



Build back a blue and stronger Mediterranean

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10685

Countries

Regional

Project Name

Build back a blue and stronger Mediterranean

Agencies

CI

Date received by PM

11/29/2021

Review completed by PM

4/12/2022

Program Manager

Taylor Henshaw

Focal Area

International Waters

Project Type

FSP

PIF □

CEO Endorsement □

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Yes, however, please address the below point:

1. The PIF document states ?Albania will be included during the PPG phase. The engagement with Albania has already started and participation will be formalized with the OFP Letter of Endorsement during the PPG phase. ?, however, Albania has not been added to the project list of countries in the portal CEO Endorsement submission Part 1, and it seems no LOE signed by the Albanian OFP has been uploaded. At the same time Albania is included in the PRODOC list of countries. Please note that for Albania to be included in the project a LOE signed by the Albanian OFP must be uploaded, and the portal submission Part 1 countries section should be updated.

SH (2.28.22): On the GEF website the Albanian OFP is listed as Mr. Sofjan Jaupaj, however the LOE provided is signed by Mr. Fshazi Rrezart. For Albania to parttake in the project the LOE provided must be signed by the Albanian OFP.

SH (4.12.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency 2/17/2022

LoE Albania has been uploaded.

CI GEF Agency 3/29/2022

LoE Albania signed by Mr. Sofjan Jaupaj, Albanian OFP, has been uploaded.?

Project description summary

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22):

1. Please in the PRODOC 'changes between PIF and CEO Endorsement stage' section explain any revisions of components, outcomes and outputs between PIF approval and CEO Endorsement stage.

SH (2.28.22): Thank you. Cleared.

2. Output 3.3.2: Please explain what discussions have happened during PPG specific to output 3.3.2 and the anticipated formation of a global alliance of networks of MPA managers and conservation trust funds? Is there broad buy-in from organizations towards this goal and what baseline will the project build from?

SH (2.28.22): Thank you. Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022

1. Changes have been made in the section 0 of the PRODOC. Two tables have been added to further explain revisions of components, outcomes and outputs between PIF and CEO endorsement stage.

2. Discussions held during PPG about Output 3.3.2, the baseline and the buy-in for the formation of a global alliance of networks of MPA managers have been directly integrated in the Project Strategy section (Output 3.3.2) as follows:

'Several discussions undertaken during the PPG phase, specific to this output 3.3.2, allowed to foresee the formation of a global alliance of networks of MPA managers and conservation trust funds and ensure buy-in from organizations. A joint concept note was developed by several key networks of MPA managers (MedPAN, CaMPAM, NAMPAN?), trust funds (MedFund, Costa Rica por Siempre?) followed by an online meeting. The recruitment of an external expert to help developing the alliance was decided, and ToRs written with inputs from all potential members of the alliance and under the coordination of MedPAN.

The process of establishing the alliance was officially launched at the IUCN Congress, during a side-event jointly organized by MedPAN and RedLAC, with support from the

MedFund and the EU Ocean Governance project and in the presence of several donors (FFEM, MAVVA?), key partners (CFA) and future members of the alliance. A second event was held at the Finance Pavilion (coordinated by CFA/ Conservation Finance Alliance) during the Congress, to which the GEF was invited to share its vision of this new alliance. After the IUCN Congress, a dedicated meeting was held by MedPAN, RedLAC and the EU Ocean Governance project to identify the next steps, and a joint contribution was submitted for the IMPAC5 Congress. Through this global alliance, the proposed project will focus on strengthening the coordination between CTFs and MPA networks in other regional seas to ensure replicability and scalability of the approach.?

3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Co-financing

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22):

Please submit co-finance letters for all participating countries. Currently letters from Algeria, Lebanon and Morocco are missing.

SH (2.28.22): Letters of cofinancing specific to Algeria and Lebanon should be provided by project inception and documented via PIRs.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022

Co-financing letter from the Government of Morocco was received and incorporated in the co-financing figures. For Algeria and Lebanon, it is less likely to obtain co-finance letters before the inception phase of the project. However, MedFund and MedPAN will

continue engaging with Lebanon and Algerian governments to secure their co-financing at the early stages of project implementation.

CI GEF Agency Response 3/29/2022

We took note of the requirement that letters of cofinancing specific to Algeria and Lebanon should be provided by project inception and documented via PIRs.

GEF Resource Availability

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response
Project Preparation Grant

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response
Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
SH (1.19.22):

1. Core Indicators: please populate indicator 7.3. Further, please readjust indicator 7.4 from ?4? to ?1?.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

2. Indicator 8 fisheries details sub-section: please add the source of the estimate of the tonnage, and also the justification for considering the fishery to be overexploited.

SH (2.28.22): Not cleared. This info should be added in the Indicator 8 "Fisheries details" section. Please add the source of the estimate of the tonnage, and also the justification for considering the fishery to be overexploited.

SH (4.12.22): Cleared. Please note that the PRODOC states that 90% of fish stocks in the Mediterranean and Black Sea are fished unsustainably. Also, per conversation with Conservation International, the agency has confirmed that the stock names and associated tonnage numbers entered in the Portal submission CI 8 comments section reference the total tonnage amount per stock unsustainably managed.

3. Indicator 2 and 8: the list of countries has been expanded, however, both the number of expected hectares and tons has been significantly reduced between PIF and CEO endorsement stage. Please in the PRODOC "changes between PIF and CEO Endorsement stage" section explain the reasoning between the reduction in numbers.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

4. A value of '1' has been entered for the Rio Climate Change Mitigation marker. The entered value indicates that climate change mitigation forms an integral part of the project's objective. Please either 1) in the CEO End submission provide insert a through explanation as to why this is the case or 2) re-adjust the Rio Climate Change Mitigation to '0'.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022

1. Indicator 7.4 has been adjusted to 1 as suggested. During project implementation this will increase to 4.

Indicator 7.3 has been populated. Indeed, the project will contribute to national/Local reforms and actively engage Inter-Ministerial Committees through the Post 2020 road map mechanism which aims at supporting the implementation of policy commitments towards MPAs in the Mediterranean, in particular the Barcelona Convention.

2. Figures in that section were taken from a publication by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (partner of the FAO/UNEP) on fisheries. The source has been included in the text.

3 Revisions related to the reduction of both MPAs surface area and number of metric tons of globally over-exploited marine fisheries moved to more sustainable levels, have been further explained in Section 0 of the PRODOC.

4. Rio Climate Change marker has been re-adjusted to 0

Part II ? Project Justification

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (1.19.22):

1. Within the context of climate change and ecosystem alternation, how will the project apply climate change modeling tools to ensure that the supported MPAs are those delivering the largest potential global environmental benefits?

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

2. Please rephrase Indicator 1.1. MPAs management effectiveness and effectivity evolution. The indicator language is not clear.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

Ci GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022:

1 In order to ensure that the selected MPAs will be delivering socio economic and environmental benefits, the project will build on the existing activities being conducted in the region regarding climate change adaptation in MPAs: T-Mednet, MPA Engage, MPA Networks project among others (see the Appendix XIII on Climate Change, section 3). The project integrates climate change challenges at the Mediterranean and at MPA level. Climate change will be included in training activities of MPA managers, to bring to MPA managers a better knowledge and capacity of potential climate change impacts and potential adaptation measures. Experience sharing activities on climate change adaptation actions, amongst the Mediterranean MPA community will be strongly encouraged in order to better address climate change issues at local, national and regional levels and enhance resilience at a Mediterranean level.

At MPA level, the MedFund supports activities related to climate change which are included in MPA management plans; and monitors the implementation of those activities; while engaging MPA-related stakeholders.

The project will therefore increase the adaptive capacity of MPA network at the MPA level and at a regional level, which will in turn contribute to mitigate the negative consequences of adverse climate change impacts and contribute to ecosystem resilience.

This has been added in the global environment benefits section.

2 Indicator 1.1 has been rephrased to 'MPAs management effectiveness and effectivity?.'

4. Is there further elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

Project Map and Coordinates

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

Child Project

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

Stakeholders

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22):

The ESS states that "The Project does not plan to work in lands or territories traditionally owned, customarily used, or occupied by indigenous peoples", however, the Portal submission Stakeholder section has "ticked" the indigenous peoples box. Please in the Stakeholder section explain the reasoning behind involving IPs in project preparation, and if the project will affect IPs during execution. If IPs were not consulted during PPG then please "un-click" the IP box.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

Ci GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022:

The IP Box has been "un-clicked".

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22):

In response to the STAP comment on Private sector:

1. Please in the PRODOC explain in greater detail the risks related to inability to shift private sector incentives driving destructive practices.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

2. Please in the PRODOC be more specific on how the project can work constructively with private sector stakeholders to advance nature positive value chains and activities, and which align themselves with, and reinforce, MPA management plans.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022:

1. Further explanation has been added in the section on private sector engagement (CEO ER/portal) as follows:

?Despite private sector engagement, risks related to the inability to shift private sector incentives driving destructive practices remain. For example, difficulties encountered concern the harmonization, at a regional level, of the framework regulating practices of private companies having a negative impact on the environment (bottom-trawling). While regulation on this topic can be integrated at MPA level, private sector shift is less feasible at a Mediterranean level. In that goal, the project foresees to strengthen partnerships and support to GFCM and groups of NGOs such as Med Sea alliance, a network of organizations collaborating to tackle overfishing and destructive fishing in the Mediterranean.?

2. Text has been added in the section on private sector engagement as follows:

?Private sector stakeholders will be involved in advancing nature positive value chains and in contributing to the implementation of MPA management plans. First of all, investments made by the MedFund will generate interests and will contribute, by a responsible investment policy, to channel investments in socially responsible companies. Thus, the project will strengthen local governance processes associating all stakeholders, including the private sector. At local level, through management committees of the MPAs and consultations, representatives of the private sector (tourism/fishermen in particular) will be involved at their own scale in the implementation of management plans. At a Mediterranean level, networks of private stakeholders will also be engaged in the process of reinforcing MPAs, through the following initiatives:

- LIFE platform and Maghrebin platform that represents small-scale fishers in EU Med and in Maghreb ;

- Mediterranean Experience of Ecotourism (MEET) a network of tourism and conservation organizations aiming at developing ecotourism in the Mediterranean in

alliance with ?industry partners? of which MedPAN is one of the founding organizations;

- Mediterranean Ecotourism Consortium (MEC) representing the interests and the political agenda of both the tourism and conservation departments, and in the process of being created.?

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared, including an elaborate COVID risk screening.

Agency Response

Coordination

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): This section could be expanded to include 1) coordination with planned GEF supported FAO/UNEP small scale fisheries interventions in the Med Sea (GFCM executed) 2) coordination with the large UNEP/EBRD Med Sea Programme currently under implementation (UNEP - MAP executed).

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022:

The two projects mentioned are presented in Section Section 6 Institutional Arrangement and Coordination Section in the portal/CEO ER. Details on the possible collaboration and synergies have been further detailed in the section L.

Consistency with National Priorities

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

Knowledge Management

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22):

Please be clear that the project will be producing an overarching KM plan during the first year of implementation, including budget and timeline. The same comment was also made by the German council member.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022:

Details on Knowledge Management are included in Section 8 KM CEO ER/portal. A knowledge management plan will be produced during the first year of implementation, including budget and timeline. It will be integrated under Output 2.1.4 and has been added as an indicative activity under this Output.

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response
Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response
Benefits

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response
Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response
Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
SH (1.19.22):

Portal submission results framework (indicators): both indicator 2.1 and 2.2 lists a target of 213,186 ha. Please correct.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022:

The portal has the correct data. A small change was made to indicator 2.2 (from 218,182 ha to 219,450 ha, due to updated information on a MPA in Montenegro)

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22):

Comment specific to the annexed budget: Project staff are charged across components and PMC. Per Guidelines, project's staff must be charged to the GEF portion *and* the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. Please charge these personnel also to the co-financing portion.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

SH (4.24.22): Please address below comments and resubmit.

1. On co-financing: OFB can be categorized as *Donor Agency*, please to correct from *Other* to *Donor Agency*.

2. On the utilization of PPG: the numbers provided in the table do not match up. The amount budgeted (\$149,995) does not equal the amount spent + the amount committed (\$148,774). Please double check the numbers and provide the costs per activity in a detailed manner, as requested in Portal.

3. On the budget:

A) Please provide information on what activities will be funded through the sub-grants provided to MedFund.

B) The highlighted staff positions stipulated below are being charged across components and PMC. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project's execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. Requesting the costs associated with the execution of the project to be covered by the PMC is reasonable ? by so doing, asking the proponents to utilize both portions allocated to PMC (GEF portion and co-financing portion) is also reasonable. As the co-financing portion to PMC is 2.0 million, and considering that the grants portion of co-financing is

23.2 million (57% of the total co-financing) , there is room to cover the costs of the project's staff from co-financing. Please see related comment to the PMC below.

4. Regarding M&E and the PMC: by reading table 10 in the portal, meetings from the project steering committee meetings and progress reports have been charged to the PMC totaling \$200,595, but in the budget table PMC is utilized to partially cover the costs of the project's staff? this seems to be a contradiction with the costs stipulated above. Per guidelines (please see second screenshot below) monitoring reports and steering committee meetings should be charged to the M&E budget and not to the PMC. Please reevaluate in every budget table (Table B, Table 9 and 10, Annex E, etc) and correct the amounts for the PMC and M&E.

5. On core indicators:

A) Please mention the GEF Core Indicators and targets explicitly in the Results Framework in Annex A. They are included in table 6: Project targets for core indicators.

B) Several protected areas WDPA ID remains blank under core indicators 2.1 and 2.2. Please add those in the core indicator table, as these are mandatory at CEO Endorsement stage.

C) Total ha for Cape of Redoni PA is missing under core indicator 2.1. also, total ha for Abbassieh PA is missing under core indicator 2.2. please revise these in the core indicator table.

18th of May 2022 (thenshaw):

(1) Addressed.

(2) Addressed.

(3) A. Partly addressed. Please add the review sheet response (including the list of funded activities) directly to the portal submission.

(3) B. Partly addressed. Please also include the technical aspects of the ToRs for these positions (and map duties and responsibilities to the specific budget allocations under the technical components) directly here in the review sheet to demonstrate that a portion of each of the staff position costs may be allocated to the project's technical components.

(4) Cleared pending PPO review.

(5) A. Partly addressed. Core Indicator 2 (combining 2.1 and 2.2) is present. Core Indicators 8 (18,058 mt) and 11 (10,000 beneficiaries) are not included in the Annex A component rows. Please map these indicators to the components in the table.

(5) B. Addressed.

(5) C. Addressed.

20th of May 2022 (thenshaw):

(3) A. Addressed.

(3) B. Addressed.

(5) A. Addressed.

Agency Response

CI-GEF Response 05/20/2022:

3A. Sinking fund activities included in Outcome 1.1 of the CEO ER (blue highlights)

3B. Please see the following summaries of technical contributions for each position charging to both PMC and Components over the 5-year duration, as found in the Terms of Reference, Appendix IX of the ProDoc. Please note that in the ToR there are positions that explain their role under a component, but it is not charged to the project budget, rather it is being co-financed

MedFund Overall Lead

\$64,627 (40%) is charged to components

For Component 1, Outcome 1.1, the MedFund Overall Lead will be providing technical leadership and knowledge throughout the sub-granting process that will lead to improved management effectiveness and efficacy of the MPAs (Output 1.1.1). This includes leading the activity design and planning; participating in all award committee meetings; coordinating with MedPAN to ensure coordination and synergies between all 3 project components.

For Monitoring and Evaluation, the MedFund Overall Lead will be coordinating with government counterparts and CI GEF Agency as needed to ensure the timely and accurate monitoring of project progress; providing inputs for the Results Monitoring Plan and Project Implementation Reports (PIRs); providing resources and information to the Mid-Term and Final evaluation consultants.

MedFund Finance and Grants Lead

\$29,860 (33%) is charged to components

For Component 1, Outcome 1.1 the Finance and Grants Lead will be directly supporting sustainable management effectiveness through the preparing calls for interest of subgrantees; developing the granting agreements; building capacities of subgrantees to ensure compliance with the GEF Minimum Fiduciary standards; organizing workshops.

MedPAN Overall Lead

\$53,116 (79%) is charged to components

For Component 2 the MedPAN Overall Lead will be enhancing capacities of managers and other stakeholders through supervising and managing the content of meeting, trainings, workshops, and other events with MPA practitioners and stakeholders; preparing content of the MPA working groups.

For Component 3 the MedPAN Overall Lead will be strengthening governance and cooperation strategies through coordinating the Roadmap process and managing partnerships; supervising events and exchanges within MPA network; developing and finalizing communication and policy tools for stakeholders; leading the coordination with the Global Alliance.

For Monitoring and Evaluation, the MedFund Overall Lead will be leading the MedPAN contribution to the monitoring and evaluation system development and implementation; providing inputs for the Results Monitoring Plan and Project Implementation Reports (PIRs); providing resources and information to the Mid-Term and Final evaluation consultants.

5A.

? Core Indicator 8 has been mapped to component 1 in Annex A as an outcome indicator and text has been updated throughout the document (Annex A blue highlights)

? Core Indicator 11 has been added as an objective indicator. Target for core indicator 11 is the culmination of all the 3 components in Annex A (blue highlights)

CI GEF Agency Response 2/17/2022:

The budget presents the level of effort required to deliver on the project components (execution of activities), as well as M&E, and the PMC activities. Further, per the policy, whenever project staff are charging to both components and PMC, a ToR should be presented. The distribution based on the level of effort for each position that is charging to components and PMC is presented in each ToR. Both, the MedFund and MedPAN are allocating PMC co-financing to cover the additional level of effort that is not covered under the GEF PMC budget, which is \$640,000 from MedFund and \$100,000 from MedPAN.

CI GEF Agency Response 5/4/2022:

1. Note. OFB has been updated to Donor Agency in the ProDoc and in the portal.
2. Noted. The PPG utilization has been updated to reflect the activities that were paid broken down and the budget amount has been modified.
3. On the budget

A) The invested sinking fund capital and its revenues will be disbursed over a 5-year period to support the core management costs of 20 nationally designated MPAs and MPAs under designation process, covering 432,636 ha in 6 Mediterranean countries (Albania, Algeria, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia). Funded activities will include:

- a. The Fund shall contribute to the recurrent management costs of MPAs over a 5-year period
- b. targeting:
- c. ? Management activities including Staff time in charge of the management of the MPA
- d. ? Equipment and infrastructure maintenance, and small equipment purchases,
- e. ? Surveillance and enforcement,
- f. ? Active governance and stakeholder participation,
- g. ? Awareness raising and communication,
- h. ? Scientific monitoring
- i. ? Management activities for the protection of the conservation targets,
- j. ? Promotion/support of socio-economic activities,
- k. ? Consideration of climate change,
- l. ? Gender approach: how to promote gender equality,
- m. ? Establishment of income-generating activities for the MPA
- n. ? And respective due diligence

B) Thank you for the comments. Please note that while there is \$2+ million in PMC co-financing, that is mostly in-kind and only \$740k is in grants, which is already covering many of the actual costs to execute the project. The amounts charged to the components are related to the costs necessary to deliver on the project outcomes that go beyond the PMC that is being charged to the GEF resources as well as what can be covered through the co-financing. Per the previous response the amounts for the personnel charging to components is not covered by co-finance. The ToRs were updated to demonstrate the co-financing portion that is covering the costs for those personnel. Both, the MedFund and MedPAN are allocating PMC co-financing to cover the additional level of effort that is not covered under the GEF PMC budget or the components, which is \$640,000

from MedFund and \$100,000 from MedPAN over a 5-year period. Thus, the EA has taken measures to ensure that the positions are both co-financed and paid by GEF resources and provided the ToRs to reflect the technical inputs that is being provided per the GEF Guidelines

4. Thank you. Please note that the PMC budget in the ProDoc matches with the budget in the excel file. The costs for personnel totals \$195,595 in the excel budget, which is also in the PMC table in the ProDoc. CI would like to note that the two categories in the PMC table in the ProDoc are eligible PMC costs, which are Stakeholder consultations, and preparation of progress and financial reports. The costs that are ineligible under PMC are costs associated with monitoring the indicators. The costs for staff throughout the life of the project to manage the project and provide quarterly reports are in the PMC budget as per GEF Guidelines below. We have updated the costs for the PMC table in the ProDoc to include the fact that the staff, through the project management, are working in providing those quarterly progress and financial reports. The M&E activities in the GEF program guidelines do not include project steering committee meetings. We have understood that these are under project management costs.

Table B - Execution Functions eligible for funding by the GEF portion of PMC¹⁰²

<p><u>Staffing costs, including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project manager;• Project assistant technical specialist(s);• Procurement specialist; and/or• Financial specialist. <p><u>Project-related activities of Executing Entity, including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparation of procurement plans;• Terms of reference and procurement packages;• Management of consultant activities;• Management of output deliverables;• Maintenance of records of all project-related documentation• Management and administration of the Knowledge Management Plan;• Preparation of progress reports and financial reports for the project;• Consultation with project stakeholders;• Financial auditing for the project.
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5. On core indicators:

A) Core Indicators and targets have been added in Annex A.

B) For the MPAs registered in the WDPA, we have added the WDPA ID numbers in the Appendix IV. GEF-7 Core Indicators. Indeed, some of the MPAs targeted are not yet registered, either because they are in the early stages of creation (such as Cape of Redon), or because the sites are not yet official and are not registered in the WDPA, or because the sites have been designated in 2021 and are not yet registered (the cases of Platamuni and Katic in Montenegro). As described in the Project Strategy, the GEF7 MedFund and MedPAN project will support the official designation of MPAs and will

thus contribute to the registration of these sites in the WDPA during the project implementation.

C) We have added the area of the Abbasieh MPA in Lebanon, and thus updated the total area of nationally designated Marine protected areas and new MPAs under designation process targeted by the project throughout the Prodoc. As mentioned above, Cape of Redoni is in the early stages of creation, with scientific studies underway to define the characteristics of the future MPA and then move into the zoning and public consultation stages. Therefore, the area of Cape of Redoni is not yet defined, nor is the zoning.

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22):

1. In response to Switzerland's council comment: In the PRODOC and the Portal submission, please describe how this CI lead project will actively coordinate with the GEF/UNEP/FAO project titled "Fisheries and Ecosystem Based Management for the Blue Economy of the Mediterranean - (FishEBM MED)" (GEF ID: 10560). Please also in the PRODOC describe how this project will be coordinating with the large GEF supported Mediterranean Sea Programme, which is executed by UNEP MAP, and which is made up of several child projects implementing activities across ICM, MPA management etc. Finally, please explore ways by which the results of this CI lead project can feature in the KM portal under the Mediterranean Sea Programme.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

2. In response to the German council members comment: Please explain if an MoU between the Med Fund and the GFCM exists, and if yes, how it will be operationalized under this project? In general, text should be added to the portal submission/PRODOC, which clearly shows the correlation between MPAs and expected improved management of stocks. It is important to reflect on ways in which this project may support collaboration and information flows between Min of Env. and Min of Fisheries in the respective countries, including ways of securing policy coherence at national level.

SH (2.28.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

CI GEF Agency Response 2/27/2022:

1 Synergies with the two projects mentioned Section 6 of the CEO ER/portal or Table 20, Section L of the ProDoc.

MedPAN working closely with UNEP/MAP will make sure to communicate and disseminate the results of this project in the KM portal under the Mediterranean Sea Programme.

2 MedPAN had in previous years a MoU with GFCM and GFCM is an official partner of MedPAN. MedPAN is part of Friends of SSF platform coordinated by the GFCM and participated in the GFCM 2030 strategy development. The MedFund has not signed a MoU with GFCM yet, however, The MedFund is ready to engage in a closer collaboration with GFCM and considers the signature of a potential MoU during the project implementation.

The correlation between MPAs and expected improved management of stocks has been described in various part of the ProDoc:

Section Environmental Context and Global Significance (Paragraph 29 of the CI-GEF ProDoc) ?Effectively managed MPAs can lead to a substantial increase in the fish stock. A review of 25 MPAs in the Mediterranean Sea showed that fully and partially protected MPAs have more and larger fish than areas outside the MPAs. Heavily fished species, such as dusky groupers and seabreams, are most abundant and biggest in fully protected areas. Compared to unprotected areas, fish biomass is 420% greater in fully protected areas and 146% greater in partially protected areas. Fish density is 111% greater in fully protected areas and 38% greater in partially protected areas . Increases in the number and size of fishes and invertebrates are most evident inside fully protected areas, however some of these benefits can also impact other areas beyond MPA borders, through the ?spillover? effect. As animals become more abundant inside a fully protected area and space becomes limited, some adults and juveniles may leave and move elsewhere. Spillover can help replenish fish and invertebrate populations in partially protected areas and outside MPAs, thereby enhancing local fisheries. For example, in Gokova MPA in Turkey , following the establishment of no-take zones, the fight against illegal fishing and small-scale fishing management measures (more selective gear to limit accidental catches, etc.) between 2013 and 2016, the abundance of fish increased by 27%, including 19% for brown grouper (*Epinephelus marginatus*).?

Section E, Socio-Economic Benefits in the portal (Paragraph 226 ProDoc): ?In addition to biodiversity benefits, the expected benefits of MPAs for coastal resources include an increase in fish abundance (net emigration of adults and juveniles across borders, termed ?spillover?), biomass and fecundity (the increased production and exportation of pelagic eggs and larvae), which finally affect positively small-scale fisheries . A 2019 study on the evaluation of the socio-economic benefits of the Mediterranean MPAs showed that MPAs benefit local populations and economies, especially the fishing and tourism sectors. The study concludes that well-managed MPAs produce environmental benefits for the fishing resource (in terms of stock regeneration, density, diversity, weight, body size, fecundity and reproduction), and spillover effect.?

Exchanges of information and collaboration between the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Fisheries are supported in each country of the project with the support of national GEF focal points; and through key MedPAN and the MedFund events where both Ministries are invited. Furthermore, support provided by the MedFund to improve the management effectiveness of MPAs does always include a governance and co-management component, targeting a more participatory and inclusive MPA management approach and bringing together stakeholders from different institutions, including from the Ministries of environment and fisheries.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request SH (1.19.22): Please see previous comments specific to STAP.

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request Cleared.

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request Cleared.

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request Cleared.

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request SH (1.19.22): Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

SH (1.19.22): Please address comments and resubmit.

SH (2.28.22): Please address comments and resubmit.

SH (4.24.22): Please see "GEF Secretariat comments box. Please address comments and resubmit.

18th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Please see "GEF Secretariat comments box. Please address comments and resubmit. Thank you.

20th of May 2022 (thenshaw): Yes

Review Dates

**Secretariat Comment at
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

First Review
Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations