

Resilient and sustainable livelihoods for rural Yemen

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10562

Countries

Yemen

Project Name

Resilient and sustainable livelihoods for rural Yemen

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

3/23/2020

Review completed by PM

4/16/2020

Program Manager

Yuki Shiga

Focal Area

Multi Focal Area

Project Type

FSP

PIF

Part I – Project Information

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

04.16.2020:

LDCF: Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

04.14.2020:

Explanation provided in the review sheet is clear. Please reflect it in the Table B to match climate adaptation indicators indicated in elsewhere. For example, under LDCF funded Component 3, total beneficiaries adds up 105,000. According to Agency's explanation, this should add up to 70,000.

04.12.2020:

LD /BD: Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

03.30.2020:

LDCF:

CCA-1 and CCA-2 in Table A is aligned with 2018-2022 GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and SCCF, and thus sufficient.

LD:

Not fully. LD-2-5 should also be selected in Table A, it is mentioned in the aligning section of the PIF text and several activities would fall under this sub-objective.

As a general comment, the proposed SLM activities are eligible under LD. However, there is a disconnect between the description of the context, threats and barriers, and risks with the actual project design and implementation strategy. The context is well described and gives a good picture of the difficulties the project would face, however, in view of this, the PIF comes across as too ambitious and not fully responding to the identified issues.

BD:

The project is loosely related to the GEF-7 biodiversity strategy's focus on biodiversity mainstreaming. However, it fails to clearly demonstrate how through the spatial planning, changing production practices, and improving the policy and regulatory framework how globally important biodiversity will be conserved or sustainably used. Please provide more precision on this element. Developing a more precise and better articulated theory of change for each geography may aid in this exercise and result in most of the biodiversity resources being directed to the geographies where GEF return on investment for globally important biodiversity could be best realized.

Agency Response

4/15/2020

Please, consider the further amendments made in the table B. Please, also consider the increase in GEBs from GEFTF investments in order to address the comment on the BD ambition. Changes have been made throughout the PIF (table B, GEFTF CI worksheet and section 1.6 Benefits).

<p>03.30.2020: LDCF: CCA-1 and CCA-2 in Table A is aligned with 2018-2022 GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and SCCF, and thus sufficient.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p>
<p>LD: Not fully. LD-2-5 should also be selected in Table A, it is mentioned in the aligning section of the PIF text and several activities would fall under this sub-objective.</p>	<p>LD-2-5 now selected with modifications made.</p>
<p>As a general comment, the proposed SLM activities are eligible under LD. However, there is a disconnect between the description of the context, threats and barriers, and risks with the actual project design and implementation strategy.</p> <p>The context is well described and gives a good picture of the difficulties the project would face, however, in view of this, the PIF comes across as too ambitious and not fully responding to the identified issues.</p>	<p>Modifications made with further elaborations.</p>
<p>BD: The project is loosely related to the GEF-7 biodiversity strategy's focus on biodiversity mainstreaming. However, it fails to clearly demonstrate how through the spatial planning, changing production practices, and improving the policy and regulatory framework how globally important biodiversity will be conserved or sustainably used. Please provide more precision on this element.</p>	<p>Modifications made to more fully describe how the project framework will mainstream biodiversity conservation and contribute to conservation of globally significant biodiversity.</p>
<p>Developing a more precise and better articulated theory of change for each geography may aid in this exercise and result in most of the biodiversity resources being directed to the geographies where GEF return on investment for globally important biodiversity could be best realized.</p>	<p>Modifications made as noted above.</p>

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

04.23.2020:

Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

04.21.2020:

Clarification requested.

Current Core Indicator indicates that 70,000 ha will be exclusively Contributing to climate adaptation Core Indicator 2 and 33,000 ha will be contributing to GEFTF Core Indicator 4. On the other hand, if entire 103,000 ha is expected to contribute to both Core Indicators (i.e., same 103k ha expected to be 'under improved practices (BD/LD)' as well as 'under climate resilient management (LDCF)'), this 103,000 ha should be indicated in both Core Indicators. This logic applies same for other Core Indicators such as beneficiaries. Please confirm.

04.14.2020:

LDCF: Explanation provided in the review sheet is clear. Please reflect it in the Table B to match climate adaptation indicators indicated in elsewhere. For example, under LDCF funded Component 3 of the Table B, total beneficiaries adds up to 105,000. According to Agency's explanation, this should add up to 70,000.

04.12.2020:

LDCF:

Agency is requested to provided further explanation on how figures related to Core Indicators in (i) Table B, (ii) Section '1.6 Benefits', and (iii) CCA Results Framework, are associated, since figures seem to be different from one place to another and thus still unclear.

LD/ BD: Cleared

03.30.2020:

LDCF:

It is unclear how LDCF is contributing to Components/Outcomes/Outputs and associated to 'indicators' since these all seem to be 'exactly' same for LDCF and GEFTF. As such, Agency is requested to restructure Table B to indicate clear demarcation on how each Funds are contributing to which Components/Outcomes/Outputs, and how these are associated to 'indicators'. This may require further reflection in the relevant section of the PIF (e.g. baseline, alternative scenario). In doing this please be considerate on formatting, so there will be minimal confusion from repeating Component/Outcome/Output names etc. in the Table B. For example, please refer to Table B in GEFID10543 PIF. In addition, how indicators in Table B are associated to CCA Core Indicators attached is also unclear. For example, sum of those seem to be 'beneficiaries' in the LDCF components is 34,000 while, that in the CCA Core Indicator table is 18,000.

LD:

Yes for LD related components/outcomes/outputs. However, the targets provided in Table B are inconsistent with targets provided in the core -indicator table and also different from the figures provided in the GEB section of the PIF. To give one example: The project objective refers to 34,000 beneficiaries, the core indicators table to 16,000.

Further, the project area fact sheets have yet another set of figures that in not fully consistent with the text and tables elsewhere.

BD:

Please clarify whether BD investments are only focused on Socotra and Al-Mahrah.

Please provide a rationale as to why investments are being simultaneously implemented in three different areas of the country given the operational challenges inherent to the current situation.

Component 1:

Please clarify if spatial planning focus is on all three sites or the two above. We note that GEF has already invested in the development and implementation of a zoning plan focused on biodiversity conservation in Socotra. The project is asking for additional resources for more planning but does not adequately evaluate the previous investment, lessons learned, and why additional investments are now needed. This does not bode well for the sustainability of the proposed intervention.

Please note that spatial planning as supported under BD mainstreaming is meant to focus on the maximization of BD benefits. The results framework indicates that this is not the case and in fact the definition provided in the text of the document states: “organizing resource user groups to establish binding spatial planning that identifies ecosystem limits and creates parameters to guide sustainable production at spatial scales large enough to deliver meaningful conservation benefits”. Sustainable production will only lead to sustainable production; it won’t, ipso facto, necessarily lead to any conservation results. Spatial planning supported under the biodiversity focal area is designed to ensure global biodiversity benefits are provided. Therefore, throughout the text please clarify how spatial planning will ensure priority biodiversity sites of global significance are protected.

Please clarify what is the available data and computing infrastructure to allow for informed spatial planning that prioritizes BD resources.

As currently presented, there are no global benefits for biodiversity to be generated by this component.

Component 2:

Part of the project response is “provision of training, capacity building and tangible incentives directly to producers to help them access and adopt improved production practices that remove current “open access” regimes that create perverse incentives for unsustainable practices”. The PIF does not explain the mechanism that will be implemented to ensure that these alternative production opportunities will not simply become additional to the current unsustainable practices thus stressing the natural resource base even more. Please clarify the mechanisms that will be used and what monitoring and enforcement strategy will be employed to monitor uptake.

With regards to this aspect of the project response please also discuss the global biodiversity benefit that will be accrued from these investments and what indicators will be used to measure this global biodiversity benefit. As currently presented, there are no global benefits for biodiversity to be generated by this component.

The narrative around a theory of change really isn't a theory of change. Please provide one for each geography where the project is investing.

Agency Response

4/23/2020

The comment above has been fully integrated and the figures amended (including updated figures in CI worksheets), for both the number of hectares and direct beneficiaries from the project.

4/15/2020

Please, see amendments made throughout the PIF (as mentioned above). The figures provided in our response yesterday are therefore outdated.

4/14/2020

Figures have been aligned throughout the document. Please, consider the following breakdown for the anticipated objective level indicators:

103,000 hectares of productive land under improved management to sustainable and resilient management benefitting biodiversity

This figure is the total area benefitting from improved management in the 3 project sites, including 70,000 ha supported by LDCF investments (LDCF CI 2 reported in the LDCF CI and metadata worksheet), and 33,000 ha supported by GEFTF investments (GEFTF CI 4.1 plus CI 4.4 reported in the CI section of the Portal), which are yielding both BD and LD benefits.

Target areas of project	GEF /LDCF Core Indicators	Breakdown
25,000 agricultural land; 75,000 grassland; 3,000 HCV forest	BD	30,000 (CI4.1) + 3,000 (CI4.4)
	LD	33,000 (same area as BD)
	LDCF	70,000 ha
103,000 ha	Totals	103,000 ha

100,000 hectares of productive marine area under improved management to benefit biodiversity conservation (GEFTF CI 5)

105,000 small-scale livestock, fisheries, and agriculture **producers** (52,500 female/52,500male) engaged in and successfully demonstrate SLM and climate change innovation and adaptation practices resulting in increased productivity and reduced food insecurity.

The total 105,000 is the sum of direct beneficiaries from LDCF and GEFTF investments. Of this total, 70,000 persons will benefit directly from LDCF investments, and 35,000 from GEFTF investments.

- The 70,000 women and men benefitting from LDCF investments are reported in the LDCF CI and metadata worksheet.
- The 35,000 small-scale livestock, fisheries and agricultural producers benefitting from the GEFTF investments are reported in the CI section of the Portal itself.

<p>03.30.2020: LDCF: It is unclear how LDCF is contributing to Components/Outcomes/Outputs and associated to 'indicators' since these all seem to be 'exactly' same for LDCF and GEFTF. As such, Agency is requested to restructure Table B to indicate clear demarcation on how each Funds are contributing to which Components/Outcomes/Outputs, and how these are associated to 'indicators'. This may require further reflection in the relevant section of the PIF (e.g. baseline, alternative scenario). In doing this please be considerate on formatting, so there will be minimal confusion from repeating Component/Outcome/Output names etc. in the Table B. For example, please refer to Table B in GEFID10543 PIF.</p>	<p>The project is promoting a highly multi-sectoral approach. The financing is blended to achieve complimentary results. These integrated solutions are designed to intentionally and systematically harness multiple benefits for UNFCCC as well as biodiversity conservation and land degradation.</p> <p>For instance, assisting private producers to improve agriculture, fisheries, and grazing management will directly result in stronger climate change resilience while simultaneously delivering biodiversity and LD benefits.</p>
<p>In addition, how indicators in Table B are associated to CCA Core Indicators attached is also unclear. For example, sum of those seem to be 'beneficiaries' in the LDCF components is 34,000 while, that in the CCA Core Indicator table is 18,000.</p>	<p>Addressed. All numbers are more coherent.</p> <p>Highly accurate numbers are challenging to determine given the current Yemen situation. Numbers provided are the most accurate available.</p> <p>Socotra and Al-Maharah are more detailed due to the limited areas.</p> <p>Precise numbers for Sarawat (highlands) are more difficult and therefore indicative due to the number of potential locations and larger population densities.</p> <p>Initial decision made to use the Dhamar Governate and associated districts for baseline.</p> <p>This is a strong candidate area for project investment.</p> <p>Final selection of specific locations within the highlands will be made during the PPG phase using criteria to make certain all intended project targets are achieved.</p>

<p>LD: Yes for LD related components/outcomes/outputs. However, the targets provided in Table B are inconsistent with targets provided in the core -indicator table and also different from the figures provided in the GEB section of the PIF. To give one example: The project objective refers to 34,000 beneficiaries, the core indicators table to 16,000. Further, the project area fact sheets have yet another set of figures that in not fully consistent with the text and tables elsewhere.</p>	<p>Please see above.</p>
<p>BD: Please clarify whether BD investments are only focused on Socotra and Al-Mahrah.</p>	<p>Yes. BD investments will primarily focus upon Socotra and Al-Mahrah. Both locations are extremely important for terrestrial and marine BD.</p> <p>Globally significant biodiversity values are not as apparent in the highlands.</p> <p>Highlands have significant agrobiodiversity.</p> <p>Unfortunately, there is limited information available.</p> <p>During the PPG, the use of agrobiodiversity within diversified farmsteads will be investigated as a potential response mechanism to benefit globally significant biodiversity while improving SLM, CC resilience, and food security.</p>

Please provide a rationale as to why investments are being simultaneously implemented in three different areas of the country given the operational challenges inherent to the current situation.

The conflict causes challenges at each of the three locations. However, only the highlands have been directly impacted by fighting.

Dividing the project into three separate, site-based projects when each requires the same basic approach to deliver global environmental benefits and each engages the same national stakeholders and their Governorate and District representatives did not make sense.

The Government is highly supportive of progress being made through WUA. This approach is working to improve natural resource management and sustainable production.

The Government wants to see the project build upon this successful model with proposed interventions/solutions applied to each of Yemen's three primary rural production sectors (fisheries, livestock and agriculture) with the overall objective of delivering multiple benefits: biodiversity conservation, SLM, CCA and associated food security/sustainable livelihoods.

To achieve this, the Government considered having only two sites: Socotra and the Highlands. These two sites provide an opportunity to reach each of the productive sectors targeted for mainstreaming: fisheries, livestock, agriculture.

This would also allow for substantial BD conservation gains.

As noted in the PIF, Socotra has very high global biodiversity values that are currently threatened. Much of this stems from the expansion of commercial fishing which is not well regulated or managed. The increased revenues from export fisheries are being invested in livestock and agriculture expansion. Agriculture and livestock expansion further threaten terrestrial biodiversity with some impacts (e.g., siltation) on marine ecosystems. Livestock and expanding agriculture (cultivation, irrigation) degrades productive lands and high conservation value terrestrial habitat, elevates climate change impacts, and threatens CCA capacity. Mainstreaming BD conservation to shift these three sectors (fisheries, livestock, agriculture) impacting Socotra BD from current "open access" regimes to "regulated access" through zoning, community-based management access, improved regulatory frameworks, etc. each predicated upon achievement of BD objectives would alleviate BD stress and provide substantial BD conservation benefits.

However, the Government would like to have an opportunity to expand effective conservation beyond the confines of Socotra. Therefore, Al-Mahrah was added. Al-Mahrah has very high biodiversity conservation value and faces LD and CC risk similar to Socotra mostly due to productive sector overgrazing and unsustainable agriculture, albeit without commercial fishery driving investment.

Al-Mahrah has received very little capacity support. The Government would like effort in Socotra to be replicated in Al-Mahrah to amplify conservation impact. This would be primarily for BD benefit. However, BD cannot be extricated from LD and CCA issues. These issues are linked and need to be addressed comprehensively and in an integrated fashion. For instance, CC/drought is a particular concern with globally significant tree species vulnerable to overgrazing, LD and CC. Increased grazing pressure increases demand for trees as fodder, reduces regeneration, etc.

Component 1:
Please clarify if spatial planning focus is on all three sites or the two above.

Yes.

As PIF Component 1 states, spatial planning is required for each of the three sites.

Sarawat Mountains Agriculture Management Spatial Plan

Socotra and Al-Mahrah Grazing Management Spatial Plan:

Socotra Fisheries Management Spatial Plan

Clearly defined boundaries with zonation linked to achieving conservation targets and accompanied by prescribed/allowed uses is fundamental to each area.

This is the basis for providing the parameters required to define how open-access will be shifted to community-based management.

We note that GEF has already invested in the development and implementation of a zoning plan focused on biodiversity conservation in Socotra. The project is asking for additional resources for more planning but does not adequately evaluate the previous investment, lessons learned, and why additional investments are now needed. This does not bode well for the sustainability of the proposed intervention.

The SCZP was reviewed in detail during project design.

The EPA is the agency responsible for SCZP implementation and oversight. The MFW (Fisheries) coordinates with the EPA regarding fisheries issues in the greater Socotra region.

Lengthy discussions were held with the EPA during PIF development specifically regarding the SCZP.

Barrier One of the PIF describes the current spatial planning gap, the impacts to BD conservation and the issues concerning the SCZP as well as the MAB plan.

As noted, the SCZP provides a strong baseline.

However,

The SCZP is a general spatial plan for the Socotra World Heritage Site and identifies PAs, conservation areas, resource use zones and general use zones.

Although approved over twenty years ago, the plan has not been fully operationalized and/or enforced.

One reason for this is due to the fact that relevant authorities (both the EPA and Fisheries) have not had the capacity to move the SCZP to its intended “next level”.

The SCZP is quite broad.

There are four land use categories: General use zone (1.4% of total area); Resource use zone (23.5% of total area); National Park (72.6% of total area); and, Nature Sanctuary (2.5%).

It was always the intention that more detailed planning would take place with communities within the context of the broader SCZP.

Please note that spatial planning as supported under BD mainstreaming is meant to focus on the maximization of BD benefits. The results framework indicates that this is not the case and in fact the definition provided in the text of the document states: “organizing resource user groups to establish binding spatial planning that identifies ecosystem limits and creates parameters to guide sustainable production at spatial scales large enough to deliver meaningful conservation benefits”. Sustainable production will only lead to sustainable production; it won’t, ipso facto, necessarily lead to any conservation results. Spatial planning supported under the biodiversity focal area is designed to ensure global biodiversity benefits are provided. Therefore, throughout the text please clarify how spatial planning will ensure priority biodiversity sites of global significance are protected.

The Component has been edited and additional language added to clarify the Component’s intent to mainstream biodiversity conservation within the productive sectors per GEF-7 biodiversity mainstreaming guidance.

Some confusion may have been due to a typographical error.

The opening statement for Component 1 read:

*This component will follow GEF-7 guidance making certain that binding spatial and land use planning is established as a critical first step for comprehensive mainstreaming of **investments** in production landscapes and seascapes.*

The intention was to write “conservation”, not “investments”.

Please clarify what is the available data and computing infrastructure to allow for informed spatial planning that prioritizes BD resources.

The EPA has GIS capacities. Socotra has more BD data than any other region of Yemen. This includes management planning for PAs and some BD monitoring. Socotra also has more institutional capacity than other areas as noted in the PIF. Both MFW (Fisheries) and EPA have several dozen staff and offices in Socotra. These staff gather data as possible (e.g., dockside monitoring, export monitoring, basic livestock and veg monitoring, etc.).

Capacities are more limited in Al-Mahrah. The EPA has an office and some PA staff.

FAO/Yemen has done spatial planning through the WUA models in Yemen.

FAO has extensive experience with spatial planning and community-based spatial planning. This includes models for zoning, defining sustainable resource use, and monitoring/adaptive management. FAO has organized communities to actively engage in effective spatial planning extensively through the farmer field school program and with community fisheries programs. Data sets, remote sensing, capacity building expertise and information housed within FAO will be accessed through the project.

Low capacity levels and the need for capacity building are integrated and reflected within the project. The extended project implementation period is intended to allow adequate time to build capacity, generate information, and work with communities to establish spatial planning that mainstreams BD conservation. Despite the relatively strong baseline at Socotra, it is envisioned that Component 1 activity will absorb most of the project's first two years of operation at each of the three locations.

Providing this time to elucidate sound spatial plan with full stakeholder engage will allow six years to trial approaches, including several growing seasons and fishing cycles. As noted in the PIF, fisheries in Socotra operate only 6 months of the year.

FAO will complete a capacity assessment based upon the approved PIF. This information and associated capacity building efforts will be detailed within the project document.

As currently presented, there are no global benefits for biodiversity to be generated by this component.

Please see comments above.

Component 2:
Part of the project response is “provision of training, capacity building and tangible incentives directly to producers to help them access and adopt improved production practices that remove current “open access” regimes that create perverse incentives for unsustainable practices”. The PIF does not explain the mechanism that will be implemented to ensure that these alternative production opportunities will not simply become additional to the current unsustainable practices thus stressing the natural resource base even more. Please clarify the mechanisms that will be used and what monitoring and enforcement strategy will be employed to monitor uptake.

Component 2 activities will be aligned with spatial plans developed under Component 1.

Plans developed under Component 1 will be developed to make certain biodiversity conservation is mainstreamed within productive sector activities.

Component 1 States:

At each location, the planning guidelines, protocols and capacity building will identify specific environmental concerns and limitations and link these to specific indicators for planning success. These indicators will be identified and generated by producers working with government agencies. Indicators such as biodiversity values, land degradation values, and climate change adaptation risks along with indicators for social and economic well-being will subsequently be used to monitor spatial planning effectiveness.

Component 2 States:

Socotra and Al-Mahrah Improved Grazing Production: At both Socotra and Al-Mahrah the project will assist producers to maximize opportunities associated with sustainable livestock production. The project will specifically work with private enterprises organized as grazing associations to provide the tools required to adopt improved practices that align with the approved spatial plans. This will include making certain that biodiversity conservation objectives outlined within the spatial plans are upheld.

Socotra Improved Fisheries Production: At Socotra, the project will work through fishing associations to support their ability to implement sustainable fisheries management that mainstreams biodiversity conservation objectives. . . . This will include helping to be sure that fishing effort complies with the binding marine spatial plan to be approved under Component 1. . . . The project will apply FAO experience and expertise to assist fishing enterprises who engage in mainstreaming conservation within their production practices to increase value chains to their commercial efforts.

With regards to this aspect of the project response please also discuss the global biodiversity benefit that will be accrued from these investments and what indicators will be used to measure this global biodiversity benefit. As currently presented, there are no global benefits for biodiversity to be generated by this component.

The following BD mainstreaming indicators are reflected in the PIF:

Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares)

Area of land restored (hectares)

Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (hectares)

High Conservation Value Forest (hectares)

Number of fisheries that meet national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations

Specific indicators related to species and habitats will be developed during the PPG and reflected in the project's results framework.

The narrative around a theory of change really isn't a theory of change. Please provide one for each geography where the project is investing.

This is well noted.

Clarifications have been made to the current TOC.

As above, a diagramed TOC will be developed during the PPG and included in the final project document.

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

04.23.2020:

Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

04.21.2020:

Please elaborate on the 38 million investment mobilized from FAO. It is not clear that all these baseline projects are from FAO, please keep in mind that co-financing should include as the source of funding the organization that provides the co-financing. Also, GEF projects cannot be considered as co-financing.

03.30.2020:

There are several issues:

- World Bank is not a donor agency, it is a GEF agency.
- Please clarify if the WB loan is indeed under implementation. If it is under implementation, then this is part of the project baseline.
- The donors that are listed will not be able to confirm commitment through letters at CEO endorsement stage. If FAO will issue those letters on the donors' behalf it would need to be listed in the table as the entity that contributes the co-financing.
- The parallel projects list the entire budgets, which will hardly be available in full to support the GEF project's objectives.
- The mentioned projects are all ongoing and are mostly coming to an end before the GEF project will start implementation. Only a small fraction of this funding could contribute to co-financing.
- I don't really see how this is Investment Mobilized? Agency is requested to provide further information on how investment mobilized were identified. For example, whether they have had any discussion with potential co-financiers and their response etc.

Agency Response

4/22/2020

Amendments have been made as requested. The same logic has been extended to all the partners mentioned in table C. The agency is aware that other GEF-financed projects cannot be mobilized as co-financing, and therefore none of the projects mentioned are GEF projects.

<p>03.30.2020: There are several issues: - World Bank is not a donor agency, it is a GEF agency. - Please clarify if the WB loan is indeed under implementation. If it is under implementation, then this is part of the project baseline. -</p>	<p>Changes were made to reflect indicative Government contributions and FAO Agency contributions. Government contributions may be limited given the existing conflict.</p>
<p>The donors that are listed will not be able to confirm commitment through letters at CEO endorsement stage. If FAO will issue those letters on the donors' behalf it would need to be listed in the table as the entity that contributes the co-financing.</p>	<p>FAO has a very large and growing portfolio of projects that will serve as co-financing. This is noted in the incremental/additional cost reasoning section. FAO will issue relevant letters.</p>

<p>- The parallel projects list the entire budgets, which will hardly be available in full to support the GEF project's objectives.</p>	<p>Noted and modified.</p>
<p>- The mentioned projects are all ongoing and are mostly coming to an end before the GEF project will start implementation. Only a small fraction of this funding could contribute to co-financing.</p> <p>-</p>	<p>Please see comment above.</p>
<p>I don't really see how this is Investment Mobilized? Agency is requested to provide further information on how investment mobilized were identified. For example, whether they have had any discussion with potential co-financiers and their response etc.</p>	<p>Discussions were held with Government and internally within FAO/Yemen.</p>

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 Yes.

Agency Response

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes.

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion Yes.

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

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 Yes. PPG has been requested and is within the allowable cap at \$300k.

Agency Response

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

04.16.2020:

BD: Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

04.14.2020: Please consider earlier BD comment(s).

04.12.2020:

LDCF /LD: Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

BD:

The core indicator targets for biodiversity at 133,000 hectares (terrestrial 33,000 and marine 100,000) are too modest for a \$5 million investment of biodiversity resources. The cost per hectare for improved biodiversity status is about 5 times more expensive than similarly designed projects. Please revise the indicators to increase the ambition of the project in terms of its area impact or reduce the request for biodiversity resources.

03.30.2020:

LDCF: Please refer to the earlier comments on 'Indicative project/program description summary' section. Also, Core Indicator 1 (Total no. of direct beneficiaries) is relatively low considering the size of finance requested from LDCF. In general, beneficiaries should be close to 100 thousand for projects of this size. Also, please include target for Core Indicator 3 (Total no. of policies/plans that will mainstream climate resilience) given Component 3 (Policy and regulatory frameworks), or provide justification if Component 3 is not contributing to Core Indicator 3.

LD: Yes, but see above notes about the inconsistency in the figures between PIF and core indicators.

BD: The total overall GEF budget of 16\$ million along with \$71 million co-finance must yield an overall benefit much greater than is presented. Please reevaluate the core indicator achievements and revise for biodiversity once other revisions are made. An investment of \$5 million should yield greater biodiversity benefits in terms of hectare coverage of globally important biodiversity habitat.

Agency Response

4/15/2020

BD: Please, consider the proposed increase from 133,000ha to 148,000ha in response to the concern raised. The design team commits to a rather conservative figure at PIF stage, as the ambition is dictated by the context: low electrification, poor infrastructure, extreme poverty, low technical and institutional capacity, poorly developed to no extension services, security issues, and more. These challenges make project execution expensive. Still, multiplications of benefits can be expected from the efforts invested in the targeted production land. For instance, as an example,

Socotra is approximately 380,000 ha, and there are four land use categories: General use zone (1.4% of total area); Resource use zone (23.5% of total area); National Park (72.6% of total area); and, Nature Sanctuary (2.5%).

The project will be targeting the Resource Use Zone (approx. 70,000ha) where overgrazing is apparently the biggest issue. Rather than targeting the entirety of Socotra's Resource Use Zone, we considered targeting a large % of this area in Socotra (50,000 ha). The number of livestock and pastoralists targeted by the project is quite high for Socotra with intensive grazing on a relatively small total hectareage. This increases the impact on biodiversity (e.g., endemic plant and animal species) in the "resource use zone" and, in addition, creates pressure through encroachment on the PA system. Although the total hectareage may be considered small, the socio-economic challenges will be substantial and the globally significant BD values represented are very high.

4/9/2020

LDCF: Please refer to the earlier comments on 'Indicative project/program description summary' section. Also, Core Indicator 1 (Total no. of direct beneficiaries) is relatively low considering the size of finance requested from LDCF. In general, beneficiaries should be close to 100 thousand for projects of this size.	Agree that it is reasonable to anticipate the project will achieve higher target beneficiary numbers. This along with commensurate indicative target areas have been adjusted higher.
--	---

Also, please include target for Core Indicator 3 (Total no. of policies/plans that will mainstream climate resilience) given Component 3 (Policy and regulatory frameworks), or provide justification if Component 3 is not contributing to Core Indicator 3.	Complete GEF-7 Core indicators included. The project intends to support improved mainstreaming of climate resilience within at least 1 national policy, the National Agriculture Strategy.
LD: Yes, but see above notes about the inconsistency in the figures between PIF and core indicators.	Noted. Figures have been adjusted.
BD: The total overall GEF budget of 16\$ million along with \$71 million co-finance must yield an overall benefit much greater than is presented. Please reevaluate the core indicator achievements and revise for biodiversity once other revisions are made. An investment of \$5 million should yield greater biodiversity benefits in terms of hectare coverage of globally important biodiversity habitat.	Core indicators for BD have been added and adjusted.

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 Yes.

Agency Response

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

03.30.2020:

LDCF: Yes. However, during PPG, it is requested to refer to STAP primer on ToC (<http://www.stagef.org/theory-change-primer>) to elaborate further on this point by the CEO Endorsement stage. Preferably this should be summarized in a diagram (or table etc.) so that GEFSEC can see an overall picture and logical structure at the glance.

LD: Yes, but the link between the project activities and the identified threats would need to be strengthened. For example, the threat analysis identifies drought as an important issue, however, the project does not address this through activities. Please consult the UNCCD publication “drought-smart sustainable land management” and explore the potential for the project to address DLDD issues, especially in the context of food insecurity.

Further, the security situation (which is described in further detail in the risk section) should also be included in the barrier analysis and cross-reference made to the risk assessment.

Agency Response

LDCF: Yes. However, during PPG, it is requested to refer to STAP primer on ToC (<http://www.stagef.org/theory-change-primer>) to elaborate further on this point by the CEO Endorsement stage. Preferably this should be summarized in a diagram (or table etc.) so that GEFSEC can see an overall picture and logical structure at the glance.

Noted: A diagrammed TOC will be developed during the PPG and included in the final project document.

<p>LD: Yes, but the link between the project activities and the identified threats would need to be strengthened. For example, the threat analysis identifies drought as an important issue, however, the project does not address this through activities. Please consult the UNCCD publication “drought-smart sustainable land management” and explore the potential for the project to address DLDD issues, especially in the context of food insecurity.</p>	<p>Addressing drought is paramount to project activity.</p> <p>Unsustainable grazing and agriculture drive drought exposure. Water scarcity and linkages to food insecurity are alarming.</p> <p>This is even the case in the relatively humid highlands where khat production drives unsustainable water use and exposure to drought.</p> <p>The PIF States under the heading: Drought, Land Degradation and Food Security.</p> <p>“As a cash crop within an integrated farmstead, coffee can be produced along with other crops such as grains and vegetables that provide food security and some additional livelihoods. When compared to khat, coffee greatly reduces water consumption, increases water retention and elevates drought resilience.”</p> <p>The UNCCD publication “The Land-Drought Nexus: Enhancing the role of land-based interventions in drought mitigation and risk management” was referenced and has been noted in the PIF to be further reflected upon and elaborated during the PPG.</p>
<p>Further, the security situation (which is described in further detail in the risk section) should also be included in the barrier analysis and cross-reference made to the risk assessment.</p>	<p>The on-going political instability and insecurity are mentioned throughout the document, including the barriers.</p> <p>Reference to the relevant risk assessment discussion has now been included within the barrier analysis.</p> <p>Security issues will be comprehensively assessed during the PPG.</p>

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

03.30.2020:

LDCF: Yes. Unsustainable fisheries, agriculture and livestock practices threaten biodiversity, degrade lands, and increase climate change vulnerabilities. These same practices and associated impacts harm the livelihoods and food security of rural Yemenis by degrading the ecosystem services upon which rural production depends. These impacts exist largely due to “open access” resource management and associated capacity constraints at national, local and producer levels.

The proposed project seeks to achieve immediate improvements to at-risk rural producers. The project will catalyze a shift from current “open-access” regimes to shared productive land and seascapes to a more coherent and strategic “community-based” management. Productive terrestrial and marine areas covering millions of hectares will be under improved management. Renewable resources such as water, agricultural land, fisheries, grazing areas, and forests will be sustainably managed to increase production levels and decrease threats to biodiversity and land degradation while reducing climate change risks. Rural poor who rely upon ecosystem services for their survival will benefit from much more stable livelihoods and improved food security. Ultimately, government and private enterprise stakeholders will have the tools, knowledge, and capacity to continue and expand project emplaced success.

LD: Yes for LD. However, the planned activities should be strengthened to respond better to the identified threats and barrier analysis. In particular, please address the identified drought and food insecurity issues.

Please also explain “khat” cultivation and use for the reader.

Agency Response

LDCF: Yes. Unsustainable fisheries, agriculture and livestock practices threaten biodiversity, degrade lands, and increase climate change vulnerabilities. These same practices and associated impacts harm the livelihoods and food security of rural Yemenis by degrading the ecosystem services upon which rural production depends. These impacts exist largely due to “open access” resource management and associated capacity constraints at national, local and producer levels.	Acknowledged
--	--------------

<p>The proposed project seeks to achieve immediate improvements to at-risk rural producers. The project will catalyze a shift from current “open-access” regimes to shared productive land and seascapes to a more coherent and strategic “community-based” management. Productive terrestrial and marine areas covering millions of hectares will be under improved management. Renewable resources such as water, agricultural land, fisheries, grazing areas, and forests will be sustainably managed to increase production levels and decrease threats to biodiversity and land degradation while reducing climate change risks. Rural poor who rely upon ecosystem services for their survival will benefit from much more stable livelihoods and improved food security. Ultimately, government and private enterprise stakeholders will have the tools, knowledge, and capacity to continue and expand project emplaced success.</p>	<p>Acknowledged</p>
<p>LD: Yes for LD. However, the planned activities should be strengthened to respond better to the identified threats and barrier analysis. In particular, please address the identified drought and food insecurity issues. Please also explain “khat” cultivation and use for the reader.</p>	<p>Please see comments above. Khat production is described under the heading: “Drought, Land Degradation and Food Security.”</p>

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes.

Agency Response

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

Yes.

Agency Response

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

04.12.2020 /03.30.2020:

Please refer to the earlier comments on ‘Indicative project/program description summary’ and ‘Core Indicator’ sections.

Agency Response

4/14/2020

Please, consider the response provided above.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes.

Agency Response

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

Agency Response

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

04.23.2020:

Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

04.21.2020:

Please provide a description of the Consultations that took place with indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society organizations and private sector entities, as indicated in the Stakeholders section. Please note that the GEF Policy on Stakeholder Engagement (Nov 2017) requires that that at PIF stage ‘Agencies provide a description of any consultations conducted during project development...’

03.30.2020:

The table only lists the names of the stakeholders. Please include proposed means of engagement and potential role in the project.

Agency Response

4/23/2020

Language on stakeholder consultations during the PIF development stage has been added in the appropriate section of the PIF.

3/30/2020

This has been updated. The political situation in Yemen is fluid. The table will be further reviewed/enhanced during the PPG. This will include a complete stakeholder analysis.

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

04.12.2020:

Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

03.30.2020:

Not fully. The gender context only has general context info for Yemen – is there any project specific context?

Agency Response

The comment is greatly appreciated. There is very limited site level data.

However, as noted in the PIF, FAO has done some very innovative work with women with regards to community-based management and WUAs. This includes very detailed governance procedures that guarantee both female representation and strong capacity to determine decision-making outcomes (e.g., veto authority).

These same or similar approaches will be integrated within the implemented project.

This will include making certain that issues of gender are FULLY reflected in the logical framework and that specific impact indicators related to gender are tracked/monitored.

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Yes.

Agency Response

Risks

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

04.12.2020:

Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

03.30.2020:

Not fully. Include the risk analysis in the barrier and context section, so that the reader gets the full picture of the situation from the outset. Please also assess natural risks: climate change, drought, food insecurity.

Agency Response

Not fully. Include the risk analysis in the barrier and context section, so that the reader gets the full picture of the situation from the outset.	Please see comment above. The security issue in Yemen is very fluid. Most recently, Saudi Arabia called for a cease fire. There is serious movement now towards peaceful resolution of the five-year conflict.
Please also assess natural risks: climate change, drought, food insecurity.	Noted with additions made to the Risk Analysis.

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

04.12.2020:

Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

03.30.2020:

PIF states: “The project will likely be implemented using an OPIM modality based upon assessments. “Agency should either remove that or say that implementation execution arrangements will be discussed and design in accordance with GEF policies and guidelines. (If text remains, please enter our standard language on implementation/execution arrangements in the review sheet.)

Please remove the paragraph describing “pending GEF-6 UNDP project”. As this was a GEF-6 project it wasn’t endorsed and therefore has been cancelled at the end of the GEF-6 replenishment period.

Agency Response

<p>PIF states: “The project will likely be implemented using an OPIM modality based upon assessments. “Agency should either remove that or say that implementation execution arrangements will be discussed and design in accordance with GEF policies and guidelines. (If text remains, please enter our standard language on implementation/execution arrangements in the review sheet.)</p>	<p>Noted. The sentence was removed.</p>
<p>Please remove the paragraph describing “pending GEF-6 UNDP project”. As this was a GEF-6 project it wasn’t endorsed and therefore has been cancelled at the end of the GEF-6 replenishment period.</p>	<p>Noted. The paragraph was removed.</p>

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

Yes.

Agency Response

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

04.12.2020:

Cleared. Earlier comment(s) are appropriately addressed for the PIF stage.

03.30.2020:

Project covers three separate geographical areas each addressing different issues. While these areas and issues are all relevant and important, the PIF should elaborate further on how lessons learned and experience from each area/issue is systemically shared and provide an opportunity to learn from each other in achieving synergetic impact from the project.

Agency Response Well noted. The project will support integrated learning and information exchange through Component 3. This will include: monitoring of project results; capture and upscale of lessons learned with regards to project activity such as partial planning, community-based planning, value chains, etc.; and, knowledge management linked to improvement of national and Governorate level policies. In addition, the Al-Mahrah site was selected specifically to serve as a location for up-scaling and amplifying lessons learned from Socotra.

Part 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

Yes.

Agency Response

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
Agency Response**

GEFSEC 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

04.23.2020: This PIF is recommended for technical clearance

04.21.2020:

- Not yet. Please refer to the review items and resubmit for consideration.

- As the agency knows, the implementation and execution roles on GEF projects are meant to be separate per policy and guideline. The GEFSEC will analyze any requests for dual role playing by an agency at the time of CEO endorsement and only approve those cases that it deems warranted on an “exceptional” basis. We strongly encourage the agency to look at third party options as a preferred way forward. We also strongly encourage the agency to discuss any and all options for execution that do not include the government with the GEFSEC early in the PPG phase. The technical clearance of this PIF in no way endorses any alternative execution arrangement.

04.12.2020 /03.30.2020: Not yet. Please refer to the review items and resubmit for consideration.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval

CONTEXT

This project is aligned with LDCF strategic objectives CCA-1 (increase resilience through innovation and technology transfer) and CCA-2 (mainstreaming adaptation) as well as BD strategic objective BD-1 (mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes) and LD strategic objective LD-1 (support on the ground implementation of SLM to achieve LDN).

Yemen’s rural communities are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. These vulnerabilities are heightened by the conflict induced humanitarian crisis. Rural communities rely upon sustainable access to natural resources and associated ecosystem services for production and subsistence. They require natural resources for basic household needs such as drinking water, fuelwood and medicinal plants. Unfortunately, land, water, fisheries, and forest resources that are already under great strain and generally degraded have limited resilience to rapidly advancing climate change impacts.

Although the current protected area regime covers less than 1% of Yemen, the conserved land and marine habitats are very important globally. Moreover, Yemen’s protected areas are currently used for production purposes including livestock, agriculture, and fisheries although these practices may be limited and are subject to additional oversight by the Environmental Protection Agency.

COMPONENTS and RESULTS

The project will aim at immediate improvements to at-risk rural producers. The project will catalyze a shift from current “open-access” regimes to shared productive land and seascapes to a more coherent and strategic “community-based” management regime predicated upon the achievement of social and environmental objectives. The project is structured around three Components that will result in multiple GEBs and adaptation benefits including 100,000 hectares of marine habitat under improved practices, 118,000 hectares of productive land achieving Land Degradation Neutrality and 115,000 hectares of land under climate resilient management.

Component 1:

Spatial planning describes and prioritizes conservation and sustainable production practices across terrestrial and marine areas

Component 2:

Agriculture, livestock, and fisheries practices stimulated to improve livelihoods and mainstream conservation

Component 3:

Policy and regulatory frameworks

INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, SCALE-UP & GENDER

FAO has led the way in Yemen in showing that projects can be successful if accompanied by an innovative project design using community-based approaches supported by capacitated national expertise. This innovation is closely followed in the proposed project design. The project will align three productive sectors (agriculture, fisheries, livestock) using a common and/or highly similar approach to deliver social and economic benefits across three large landscapes.

The project will ensure sustainability through capacity building and mainstreaming of best practices within government offices, community institutions, and the private sector. This includes the completion of spatial plans which will be legally binding. Financial sustainability is a challenge under the current situation where the Government of Yemen has very little capital. The project addresses this challenge by building the capacity of private enterprise to reach a level of profitability where improved value chains, investment returns, and market access generate financial incentives to engage in conservation-oriented production and sustain conservation-oriented production.

Once project successes are in place and well proven through monitoring and evaluation, upscaling will be further advanced through national and governate level capacities built through project effort. This is one reason that the project takes a “trainer of trainers” approach throughout many of its component work.

The project will adopt a participatory approach for maximum impact through the inclusion of all relevant social groups, including marginalized people, with attention to the participation and inclusion of women whilst respecting the norms, values and customs of targeted communities. A project specific gender mainstreaming plan will be developed during the PPG phase.

Projects risks and the current context in Yemen have been duly assessed and appropriate mitigation measures identified. It is noted that FAO currently maintains on the ground operations in the country and project implementation is considered feasible.

The project will deliver additional benefits within \$71 million of co-financing.