could be made available for the project, but are not in good shape. They are not well-maintained and therefore will not be able to provide reliable service throughout the duration of the project. Within the Technical partners identified for this project, there are very well-maintained vehicles, but they are assigned for specific projects. Relying on partners' vehicle will neither enhance mobility and accessibility, nor improved project efficiency. The acquisition of 2 new vehicles will enable project staff to move swiftly between different restoration sites (as an example), ensuring timely intervention and management. Many restoration sites are located in remote or difficult-to-access areas. Reliable vehicles will ensure these areas are reachable for regular project interventions and monitoring. The acquisition of new vehicles will facilitate the transportation of essential equipment, seedlings, consultants and personnel, reducing delays and increasing overall productivity. It will be use to facilitate community outreach programs, workshops, fostering better relationships with Indigenous peoples and local communities. Finally, investing in the acquisition of vehicles will lead to long-term savings by reducing the need for renting vehicles (which are excessively high) or relying on external transportation services, which are almost inexistant, and when they do exist, they are mainly logging trucks. For effective coordination, the project team will need at least two vehicles.

- Referring to comment on high budgets (Rainforest Alliance and ACDF), the budget has been adequately revised to take into considerations the issues raised by the reviewer. The activity portfolio of executing partners has been reworked with due regards to baseline funding and ongoing initiatives by each partner in the landscape. Other criteria utilized in choice of executing were their respective expertise and capacity to mobilize additional resources

Referring to the line on OECM for 134.5 K USD: The activity has been reformulated as follow:
2.3.1. Identify and recommend conservation actions for HCVs and other critical conservation sites for consideration as OECMs and alignment with SDGs. However, the government does not yet officially recognize OECM sites. The budget has been recalculated to \$79,500. The previous consultant to identify and recommend conservation actions for HCVs and other critical conservation sites for consideration as OECMs, has now been removed from the budget, as there is an NGO (ACDEF Cameroon) with earmarked funding for this activity.

- In reference to PCLG\IIED, they are no longer executing partners in the new alignment of budget allocations based on baseline of ongoing activities of the different partners

Concerning the following comments:

- We do not see the added value and the sustainability, to not say the interest of the Sub-contract with AWF to develop a database to monitor livelihoods and biodiversity (28.5KUSD).

We need clarifications on multiple consultations and staff positions that may be a source of duplication.

- Please, clarify the need for a Sub-contract to WWF to support the implementation, management, and capacity building of project's Safeguard System (Safeguard system, comprised of policies, standards and procedures, guidance, capacity-building processes, and a grievance redress mechanism) of 271 KUSD? It seems a duplication with what UNEP is supposed to deliver at CEO endorsement and there are several positions related to these tasks, Please, clarify and revise.

- Consultant for Carry out studies on restoration opportunities in the Dja landscape (221 KUSD): We are seeing a duplication with a staff position on forest restoration (85.4 KUSD).

- Consultant to Identify and recommend conservation actions for HCVs and other critical conservation sites for consideration as OECMs (134.5 KUSD): interests and costs?

- Carry out studies to analyse options in community-based carbon/biodiversity finance projects (49 KUSD): interests and meaning?

- Gender, Safeguards and Indigenous peoples? Expert And Specialist Communication and Indigenous people Engagement Duplication? Each 77.42 KUSD

- Two site manager? Definition? Interests? cofinancing?

- 3 Drivers? Please, clarify and justify (see the item on vehicle: the same questions are applicable: role of domestic finance, cofinancing, executing partners, GEF Agency...).

Our Response:

- In terms of consolidated database and sustainability, as mentioned above, this activity has been deleted.

- In reference to comment on multiple consultations, this has been reviewed. The budget \$250,000.

- Regarding comment on sub contract on safeguards with WWF, this activity is no longer attributed to WWF. Instead, there is an activity under output 1.2, activity 1.2.5 Facilitate the technical establishment and functioning of a grievance mechanisms, safeguard of community

rights and compliance to human rights protocols. The GEF funds will only finance putting in place of grievance mechanism and the safeguards will be addressed by UNEP. This activity will be executed by AIWO-CAN, African Indigenous Women Organization -Central African Network, with support from Repaleac and Okani.

- On the comment of duplication of restoration efforts, CBI/UCLA is now taking the lead on this activity as mentioned above. All consultancies related to restoration opportunities have been removed from the project.

- In reference to the comment on value added of HCV and OECM, and the interest: please, refer to our response above under Component 2 ? specifically, the rationale provided for activities 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.3.3.

- Referring to the comment to activity on community based carbon and the interest: Please to our response above under component 2 (page 11 of this review sheet).

- In reference to comment on gender, safeguards position, only one expert will be recruited for this position. The salary for this position over a 6-year period is \$77,420

- In reference to recruitment of two Field operation Team/ site managers: they will be based in Lomie and Mintom. They will be responsible for supervision and coordination of project activities executed by consortium partners. They will report to the ND and facilitate inter sectoral collaboration and support to implementation of field activities. The two site managers is part of institutional capacitation and ownership of results generated by the project.

- Referring to comment on 3 drivers, this number has now been reduced to 2. The project will buy two vehicles to be deployed in the field precisely in Mintom and Lomie. The project area is vast more than 4million ha, two administrative regions and 11 sub divisions. Moving from one administrative to the other is very difficult. The project area is covered by dirt roads necessitating several hours of travel. For effective coordination, the project team will need at least two vehicles.

