

Transboundary cooperation for the conservation, sustainable development and integrated management of the Pantanal - Upper Paraguay River Basin

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10554

Countries

Regional (Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay)

Project Name

Transboundary cooperation for the conservation, sustainable development and integrated management of the Pantanal - Upper Paraguay River Basin

Agencies

IADB, UNEP

Date received by PM

2/28/2022

Review completed by PM

5/26/2022

Program Manager

Taylor Henshaw

Focal Area

International Waters

Project Type

FSP

PIF **CEO Endorsement**

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes, but please address the following:

(1) Please provide the correct submission date in the project information section. The portal shows 03/23/20.

(2) Although four executing agencies were selected at PIF stage and at CEO Endorsement, in Section 6 (Institutional Arrangements and Coordination), WWF is identified as the lead executing entity for this project. This information should be reflected in the project information section of the portal, so only WWF will show as the Executing Partner. Please also adjust the Executing Partner Type as appropriate.

(3) Please ensure both the CEO Endorsement Document and ProDoc refer to SAP as "Strategic Action Programme" rather than "Strategic Action Plan" throughout.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Partially. Comments 1 and 3 are addressed. Comment 2 is partially addressed. Because WWF-US is a GEF Agency, please change Executing Partner Type to "GEF Agency".

4th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. The date was corrected accordingly into the portal.
2. Please note that at PIF stage we did not have agreement on who should be the right Executing Agency (EA) in charge of coordinating the overall execution for this project. Hence we reflected the three national counterpart Ministries as EAs. After a thorough selection process through expression of interests, the two IAs and the countries concluded that WWF would be the best entity to coordinate project execution in tandem with countries and local stakeholders. WWF now shows as the sole EA in portal and its status has been changed from others to CSO.
3. While we note that the GEF TDA/SAP manual uses both terms i.e. "Programme" and "Plan" recognizing countries preferences on the terminology but also factoring in translation preferences, the "P" was changed to Programme throughout the Request and accompanying documents, in line with the Secretariat's comment.

Agency Response April 28, 2022

WWF-US is now duly reflected in the portal as "GEF Agency" in the Executing Partner Type.

Project description summary

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Partly. Please address the following:

- (1) As instructed in the PIF Review Sheet, please change Output 3.1 to "A region-wide Strategic Action Programme signed at ministerial level". Please ensure "signed" replaces "approved" throughout both the CEO Endorsement Document and the ProDoc.
- (2) The CEO Document does not sufficiently detail the global environment problems, root causes, and barriers to be overcome; the baseline; the alternative scenario; the incremental cost reasoning; nor the global environmental benefits. This document must be able to be read standalone from the ProDoc. Please see comments below. Once the comments for these sections are properly addressed, a determination of whether Table B is appropriately structured to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs can be made.
- (3) Please ensure each project output is quantified to the extent possible.

(4) If appropriate, please include the GEF Core Indicator 4 and 11 targets in Table B.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. Note that it was changed to "approved" at the request of one participating Government. After further consultation with the said Government, we have now modified it to read "signed".
 2. Details on global environment problems, root causes, and barriers to be overcome; the baseline; the alternative scenario; the incremental cost reasoning etc. were added into the CEO Request as requested. Note that the project structure in Table B did not change from PIF stage. Output language has been subject to minor simplification.
 3. Outputs have been further quantified to the extent feasible in Annex A and accompanying documents. Since this is a foundational capacity building project with a majority of process outputs e.g. TDA, SAP, Governance, only the pilots meant to deliver stress reduction can reflect tentative quantified expected targets. And the sites of most pilots are not yet defined; this will happen at inception phase.
 4. GEF Core indicators info has been added in Table B by the relevant components.
- 3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Co-financing

4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) Where co-financing truly meets the definition of "in-kind", it should typically be classified as "recurrent expenditures" rather than "investment mobilized". Please provide justification for "in-kind ? investment mobilized". The explanation under the description

of how any investment mobilized was identified is not sufficient justification. Each co-financing source described reads as a recurrent expenditure.

(2) Please explain in the description why IADB investment mobilized in the amount of \$4,796,845 is included in Bolivia's co-financing calculation and not as a separate entry. The description notes that IADB co-financing is "reported in the co-financing letter of the Bolivia Ministry of Environment and Water". However, this is not expressly noted in the letter itself.

(3) UNEP, as co-Implementing Agency, should be providing co-financing for this project. Please determine and include this co-financing in Table C and in the explanation on resubmission.

(4) There is no private sector co-financing listed, even though the Agency notes in the PIF review sheet that "...engaging with the private sector to support project execution will be key". Please explain the exclusion of the private sector as a co-financing partner.

16th of May 2022 (thenshaw): No.

Typically, "Grant" and "Public Investment" (recipient government) are classified as "Investment mobilized"; and "in-kind" as "Recurrent expenditures". All submitted government co-financing letters do not contain sufficient information as to how the split between grant and in-kind was calculated. While it is not necessary to obtain revised co-financing letters, please use the following guidance and revise the co-financing table:

-- Government "in-kind/recurrent expenditure": e.g. staff time, office/equipment rental necessary for the project implementation during the project implementation period (normally comes from the ministry admin budget)

-- Government "public investment/investment mobilized" may combine (i) ministry special budget for national initiatives/activities in support of the GEF project (the funding to be disbursed during the GEF project implementation period)

WWF-Paraguay co-financing: if necessary, split the amount to grant/investment mobilized and in-kind/recurrent expenditures using the guidance above. Any co-financing from other sources (not WWF-Paraguay own budget) need a co-financing letter signed by the original source to be reported as Investment Mobilized. If not feasible, the amount may be reported as "in-kind/recurrent expenditures"

Investment mobilized:

-- Amount calculation needs to reflect (i) reasonable amount for the activities that will support the GEF project implementation, and amount needs to be (ii) available for disbursement during the GEF project implementation period. Any past investment may be reported as "in-kind/recurrent expenditures" if wishes to be reported.

-- Summary of each Investment Mobilized entry needs to be provided in the Investment Mobilized description section.

25th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. (1) the co-financing truly corresponds to investments which are mobilized by countries through other donors and will work hand in hand with the GEF grant, although such investments will not be managed by the EA per se but rather will continue to be managed by the respective countries as budget holders. Furthermore, this co-financing, carefully discussed with countries and described in each co-financing letter, does not meet the policy definition of recurring expenditure - stating that recurring expenditure refers to the costs an organization incurs in its day-to-day operations. The reported co-financing is truly activity based; hence truly investments mobilized. (The activities covered by those parallel investments mobilized will complement activities funded by the GEF grant hence multiplying the transformational potential of this project.) It will not be added to and managed alongside with the GEF Grant by the EA and it is not merged financing under the control of the EA; hence considered as in-kind as. It is thus believed that the way the co-financing is currently reported in the portal is the most adequate reflection of the reality.

2. After revising the co-financing letter submitted by the Bolivian Ministry of the Environment and Water, it was realized that the referenced amount (\$4,796,845) was wrongly attributed to the IDB (and the IDB's co-financing of the Project). Please disregard the footnote . The IDB's contribution of \$ 1 million dollars was accidentally omitted from the total; we are providing an additional co-financing letter and adjusted the total co-financing amount, which changed from \$129,142,879 to \$130,142,879 (now updated properly in tables B and C and in the rest of the documents).

3. The Co-financing proposed strictly followed the co-financing list agreed at PIF (only IDB will provide co-financing; UNEP was not asked to provide co-financing at PIF). Nevertheless, efforts will be made during inception phase to secure some, moderate in-kind co-financing.

4. It is anticipated that local private sector will be an active stakeholder in the pilot projects. However, at this stage, the actual pilot sites and hence the likely specific local private sector entities are not yet decided. Securing local private sector in-kind co-financing will thus be done at inception phase and throughout execution. Furthermore, IDB Invest, the IDB private branch will be engaged during the execution, starting at the project inception, to: (i) support the development and design of innovative financial mechanisms to be piloted to attract and enable private investments and (ii) support the identification of private stakeholders to be engaged during the SAP preparation.

Agency Response May 25, 2022

The investments mobilized as co-financing typically correspond to parallel initiatives and activities from countries and the EA in support of project execution. The national investments mobilized have thus been further qualified as 'public investments' (contributions from recipient country governments) whereas WWF-Paraguay's investment mobilized was reclassified as 'others'.

Regarding national investments mobilized, those amounts reflect national projects that are under implementation which will support GEF Pantanal Project during its execution phase. Moreover, please note that all sources of co-financing are supported by signed co-financing letters in the roadmap. Particularly, please note the stand-alone signed co-financing letter from WWF-Paraguay which has been appended in the road map.

The description section provided below Table C *'Sources of Co-Financing for the Project by name and type'* characterizes how 'public investments/investment mobilized' and 'in-kind/recurrent expenditures' supports project components.

In particular, the WWF-Paraguay co-financing ('Others'/investment mobilized) will support project activities under Component 5; specifically related to stakeholder engagement, communication and training matters, as well as land and water management and gender mainstreaming. WWF-Paraguay is indeed implementing eight projects in the Pantanal-UPRB which will support the GEF project. Their co-financing does not qualify under any of the defined type (Grant, Loan, Equity Investment, In-Kind Contributions or Public Investment), hence the use of 'other' defined as *'Other type of Co-Financing that does not match those defined above'*.

GEF Resource Availability

5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 12th of March 2022
(thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response
Project Preparation Grant

6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) This section and Annex C only show amounts spent to date and amounts committed. Please provide a detailed accounting in Annex C of how the PPG Budget was utilized (broken down by activity).

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response Detailed information for both IAs has been added in Annex C.

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) In the field below Table E, please explain the calculations and methodologies utilized to reach the figures indicated for Core Indicator 4 and 11. This explanation is provided in the PIF, but must also be present in the CEO Document and updated if changes have been made.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response The explanation below Table E has been revised.

Part II ? Project Justification

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) This document must be able to be read standalone. The submission notes that "The description and analysis have been elaborated..." but there is no such text present. Please include a detailed description of the global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (which at least includes the level of detail present in the PIF). For clarity, please use separate headings for (1) global environmental problems; (2) root causes; (3) barriers that need to be overcome. Please utilize

quantitative data where possible to make the case for the need for this project. The required substance for the CEO Document is present in the ProDoc in section 2.2 Threats, Root Causes and Barriers.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response The corresponding section of the CEO document was complemented and adjusted to be read standalone, in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) This document must be able to be read standalone. Please include a detailed description of the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects and how they were derived. The required substance for the CEO Document is present in the ProDoc in section 2.3 Baseline and Project Linkage with other GEF and non-GEF Interventions.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response The corresponding section of the CEO document was complemented and adjusted to be read standalone, in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.

3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) This document must be able to be read standalone. There is no detail on what the project outcomes and outputs are and what the project will actually do. Each component should include a summary of the overall component structure before moving to a discussion of project outcomes and then to project outputs. Please ensure the identified barriers to be overcome are mapped to project outcomes. The required substance for the Project Document is present in the ProDoc in section 3: Intervention Strategy (Alternative) and section 3.2 Goals and Objectives and section 3.3 Components.

(2) Please explain/introduce the Theory of Change diagram in a few paragraphs. This information is present in Appendix 9 - Theory of Change Analysis. To this end, please

also include and explain the helpful Figure 7 flowchart in the ProDoc, which importantly demonstrates the connections between the different project components/outputs.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. The corresponding section of the CEO document was complemented and adjusted to be read standalone, in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.
 2. Information has been added to the CEO Request to adequately introduce/ explain the ToC.
- 4. Is there further elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) This document must be able to be read standalone. Please elaborate on how the project is aligned with the IW focal area strategy. The required substance for the CEO Document is partly present in the ProDoc in section 3.1.3 Consistency with GEF Focal Area Strategy. Please explain this alignment by pinpointing language from the GEF-7 IW Programming Directions.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response The corresponding section of the CEO document was complemented and adjusted to be read standalone, in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) This document must be able to be read standalone. Please review the GEF Guidelines for incremental costs and clearly elaborate accordingly. The required substance for the CEO Document is present in the ProDoc in section 3.7 Incremental Costs. Please include language along the lines of "Without the GEF increment...."

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response The corresponding section of the CEO document was complemented and adjusted to be read standalone, in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.

6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) This document must be able to be read standalone. The required substance for the CEO Document is present in the ProDoc in section 3.1.4 Global Environmental Benefits. Please quantify these benefits where possible.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response The corresponding section of the CEO document was complemented and adjusted to be read standalone, in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response

Project Map and Coordinates

Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response

Child Project

If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

Stakeholders

**Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase?
Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Partly. Please address the following:

(1) Indigenous Peoples is selected as stakeholder. Please ensure the project follows to the GEF principles and guidelines for engagement with Indigenous Peoples. Please explain the project's plan to adhere to a standard of free, prior and informed consent when engaging Indigenous Peoples. The required substance for the CEO Document is present in the ProDoc in section 2.4.7 Indigenous People and Organizations and 1.6 of Appendix 13A.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response The corresponding section of the CEO document was complemented and adjusted to be read standalone, in accordance with the Secretariat's comment, including explanation about indigenous people in Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia and the FPIC process for activities involving indigenous communities and/or territories.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes. The gender analysis is present in Appendix 12 in the portal

Agency Response

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Partly. Please address the following:

(1) Please include a separate Covid-19 risk and opportunities analysis in this section. The required substance for the CEO Document is present in Appendix K: Covid-19 Risk and Opportunity Analysis.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response 1. The COVID-19 risk and opportunity analysis was added in Section 5, specifically Table 4 (Identification of COVID-19 project risk, associated scores and mitigation actions) and Table 5 (COVID-19 Opportunity Analysis).

Coordination

Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) The institutional arrangement for project implementation needs to be fully described. Please include detailed information on the Implementing Agencies (and the principles governing IA relations), the Executing Agency, the Project Steering Committee, the Project Coordination Unit, National Project Coordination, the Interagency Coordination Group, and National and Regional Coordination Bodies. The required substance for the CEO Document is present in section 4.2 Responsibilities within the Pantanal Project in the ProDoc.

(2) Please better make the connection between the list of projects reviewed during PPG and how the project will/may coordinate with those initiatives.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. Section 6 (Institutional Arrangement and Coordination) has been revised to further clarify the roles and responsibilities.

2. The information containing the connection between the projects reviewed and the coordination among them was included in Part II, Project Justification, 1.a. Project Description, item b. Baseline scenario and any associated baseline programmes. Reference to projects reviewed during PPG was summarized in Section 6 under consistency with other initiatives.

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed Knowledge Management Approach for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Partly. Please address the following:

(1) Please provide a clear timeline, budget and set of deliverables (in table format).

(2) Please include a summary of the Appendix 11 draft Communications Plan (or include substance from section 3.10 Communication Plan of the ProDoc).

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. The Knowledge Management Section was revised in accordance with the Secretariat's comment, including the suggested table.

2. Section 8 was complemented and adjusted in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response

Monitoring and Evaluation

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response

Benefits

Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address the following:

(1) The Annex E project budget table is not in the correct format. Please upload a budget using the GEF Budget Table template. Please find the template at pg 46 of the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_Guidelines_Project_Program_Cycle_Policy_20200731.pdf. The correct budget table for the CEO Document is presented in the ProDoc at section 7.1 Overall Project Budget.

This budget indicates that the technical components will absorb some staff costs. This is not in line with GEF policy. Managerial staff costs must be absorbed by the PMC, either through GEF financing or co-financing. Please revise accordingly.

(2) Please see comment above regarding Annex C. Please detail each expenditure.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): No, please address the following regarding the Annex E Budget Table:

(1) The revised budget table must include a column indicating which entity is responsible for which activity. Please revise accordingly.

(2) Please define what "General Staff" refers to. Note that project staff costs must be included under PMC or covered by project co-financing. Please revise accordingly.

(3) In the review sheet, please describe, using the ToRs, the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Project Coordinator and National Coordinators to demonstrate why these position costs/a portion of these position costs can be included under technical component budgets.

(4) The \$31,160 allocated to Regional Project Coordinator for project management (about 8% of total PMC) is low to properly coordinate a 4-year project with 5 components. Please justify this low allocation and reconsider whether this budget can be increased.

(5) There are discrepancies observed in the component figures between the Annex E Budget Table and Table B. Please verify and corroborate that all budget tables (in portal, in ProDoc, appended to documents tab) are harmonized. The discrepancy appears due to M&E costs, which are presented as a separate column in Table E and absorbed within the components in Table B. One solution is to create a new Component 6 for M&E in Table B. If a new Component is created, please ensure PMC GEF financing/co-financing remains proportional.

16th of May 2022 (thenshaw): No. Please address following two comments re: the budget table.

(1) Regional Project Coordinator and National Coordinators are being charged to components and PMC. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project's execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. The co-financing portion allocated to PMC is 6.1 million, and there is a co-financing loan of 1.0 million represented in grants ? some portion of this could be used to cover the costs of the project's staff.

(2) Unspecified "Other" under "Supplies, Commodities and Materials" cannot be covered by GEF resources ? please explore charging this to co-financing

25th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. Annex E was revised in line with the GEF template.

The staff costs reflected in the technical components are not related to project management, but rather to technical matters related to project execution of the components. (See for example the Regional Project Coordinator's ToR in UNEP Prodoc

Appendix 06.) For this reason, a part of the cost of PEU staff was included in the corresponding components that they will participate in a technical role.

2. Annex C has been updated with a PPG cost breakdown.

Agency Response April 28, 2022

(1) The revised budget (Annex E Budget Table) attached in the roadmap now includes two tabs, a first 'Budget' tab with the overall budget, and a second tab 'Breakdown per Agency' showing a detailed breakdown of each GEF Agency budget, with UNEP highlighted in blue and IDB in green. Please note that the limitations of the format in terms of size and the amount of columns, do not allow to convert it into a good quality readable image in the portal.

(2) 'General staff' is a nomenclature used during the project preparation referring to support staff both technical or administrative, and according to the nature of the program and its activities, some staff would be able to attend both roles, maximizing the use of resources. In this instance, it is envisaged that the 'General staff' will serve as Technical Programme Assistant for Component 5 purposes. The budget labelling in Annex E has been adjusted accordingly to reflect this change.

(3) Please find below a summary of the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Project Coordinator and National Coordinators, based on the ToRs.

Roles and responsibilities of the Regional Project Coordinator:

In its technical capacity, the Regional Project Coordinator will be responsible for providing overall technical guidance to project personnel and technical consultants and ensure oversight and quality control of all technical activities undertaken or contracted by the Project. The regional project coordinator will technically guide the formulation of the TDA and SAP and provide technical support to the Pilot project teams. As a manager, he/she will be responsible for project execution overseeing activities in accordance with the required terms of quality, deadline completion and budget execution of the project.

Roles and responsibilities of the National Coordinators:

The National Coordinators will be recruited with relevant technical skills to provide specialist inputs to the project. These will cover aspects of relevance to the project's implementation and are likely to include: water quality, land-water management, hydrology, communication, etc. In addition, they will serve as the liaison between the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and national partners, technically supporting their work. They will coordinate Inter-Ministerial Committee meetings, National Technical Working Groups and national TDA/SAP Task Forces and will liaise with CSOs and local communities as appropriate.

(4) The \$31,160 allocated to Regional Project Coordinator for project management (about 8% of total PMC) corresponds to management tasks that would be supported by a full time Administrative and Finance person (fully covered under PMC budget) and a Knowledge Management and Communications Specialist. The Regional Project Coordinator will dedicate a substantial portion of his/her time to provide support to technical activities under the different components, assisting consultants and providing orientation for the preparation of technical products. Therefore, the distribution of this workload in the different components is proportional to the scope of work and effort as shown in the budget (Annex E): Comp.1 \$36,400 (12.4%); Comp.2 \$85,400 (29.2%); Comp.3 \$80,850 (27.6%); Comp.4 \$58,790 (20.1%) and PMC \$31,160 (10.6%) providing a total of \$292,600.

(5) Thank you for your comment. Indeed, M&E costs are absorbed within the existing 5 project components in Table B. However, the apparent discrepancies are due to how costs are broken down; the total amounts for M&E are consistent throughout, including between the M&E budgeted plan and Annex E: Detailed Budget. A clarification, that shows that budget tables are harmonized, was added in Section 9. M&E in the CEO endorsement interactive document.

Agency Response May 25, 2022

1. The indicative budget table in Annex E has been adjusted so as to more accurately reflect the technical and coordination facets of the **Regional Project Coordinator & Technical Advisor** (previously named as Regional Project Coordinator) position. He/She will be supporting the execution, technical monitoring and evaluation of project components. His/her general management duties are covered under PMC and will be supported by an **Admin/Finance officer and Technical National Coordinators**. Below is a summary of the above breakdown and responsibilities. More detailed information about the project governance structure and definition of roles and responsibilities for each position is found in the Terms of Reference, UNEP - Appendix 06 of the ProDoc which needs to be read with the Budget in UNEP -Appendix 01. Please note that those are still preliminary and will be further refined during inception.

Regional Project Coordinator and Technical advisor

A total of **75%** of the Regional Project Coordinator and Technical Advisor time (i.e. USD **261,440**) is charged to components to provide **overall technical guidance** to project personnel and technical consultants and ensuring oversight and quality control of all technical activities undertaken or contracted by the Project.

More specifically, for Component 1, the Regional Project Coordinator and Technical Advisor will be providing technical leadership and knowledge throughout the sub-granting process that will lead to the assessment of current coordination arrangements and future options to support formulation of recommendations for a trinational coordination framework for protection and institutional strengthening needs for integrated river basin management (Component 1).

Likewise, the Regional Project Coordinator and Technical Advisor will lend its technical expertise to support the TDA formulation under Component 2 and SAP formulation under Component 3 leading the coordination of the design and development

of the TDA/SAP and complementary studies (Component 2) and pilots (component 4) and providing technical oversight to sub-contractees, consultants and countries while also leading the signatory SAP process by countries

Twenty five percent (**25%**) (USD 87,780) of the Regional Project Coordinator and Technical Advisor will be charged to **PMC** to support project management tasks including inter alia leading the overall project activity design and planning; participating in all award committee meetings; coordinating with PCU staff, National Technical Coordinators and contracted parties to ensure coordination and synergies between all 5 project components. He/She will be coordinating with government counterparts, the Executing Agency and the 2 Implementing Agencies as needed to ensure the timely and accurate monitoring of project progress; providing inputs for the Results Monitoring Plan and Project Implementation Reports (PIRs); providing resources and information to the Mid-Term and Final evaluation consultants.

National Technical Coordinators

Hundred percent (**100%**) of the **3 National Technical Coordinators** salary (USD 627,000) is charged to the technical components. They will be recruited with relevant skills to provide national technical inputs to the Regional Project Coordinator and Technical Advisor and will act as country leads. In order to have a large scope of expertise to support project execution, each National Technical Coordinator will have a different key niche expertise to cover aspects of relevance to the project implementation and are likely to include three main areas of expertise in support of the five project components:

- Integrated water management**: flow regimes, water monitoring networks, sediment loads, municipal water and sanitation, Nexus approach, efficient irrigation, aquifer recharge and water use permits to support components 2, 3 and 4.
- Governance, Social and Policy**: Tri-national coordination mechanisms, TDA and SAP formulation, stakeholder engagement, gender equity and knowledge sharing to support components 1, 3, 4 & 5.
- Data Management and Geographic Information Systems**: basin wide information exchange protocols and integrated hydroclimatic reporting systems, land use management, geo referencing, social, economic, biological and hydrologic information and data collection, storage, sharing and dissemination in support of components 2, 3 & 5 mostly.

The ToRs for the National Technical Coordinators will be formulated by the Regional Project Coordinator & Technical Advisor during the inception phase and in discussion with the national Focal Points identified by the countries.

Admin Finance Officer

Hundred percent (**100%**) of the **Admin finance Officer's** salary (USD 102,200) is charged to PMC. _

The Admin Finance officer will be directly supporting sustainable management effectiveness through preparing calls for interest of sub-grantees; developing the granting agreements; building capacities of sub-grantees to ensure compliance with the GEF Minimum Fiduciary standards; organizing workshops etc.

2. The term "Other" under "Supplies, Commodities and Materials" corresponds to "Data Center for hosting data during project". It has been further clarified into the budget in Annex E and corresponding Appendix 01 to the UNEP Prodoc. Such data infrastructure center will support component 2 (output 2.3).

Component 2 is focused on increasing the understanding of transboundary problems, the tools that can assist with this understanding, and on the means to ensure that data is shared across the basin for long term basin wide monitoring and assessment of the threats to the basin's ecosystems. Specifically, output 2.3 will facilitate the establishment of an information system for decisions making. Activity 2.3.2 will aim at development of a data collection centre with country focal points, including equipping the centres with related hardware. Hence, it best fits under PMC.

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Yes, but please respond to the following:

(1) Please ensure the number of direct beneficiaries noted throughout the framework's Key Project Targets equals the target figure indicated for Core Indicator 11.

(2) For consistency, please label Output 1.1.3 "A roadmap to implement proposed trilateral co-ordination mechanism". This roadmap is scheduled to be approved by PSC by month 30, which is before the draft proposal submitted to PSC (month 36). Please confirm the roadmap can be done ahead of the draft. Similarly, the "Document" is scheduled to be sent to the countries at month 30 for approval, yet the draft is submitted to PSC at month 36. Please explain.

(3) Please change Outcome 3.1 to "SAP signed at ministerial level by three countries".

(4) As noted earlier, please change "Strategic Action Plan" to "Strategic Action Programme" for references to SAP.

(5) Please be mindful of nuanced differences among "approved" and "validated" and "endorsed". Please be consistent across indicators and targets in this regard.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

1. The targeted beneficiaries in the results framework and in the core indicators section G are now fully aligned.

2. The name of the Output 1.1.3 was changed accordingly. In addition, the timeline has been adjusted to reflect correct delivery dates.

3. Outcome 3.1 has been adjusted as suggested.

4. SAP is now reflected as Programme throughout the documents.

5. Language has been harmonized throughout the Request and accompanying documents. In Annex A and Appendix 02, please however note the gradation and nuances in the wording as e.g. the PSC does not have the same authority as the countries and SAP signatories: PSC validates and ratifies the SAP, countries endorse it, and ministers sign it.

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw) No. Please address the following:

(1) GEF Secretariat comment that output 3.1 will deliver "A region-wide SAP signed at ministerial level" has not been fully taken up. Please see Table B as an example. Output 3.1 of Table B states "A region-wide SAP approved by relevant ministries". Please change to "signed". This also appears elsewhere in the ProDoc.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

The Request and accompanying documents were adjusted in accordance with the Secretariat's comment.

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Partly.

(1) Please ensure all comments from Council are adequately responded to in the CEO document and not just the ProDoc. Please then document in the Annex B table accordingly, with sufficient detail so the reader does not need to track down the response elsewhere in the portal submission. A full review of whether the comments have been addressed can only be carried out once this has been done.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Partially addressed.

(1) Matrix responses are now present in the portal submission. However, responses are not satisfactory. Please re-read each comment to ensure each of Germany's points are adequately addressed in the matrix. In some cases, they are not. To this end, please provide sufficient detail in the matrix such that the reader does not need to search among the uploaded documents to determine if comments are addressed. This is particularly the case for Germany's third comment (value of tri-national approach, country ownership, financing and monitoring system) and sixth comment (documenting a private sector engagement strategy).

4th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response All comments from Council (UK and Germany) are now duly responded into the CEO document, including Annex B.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Partly.

(1) Please ensure all comments from STAP are adequately responded to in the CEO document and not just the ProDoc. Please then document in the Annex B table accordingly, with sufficient detail so the reader does not need to track down the response elsewhere in the portal submission. A full review of whether the comments have been addressed can only be carried out once this has been done.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Partially addressed.

(1) Matrix responses are now present in the portal submission. However, responses are not satisfactory. Please re-read each comment to ensure each of STAP's points are adequately addressed in the matrix. In some cases, they are not. To this end, please provide sufficient detail in the matrix such that the reader does not need to search among the uploaded documents to determine if comments are addressed. For example, rather than noting, "This is addressed in an enhanced risk table presented in the Project Document and the CEO Document", please directly note in the matrix what the result is of the reassessment of the "consensual decision making" risk level.

4th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response

The responses to STAP's comments are now included in the CEO document and documented in Annex B. (References to UNEPs Prodoc and IDBs TC document have been included where useful, though the responses in the CEO document are self-contained).

Agency Response April 28, 2022

Annex B has been refined and responses to Germany comments further elaborated to ensure that each of Germany's points are adequately addressed in the matrix. More details and clarification references were included in the responses of comments in order to explain how these were addressed. In particular, responses to Germany's third comment (value of tri-national approach, country ownership, financing and monitoring system) and sixth comment (documenting a private sector engagement strategy) were expanded. A revised Annex B is available in the Portal and a marked up version of the same has been uploaded in the road map.

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Please address the following:

(1) Annex C only show amounts spent to date and amounts committed. Please provide a detailed accounting in Annex C of how the PPG Budget was utilized (broken down by activity).

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

Agency Response 1. Annex C has been adjusted to provide the PPG costs breakdown.

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 12th of March 2022 (thenshaw): Cleared.

Agency Response

Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response

Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request N/A

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

13th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No, please address comments and resubmit. Thank you.

14th of April 2022 (thenshaw): No, please address comments and resubmit. Thank you.

16th of May 2022 (thenshaw): No, please address comments and resubmit. Thank you.

25th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Yes.

Review Dates

**Secretariat Comment at
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

First Review
Additional Review (as necessary)

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations