

Living in harmony with nature: Connecting biodiversity with production systems in the Gualaca Altitudinal Corridor Landscape.

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10649

Countries

Panama

Project Name

Living in harmony with nature: Connecting biodiversity with production systems in the Gualaca Altitudinal Corridor Landscape.

Agencies

CAF

Date received by PM

8/17/2020

Review completed by PM

3/17/2022

Program Manager

Pascal Martinez

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

MSP

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

September 3, 2020:

As mentioned in the project description, the proposal is aligned with 2 different objectives: BD 1.1 and BD 2.7. Nevertheless the table A only include BD 1.1. Please complete the table A as needed including the BD objective 2.7.

April 22, 2021:

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

No response needed.

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

September 3, 2020:

1. The target 1.1 of a total of 348,474 doesn't match with the areas informed in the core indicators table. Please revise and correct accordingly to ensure all the expected results are consistent throughout all the proposal.
2. The type of financing is all referred as 'TA'. As financial transfers to beneficiaries and restoration works are planned and to ensure the project will have impact on the ground, some significant investment referred as 'INV' should also be considered. Please revise accordingly.
3. The order of the outputs in Component 1 doesn't look logical without more explanation, with the creation of the Governance Platform after the integrated landscape planning and the elaboration of the productive models. Please consider the relevance of having first the governance in place.
4. The total announced target of 138,729 ha doesn't exactly correspond to the sum of 55,483 ha (terrestrial) and 83,237 ha (marine). Please correct.
5. Considering the current COVID 19 crisis, it could be very relevant to assess whether this project could provide opportunities to contribute somehow to the recovery and/or increase resilience of the affected stakeholders and particularly the most vulnerable.

April 22, 2021:

1. The expected results still don't match between the Table B, the core indicator table in the Portal and the Annex B. Please ensure all the numbers are consistent throughout all the information provided.
2. Well noted. Please clarify none investment is applicable.
3. We don't see any modification in the order of the outputs in Table B and in the Portal. Please amend the information in Portal as informed in the response to this comment.
4. In table B, the total target 2.1 of 138,729 ha is still slightly different from the sum of 55,483 ha (terrestrial) + 83,237 ha (marine). Please correct.
5. Well noted. Please see the comment made below under the risks section.

October 4, 2021:

1. Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.
2. Comment not addressed (the response is the same as the one for comment 1). Please justify why none investment is applicable.

3, 4 and 5. Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

As mentioned in the project description, the proposal is aligned with 2 different objectives: BD 1.1 and BD 2.7. Nevertheless the table A only include BD 1.1. Please complete the table A as needed including the BD objective 2.7.

1. The target 1.1 of a total of 348,474 doesn't match with the areas informed in the core indicators table. Please revise and correct accordingly to ensure all the expected results are consistent throughout all the proposal.

The figures were revised, based on the official documents under which the Panamanian natural protected areas were put in place. The figures in the official Panamanian documents differ from the figures shown in the WDPA. The following table summarise the figures:

Protected area	WDPA		Official documents			
	WDPA ID	WDPA area (km2)	Land area (ha)	Marine area (ha)	Total (ha)	Total (km2)
Fortuna Forest Reserve	303326	206.54	19,500.00	-	19,500.00	195.00
Gulf of Chiriqui Marine National Park	99632	212.21	1,474.00	13,266.00	14,740.00	147.40
La Barqueta Wildlife Refuge	303325	67.04	2,978.78	3,724.88	6,703.66	67.04
Playa Boca Vieja Wildlife Refuge	99640	35.79	-	3,740.00	3,740.00	37.40
David Mangroves Multiple Resources Uses	Not listed in WDPA	-	16,701.88	-	16,701.88	167.02
	Total	521.58	40,654.66	20,730.88	61,385.54	613.86

Protected area	WDPA		Official documents			
	WDPA ID	WDPA area (km2)	Land area (ha)	Marine area (ha)	Total (ha)	Total (km2)
Fortuna Forest Reserve	303326	206.54	19,500.00	-	19,500.00	195.00
Gulf of Chiriqui Marine National Park	99632	212.21	1,474.00	13,266.00	14,740.00	147.40
La Barqueta Wildlife Refuge	303325	67.04	2,978.78	3,724.88	6,703.66	67.04
Playa Boca Vieja Wildlife Refuge	99640	35.79	-	3,740.00	3,740.00	37.40
David Mangroves Multiple Resources Uses	Not listed in WDPA	-	16,701.88	-	16,701.88	167.02
	Total	521.58	40,654.66	20,730.88	61,385.54	613.86

The figures were adjusted in section F and the Annex B.

2. The type of financing is all referred as 'TA'. As financial transfers to beneficiaries and restoration works are planned and to ensure the project will have impact on the ground, some significant investment referred as 'INV' should also be considered. Please revise accordingly.

Investment is not applicable; the field work will be channelled as technical assistance activities.

3. The order of the outputs in Component 1 doesn't look logical without more explanation, with the creation of the Governance Platform after the integrated landscape planning and the elaboration of the productive models. Please consider the relevance of having first the governance in place.

Revised. The order of the outputs has been modified to:

Output 1.1.1. Multi-sectorial PCAG governance platform formally created and functioning.

Output 1.1.2. Land and marine use plan developed using a Sustainable Landscape Planning (SLP) and Reef to Ridge (R2R) approach to effectively integrate conservation actions with PCAG production systems.

Output 1.1.3. Biodiversity-friendly farm and fisheries model management plans designed with conservation and sustainability criteria

Output 1.1.4. PCAG financial sustainability strategy designed and key actions implemented

Output 1.1.5. Lessons learned from project implementation systematized and widely disseminated to stakeholders through the project knowledge management plan.

4. The total announced target of 138,729 ha doesn't exactly correspond to the sum of 55,483 ha (terrestrial) and 83,237 ha (marine). Please correct.

Targets 1.1 and 2.1 a were revised.

Target 1.1. Total: 348,474 ha. Terrestrial: 228,767 ha. Marine: 119,707 ha

This corresponds to the surface to be included in the landscape planning process. The values are explained in the following table:

Landscape planning surface	Terrestrial protected areas	Terrestrial non-protected areas	Marine protected areas	Marine non-protected areas
348,474	40,655	188,112 [1]	20,731	98,976 [2]

Subtotal terrestrial surface	228,767			
Subtotal marine surface			119,707	
[1] includes 500 ha restored land and 1500 ha under conservation agreements [2] not listed in Annex B because it does not fit the criteria of indicators 5.1 and 5.2				

Target 2.1 a) 61,386 ha (total) 40,655 ha (terrestrial) 20,731 ha (marine) (baseline and target METT scores TBD during PPG)

This corresponds to the areas listed in Annex B

5. Considering the current COVID 19 crisis, it could be very relevant to assess whether this project could provide opportunities to contribute somehow to the recovery and/or increase resilience of the affected stakeholders and particularly the most vulnerable.

Acknowledged. This will be developed during the PPG phase.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

- 1 The expected results has been updated in the GEF Portal, Table B and Core Indicator
- 2 The expected results has been updated in the GEF Portal, Table B and Core Indicator
- 3 The order of the outputs has been checked and corrected in Table B.
- 4 Total target 2.1 has been checked and corrected in Table B.
- 5 The expected results has been updated in the GEF Portal,

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

- 1,3,4,5 No response needed
2. Modifications have been made to the PIF budget where the investments have been incorporated.

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

September 2, 2020:

The co-financing ratio is relatively low: 5.2:1 in total and 1.4:1 considering only the investments mobilized. As Panama is a high-income economy, we could expect more contribution to the GEF overall targets of 7:1 and 5:1 respectively. Reminding the Secretariat does not impose minimum thresholds and/or specific types or sources of Co-Financing or Investment Mobilized, we invite the agency to consider the possibility of increasing the co-financing of this project.

April 22, 2021:

Thank you for the improvement. Nevertheless, the new numbers from MiAmbiente are not updated in the Table C in the Portal. In addition, the Type of co-financing said to be 'Guarantee' in the Portal is actually 'Grant' in the table provided in the response to the comment. Please amend the Table C in the Portal so that it correspond to table provided below in the response to the comment.

October 4, 2021:

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

The co- financing ratio is relatively low: 5.2:1 in total and 1.4:1 considering only the investments mobilized. As Panama is a high-income economy, we could expect more contribution to the GEF overall targets of 7:1 and 5:1 respectively. Reminding the Secretariat does not impose minimum thresholds and/or specific types or sources of Co-Financing or Investment Mobilized, we invite the agency to consider the possibility of increasing the co-financing of this project.

Acknowledged. The government of Panama has agreed to increase in USD2.0 million the co-financing from MiAmbiente. Co-financing will be further revised during the PPG phase. The new indicative values are:

Sources	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Recipient Government	Ministry of Environment (MiAmbiente)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	1,900,000
Recipient Government	Ministry of Environment (MiAmbiente)	Grant	Investment Mobilized	1,300,000
Recipient Government	Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	900,000
Recipient Government	Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA)	Grant	Investment Mobilized	2,000,000

Recipient Government	Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	450,000
Recipient Government	Autonomous University of Chiriqu? (UNACHI)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	150,000
Private Sector	ENEL Fortuna S.A.	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	300,000
Private Sector	OTEIMA Technological University	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	150,000
Private Sector	BATIPA Ecological Foundation	In-kind	Investment Mobilized	300,000
Private Sector	The Centre for Competitiveness of Panama's Western Region (CECOMRO)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	300,000
Private Sector	Agricultural Master Plan of the Western Region (PMARO)	Grant	Investment Mobilized	4,000,000
Beneficiaries	Local producers? beneficiaries	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	300,000
GEF Agency	CAF Development Bank of Latin America	Grant	Investment Mobilized	450,000
Total co-financing				12,500,000

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The numbers and type of co-financing from MiAmbiente has been checked and corrected in the GEF Portal, Table C.

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

No response needed

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

September 2, 2020:

Yes, Cleared.

Agency Response

No response needed.

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 2, 2020:

Yes. With this proposal, the country is utilizing \$8,571,000.00 out of a total STAR allocation of \$12,705,193.27. Cleared.

Agency Response

No response needed

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 2, 2020:

Yes. With this proposal, the country is utilizing \$6,471,000 from BD FA out of a total BD allocation of \$10,705,193.27. Cleared.

Agency Response

No response needed

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion N/A

Agency Response

N/A

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion N/A

Agency Response

N/A

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion N/A

Agency Response

N/A

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion N/A

Agency Response N/A

Project Preparation Grant

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
September 2, 2020:

Yes, PPG is requested and within the allowable cap. Cleared.

Agency Response N/A

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
September 2, 2020:

1. Under Core Indicator 1, the WDPA IDs are missing and the area considered doesn't correspond to the actual area of the Protected Area. For instance, according to the WDPA in the IUCN website, the 'Fortuna Forest Reserve' WDPA ID is 303326 but this is not informed and the actual area is 20,654 ha but the area considered in this project is 19,640 ha. The project proponent should count the entire area of the Protected Areas in the core indicators. Please revise all the terrestrial and marine protected areas included in the project and complete as needed.

2. The total area of marine PA reported in the table is 36,506 ha while in the project description it is 83,237 ha. Please correct so that all the area under improved management is considered in the relevant core indicator.

3. The proposal includes in component 2 activities of reforestation and restoration of key areas of connectivity that will favor the conservation of biodiversity. Nevertheless,

only degraded agricultural land restored is reported in the core indicators table. Please complete with the expected area of Forest and Forest Land restored.

4. The 1,500 ha resulting from the Conservation agreements are not reported in the core indicator table. Please complete as needed.

5. Under the Global Environment benefits it is informed that the total area under improved management is the total area of the PCAG - 348,474 ha. Nevertheless, the sum of all the areas under improved management in the core indicator table is less than this amount. Please complete accordingly so that all the expected global environment benefits are correctly captured in the core indicator table.

6. Please make sure all the adjusted numbers are consistent throughout all the documents provided and particularly with the uploaded Annex B 'Core Indicator Worksheet'.

April 22, 2021:

1 and 2. The information provided in the response to the comment is not reflected in the Core Indicator Table in the Portal which has not changed from the previous PIF version. Please update the Core Indicator Table in the Portal.

3. Considering the kind of restoration which is 'reforestation actions and restoration of these critical habitats' the 500 hectares should be reported under the 'Indicator 3.2 Area of Forest and Forest Land restored' and not under the 'Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural land restored' as is in the current version of the core indicator table in the Portal.

4. Well noted, cleared.

5. Thank you for the clarification, cleared.

6. While updating the core indicator table, please make sure all the adjusted numbers are consistent throughout all the documents provided including with the uploaded Annex B 'GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet'.

October 4, 2021:

1 and 2. Thank you for the corrections. Cleared.

3. The area to be restored is now rightly reported under the core indicator 3.2 as forest restored. Cleared.

6. Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

1. Under Core Indicator 1, the WDPA IDs are missing and the area considered doesn't correspond to the actual area of the Protected Area. For instance, according to the WDPA in the IUCN website, the 'Fortuna Forest Reserve' WDPA ID is 303326 but this is not informed and the actual area is 20,654 ha but the area considered in this project is 19,640 ha. The project proponent should count the entire area of the Protected Areas in the core indicators. Please revise all the terrestrial and marine protected areas included in the project and complete as needed.

Revised. The official figures have been used; they differ from the information available on the WDPA. The updated information is:

Indicator 1.2	Terrestrial protected areas under improved effective management (Hectares)					
Name of Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN category	METT Score (Scale 1-3)			
			Expected		Achieved	
			PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Fortuna Forest Reserve	303326	VI PA with sustainable use of natural resources	19,500			
Gulf of Chiriqui Marine National Park	99632	II National Park	1,474			
La Barqueta Wildlife Refuge	303325	IV Habitat/Species management area	2,979			
Playa Boca Vieja Wildlife Refuge	99640	IV Habitat/Species management area	0			
David Mangroves Multiple Resources Uses	Not listed in WDPA	VI PA with sustainable use of natural resources	16,702			
		Sum	40,655			

Indicator 2.2	Marine protected areas under improved management effectiveness (Hectares)					
Name of Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN category	METT Score (Scale 1-3)			
			Expected		Achieved	
			PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE

Gulf of Chiriqui Marine National Park	99632	II National Park	13,266			
La Barqueta Wildlife Refuge	303325	IV Habitat/Species management area	3,725			
Playa Boca Vieja Wildlife Refuge	99640	IV Habitat/Species management area	3,740			
		<i>Sum</i>	20,731			

2. The total area of marine PA reported in the table is 36,506 ha while in the project description it is 83,237 ha. Please correct so that all the area under improved management is considered in the relevant core indicator.

Revised. The total area of marine protected areas is 20,731 ha.

3. The proposal includes in component 2 activities of reforestation and restoration of key areas of connectivity that will favor the conservation of biodiversity. Nevertheless, only degraded agricultural land restored is reported in the core indicators table. Please complete with the expected area of Forest and Forest Land restored.

Only 500 ha will be restored. There is no target for additional restoration of forest areas.

4. The 1,500 ha resulting from the Conservation agreements are not reported in the core indicator table. Please complete as needed.

This area is within the 188,112 ha of the core indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas).

5. Under the Global Environment benefits it is informed that the total area under improved management is the total area of the PCAG - 348,474 ha. Nevertheless, the sum of all the areas under improved management in the core indicator table is less than this amount. Please complete accordingly so that all the expected global environment benefits are correctly captured in the core indicator table.

The total surface is correct: 348,474 ha. However, there are 98,976 ha of marine non-protected areas that cannot be included into the core indicators, because the core indicator 5 (area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity) does not include an indicator that can capture this figure.

6. Please make sure all the adjusted numbers are consistent throughout all the documents provided and particularly with the uploaded Annex B 'Core Indicator Worksheet'.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

- 1 and 2. The information has been updated in the Core Indicator Table in the Portal and PIF version
3. The information has been updated in the GEF Portal
4. No response needed
5. No response needed
6. The information has been checked and corrected in the Annex B Core Indicator GEF

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):
No response needed

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
September 2, 2020:

We don't understand why the 'Integrated Programs', 'Commodity Supply Chains (Good Growth Partnership)' and the 'Sustainable Commodities Production' boxes are checked. Please revise as needed.

April 22, 2021:

All the taxonomy related to biodiversity is missing. Please complete.

October 4, 2021:

In the Annex C, the 'Integrated Programs', 'Commodity Supply Chains (Good Growth Partnership)' and the 'Sustainable Commodities Production' boxes are still checked. Please uncheck these boxes as requested in the first review of September 2, 2020.

January 11, 2022:

The boxes are still checked in the Annex C. Please ensure the information is consistent throughout the different documents provided and uncheck these boxes during the PPG phase. Cleared.

Agency Response
Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

Acknowledged. The integrated programs box has been unchecked.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The taxonomy has been updated in the GEF Portal

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

The boxes have already been unchecked in the GEF portal as in the PIF document.

Agency Response: 2/23/2022

No agency response required.

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

September 3, 2020:

The environmental problems and barriers are clearly presented and in a concise manner, thank you. What remains vague is to which extent the environment is being degraded. To better demonstrate the relevance of the proposed project, is it possible possible to quantify the consequences of illegal logging, unsustainable fishing, as well as the area of ecosystems such as forests and mangroves being lost every year or since a couple of years? Are there relevant data about the current or expected progress of the agriculture frontier for each kind of producers? Is the production of commodities such as palm oil relatively new and expected to have a an increasing and massive impact in the future? Please consider these questions to quantify as much as possible the environment destruction and thus enhance the rationale of the proposal.

April 22, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information provided in the response to the comment. Please include it in the project description in the Portal under the Problem section (currently from paragraph 20).

October 4, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

There is no detailed quantitative information for each threat. The most recent assessment used experts' opinions to identify, prioritise and locate the main threats (mentioned in paragraph 20 of the PIF) (<https://chm.cbd.int/api/v2013/documents/05B386D2-5BCD-A52D-6097-F853803CC619/attachments/Corredor%20biol%C3%B3gico%20Gualaca%20-%20Informe%20Final%20-%20CATIE.pdf>). The following table summarise the results of this analysis:

Biodiversity conservation objects	Conservation status [1]	Key threats [2]
Cloud forest	Regular	? Illegal logging to advance the agricultural frontier [medium] ? Agriculture by the advance of the agricultural frontier [medium] ? Livestock grazing in forest areas [medium]
Riparian forest	Regular	? Use of agrochemicals for industrial agriculture of pineapple, rice and oil palm [very high] ? Diversion of rivers due to hydropower development [very high]
Evergreen forest of intermediate elevations	Poor	? Extensive livestock farming [very high] ? Hydropower development [very high] ? Introduction of pastures [very high]
Deciduous and semi-deciduous forest	Regular	? Fire caused by improper disposal of solid waste [high] ? Selective extraction of timber forest products [high] ? Use of agrochemicals and incompatible grazing practices [high]
Mangroves and associated ecosystems	Regular	? Use of agrochemicals in the vicinity of mangroves [high] ? Selective extraction of non-timber forest products [medium]
Sea turtles	Good	? Subsistence capture for meat consumption [low] ? Capture for commercial purposes [medium] ? Incidental catch [very high]
<p>[1] Three-point scale: good, regular, poor. [2] Four-point scale: low, medium, high, very high Source: CATIE. 2018. Diseño de lineamientos estratégicos para el desarrollo del corredor biológico altitudinal de Gualaca. Informe Final con propuesta del corredor biológico altitudinal de Gualaca, esquema de gobernanza, plan estratégico validado y mapas. Proyecto "Mejorando la Conservación de los Manglares a lo Largo del Corredor Marino del Pacífico Tropical Oriental (ETPS) a través del Desarrollo e Implementación de Estrategias Coordinadas Regionales y Nacionales". Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE). 28 marzo 2018: 75 pp.</p>		

There is information about mangrove cover reduction up to 2012 in the watersheds which are part of the project area. This information is shown in the following table:

Watershed	2000 (ha)	2012 (ha)	Change (ha)
Chiriqu? Viejo river	459.90	384.15	- 75.74
Chico river	2,055.53	1,841.83	- 213.70
Chiriqu? river	7,195.99	5,543.58	- 1,652.41
Fonseca river and between Chiriqu? river and San Juan river	10,040.58	10,018.18	-22.41 112
Rivers between Fonseca and Tabasar?	9,600.21	8,786.43	- 813.78
Total	29,352.21	26,574.17	- 2,778.04
Source: MiAmbiente			

During the PPG more detailed information will be collected.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The information has been updated in the GEF Portal

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

No response needed

Agency Response: 3/16/2022

Regarding the TOC Theory of Change of the project, it has been included in section 1 description of the project and highlighted in green, as well as in the annexes the diagram has been included to facilitate its reading in detail.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 3, 2020:

1. The description remains unclear about the institutional and regulatory framework already in place and related to the different landscape uses including conservation. Please elaborate further what initiatives are already in place from the different involved stakeholders, including the ministries, local authorities and organizations and private sector, the project will build on to implement the activities and maximize its impact.

2. In particular, the project plans to establish Conservation Agreements with private owners outside of PAs but there is no indication of how this can be done. Please explain further this instrument and its current application in the country and in the project area so that we can better understand how this kind of arrangement is doable and relevant.

April 22, 2021:

1 and 2. Thank you for the additional information provided in the response to the comment. Nevertheless, again, we don't see the corresponding update in the Portal. Please include it in the project description in the Portal under the Baseline section.

October 5, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

1. Four national entities are key to address the key conservation issues of the Gualaca corridor:

1. The Ministry of the Environment (MiAmbiente) is the national environment authority, responsible for the protection and conservation of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources. It implements the environment law (Law 41 of 1998) and manage the national system of protected areas (SINAP), forests (natural and plantations), watersheds (e.g., water concessions and discharge permits) and coastal and marine resources, among other. The ministry also manages the system which assess the environmental impact of development activities and issue environmental permits. MiAmbiente coordinate the implementation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan (2018-2050). This strategy includes ecological connectivity is a priority for in situ conservation (action 1.3.1).
2. The Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) is responsible of the agricultural sector, especially regarding agricultural services (e.g., extension), prices, marketing and incentives to the producers. MIDA regulates agricultural production.
3. The Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP) is the national fisheries and aquaculture authority. ARAP implements the fisheries law (law 17 of 1959) which is being updated.
4. The Ministry of Housing and land use planning (MIVIOT) coordinate the implementation of the national land use plan, which was updated in 2019. Land use planning is implemented at the local level through districts and corregimientos.

At the local level, municipalities administer districts and are responsible of local development and land use planning. Indigenous territories have a special administration regime. The Ng?be-Bugl? comarca was established by in 1997 by law 10; it has the status of a province and the land is a community property. The comarca is headed by a cacique and a general council, who are elected every six years.

It is worth mentioning that CAF assisted the preparation of the Agricultural Master Plan for the western region of Panama and is supporting its implementation. This will

facilitate to mainstream biodiversity conservation considerations into the agriculture sector where the Gualaca corridor is located.

2. A conservation agreement is a tool developed by Conservation International to facilitate biodiversity conservation. They contemplate direct incentives for conservation, through a package of benefits negotiated in exchange for an improvement in the use of natural resources by the communities. This tool has been widely used worldwide and there are a number of lessons to improve its application. Further information can be found in:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14888386.2010.9712639>

<https://www.conservation.org/blog/what-on-earth-is-a-conservation-agreement>

<https://asociacionbalam.org.gt/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Evaluating-Conservation-Agreements-as-a-Tool-for-Conserving-Nature.pdf>

The specific details for the use of conservation agreements in the Gualaca corridor will be developed during the PPG.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The information has been updated in the GEF Portal

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

No response needed

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 3, 2020:

1. In the component 1, the different outcomes are mostly focused on elaborating plans, guidelines, models, strategy, platform... The actual implementation of these plans remains very vague and seems actually limited. Please explain with details how the project will ensure concrete implementation of activities on the ground, including with PA staff, producers and fishermen and what kind of activities are considered with each of the stakeholders to address the identified environmental problems and barriers.

2. The title of the Output 1.1.4 includes "key actions implemented". Nevertheless, no action is indicated in the description of this output. Please explain what key actions are considered here.

3. The Output 1.1.3. is the creation of a Multi-sectorial governance platform. Nevertheless the description says briefly what the platform will do but there is no information about how concretely it will be created and what will be its composition and modalities. Please elaborate further about the activities supported by the project to establish this platform and make it functioning and what are the involved stakeholders considered at this stage.

4. An important issue raised in the proposal is the lack of control and enforcement of illegal logging and unsustainable fishing especially in PAs. Nevertheless, how the project will concretely and effectively address this issue remains unclear. Please elaborate further accordingly.

5. The knowledge management is an output of the Component 1. How the results and lessons learnt from the second component will be captured and shared? Please consider a more appropriate organization for this activity, such as for instance a separate component including the knowledge management and M&E.

6. The outcome 2.1 focuses on improving the management of PAs over a total area of 138,729 ha. Nevertheless, in the outcome 2.1.1, the total area of the PAs considered is 121,828 ha. Please explain this difference and correct as needed.

7. The output 2.1.1 foresees strategic actions of the updated PAs' plans will be financed and implemented by the project but remains vague about what these actions could be. Please elaborate further on the kind of actions that would need to be identified and prioritized to improve the management and conservation of the PAs.

8. The recovery of key connectivity areas outside protected areas (outcome 2.2) is planned through reforestation actions and restoration of 500 ha in prioritized connectivity areas and 1,500 ha of ha under Conservation Agreements with private owners. Nevertheless, there is no restoration of forested land presented in the proposal nor reported in the project results (core indicators). Please clarify and quantify the kind of land restored, including forests, complete the core indicators table accordingly and explain how the numbers of hectares were assessed.

9. In the general context description, we are informed that land tenure rights remain an issue, especially among small-scale producers. How this issue will be addressed by the project?

10. The area of 172,784 ha of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity reported in the core indicator table isn't mentioned in the rest of the project description. Please indicate in the alternative scenario what exactly is this area and how it will be achieved. Please also indicate this area in Table B as target under the appropriate outcome.

April 22, 2021:

- 1 and 2. Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.
3. Thank you for the clarification. Please include it in the project description in the Portal.
4. Thank you for the clarification. Please include it in the project description in the Portal under the relevant output.
5. Thank you for the clarification, cleared.
6. We don't see the correction in the Portal. Please amend as indicated.
7. Thank you for the clarification. Please include it in the project description in the Portal under the output 2.1.1.
8. Thank you for the clarification. Please refer to the comment above under the core indicator box on the restoration wrongly reported as agriculture land restoration.
9. Thank you for this important clarification about the selection criteria of the project sites. Please include it in the project description in the Portal.
10. We see the modification in the Annex B but not in the Portal. Please ensure the Portal is updated in the Portal as indicated.
11. Thank you for this information. Please include it in the Portal under the Incremental/additional cost reasoning section.

October 5, 2021:

3. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.
4. We don't find the information in the Portal. Please indicate precisely where the information has been uploaded (paragraph number).
6. Again, the areas of PA considered by the project are different in the alternative scenario under the outcome 2.1 from Table B and the core indicator section. Please correct and ensure the information provided is consistent throughout all documents provided.
7. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.
8. Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.
9. Thank you for the information provided. Cleared.
10. The new number of hectares under improved management outside PAs (188,112 ha) is still not mentioned in the project description. Please clarify in the presentation of the

outcome 1.1 that the terrestrial area of 228,767 ha includes 40,655 ha in PAs and 188,112 ha outside PA and that marine area of 119,707 ha includes 20,731 ha in PAs and the rest outside PAs.

11. Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

1. Component 1 is focused on building a multilevel governance platform for the Gualaca corridor (output 1.1.3) as well as the planning tools to materialise the collaborative agreements (outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.4). It is foreseen that the PCAG governance platform will be operational during project execution and will drive the implementation of the tools to be developed. The actions included in component 2 will serve as examples of activities that implement the planning tools. The project will facilitate initial implementation of the planning tools, but details will have to be outlined during the PPG.

2. Output 1.1.4 : ?Key actions? should be understood as those activities related to the strategy that ensures the financing of the management of the CAG?s Governance Platform once the project is finished. It includes the validation and formalization of the proposed governance platform, its operations budget based on a five-year strategic plan and a plan for raising resources with public and private sources. All this agreed with the multisectoral and inter-institutional actors that make up this governance platform.

3. The Output 1.1.3: The Project will take up the actions developed by CATIE and Conservation International, which proposed a governance structure proposal for the Gualaca Altitudinal Biological Corridor Landscape with the participation of key actors, which should be taken up and formalized by the project. The platform will be comprised of key public and private stakeholders. It is expected that they will draft, to negotiate and sign a collaboration agreement in support of the management of the Gualaca Altitudinal Corridor. At this stage, it is not possible to provide details on its composition and modes of operation. During the preparation phase, a detailed stakeholder analysis will be conducted and a discussion with key stakeholders will provide the details of this matter, taking up the process already initiated by CATIE and Conservation International.

4. The search for solutions to reduce the pressures mentioned in the document (lack of control, illegal logging and unsustainable productive practices) will be addressed jointly with competent authorities (Miambiente, ARAP) through actions aimed at strengthening institutional control and surveillance. The project is also expected to help mobilize stakeholders to report illegal activities, through awareness-raising initiatives about the importance of maintaining the environmental services offered by the CAG ecosystems. Additionally, work will be done with local producers / fishermen in the development of more profitable and socially and environmentally responsible production techniques (good production practices).

5. After a process of consultation with authorities and interested parties, we conclude that it is not necessary to develop an additional component in the project to include knowledge management and M&E because this activity will be assumed by the Multisectoral Coordination Platform as part of its functions. In the project preparation phase, the way in which these functions will work will be defined in detail.

6. This was corrected in portal. The digits have been updated.

7. The strategic actions of the PA plans will be oriented towards strengthening the capacities of control, surveillance, and awareness of the population to reduce the main pressures identified and the awareness of the actors, all this with a landscape approach. The details will be developed during the project preparation phase in consensus with those responsible for the management of protected areas (Miambiente) and other important key actors to strengthen these actions (ARAP, Fundaci?n Natura, CREHO, UNACHI, OTEIMA, among others).

8. Forest land restoration is not a separate indicator, the indicator includes reforestation and / or restoring 500 ha in key areas of connectivity. The technical action will depend on the condition and environment of the area selected to intervene. Additionally, the conservation of 1,500 ha is proposed under conservation agreements with private owners in priority areas. The priority area for the development of reforestation and / or restoration actions and establishment of Conservation Agreements will be defined in greater detail during the project preparation phase, in common agreement with the producers and other key stakeholders. Likewise, some criteria will be defined to facilitate the prioritization of these sites.

9. The document, in the general context (point 5) mentions that "land tenure rights continue to be a problem with approximately 26% of the farms in Panama without legal tenure." However, this does not particularly refer to the project area. One of the reasons this site was selected was precisely that there is a high degree of definition of land tenure. Conflicts of this type are rare in the project area and well localized. Additionally, in the event of any eventuality, the National Land Titling Program of Panama (PONAT) will be able to count on the support of the institution in charge of managing these issues.

10. The digits were revised and updated. The "Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)" is 188,112 ha. This is the terrestrial surface area of the Gualaca corridor which is outside of protected areas. Total Gualaca corridor area: 228,767 ha = 40,655 ha of protected areas + 188,112 ha of land outside protected areas. Annex B was updated.

11. The project seeks to take advantage of the capabilities and tools developed by other projects that have made significant investments in part of the project area and contribute to the regional development initiative of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor by proposing the construction of an altitude corridor that connects the mountainous area of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve specifically in the core area of the Fortuna Forest Reserve with the Chiriqu? mangroves. The GEF-CAF project wants to become a subregional model that formalizes, manages and develops the first biological corridor of Panama, incorporating elements of productivity through its sustainable use (socially and environmentally) of the natural capital of the region, at the same time as the conservation of ecosystem goods and services in this region is strengthened. Additionally, this project is part of the subregional development initiative called the Agro Master Plan of the Western Region of Panama, which has financing granted by CAF of \$ 80 million. This seeks to contribute to raising the installed capacity and competitiveness of more than 15,000 agricultural producers over seven years so that

they take advantage of market opportunities, thus promoting the development of priority value chains in the main agricultural region of Panama.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The information has been updated in the GEF Portal

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

3,7,8,9,11 No response needed

4. The information has been included in PIF document & the GEF Portal, please see paragraph number 53.2

6 The values of areas of PA has been reviewed and corrected adjusted in PIF document & the GEF Portal

10 The new number of hectares under improved management outside PAS has been included in PIF document & the GEF Portal, please see paragraph 50.

Agency Response: 2/23/2022

No agency response required.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 3, 2020:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

No response needed

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

September 3, 2020:

The description says the project will take advantage of and build on the investments made by the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and previous GEF projects in biodiversity conservation and management of protected areas. It will also build on the investments made by the Government in the agricultural sector by improving land use planning and hence reducing pressure on natural resources. But

there is no more information about these investments and how they will contribute to the project. Please elaborate further on how the activities proposed in the project will articulate and build on the existing investments and initiatives as identified in the baseline scenario.

April 22, 2021:

Thank you for this information. Please include it in the Portal.

October 5, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

The project seeks to take advantage of the capabilities and tools developed by other projects that have made significant investments in part of the project area and contribute to the regional development initiative of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor by proposing the construction of an altitude corridor that connects the mountainous area of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve specifically in the core area of the Fortuna Forest Reserve with the Chiriqu? mangroves. The GEF-CAF project wants to become a subregional model that formalizes, manages and develops the first biological corridor of Panama, incorporating elements of productivity through its sustainable use (socially and environmentally) of the natural capital of the region, at the same time as the conservation of ecosystem goods and services in this region is strengthened. Additionally, this project is part of the subregional development initiative called the Agro Master Plan of the Western Region of Panama, which has financing granted by CAF of \$ 80 million. This seeks to contribute to raising the installed capacity and competitiveness of more than 15,000 agricultural producers over seven years so that they take advantage of market opportunities, thus promoting the development of priority value chains in the main agricultural region of Panama.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The information has been updated in the GEF Portal

Agency Response (19th, Oct 2021):

No response needed

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

September 3, 2020:

1. The description says in total, the project will improve the management of the total area of the PCAG - 348,474 ha 5 protected areas, including a total terrestrial PAs of 55,483 ha, a total marine PAs of 83,237 ha, 500 ha of land will be restored and/or reforested, and 1,500 ha of land conserved through conservation agreements with private owners. We don't find in the description the 172,784 ha of area of landscapes under improved practices as reported in the core indicator table. Please complete explaining what are exactly those 172,784 ha so that all the global environmental benefits are clearly reported under this section.

2. The sum of the different areas under improved management or restored doesn't correspond to the total announced of 348,474 ha. Please make sure that all the benefits are consistent with the total reported.

April 22, 2021:

1 and 2. Thank you for the clarification. Please refer to the response above (the sum remains incorrect) and ensure the revised number are actually updated in the Portal.

2 bis. Most of the response provided actually correspond to the next comment about the potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up. Please move this response in the right box.

October 5, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

The area included in 'core indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity' is 188,112 ha. This surface is the terrestrial land area (not included within protected areas) to be included in the landscape planning process. It is composed as follows: 500 ha restored land + 1,500 ha under conservation agreements + 186,112 ha other land included into the landscape planning process.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

1 and 2. The figures have been revised, the Portal has been updated.

2. bis. Corrected.

Agency Response (19th, Oct 2021):

No response needed

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 3, 2020:

The project proponents recognize that very little resources are currently being allocated towards natural resource management and the protected areas protection of PCAG. But to overcome this constraint, the proposal remains vague informing the financial sustainability is expected to be achieved 'through the design and implementation of a comprehensive financial sustainability strategy'. Please explain further where the resources will come from after the end of the project, particularly to maintain the adequate management of the PAs according to the elaborated plans, to assist the producers in the improvement of their practices and to maintain the Conservation Agreements.

April 22, 2021:

Please complete the description in the Portal with the information provided in the response in the previous box (on project's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits).

October 5, 2021:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

The sources to sustain the financial strategy will be identified and assessed during the PPG phase. When preparing the concept proposal some opportunities were identified like the development of the Agricultural Master Plan for the western region of Panama, this process might open opportunities to mobilize public and private resources.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The information has been updated in the GEF Portal

This project is innovative, sustainable and scalable because it proposes a subnational development model that seeks to solve the traditional problems of rural productivity and poor market access conditions with the adoption of productive and market practices with a green approach, that is, that conserve natural capital through protection and / or sustainable use under the premise that it is more convenient economically, socially and environmentally not only for the benefits it can generate, but also for the costs it can avoid in terms of loss and / or degradation of environmental services and increase of climate vulnerability.

Although, it is possible that the final results will be obtained beyond the project's execution horizon, it seeks to catalyze and channel existing subnational development initiatives (the Master Plan for Agro for the Western Region of Panama has an approved loan from \$ 80M to promote development) through the creation of enabling conditions (landscape vision, productive organization, governance, financial mechanisms, etc.)

It is scalable because it is expected that the products generated in this project (planning with a landscape approach, governance schemes, financial mechanisms, productive and market organization, conservation agreements, etc.) once contrasted, can be adopted and replicated in other areas of the country.

Once the project is finished and the expected conditions have been enabled, for the productive activities of the project, it is expected to channel resources from the Master Plan for the Development of Agro (\$ 80M is available for the region) to support productive activities and access to better market conditions that will be developed by the draft. With the support of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (Law 25 of Agricultural Transformation), it is expected to create a financial instrument (part donation, part soft loan) to continue financing productive activities, as well as Conservation Agreements in the future.

With respect to protected areas, the adoption of this new production model will generate a series of long-term benefits, including the reduction of threats. This will make it possible to optimize the available resources of the PAs towards other activities such as planning, monitoring and environmental education, as well as the design of financial sustainability strategies based on the promotion of visitation and alliances with the private sector (hydroelectrics, tourism)

Agency Response (19th, Oct 2021):

No response needed

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

September 2, 2020:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

No response needed

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

September 3, 2020:

1. The description is vague, informing that 'For the past two years, meetings and workshops were held in the region with interested parties'. Please briefly elaborate further about which stakeholders were involved (including indigenous and local communities) and about the main outcomes of the consultations.
2. Indigenous people and local communities are not explicitly mentioned in the table providing details about the key stakeholders identified and their expected role. Please complete as these groups are targeted as direct beneficiaries of the project.

April 22, 2021:

1. Please include in the Portal the information provided in the response to this comment and upload the document containing the results of the consultation process which is referenced through the link: <https://chm.cbd.int/api/v2013/documents/05B386D2-5BCD-A52D-6097-F853803CC619/attachments/Corredor%20biol%20B3gico%20Gualaca%20-%20Informe%20Final%20-%20CATIE.pdf> but which is not accessible.
2. We don't see the table updated. Please in the Portal complete the table as indicated and add that the priority area of intervention where the main field actions of the Project will be concentrated does not include territories or indigenous communities.

October 5, 2021:

1. The response to the comment says: "document uploaded and the roadmap" but we don't find where. Please indicate where is the new information uploaded. In particular, the results of the consultation process (main lessons to inform the project design) are still missing.
2. Again, we don't see the table updated. Please address this comment and highlight in yellow the new text.
3. In addition, in the beginning of Part I: Project information, the information on the Executing Agency is missing. Please complete as needed the following fields:

Other Executing Partner(s) ⓘ

Executing Partner Type

January 11, 2022:

1. We don't find the document including the results of the consultations. Please upload this document and summarize its findings (main results to inform the project design) in this section of the Portal entry.

2 and 3. Thank you for the clarification and amendments. Cleared.

February 28, 2022:

1. In the stakeholders section of the Portal entry, we don't find any additional clarification and the description remains vague. Please elaborate further in [this section](#) on the consultations which were conducted to elaborate the proposal, including the following information: how many workshops, when were they organized and what were the main results or lessons (including the interest of the key stakeholders) that inform the project design. In particular, please clarify how the indigenous people and local communities were included in the consultation process and what will be their engagement in the project (they are not included in the table). It is particularly important to complete this information as the uploaded document is in Spanish (and not in English), it is not specifically focused on the stakeholders consultation (it appears more like a broader study) and it refers only to one workshop (and not several) held more than 4 years ago ("Primer Taller de Consulta realizado el 17 de enero de 2018").

March 9, 2022:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Agency Response (4th, Apr 2021):

1. During the process of preparing the PIF, several workshops were held in the project area in which the participation of more than fifty organisations:

1. Government: Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario (MIDA), Instituto de Investigaci?n Agropecuaria de Panam? (IDIAP), Instituto de Seguro Agropecuario (ISA), Autoridad de los Recursos Acu?ticos de Panam? (ARAP), Autoridad de Turismo de Panam? (ATP), Ministerio de Ambiente (MiAmbiente), Ministerio de Educaci?n (MEDUCA), Ministerio de Obras P?blicas (MOP), Ministerio de Comercio e Industrias (MICI), Consejo Nacional para el Desarrollo Sostenible (CONADES), Ministerio de Salud (MINSA), Instituto Paname?o Aut?nomo Cooperativo (IPACOOOP), Banco Nacional de Panam? (BNP), Banco de Desarrollo Agropecuario (BDA), Municipios de Alanje, David, Gualaca, San Lorenzo, San F?lix, Remedios y Tol?, Autoridad Mar?tima de Panam? (AMP), Instituto de Mercadeo Agropecuario (IMA), Juntas comunales,

Instituto Nacional de Formaci?n Profesional y Capacitaci?n para el Desarrollo Humano (INADEH).

2. Academy: Universidad Aut?noma de Chiriqu? (UNACHI), Universidad Tecnol?gica Oteima, Universidad de Panam? (UP), Universidad Tecnol?gica de Panam? (UTP).

3. Private sector and NGOs: Cecomro, Enel Fortuna, Finca Batipa, AES Panam?, CIELSA, Innovaci?n y Desarrollo Latinoam?rica (IDEL), HELMOT, Matadero de Chiriqu? S.A (MACHISA), Las Olas Resort, San Pedro S.A (SAPESA), C?mara de Comercio Industrias y Agricultura de Chiriqu? (CAMCHI), Conservaci?n Internacional (CI), Wetlands International, Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD), Mar Viva, Alianza para la Conservaci?n y el Desarrollo (ACD), Plataforma de Voluntarios de Golfos Vivos - ICEPED

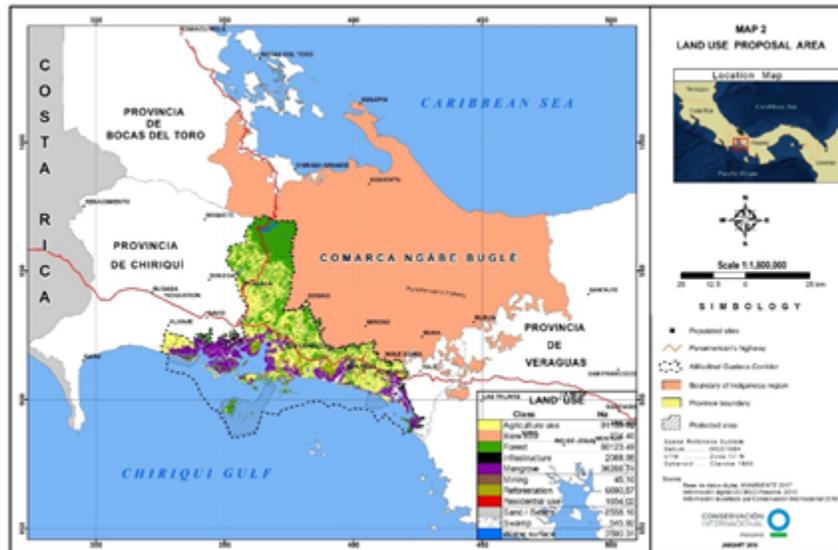
4. Local organisations: Asociaciones de productores locales (APOCHI), Asociaci?n de Peque?os y Medianos Ganaderos de Paja de Sombrero (ASOPEGA), Asociaci?n Nacional de Ganaderos (ANAGAN), Asociaci?n Nacional de Productores de Ganado Lechero de Panam? (APROGALPA), Asociaci?n de Criadores de Ceb? en Panam? (CRICEPA), Cooperativa Gualaca, Grupos ambientalistas, Asociaciones de arroceros, Asociaci?n Nacional de Reforestadores y Afines de Panam? (ANARAP), Asociaci?n Tur?stica de Boca Chica.

The GEF ID 5771 project funded the preparation of the strategy to develop the Gualaca Altitudinal Corridor. This was a participatory process with key local stakeholders. The results of the process are found in the following document:

<https://chm.cbd.int/api/v2013/documents/05B386D2-5BCD-A52D-6097-F853803CC619/attachments/Corredor%20biol%C3%B3gico%20Gualaca%20-%20Informe%20Final%20-%20CATIE.pdf>.

2. Local producers and land-owners were included in the table as ?direct beneficiaries? ?individual farmers and fishermen?. The table has been updated to incorporate specific mention of indigenous people and local communities.

The priority area of intervention where the main field actions of the Project will be concentrated does not include territories or indigenous communities (See map of the area of priority area of intervention).



However, during the preparation phase of the Project Document (PPG), prior informed consultation processes must be developed that includes representatives and traditional indigenous authorities as a small part of the Ng?be Bugl? Comarca is within the proposed Sustainable Landscape of the Gualaca Altitudinal Corridor. Additionally,

during the PPG phase, compliance with the environmental and social safeguards protocols established by the CAF will be complied with.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

1. Text included in the GEF portal and document uploaded and the roadmap
2. The table has been updated.

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

- 1 The project implementing organization has been uploaded on the GEF website and in the project document.
- 2 The information has been updated and highlighted in yellow.
- 3 The information from the executing agency has been incorporated into the GEF portal.

Agency Response (18th, Feb 2022):

This information has been better explained in section 1.A paragraph 8 on the GEF website, highlighted in green.

The public consultation support document is uploaded in the Roadmap as "Public Consultation Support Document". This document shows the information of the consultation process, for the "Design of strategic guidelines for the development of the Gualaca Altitudinal Biological Corridor (CBAG)", carried out as part of the GEF project "Improving Mangrove Conservation across the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) through Coordinated Regional and National Strategy Development and Implementation" that gave rise to the current project.

Agency Response (8th, Mar 2022):

The relevant information collected from the stakeholders has been included in a summarized manner highlighted in green color and attached in Annex E.

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

September 3, 2020:

1. The text says 'the Executing Agency will prepare a gender analysis and a gender action plan during the PPG phase of the project'. Please note that as per GEF policy, the

PPG resources are managed by the GEF/Implementing Agency (CAF) and can't support Government staff or consultant. Please reformulate accordingly.

2. The question related to 'closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources' is not answered (Yes or No). Please complete as needed.

April 22, 2021:

1 and 2. Again, we don't see the adjustments in the Portal. Please complete as indicated in the response.

October 5, 2021:

1. We don't see the text adjusted in the Portal. Please clarify where is the new text and highlight it in yellow.

2. Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

Respuesta de la agencia (4 de abril de 2021):

1. Reconocido y ajustado (ver párrafo 82).

2. Actualizado en el portal GEF

Respuesta de la agencia (17 de agosto de 2021):

1. El texto ha sido ajustado y cargado en el portal GEF

2. Completado en el portal GEF

Respuesta de la agencia (15 de diciembre de 2021):

1 El texto ajustado se ha resaltado en amarillo en el Portal GEF.

2. No se necesita respuesta

Respuesta de la agencia: 23/02/2022

No se requiere respuesta de la agencia.

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 3, 2020:

The description only focuses on a group of entrepreneurs and its actions. Please also consider the farmers, fishermen and other eventual relevant stakeholders from the private sector along the value chain and briefly describe their expected engagement in the project (including those involved in the Conservation agreements).

April 22, 2021:

Thank you for the clarification. Please complete the Portal with the information provided in the response of this comment.

October 5, 2021:

Partially. Only the paragraph "Farmers, fishers,... Hotels of Boca Chica." is uploaded in the Portal. Please upload the rest of the response provided to the previous review and briefly describe in addition the expected stakeholders engagement involved in the Conservation agreements.

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Respuesta de la agencia (4 de abril de 2021) :

Los grupos mencionados en el PIF son aquellos que fueron identificados como claves para el desarrollo del corredor por su influencia en la zona. Estos son:

Centro de Competitividad de la Región Occidental de Panamá (CECOM-RO)

ENEL Fortuna SA que administra la central hidroeléctrica Fortuna.

Finca Batipa un gran holding de empresas agropecuarias y forestales.

AES Panamá una empresa de energía que opera el complejo hidroeléctrico de Chiriquí.

Farmers, fishers, and other resource users are key stakeholders. The main organisations have been identified. For example: Chiriquí Organic Producers Association (APOCHI), Association of small and medium farmers of Paja de Sombrero (ASOPEGA), National Association of Cattle Ranchers (ANAGAN), National Association of Dairy Cattle

Producers of Panama (APROGALPA), Panama Cebu Breeders Association (CRICEPA), National Association of Reforestation (ANARAP), Association of Tourist Guides of the Port and Hotels of Boca Chica.

All these groups will participate in the planning process. It is foreseen that some of them will be elected to be part of the governance structure. The specific groups that will be part of the conservation agreements will be identified during the PPG.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The information has been updated in the GEF Portal

Respuesta de la agencia (15 de diciembre de 2021):

La informaci?n sobre la participaci?n del sector privado se ha incluido en el portal GEF, res?ltelo en amarillo

Respuesta de la agencia: 23/02/2022

No se requiere respuesta de la agencia.

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 3, 2020:

The risk related with the COVID 19 pandemic is not considered. As this has become an important risk for the project elaboration and implementation, please elaborate on the possible consequences of this risk and the proposed measures to mitigate it. If needed as proposed advice, the Agency may wish to refer to the note 'Project Design and Review Considerations in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis and the Mitigation of Future Pandemics' sent by the GEF Secretariat on August 27 .

April 22, 2021:

The COVID-19 analysis is too limited and should consider the guidelines sent to all the Agencies and published on the GEF website in September 2020 (<https://www.thegef.org/documents/project-design-and-review-considerations-response-covid-19-crisis-and-mitigation-future>). Please complete as needed.

October 5, 2021:

We don't see in the Portal entry the improvements showing a consideration of the COVID-19 risks and opportunities as per GEF guidelines. Please indicate where is the new text, highlight it in yellow, and ensure it follows GEF guidelines (which include the consideration of potential opportunities even at PIF stage).

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the improvement. Nevertheless, we still don't find any consideration of potential opportunities the project could provide to build back better and enhance the resilience of the beneficiaries against possible future pandemics. Please follow GEF guidelines and complete as needed.

February 28, 2022:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Respuesta de la agencia (4 de abril de 2021):

El riesgo de pandemia de COVID 19 se ha incluido en la tabla de riesgos. Las respuestas detalladas se desarrollarán durante el PPG.

Cuando se diseñó el PIF, el Covid no existía como amenaza, por lo que no se incluyó como riesgo. Sin embargo, hemos revisado la tabla de amenazas para incluirla como un problema a considerar. En la fase de producción se realizará una evaluación de impacto del covid en el área del proyecto y se tomarán las medidas de mitigación acordes a los resultados obtenidos. Como punto preliminar, podemos decir que dado que la zona está relativamente poblada, el impacto de la pandemia no ha sido muy grave en la región.

Respuesta de la agencia (17 de agosto de 2021):

Gracias por el comentario se ha actualizado la tabla de riesgos. El análisis de riesgo relacionado con COVID se desarrollará más durante el PPG siguiendo las pautas pertinentes del FMAM.

Respuesta de la agencia (15 de diciembre de 2021):

La información sobre el riesgo de COVID-19 se ha actualizado en el portal GEF, resaltado en amarillo

Respuesta de la agencia (18 de febrero de 2022):

En el apartado de riesgos se han incorporado las oportunidades potenciales que podría ofrecer el proyecto para mejorar la resiliencia de los beneficiarios ante posibles pandemias, de acuerdo con los lineamientos del GEF. El texto está resaltado en verde.

Respuesta de la agencia (8 de marzo de 2022):

No se necesita respuesta.

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

September 3, 2020:

The monitoring and evaluation coordination is not mentioned in the institutional structure of the project. Please clarify how this activity will be implemented.

April 22, 2021:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

Respuesta de la agencia (4 de abril de 2021):

La coordinaci3n de seguimiento y evaluaci3n no se menciona en la estructura institucional del proyecto. S3rvase aclarar c3mo se implementar3 esta actividad.

Tal como se indica en el PIF, la organizaci3n final de la gesti3n del proyecto se propondr3 en el PRODOC. Por el momento, se prev3 que el seguimiento y la evaluaci3n sean ejecutados por el equipo del proyecto, y se presenten informes peri3dicos (incluidas las evaluaciones intermedia y final) al Comit3 Directivo para la toma de decisiones.

Respuesta de la agencia (17 de agosto de 2021):

No se necesita respuesta

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

September 3, 2020:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

No se necesita respuesta

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

September 3, 2020:

1. The description says the knowledge management plan will be designed at the beginning of the project. This plan needs to be elaborated before and presented at CEO Endorsement. Please rectify accordingly.
2. Under the coordination section, the proposal refers to previous GEF projects this new project will build on. Please include these projects and any other relevant initiatives the project will learn from.

April 22, 2021:

- 1 and 2. Again, we don't see the adjustments in the Portal nor any paragraph 90. Please complete the description in the Portal as indicated in the response.
- 2 bis. Please ensure the text under "42 Baseline ? Related Projects (pag. 14)" is in the correct comment box and remove it in this response as it is not related to it.

October 5, 2021:

1. Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.
2. Thank you for adding the list of related projects in the baseline scenario. In this specific section on knowledge management, please clarify 1- how existing lessons informed the project concept and 2- what are the plans considered to learn from ongoing relevant projects and initiatives. In addition, please be more specific on the envisioned knowledge outputs to be produced and shared with stakeholders and clarify how knowledge and learning will contribute to overall project impact and sustainability.

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

Respuesta de la agencia (4 de abril de 2021):

1. Reconocido y ajustado en el texto.
2. Se actualiz? el p?rrafo 90.

42 L?nea Base ? Proyectos Relacionados (p?g. 14)

1. Hay muchos proyectos e inversiones relacionados con la conservaci?n de bosques y la pesca sostenible, el manejo de los recursos naturales y la protecci?n de la biodiversidad, el mejoramiento del sector productivo y los pueblos ind?genas en el ?rea del proyecto. Algunos de estos proyectos se detallan en la siguiente tabla.

Respuesta de la agencia (17 de agosto de 2021):

1. Se ha actualizado el texto para indicar que el plan de gesti?n del conocimiento se preparar? durante el PPG.
2. La lista de proyectos a coordinar est? incluida en la ?l?nea de base ? proyectos relacionados?

Respuesta de la agencia (15 de diciembre de 2021):

1 No se necesita respuesta

2 As the project is based on a conceptual development derived from a GEF project called Improving Mangrove Conservation throughout the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (ETPS) through of the Development and Implementation of Coordinated Strategies Regional and National. From which the proposal arises: Design of strategic guidelines for the development of the Gualaca Altitudinal Biological Corridor.

Toda la experiencia acumulada en el proceso ser? fundamental para la gesti?n del conocimiento ya que se ha establecido un mapa de actores, entre los que se destacan organizaciones comunitarias, centros acad?micos e instituciones p?blicas. Ya que se pretende aprovechar lo ya desarrollado para la generaci?n de nuevos conocimientos orientados principalmente al desarrollo de buenas pr?cticas productivas que favorezcan la conservaci?n de la biodiversidad existente, como el mejoramiento del medio ambiente. Principalmente a trav?s de gu?as did?cticas y pr?cticas de campo dirigidas a productores y beneficiarios directos del proyecto.

Otra fuente de experiencias de las que se beneficiar? el proyecto son los productos de conocimiento que se han generado a partir de la implementaci?n de los planes de manejo de las ?reas protegidas ubicadas dentro del proyecto. Todo este conjunto de experiencias servir? para mejorar el impacto y aumentar la sostenibilidad del proyecto.

Respuesta de la agencia: 23/02/2022

No se requiere respuesta de la agencia.

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

September 3, 2020:

The overall preliminary risk rating is well determined as 'Low', thank you. Nevertheless, the table of identified risks is exactly the same as the one under the section 'Risks to Achieving Project Objectives'. This section should refer to other specific risks related to the project implementation. Please refer to the relevant GEF policy and guidelines (SD/GN/03 from December 19, 2019, in particular page 5-6) and correct accordingly. As an ESS screening is uploaded in the portal, the Agency may simply delete the existing table in this section and refers to the uploaded ESS screening for further details.

April 22, 2021:

This comment is not addressed in the Portal. Please address the comment.

October 5, 2021:

Thank you for uploading the ESS supporting document. The response to the question "3. Will the project affect species identified as threatened at the local and/or global levels?" is a "no" nevertheless, the question is followed by an explanation as if it were a "yes". Please answer "yes" to this question.

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

Respuesta de la agencia (4 de abril de 2021):

Riesgos	administraci?n
----------------	-----------------------

Riesgos	administraci?n
Riesgo de que los bancos locales no tengan mecanismos de financiamiento disponibles para los peque?os productores.	Se pretende canalizar recursos para peque?os productores a trav?s del Banco de Desarrollo Agropecuario como parte del financiamiento de CAF al Plan Maestro Agro Regi?n Occidente, el cual se ubica en los l?mites del proyecto GEF.
The mobility limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic in Panama may affect the actions that need to be carried out in the field.	Despite the fact that to date Panama has reported 337,000 cases of contagion, which has resulted in the death of 5,972 people, the current vaccination campaign promoted by the government allows for early recovery as it is the third country in the continent with the highest rate. of vaccination per inhabitant.

Agency Response (17th, Aug 2021):

The E&S information has been updated in the GEF Portal.

Agency Response (15th, Dec 2021):

La respuesta 3 es ?NO? porque el proyecto no afectar? negativamente a las especies amenazadas a nivel local y global. La informaci?n fue corregida en la Evaluaci?n de Salvaguardas Ambientales y Sociales. Por error, subimos una versi?n anterior del documento de an?lisis de riesgos de ESS. Corregimos eso en el documento PIF (anexo) en el portal GEF

Respuesta de la agencia: 23/02/2022

No se requiere respuesta de la agencia.

Respuesta de la agencia: 16/03/2022

La detecci?n de riesgos clim?ticos se ha incorporado al documento preliminar de evaluaci?n de riesgos ambientales del proyecto.

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

September 2, 2020:

No, the letter of endorsement is signed by the Political Focal Point whereas it should be signed by the Operational Focal Point. In addition, the total amount endorsed in the table should reflect all the STAR resources requested (\$2 million) and therefore should include the PPG and PPG fee amount. Finally, the Fee column should also include the

PPG fee (it should be the sum of the project fee + PPG fee). Please correct the letter accordingly.

April 22, 2021:

This comment is not addressed as we don't find the new correct Letter of Endorsement in the Portal. Please address this comment.

October 6, 2021:

Thank you for uploading the Letter of Endorsement (LoE). Nevertheless, in the table of this letter, the project amount and total fees should be the same as in the Portal: respectively \$1,784,862 (and not \$1,770,000) and \$165,138 (the sum of project fees + PPG fees, and not \$180,000).

Please note that the amounts allocated to PPG and GEF Financing and related fees in LoEs are to be strictly respected (the total amounts in the project description should match total amounts in the table). Also, the amounts uploaded in Portal can be lower than amounts allocated by the OFP in LoE but can never be higher (if there is a need of more funds, a new LoE is required).

As a consequence, please address one of the two following comments corresponding to the two possible options:

1- Provide a new Letter of Endorsement with the correct numbers;

2- Change the budget in the Portal as follows: GEF Project financing: \$1,770,000; Agency Fee for the GEF Project financing: \$159,300 (9%); PPG: \$50,000 and Agency Fee for the PPG: \$4,500 (9%).

January 11, 2022:

Thank you for the adjustments. Nevertheless the CAF has been accredited through the Pilot Program on Accrediting GEF Agencies and as such, the fee structure is 9.0% for all types and sizes of projects and programs irrespective of the GEF project financing size. In the new Letter of Endorsement and in the Portal, the Agency fees are 9.5% of the project budget. For a total amount requested of \$2 million and with a PPG cost of \$54,500 (including fees), the project budget should be \$1,784,862 and the project fees should be \$160,638. Please refer to the Annex 8 of GEF "Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy" (GEF/C.59/Inf.03) and provide a correct Letter of Endorsement and amend the financial numbers in the Portal as needed.

February 28, 2022:

Thank you for the amendments and corrected Letter of Endorsement. Cleared.

Agency Response

Respuesta de la agencia (17 de agosto de 2021)

La carta de respaldo se ha cargado en el Portal GEF

Respuesta de la agencia (15 de diciembre de 2021):

El monto del proyecto y las tarifas totales se actualizaron en el portal GEF de acuerdo con la nueva Carta de respaldo adjunta

Respuesta de la agencia (18 de febrero de 2021):

Los montos de los proyectos han sido actualizados en el portal GEF de acuerdo con las "Directrices sobre la Política del Ciclo de Proyectos y Programas" (GEF/C.59/Inf.03). Se ha corregido la carta de aval de acuerdo a los nuevos montos. El texto está resaltado en verde.

Respuesta de la agencia (8 de marzo de 2022):

No se necesita respuesta.

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

N/A

Agency Response

N / A

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

September 3, 2020:

Not yet. Please address the comments above.

In addition, at the beginning of the PIF, the following items 'Other Executing Partner(s)' and 'Executing Partner Type' are not informed. Please complete this important information as needed.

April 22, 2021:

Not Yet. It appears that all the modifications made by the agency are not reflected in the Portal. Please address the remaining comments and ensure the Agency response is actually reflected in the PIF description in the Portal. In addition, to facilitate the review process, please indicate in the PIF review sheet where the changes have been made in the Portal and highlight these changes in yellow.

October 6, 2021:

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments.

January 11, 2022:

Not yet. Please address the remaining comments.

February 28, 2022:

Not yet. Please address the remaining comment. Please also remove the previous highlights in color and only highlight the new text to have a cleaner version of the description in the Portal.

March 9, 2022:

Thank you for addressing the comment on stakeholders consultation. Nevertheless, there are two pending issues that still need to be addressed at this stage: a Theory of Change (TOC) and a climate risk screening need to be included in the package (both analyses can be uploaded in 2 separate documents in the document section of the Portal and summarized in the appropriate section of the Portal entry: TOC under the alternative scenario and climate risk under the risk section). Please complete the information provided accordingly. Further information can be found here: <https://www.stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/theory-change-primer> (for the TOC) and <https://www.stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/stap-guidance-climate-risk-screening> (for the climate risk screening). The Agency is invited to consult the GEF PM of this project for further guidance as needed. Please apology for not having raised these issues before.

March 25, 2022:

Thank you for addressing the comments. Nevertheless, further checking revealed the need to address the following comments to finalize the concept (sorry for not having raised this points earlier):

1. On PMC proportionality: the co-financing contribution to PMC is highly disproportionate. If the GEF contribution is kept at 10%, for a co-financing of \$11,850,000 the expected contribution to PMC must be around \$1,185,000 instead of \$650,000 (which is 5.0%). As the costs associated with the project management have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to the PMC, the GEF contribution and the co-financing contribution must be proportional, which means that the GEF contribution to PMC might be decreased and the co-financing contribution to PMC might be increased to reach a similar level. Please amend either by increasing the co-financing portion and/or by reducing the GEF portion:

	Sub Total (\$)	1,623,862.00	11,850,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)			
	GET	161,000.00	650,000.00
	Sub Total(\$)	161,000.00	650,000.00
	Total Project Cost(\$)	1,784,862.00	12,500,000.00

2. Project information section lists Wetlands International as executing agency, while under in the LoE and in the Coordination section, it is Ministry of Environment of Panama ? please amend the Project Information Section by Including the "Ministry of Environment" under Other Executing Partner and "Governmental" under Executing Partner Type

- **Project Information section:**

Other Executing Partner(s) ⓘ	Executing Partner Type
Wetlands International,	CSO

- **LoE:**

Subject: *Endorsement for the Project Living in harmony with nature: Connecting biodiversity with production systems in the Gualaca Altitudinal Corridor Landscape, in Panama.*

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point (PFP) for Panama, I confirm that the above project to be implemented in Panama, (a) is in accordance with the government's national priorities and the commitments made by Panama under the relevant global environmental conventions; and (b) has been discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points, in accordance to GEF's policy on public involvement.

I am pleased to endorse the preparation of the above project proposal with the support of CAF as GEF implementing agency. If approved, the proposal will be prepared and implemented by **Ministry of Environment**. Further I request the GEF Agency to provide Panama's Operational Focal Point a copy of the project document for final review and approval by the proponent, before it is submitted to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement.

The total GEF financing being requested for this project is US\$2,000,000, including the project preparation grant (PPG), if any, and Agency fee for project cycle management services associated with this project. The financing requested for the project is detailed in the table below:

Source of Funds	GEF Agency	Focal Area	Amount (in US\$)			
			Project Preparation	Project	Fee	Total
GEF TF	CAF	Biodiversity	54,500	1,784,862	160,638	2,000,000
Total GEF Resources			54,500	1,784,862	160,638	2,000,000

I consent to the utilization of Panama's allocations in GEF-7 as defined in the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR).

Sincerely,

RAÚL PINEDO
 Operational Focal Point GEF-Panama

3. PPG and PPG fee are included under PPG in the OFP's LOE ? however in Table E the PPG Agency Fee is excluded. The Agency can either (i) request a new LoE with different amounts for the PPG (\$50,000) and the PPG Agency Fee (\$4,500 added to the GEF Project Agency Fee of \$160,638); or (ii) request the PPG for \$54,500 (same amount as in LoE), but it will not be possible to charge the PPG Agency Fee ? please amend as needed.

- LOE:

Subject: Endorsement for the Project Living in harmony with nature: Connecting biodiversity with production systems in the Gualaca Altitudinal Corridor Landscape, in Panama.

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point (PFP) for Panama, I confirm that the above project to be implemented in Panama, (a) is in accordance with the government's national priorities and the commitments made by Panama under the relevant global environmental conventions; and (b) has been discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points, in accordance to GEF's policy on public involvement.

I am pleased to endorse the preparation of the above project proposal with the support of CAF as GEF implementing agency. If approved, the proposal will be prepared and implemented by Ministry of Environment. Further I request the GEF Agency to provide Panama's Operational Focal Point a copy of the project document for final review and approval by the proponent, before it is submitted to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement.

The total GEF financing being requested for this project is US\$2,000,000, including the project preparation grant (PPG), if any, and Agency fee for project cycle management services associated with this project. The financing requested for the project is detailed in the table below:

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Total GEF Resources			54,500	1,784,862	160,638	2,000,000

I consent to the utilization of Panama's allocations in GEF-7 as defined in the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR).

Sincerely,

RAÚL PINEDO
 Operational Focal Point GEF-Panama

- Tables D and E of Portal entry:

D. Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
CAF	GET	Panama	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,784,862	160,638	1,945,500.00
Total GEF Resources(\$)					1,784,862.00	160,638.00	1,945,500.00

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required

PPG Amount (\$) 50,000 PPG Agency Fee (\$) 4,500

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
CAF	GET	Panama	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	50,000	4,500	54,500.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					50,000.00	4,500.00	54,500.00

4. On Gender: The project does not include any information on gender dimensions relevant to the project objective or components. While it is well noted that the project intends to carry out a gender analysis during PPG stage, the project should at this stage be able to provide some indicative considerations/reflections on gender dimensions related to the project components to strengthen the governance for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of the PCAG. Please provide some further indicative

information related to gender dimensions in the project area and proposed project objectives.

5. On Environmental and Social Safeguards : It is noted that the project overall ESS risk is classified as low, and that CAF has attached the Preliminary Environmental and Social risk analysis matrix for Infrastructure, Social and Environmental Development Operations. It is not clear from the attached Preliminary Environmental and Social risk analysis matrix, however, how the CAF ESS screening/safeguard policy has been applied, including how the CAF's safeguard S06 has been triggered in this project. Please provide further details and information on the process and which CAF's safeguard policies have been triggered or not in this project.

April 13, 2022:

1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Thank you for the amendments and for providing a new Letter of Endorsement. The PIF is now recommended for technical clearance.

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	9/4/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/22/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/6/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/11/2022	
Additional Review (as necessary)	2/28/2022	

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval