

Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini

Basic Information

GEF ID

10695

Countries

Eswatini

Project Title

Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini

GEF Agency(ies)

UNEP

Agency ID

UNEP: 01858

GEF Focal Area(s)

Multi Focal Area

Program Manager

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy

PIF

Part I – Project Informatic

Focal area elements

1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed.

October 2nd, 2020

No.

This MFA project is developed under 3 BD objectives and 3 LD objectives. It is very challenging with relatively limited resources to justify so many GEF objectives, as the demonstration to generate Global Environment Benefits is difficult.

- - We do not see the point to assign \$105,000 to BD1.1. on mainstreaming. There is not enough information about the baseline situation and cofinancing opportunities to be convinced that these resources will make a difference to generate GEB.
- - The BD1.5 on inclusive conservation is not relevant (this objective was set up for a specific initiative).
- - We recommend focusing on a single BD objective as the BD2.7 on protected area management. You can develop a robust reasoning to provide additional resources to manage the three considered natural reserves.
- - There is potentially a right use of the LD2.5 objective with \$311,450 to improve the enabling environment for LDN. However, you would need to be more explicit about the output 1.1.1 and its expected deliverables related to LDN.
- Now, using the LD resources on LD1.1 (SLM on productive landscape), LD1.3 (restoration, including natural forest regeneration) and LD1.4 (integrated management) is possible if you can clearly demonstrate the role of GEF resources in addition to the baseline situation and cofinancing opportunities, but as for BD, we are seeing a risk of dispersal and a lack of focus, with also several non-eligible activities under LD (renewable energy, wetland restoration, water irrigation for sugar cane. To be revised.

Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November 2021

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment :

The number of FA strategies have been reduced as shown in the PIF to only

BD-2-7 Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and Improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate

LD-1-1 Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods through Sustainable Land Management (SLM)

LD-1-4 Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses and increase resilience in the wider landscape

Indicative project/program description summary

2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

March 24, 2021

Addressed.

November 4, 2020

Not fully addressed. Item to see in connection with the item II.3 on the incremental reasoning: The pathway from the current situation, the problems, the barriers to the proposed outcomes and outputs is not clear. We suggest including a Theory of Change with a diagram and an explanation.

The role of the baseline and cofinancing are not clear, we are not seeing the added value of the GEF project which seems a stand-alone project. Please, clarify.

Component 1

- The result framework proposes a first component, close to \$1 million (\$960,500) with capacity building (1.1.1), assessment (1.1.2), and plans (1.1.3, 1.1.4); The value for money is not demonstrated, as well as the complementarity with the cofinancing; Please, explain, or modify;
- The output 1.1.1 is not formulated as an output, it is a series of activities for a too vague result (update the institutional and legislative

framework for SLM and ecosystem restoration in the Mbuluzi landscape?); Please, revise;

- The role of cofinancing is not explained, and the GEF resources seems stand alone.

Component 2

- The second component includes (again) plans (2.1.1.) on SLM and conservation agriculture and SLM implemented (2.1.2). It seems a duplication of the previous output 1.1.4 that was referring to “sustainable development plans strengthened and implemented to scale up adoption of SLM and ecosystem approaches using participatory approaches). Please, modify, and/or explain.
- Here again, the role of cofinancing would be welcome

Component 3

- Revise the numbers for outcomes and outputs (3.1, 3.1.1...).
- Output 1.1.1: what “management frameworks and governance models for PA” means in Eswatini. It seems that the project is starting PA management from scratch. It is very probably not the case. Please, revise
- Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.3 seem very close, with duplication. Please, revise.
- Are the activities under 1.1.4 under the METT enough to justify an output?

Component 4: modifications welcome. Cleared.

October 2nd, 2020

No.

- As far as possible, please, express the outputs in a way to reflect the nature of activities and the value for money. If needed, refer to the OECD glossary to better define outcomes and outputs (<https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/2754804.pdf>).
- When possible, include quantities for the deliverables. The following outputs are not correctly formulated: 1.1.1 (or detail in the text the expected deliverables expected at national and local level; make the connection with LDN more explicit); 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.5.