Concerning the following Comments:

- The costs of some items is raising questions, as well as the differences of budgets among the different executing partners. The weaknesses in the incremental reasoning and the connections between the different sections, associated to the problems of formulation of the activities make difficult to figure out the value for money of activities and the justification of the different amounts. We are sure these difficulties will disappear at the next round when the project document will have been streamlined, revised, and shortened. Please, justify these amounts and provide a better detail of budget items .

- 221KUSD? Consultant for Carry out studies on restoration opportunities in the Dja landscape?

- 402 K USD ? Sub-contract with ZSL for identify migratory corridors, landuse planning within the interzone and pilot carbon mechanisms?
- Connection with CBI and 113K USD for a Sub-contract with CBI to support and capitalize on Ebony's project experience?
- There is potentially a missed opportunity for restoration of x ha of agroforestry parklands, counting as OECMs in the surrounding of the Dja NP. It seems that the CBI has developed an expertise and practices that should be used and scaled up around the targeted landscape. Please, revise.
- We take note of a 367K\$ contract for AWF. Please, provide the expected Outcome, Results, and nature of activities.
- All Office and Telephone Costs should be assigned to pmc (144KUSD)
- Please, explain and clarify the budget line of 115KUSD for Project Coordination Outreach and Meetings, Field missions logistics for technical delivery on components? What does that mean?
- We are seeing a budget line of 25 KUSD for "Lessons learned" : You need to detail the KM strategy. This budget seems low.
- M&E Plan including, Inception meeting, baseline measurement of project outcome indicators, GEF Core indicators: + 57,652KUSD in all components? to be clarified.
- Please, explain the Audits in all technical components? 39,999 USD

Our response:

- In reference to the comment on differences in budgets among executing partners and the weakness in incremental reasoning, the project document has been streamlined, revised, and shortened. The budget allocations were done based on expertise of the different partners and taking into consideration on baseline projects in the project area.
- Concerning comment on \$221KUSD for restoration, this is a repetition of same comment which has been answered in earlier section on budget comments.
- In reference to activity and sub contract on migratory corridors, please refer to our response provided above under component 2 (pages 10-11 of this review sheet);
- Regarding the comment on CBI work and initial budget allocation, this has been revised to take into consideration up scaling and replication of the ebony model in the landscape (US \$1 millio) and supporting agroforestry activities.

- On the comment about missed opportunity on OECMs and CBI expertise, the revised CEO Endorsement under Output 2.3 now captures the legal analysis of land use types that might be used as a basis for OECMs in Cameroon that was conducted by CBI. To achieve this output, the project will build on the ongoing works from ACDEF, WWF including CBI.

- In relation to comment on AWF sub contract, it is anticipated that both ZWF and ZSL will deliver on output 2.1 activities 2.1.1, 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 on wildlife monitoring tools, techniques and management of wildlife corridors, and sub grant to AWF to deliver on output 3.1 (activities 3.1.4).

- With regards to comment on office and telephone costs, the cost has been budgeted under PMC;

- In reference to the comment project coordination costs, we have the following BL:

1602: this include National travel for PMU for Project Coordination: \$50k /year (\$300k over 6 years);

And 1603: Local supervisors travel to oversee and coordinate activities implemented by field executing partners: this concerns site Field Operation team.

- With regards to comment on KM strategy and budget: Activities under Output 4.2 will be managed by Rainforest Alliance and is included in their proposed allocation of US\$ 2, 985, 326;

- Concerning the comment on M&E plan, the monitoring and evaluation activities are cross cutting and involving all four project components. Its budget is under component 4. Part of M&E costs include midterm and final project evaluations which is separately budgeted

- Concerning audit of all technical components, the audit cost is lodged in the PMC which is \$42,404

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.

b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.

c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation

Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 3, 2024

The observations from the Quality Control have been addressed. The project was already technically cleared and is now recommended for the next steps.

December 2, 2024

Please, address the observations from the Quality Control (see item 8 on annexes) before we can recommend the project for next steps.

November 20, 2024

All points are addressed. The project is recommended for approval and next steps.

November 19, 2024

Please, see the pending issues on cofinancing. The project cannot yet be recommended

November 18, 2024

The item on cofinancing (2 issues) has not been addressed. The project cannot yet be recommended.

November 15, 2024

Anticipating the control quality, we found out some remaining items that deserve your attention (risk assessment, cofinancing, pmc/cofinancing, and METT scores). The project cannot be recommended yet.

November 13, 2024

The comment is addressed in the review, but not reflected in the budget logged in the portal. Please, update with the right version of the budget. Please, confirm the budget in the project document has also been updated.

November 12, 2024

The project cannot be recommended yet. Please, address the costs of vehicles, maintenance, and insurance that have not been fully addressed.

October 24, 2024

Please resubmit the project package with a single version of the budget in the GEF format. We cannot review this version with two different budgets. Thanks.

July 19, 2024

The project cannot be recommended yet. Please, address the comments above. Please, be aware that the Quality Control has not been requested at this stage under the united review process as this project needs deep revisions before being submitted to the Quality Control. Additional comments from the Quality Control may come at the next round.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	7/19/2024	9/11/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/24/2024	10/28/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/12/2024	11/4/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/14/2024	
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/15/2024	