More in the detail:

- 1.1.1: Be more explicit on the expected results, and the connection with the LDN framework at national and local levels.
- 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 2.1.1, 2.2.2: Please, keep in mind that the LDFA finances SLM in productive landscapes. We can understand the need for wetland restoration and better water management, but it cannot be in this project, as we cannot see the global environment benefits from LD and BD points of view.
- 2.1.3: We understand the willingness to remove invasive species as Chromolaena and Dichrostachys, but you need to put these operations in the perspective of productive landscape restoration and clarify the sustainability of the proposed approach.
- 2.2.1: Basically, the LD Focal Area finances SLM to produce multiple benefits and the number of ha of SLM is used as a proxy to reflect

these multiple benefits. Different forms of conservation agriculture are welcome in this context, and we suggest focusing on this kind of interventions. The mention of renewable energy devices and tools is possible at the margins, but we do not recommend highlighting too much importance, as the generation of global environment benefits (GHG reduction?) is much more difficult to demonstrate and not LD related.

- 2.2.1: The LDFA finances SLM and targets smallholder farmers. Supporting commercial enterprises for industrial commodities as sugar cane, is not welcome in a GEF LD project, as it does not fit with SLM and does not generate GEB. In addition, we are seeing potential reputation risks. Remove or justify.

- 2.2.2: wetland restoration is not eligible under GEF7 LD and BD strategies.

Agency Response

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for the November 4, 2020 GEF Review comment

A Theory of Change has been added

The whole section on the baseline has been re-written and the role of the co-financing has been incorporated in the PIF in section 1.2 from page 12 to page 24 but can be summarized below:

Co-financing from the Eswatini National Trust Commission, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development and Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, will contribute to component 1.

Co-financing from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development, the National Maize Corporation, Peak Timbers, Swaziland Industrial development Company (SIDC), the International center for Research in Agro-Forestry (ICRAF), World Vision, Mbuluzi basin Communities will contribute to component 2.

Co-financing from the Eswatini National Trust Commission, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mbuluzi basin Communities and Private Conservancies, will contribute to component 3 on Protected areas management improvement.

component 4 on knowledge management including documentation of best practices, action research and monitoring of farm output and performance of target crops/livestock and measurement of soil fertility improvement in participating communities will benefit from Co-financing by the Eswatini National Trust Commission, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development and Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, the International centre for Research in Agro-Forestry (ICRAF), World Vision.

Component 1

The outputs in component 1 have been strengthened; they now include implementation and enforcement of the frameworks to be developed/revised and mainstreaming of SLM and ecosystem restoration into local government development plans and supporting those local governments to implement and monitor those plans.

Also, the budget for this component 1 has been reduced.

In addition, the description of the component now includes the explanation of how the GEF will be complimented by the co-financing

An explanation of how co-financing will complement the baselines has been included in the alternative scenario. Also a describe of the incrementality has been added for each component.

Output 1.1.1 has been formulated to read as an output

the role of co-financing has been explained and linked with the baseline and incorporated in the PIF in section 1.2 from page 13

Component 2

All the outputs of component 2 have been revised and they are now reading differently from the former ones and all those outputs that were relating to assessments and plan development have been shifted to component 1.

The outputs of component 2 have been revised to focus on capacity building and strengthening for sustainable land management, while those of component 1 are on frameworks and their implementation, regulation and enforcement

Here again, the role of the baseline and co-financing has been incorporated in the PIF in section 1.2 from page 13

Component 3

- The numbering of outcomes and outputs have been revised accordingly
- Output 3.1.1: has been revised and strengthened
- the original Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.3 have been revised and numbered correctly.
- The output on the METT has been strengthened to focus on monitoring and tracking of management effectiveness of PAs within the Mbuluzi landscape

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

All the outputs have been revised. Those targeting water and wetlands have been removed

Output 2.2.1: on Supporting commercial enterprises for industrial commodities as sugar cane has been removed and the project has been made to targets smallholder farmers

Co-financing

3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

March 24, 2021

Addressed.

November 4th, 2020

- There are several cofinancing partners (13), including from the private sector.
- Please, confirm that all these partners will have an influence and a role in the project result framework (Per definition cofinancing means "resources that are additional to the GEF grant and that are provided by the GEF Partner Agency itself and/or by other non-GEF sources that support the implementation of the GEF-financed project and the achievement of its objectives").
- Please, confirm you did a background check on these enterprises and if needed, reputation risks will be assessed at PPG.
- We take note that the Agency does not provide any cofinancing in cash or in-kind. It is an aspect that could be developed?

Agency Response

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for the 4th November review comment

All the partners will have an influence and a role to play in the project as explained in the PIF in sections 1.2 on page 12 and on page 28 in table 2.2 of section 2 on stakeholders.

All co-financiers are now included in the list of stakeholders and their roles are well explained

A thorough background check on all the partners listed was undertaken. There has been a good level of consultations although some of them have not been documented or minuted. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, most of the consultations have been virtual and so, a reputation risks can be assessed at PPG. The list of the names consulted, the time they were consulted, and their addresses has been

included in the PIF in section 2 page 34

At this stage there no co-financing identified by UNEP but this will be looked at during the PPG stage

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

We confirm that all these partners will have an influence and a role in the project result framework and that they have been consulted and agreed to participate in the project as detailed in section 2 of the PIF. UNEP is not providing any co-financing for this project at the moment but such co-financing will be sought during PPG.

GEF Resource Availability

4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed.

October 2nd, 2020

No new letter of endorsement is needed as Eswatini has fully flexible STAR allocations.

However please note:

- The LoE mentions \$2,155,708 under BD and \$1,776,484 under LD; while you used a different breakdown with \$1,355,000 under BD and \$2,561,450 under LD. Based on the project directions, we understand the need for more LD resources than BD resources. Depending on the ways to respond to the item I.1, this breakdown may even be adjusted with more LD resources.

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Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November 2020

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF Review comment:

We have maintained the higher figure for BD because there will be a lot of work in the 3 protected areas under component 3

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Addressed.

Agency Response

Cleared on 2nd October 2020

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed.

October 2nd, 2020

Addressed. See item I-1.

Agency Response

Cleared on 2nd October 2020

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

N/A

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response N/A

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response N/A

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response N/A

Project Preparation Grant

5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed.

October 2nd, 2020

- A \$150,000 PPG is within the allowable cap.

- In the portal, please, revise the Table E: there is a mismatch between the BD and LD fees.

Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November 2020

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

The PPG Table e has been revised

Core indicators

6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed.

October 2nd, 2020

To be confirmed:

The core indicators are 1.2 (PA): 34,500 ha; 3.1: 12,000 ha under restoration (to be confirmed as several restoration activities are not eligible), 4.1: 14,200 h under SLM (to be confirmed). The number of beneficiaries is 100,000.

Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November 2020

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

The new core indicators are 1.2 (PA): 35,000ha; 3.1: 700 ha under restoration, 4.1: 60,000 h under SLM. The number of beneficiaries remains at 100,000

Project/Program taxonomy

7. Is the project/program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 2nd, 2020

Addressed.

Agency Response

Cleared on 2nd October 2020

Part II – Project Justification

1. Has the project/program described the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

March 24, 2021

Addressed.

November 4, 2020

The text may have been revised, but the logic is still to be demonstrated. See item II.3 about the need for a Theory of Change.

October 2nd, 2020

There is a interesting and appropriate information in the description.

- However, we have some difficulties to figure out the pathways for change and the logics from the description, the problem analysis, the barriers, and the proposed result framework. See item II.3.

Agency Response

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for the 4th November review comment

The logical framework has been revised and the theory of change has been added.

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

the problem analysis, the barriers, and the proposed result framework have been revised accordingly

2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed at PIF level. To be confirmed at CEO endorsement, especially the lessons from the GEF and LDCF portfolio.

October 2nd, 2020

- Climate risk is mentioned, but data are lacking to describe the situation, propose climate projections (by 2050 for instance), and justify SLM and other interventions for better resilience.
- As mentioned in the text, there is an interesting GEF and LDCF portfolio in the country (for instance under the Resilient Food System Program, or IAP-Food Security). We would like to see a short review of lessons and best practices.

Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November 2020

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

Climate risk data has been added in section 1.2 on baseline of the PIF

The lessons learnt from the GEF and LDCF portfolio in the country (under the Resilient Food System Program, or IAP-Food Security) has also been added in the same section

3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

March 24, 2021

Addressed.

November 4, 2020

Not fully addressed:

- The pathway from the current situation, the problems, the barriers to the proposed outcomes and outputs is still not clear.
- The request to include a Theory of Change with a diagram and an explanation has not been addressed.

- The roles of the baseline and cofinancing are not clear, we are not seeing the added value of the GEF project.

October 2nd, 2020

- We have some difficulties to figure out the pathways for change and the logic from the description, the problem analysis, the barriers, and the proposed result framework. For the time being the result framework is too broad, partially not eligible, and the cause-effect reasoning is not obvious. The result framework insists too much on water aspects, water planning, and interventions that are not really eligible under LD and BD focal areas.
- We recommend including a Theory of Change, or at least a more robust reasoning to understand the strategic choices, the pathways for change, and justify the result framework. For the time being, the project embraces too many issues, reflected by too many BD and LD objectives, with several disputable activities. If needed, please check <https://stapgef.org/theory-change-primer>.
- The component 2 on IWRM for instance should be mainly financed by cofinancing as several agriculture and water aspects are not GEB related (invasive species, water-efficiency technologies, renewable energies, industrial agriculture), or out of the scope of GEF strategies (wetland restoration).
- Having a component on gender and the youth is certainly interesting in the context of Eswatini, but there is no information in the baseline that may help to understand the cause-effect pathway.

Agency Response

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for the 4th November review comment

- The Theory of Change with a diagram and an explanation has been added.
- The roles of the baseline and co-financing have been detailed in section 1.2 of the PIF

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

Non eligible and out of scope components/outputs and activities have been removed.
BD and LD objectives have been reduced and the result framework re-aligned
The result framework is now justifiable

4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 6, 2021

Addressed.

March 31, 2021

Not addressed. The text proposed to justify the project under the BD2.7 objective does not work. In our understanding. The project is going to generate GEB under BD with 35,000 ha of protected areas better managed. Please revise.

March 21, 2021

Addressed.

However, in the PIF, remove the reference of the BD1.4 objective in the text and include the reference to the BD2.7 objective on protected areas.

November 4, 2020

The text in the section 1.4 "Alignment with GEF Focal area has not been updated and there is no explanation on how this project fits with BD2/7, LD1.1, LD 1.4.

Please, revise.

October 2nd, 2020

No

See item I.1: the number of GEF objectives should be narrowed and the project should be revised to be more focused.

Agency Response

Cleared on 6 April 2021

Answer for the 31 March 2021 GEF Review Comment

The text proposed to justify the project under the BD2.7 objective has been revised to read as follows: – see section 1.4 on page 23 of the PIF

Under component 3, the project will deliver global environmental benefits through improved management of 3 protected areas (Malolotja Nature Reserve, Mlawula nature reserve and Hawane Dam (Ramsar site) leading to species conservation in the basin. Hence making the project aligned with BD2.7. In addition, global environmental benefits will extend beyond these 3 Protected Areas, as efforts to scale up

biodiversity conservation in Mbuluzi river landscape will be attained through component 2; outputs 2.1.5 in which tree planting in degraded communal lands and along riverine areas will be promoted to reduce land degradation and also under output 2.1.6 in which Capacity building of Community Forest Associations (CFAs) for community biodiversity conservation will be enhanced for them to continue with the forestry related activities at community level and consequently, indigenous forest/woodland restoration covering 700 ha in Mbuluzi catchment with livelihood benefits will be undertaken. Reforestation of degraded communal lands and along riverine areas will cause biodiversity enrichment and the return of species in these areas.

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for 21 March 2021

Reference to the BD1.4 has been removed and a reference of BD2.7 has been used – see section 1.4 on page 23 of the PIF

Answer for the 4th November GEF review comment

The text in section 1.4 "Alignment with GEF Focal area has been revised/updated and strengthened with an explanation on how this project fits with BD2/7, LD1.1. and LD-1-4

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

BD and LD objectives have been reduced and the result framework re-aligned

5. Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Not fully addressed. See II.3.

October 2nd, 2020

No. See I.3

Agency Response

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for the 4th November GEF review comment

Section 1.5 of the PIF on incremental cost reasoning has been revised and strengthened

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

Yes, it has been properly described

6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 8, 2021

Addressed.

April 6, 2021

No change or explanation have been provided. The information is not still coherent between the word PIF document and the portal. In the PIF, you mention 60,000 ha under SLM (equivalent to the core indicator 4.3), meanwhile in the portal you still use the core indicator 4.1 (enhanced management for biodiversity).

TO BE CONFIRMED AT CEO ENDORSEMENT.

March 31, 2021

The information in the PIF and the portal are not yet coherent. In our understand and to justify this PIF using both BD and LD resources, we should find GEB under the BD and the LD strategy: 700 ha of forests restored (3.1), 35,000 ha of Protected Areas better managed (1.2) AND 60,000 ha under SLM - as written in the PIF, but not reflected in the portal where you inserted 60,000 ha under 4.1 (for BD) and not under 4.3 for SLM. Please, correct.

March 24, 2021

Please, revise the numbers between the portal and the PIF and confirm the right targets:

- Portal (core indicators): 35,000 ha of PA under improved management effectiveness (1.2), 700 ha of degraded lands restored (3.1), 6,000 ha of terrestrial landscapes under better management for biodiversity (4.1), 100,000 beneficiaries with 50% of women.
- PIF and text: At least 320,000 hectares of restored land under landscape management plans and improved management including? 60,000 ha of restored agricultural land through SLM practices?
- In the PIF, there are also mentions of b) Diversification of agro-ecological food production systems, c) improved and diversified vegetative cover, as a co-benefit, contributions to GHG mitigation are expected, d) Increased resilience of ecosystems and landscapes due to reduced surface water runoff and soil erosion, e) Enhanced capacities and knowledge to apply SLM practices in the targeted landscapes. Please, explain how these indicators will be monitored, provide baseline and targets, or remove them from the section.

November 4, 2020

There is no more explanation in the text (section 1.6) to justify the targets under the different core indicators. The targets themselves are even not listed. Please revise.

October 2nd, 2020

- Please, focus the text to justify and explain the selected core indicators: 1.2: 34,000 (PA). 3.1: 12,000 had under restoration, 4.1: 14,200 ha under SLM; for 100,000 targeted beneficiaries. You can for instance confirm that the three selected PA fit with Key Biodiversity Areas, KBA, and reflect a Global Important Biodiversity.

- The targets under 3.1 and 4.1 should be based on the Theory of Change and the strategic choices made in the result framework, as well as the LDN targets. The Mbulizi river basin is for instance identified as a hotspot of land degradation and a priority for action.

Agency Response

Answer for the 6th April 2021 GEF Review comment

The information between the word PIF document and the portal is now coherent.

The indicator of 60,000 ha under SLM in the PIF has now been placed under core indicator 4.3 in the portal. It has been removed from core indicator 4.1.

Answer for the 24 March 2021 review comment

see section 1.6 on page 24 of the PIF

The numbers between the portal and the PIF have been revised and harmonized

These figures are now correct -indicator 4.1 has been revised from 6,000 to 60,000 hectares. This has been corrected in both the PIF and the portal

The 320,000 hectares was incorrect and has been removed. The 60,000 hectares is correct. Please refer to the above response

The para of (b) to (e) has been deleted – see section 1.6 on page 24 of the PIF

Answer for the 4th November review comment

More explanation in the text (section 1.6) to justify the targets under the different core indicators has been added and the targets have been listed.

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

The new core indicators are 1.2 (PA): 35,000ha; 3.1: 700 ha under restoration, 4.1: 60,000 h under SLM. The number of beneficiaries remains at 100,000

7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 2nd, 2020

Yes.

Agency Response **Cleared on 2nd October 2020**

Project/Program Map and Coordinates

Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 2nd, 2020

Yes

Agency Response **Cleared on 2nd October 2020**

Stakeholders

Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Not fully addressed. The information provided does not allow us to know the level of consultation with national and local stakeholders. Is there a way to know the number of participants that took part in these meetings? Any agenda? Any minutes?

October 2nd, 2020

A list of stakeholders is mentioned.

Please provide basic information about the consultations that took place (dates, participants, agenda, eventually minutes).

Agency Response

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for the 4th November review comment

The section on stakeholder engagement has been improved with enough information on the level of consultation with national and local stakeholders. The list of participants that were consulted during the meetings has been added. see table 2.1 of section 2 on page 28 of the PIF. A lot of consultations happened virtually due to COVID19 and it is difficult to document some, for instance some of them were by direct phone calls.

The PPG will deepen the consultations

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

The project will be executed by the Eswatini National Trust Commission. UNEP Task Manager had extensive consultations with the Eswatini National Trust Commission officials and agreed on the general modalities. After which the Commission officials organized meetings between the Task Manager and the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Section, the Ministry of Agriculture Crop section and the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs. These consultation meetings were face to face and took place on 22 to 28 Sept 2019, moderated by the national GEF focal point. Thereafter, the commission conducted consultations with the rest of the partners discussing details of their participation in the project including their co-financial contributions.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Addressed.

November 4, 2020

Not fully addressed. Thanks for the additional information to better define the status of women and the inequalities between men and women in Eswatini. However, there is no indication on how this information is integrated in the result framework, and what role the project will play to reduce these inequalities. Please, revise.

October 2nd, 2020

There is a willingness to include gender issues in the monitoring aspects (disaggregated data for instance). However, the PIF misses the description of inequalities between males and females, specifically in the sector of agriculture (access to land, access to credit and resources, access to training, access to decision making bodies, etc) but also in the society (abuses, violence). The result framework is therefore silent about the way this project will propose a strategy to reduce these inequalities.

- <https://data.unwomen.org/country/eswatini>

- <http://afrobarometer.org/publications/ad235-property-rights-domestic-roles-still-question-marks-amid-strong-support-gender#:~:text=The%20government%20of%20the%20Kingdom,statutes%2C%20policies%2C%20and%20strategies.&text=Despite%20these%20efforts%2C%20women's%20rights,a%20challenging%20issue%20in%20eSwatini.>

Agency Response

Cleared on 24 March 2021

Answer for the 4th November review comment

Section 3 of the PIF has been revised. It is now clear on how gender information is integrated in the result framework, and what role the project will play to reduce these inequalities

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

Gender issues with data have been well articulated in section 3 of the PIF on gender.

Private Sector Engagement

Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 2nd, 2020

Yes. see the comments above on sugar cane plantations and potential reputation risks

Agency Response

Cleared on 2nd October 2020

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed. Some words about the private sector and the reputation risks would have been appreciated though.

October 2nd, 2020

- Climate risk is mentioned but not really screened: data are lacking to describe the situation, propose climate projects (by 2050 for instance), and justify SLM and other interventions. Please, revise.
- Please, check the guidelines on COVID-19 to provide basic information on 1) the current situation, 2) existing problems, and 3) eventually opportunities and mitigation measures. Innovative partnerships may be proposed (with projects and initiatives related to Human Capital).
- Include and assess (At least at PPG) the reputation risks to be associated with industrial agriculture.

Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November and We agree with the reviewer that we will do a deeper reputation risks assessment and analysis during the PPG stage

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

Climate risks and COVID19 risks have been included in the risk table in section 5 of the PIF.

Coordination

Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined?
Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 2nd, 2020

Yes. A coordination with existing GEF and LDCF projects is proposed.

The platform on AFR100 is also an excellent opportunity to promote coordination and synergy with other bilateral and multilateral initiatives in the project area.

Agency Response

Cleared on 2nd October 2020

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed.

October 2nd, 2020

This project is financed by LD and BD: we want to see the NAP, LDN targets and the NBSAP as priority documents. A minimum of analysis is requested to demonstrate that this project fits with these documents.

The mention of the NDS is welcome, as well as other climate mitigation and adaptation documents (information on climate risks should be taken from these documents).

The water act and water policy are out of the scope of LD and BD concerns.

Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November 2020

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 GEF review comment:

The water act and water policy have been removed

The NAP, LDN targets and the NBSAP are well articulated in section 7 of the PIF

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed “knowledge management (KM) approach” in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project’s/program’s overall impact and sustainability?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

November 4, 2020

Addressed.

October 2nd, 2020

Yes.

As said above, the focus on gender and youth should be supported with data.

Agency Response

Cleared on 4th November 2020

Answer for the 2nd October 2020 review comment:

Gender issues with data have been well articulated in section 3 of the PIF on gender.

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 2nd, 2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Cleared on 2nd October 2020

art III – Country Endorsements

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

October 2nd, 2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Cleared on 2nd October 2020

Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects

Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion:

NA

Agency Response

Answer for the 13th April 2021 GEF Review comments: Comments under section GEFSEC DECISION :RECOMMENDATION

Point 1 Response: A new LOE stating Eswatini National Trust Commission as the executing entity has been secured and is attached. It also has been uploaded in the portal

The Executing Entity in the Portal has been changed to Eswatini National Trust Commission as in the new LoE

Point 2 Response: The indicative target for carbon sequestration under sub-indicator 6.1 has been added both in the PIF 9 (see table F) and in the portal. It has been calculated to be 827,477 tCO₂-eq using the attached EX-ACT tool sheet.

EFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

April 22, 2021

All points are addressed. The PIF is recommended for clearance.

April 13, 2021

Please, address the two comments below raised at quality control:

1. Executing Entity in Portal (Eswatini National Trust Commission) is different than the Executing Entity in LoE (Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs) – please ask the Agency to include the Entity as it is on LoE, or to leave the Executing Entity in blank or t.b.d (to be determined) – throughout the preparation of the project, the Executing Entity could be determined accordingly.

Dr. Kelly West
UNEP/GEF Coordination Office
NAIROBI - KENYA

RE: Endorsement for a project on “Restoration of ecosystems, integrated water resource management and promotion of sustainable agricultural production systems in the Mbulazi river Basin of Eswatini”

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Eswatini, I confirm that the above project is in accordance with the Government's national priorities and commitments under the relevant global environmental conventions and has been discussed with relevant stakeholders in accordance with GEF's policy on public involvement.

I am pleased to endorse preparation of the project proposal with the support of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). If approved, the project will be executed by the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs on behalf of Government of Eswatini. I request UNEP to provide a copy of the project document to the Ministry of Environment of Eswatini before it is submitted to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement.

The total financing from GEFTF being requested for this project is **US\$ 4,470,000** using the GEF7 flexibility mechanism, inclusive of project preparation grant and Agency fees for project cycle management services associated with the total GEF grant. The financing requested for Eswatini is detailed in the table below:

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID
10695

Project Type
FSP

Type of Trust Fund
GET

CBIT/NGI
☒ CBIT ☐ NGI

Project Title ⓘ
Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini

Countries
Eswatini

Agency(ies)
UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s) ⓘ
Eswatini National Trust Commission

Executing Partner Type
Government

2. On core indicators: the proposal mentions “Using the EX-ACT tool, it has been calculated that the project will result in considerable carbon sequestration, due to restoration tree planting, agro-forestry and SLM”. Based on the Ex-ACT analysis, please include indicative target for carbon sequestration under sub-indicator 6.1.

April 8, 2021

The PIF is recommended for clearance.

April 6, 2021

Item 4 addressed, item 6 not addressed (if you cannot confirm between the core indicators 4.1 and 4.3, tell it at PIF stage. to be confirmed at CEO endorsement).

The maps and figures, including the Theory of Change, are not readable in the portal. Please, revise. It is a problem as the STAP for instance may not be able to check the ToC, the maps, and the figures.

March 31, 2021

Items 4 and 6 under the part II have not correctly been addressed. In addition, the maps and figures, including the Theory of Change, are not

readable in the portal. Please, revise.

March 24, 2021

All points have been addressed, but the item 4 and 6 (part II).

- Please correct the text in the portal and in the PIF about the indicators and confirm the targets.
- In the PIF, please take the opportunity to remove the reference of the BD1.4 objective in the text and make a reference to the BD2.7 on protected areas.
- Upon receipt of a revised PIF package, the PIF will be recommended for technical clearance.

November 4, 2020

All points have not been addressed. The PIF cannot be recommended yet.

October 2nd, 2020

Not yet. Please, address the comments above.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

- Include lessons from the GEF and LDCF portfolio.
- Identify eventual risks with the private sector, including reputation risks.
- Provide a stakeholder engagement plan.
- Confirm cofinancing;
- Confirm the targets for each core indicators.
- Include a gender Action plan and mainstream gender issues in the project.

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	10/2/2020	10/2/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/4/2020	3/17/2021
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/24/2021	4/22/2021
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/31/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/6/2021	

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval