

Umbrella Programme for Preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10781

Countries

Global (Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mauritania, Zambia)

Project Name

Umbrella Programme for Preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

8/5/2021

Review completed by PM

9/27/2021

Program Manager

Patricia Marcos Huidobro

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

EA

Non-Expedited Enabling Activity req (PIF)
Non-Expedited Enabling Activity req (CEO)

Part 1: Project Information

Focal area elements

Is the enabling activity aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as indicated in Table A and as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes, with suggestions. In Annex C GEF-7 Taxonomy of the Agency Pro-Doc please update the Rio Marker for CCM from CCM1 to CCM2 to make it consistent with the CEO Endorsement Request.

PM 10/4/2021:

No. On Project Information: Please update the list of Executing Partners and change ?Eight (8) National Governments? for the names of the 8 National institutions in charge of executing the Project.

PM 10/29/2021:

Cleared.

Agency Response

09/14/2021:

Annex C of the GEF-7 Taxonomy of the Agency Pro-Doc:

- The Rio Marker for CCM has been updated in Annex C of the GEF-7 Taxonomy in the Agency Pro-Doc from CCM1 to CCM2 to be consistent with the CEO Endorsement Request.

10/22/2021:

The list of Executing Partners has been updated on Part I, project information in the Pro doc.

Project description summary

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

PM 9/16/2021:

No. As per the CEO Endorsement request the project duration is 46 months. However, the implementation start date is 12/1/2021 and the project submission date 12/31/2024, i.e. 37 months instead of 46 months. Please update these dates/numbers to make them consistent.

PM 10/4/2021:

No. Please address the following comments:

- On the PMC: There is an item line, in Table B, related to PMC and it stipulates 361,000 from GEF funding and 36,000 from co-financing. The issue here is that those numbers have not been included in the PMC Section. Kindly request to take out the PMC item line from the components, Table B, and please include the number in the PMC Section.

- On the Budget: Project Management Cost (PMC) should be charged separately and Audits should be charged to the PMC and no to a component.

PM 10/29/2021:

Cleared.

Agency Response

10/22/2021:

The PMC indicated reflects the aggregate amount from each BTR and combined BTR/NC project as per the GEF costing table totaling to US\$ 361,000- being the PMC for the 8 separate projects. Table B has been amended and the PMC amount located in the correct PMC row.

Budget: The budget has been updated- the audit costs and PMC have been merged.

Co-financing

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

N/A for EA.

PM 10/4/2021:

No. Please address the following comments:

- Even if EAs do not require co-financing, once included in Table C, supporting documentation is required. The co-financing letters for the 8 government ministries and departments? \$393,000 in-kind contribution are missing. Please obtain co-financing letters from all 8 ministries and departments or remove the co-financing from table C.

PM 10/29/2021:

Cleared.

Agency Response

10/22/2021:

The total co-finance included in this project is US\$ 15,000 and is supported by the UNEP letter in Annex L of the Pro doc.

The in-kind co-financing estimated at US\$ 393,000 from the eight national governments has been removed from Tables A, B and C. Voluntary co-financing contribution from the 8 national governments will be captured, when realized, through annual reporting, the text on pg. 10 para 3 of the Pro doc has been updated to reflect this.

GEF Resource Availability

Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

Agency Response

N/A

**Are they within the resources available from:
The STAR allocation?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

This Umbrella Programme will be funded by the set-aside resources from the CC focal area.

Agency Response

[N/A](#)

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

This Umbrella Programme will be funded by the set-aside resources from the CC focal area.

Agency Response

[N/A](#)

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

This Umbrella Programme will be funded by the set-aside resources from the CC focal area.

Agency Response

[N/A](#)

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

This Umbrella Programme will be funded by the set-aside resources from the CC focal area.

Agency Response

[N/A](#)

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes, there are sufficient resources to support this Umbrella Programme from the climate change focal area set aside.

Agency Response

[N/A](#)

Is the financing presented adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes, the financing requested is based on full-cost basis for reporting obligations. In addition, the programme will provide additional execution support to SIDD and LDCs.

Agency Response

[N/A](#)

Part 2: Enabling Activity Justification

Background and Context.

Are the achievements of previously implemented enabling activities cited since the country(ies) became a party to the Convention?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

Agency Response

[N/A](#)

Goals, Objectives, and Activities.

Is the project framework sufficiently described?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

PM 10/4/2021:

No. Please address the following comments:

- The EA does not include any information on Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS). Please add UNEP's ESS screening of this project and provide a justification if this project is excluded from UNEP ESS procedures.

- We note that the CEO Approval document has knowledge management section. However, there is no information of budget regarding knowledge management activities such as awareness raising and education of different groups of peoples including publication, training workshop and public meeting. Please provide budget information about knowledge management activities.

PM 10/29/2021:

Cleared.

Agency Response

10/22/2021:

UNEP's ESS screening of this project was done, signed and attached as Annex J: Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) in the Pro-Doc. This has been included in the portal in Part II section F. The complete SRIF is available in Annex J of the Pro doc.

Knowledge management

As agreed with the GEF Sec, the budget for knowledge management will be excluded at the umbrella level. This information will be obtained from each country under the output 1- the project implementation plan phase.

Stakeholders.

Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase?

Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

No. The stakeholders' section shall be further strengthened. Please address the following comments raised by Council Members at PIF stage:

- Positive that UNEP actively plans to coordinate with other capacity building/planning support actors, such as the NDC- Partnership. However, there are several relevant actors that are not mentioned. We would encourage UNEP to link and cooperate with more actors in the field, including UNDP (especially the activities under UNDP's 'Climate Promise?').

? The Private Sector is identified as a crucial actor under stakeholder involvement. However, the described engagement seems under-developed and shallow. The role of the private sector should be discussed more in terms of engaging them to follow up on opportunities and needs identified in the report, especially in terms of finance and technology.

- Germany welcomes the project proposal's acknowledgement of a wide group of stakeholders, including farmers, indigenous peoples, ethics specialists and local authorities, but suggests including more detail on how stakeholders will be specifically engaged and adding concrete examples wherever appropriate.

? Germany also recommends to provide more detail on how the project proposal expects *to create awareness on climate reporting among critical stakeholders, including the private sector?*, besides inviting private sector representatives to project inception workshops

- Germany welcomes the thorough exploration of linkages with other initiatives, plans, reports and assessments. According to UNFCCC document FCCC/SBI/2020/INF.13 all countries have undertaken measures in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans, partly on reporting monitoring and evaluation. We suggest to explicitly mention possible links.

PM 9/16/2021:

Cleared.

Agency Response

09/14/2021:

We seemed to have missed these comments after PIF clearance. But we are glad to note that most of these comments raised had already been captured in the CEO endorsement package; based on our previous experience in managing comments that are likely to arise from the GEF Secretariat and/or the GEF council on stakeholder involvement.

As described in Part IIA. Page 9 ? most of the additional information obtained through survey responses of participating countries have been included in different sections & **Annexes of the Prodoc uploaded as a separate supporting document to the CEO endorsement request.**

The following section responds specifically to comments raised: -

On enhancing linkages with other actors, and the UNDP's 'Climate Promise': - Thanks for this additional suggestion, which is now included in Part IIA pg. 7 on support received in updating Countries' NDCs ? Table 3 (pg. 8); and in Pg. 13 - Section on Coordination at Regional and Global Level.

Comment on the Private Sector role; - The Private sector role has been enhanced, in section of the Pro-Doc, pg. 23.

Suggestion to include more detail on stakeholder's engagement: - This has been reflected in section B, pg. 21-22; and in **Prodoc Annex I: Project implementation arrangements at national level under each country**

Information on awareness creation has been included in the Pro-Doc on pg. 26 under the knowledge management section. The Private sector role has been enhanced. Additional information has been included in the private sector engagement section of the Pro-Doc, pg. 23.

The suggestion to explicitly mention possible links with the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) & other initiatives have been added in the Pro-Doc, pg. 11. Information for each of the participating countries' linkage of the new proposed NC/BTR project with other initiatives based on survey responses is presented in Table 6 on pg. 12.

Gender equality and women's empowerment.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

Agency Response

N/A

Monitoring and Evaluation.

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

N/A. We note that as per GEF Policies and Guidelines, M&E budgets are not required as these costs do not apply to EAs, please remove.

PM 9/16/2021:

Cleared.

Agency Response

09/14/2021:

M&E cost: -

- The M&E cost has been removed, updated monitoring and Evaluation workplan in Section E, Pg. 30 & Annex F/ Pg. 51.

Cost Effectiveness.

Is the project cost effective?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

Agency Response

N/A

Cost Ranges

If there was a deviation in the cost range, was this explained?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

N/A.

Agency Response

N/A

Part III. Endorsement/Approval by OFP

Country endorsement

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

Agency Response

N/A

Response to Comments

Are all the comments adequately responded to? (only as applicable)

GEF Secretariat Comment

PM 8/18/2021:

Yes.

Agency Response

N/A

Other Agencies comments?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

N/A.

Agency Response

N/A

Council comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

No. Please address the following comments raised by Council members from Norway, Denmark and Germany at PIF stage:

• ***Comment by Liesl Karen Inglis, Senior Advisor, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (GDK), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark?, Council, Denmark made on 7/8/2021***

• ***Comment:***

• ***Norway/Denmark Comments***

? The transition from the current system to the enhanced transparency framework under the UNFCCC is demanding for many developing countries. Very positive that LDCs and SIDS are prioritized, and that the identified countries have signaled that they want to progress to BTR reporting.

? GEF plays a vital role in providing support for reporting and transparency under the UNFCCC. We agree with the secretariat that the Umbrella Programme could set a deadline (i.e. December 2021) for inclusion of other countries based on the submission of NCs and BURs to ensure a timely endorsement and start of the program. This would mean that if those countries have not yet submitted their NC to the UNFCCC; they would have to request support for a stand-alone BTR (if possible) or await for top-up support in GEF-8.

? Positive that UNEP actively plans to coordinate with other capacity building/planning support actors, such as the NDC- Partnership. However, there are several relevant actors that are not mentioned. We would encourage UNEP to link and cooperate with more actors in the field, including UNDP (especially the activities under UNDP's Climate Promise?).

? As identified, there is a risk that weak institutional arrangements and inexperienced staff affect the sustainability of the project's results. It should be a priority to ensure that the capacity developed during the project is maintained within each country's relevant agencies. Therefore, the project should actively foster and encourage in-house capacities and limit use of consultants when developing these reports.

? The Private Sector is identified as a crucial actor under stakeholder involvement. However, the described engagement seems under-developed and shallow. The role of the private sector should be discussed more in terms of engaging them to follow up on opportunities and needs identified in the report, especially in terms of finance and technology.

• ***Comment by Kordula Mehlhart, GEF Council Member, Head of Division on Climate Finance, BMZ, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Council, Germany made on 7/4/2021***

• ***Comment:***

? ***Germany Comments***

Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:

Suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:

? Germany welcomes the project proposal's acknowledgement of a wide group of stakeholders, including farmers, indigenous peoples, ethics specialists and local authorities, but suggests including more detail on how stakeholders will be specifically engaged and adding concrete examples wherever appropriate.

? Germany also recommends to provide more detail on what is meant with *?efforts will be made to have acceptable gender representation in project management structures?* and how the project proposal expects *?to create awareness on climate reporting among critical stakeholders, including the private sector?*, besides inviting private sector representatives to project inception workshops.

? Germany welcomes that the project proposal lists the national priorities with which the project proposal is aligned, e.g. (I)NDCs, the CBIT and NAMAs. It recommends to further elaborate where a detailed description of consistency with national priorities is missing, e.g. regarding *?regional and national programmes strategies aimed at addressing climate change?* and *?Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?*.

? Germany appreciates the recognition of the Information Matters project, carried out by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) under its International Climate Initiative (IKI).

? Germany welcomes the project proposal's section dedicated to risks and mitigation strategies, including weak institutional arrangements, limited consultations and delayed reporting. It suggests detailing what specific *?measures?* UNEP intends to put in place to mitigate the risks from *?political unrest/ instability?*.

? Germany welcomes the thorough exploration of linkages with other initiatives, plans, reports and assessments. According to UNFCCC document FCCC/SBI/2020/INF.13 all countries have undertaken measures in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans, partly on reporting monitoring and evaluation. We suggest to explicitly mention possible links.

PM 9/16/2021:

Cleared.

Agency Response

09/14/2021:

[Norway/Denmark Comments](#)

Comment on the transition from the current system to the enhanced transparency framework under the UNFCCC noted.

Comment on inclusion of other countries based on the submission of NCs and BURs to ensure a timely endorsement and start of the program noted.

Linkages with other actors, and the UNDP's 'Climate Promise': -have been added in Part IIA pg. 7 on support received in updating Countries' NDCs ' Table 3 (pg. 8); and in Pg. 13 - Section on Coordination at Regional and Global Level.

Comment on fostering and encouraging in-house capacities and limit use of consultants when developing these reports -to enhance sustainability of reporting processes ' addressed in different sections of the project as follows; -

- Section B, under Component 2 para 3 on pg.18 highlights the national experts/institutions that will be engaged in the proposed NC/BTR.

- The 3rd component's objective as discussed on pg. 20-21 will ensure sustainability for continuous engagement of climate change structures/units within the participating countries' relevant agencies.

- The proposed NC/BTR presents capacity building opportunities to EAs and experts, Table 8 on pg. 19 presents key capacity needs of each participating countries that are expected to be addressed through the proposed NC/BTR project;

Comment on the Private Sector role; - has been addressed above in part 2 under stakeholders' section and included in the private sector engagement section of the Pro-Doc, pg. 23.

' Germany Comments

- Suggestion to include more detail on stakeholder's engagement: - This has been included in section B, pg. 21-22; and in Annex I: Project implementation arrangements at national level under each country

Gender representation: - Additional information on gender has been included, please see Gender section in pg. 24 and Table 10. Enhanced private sector engaged outlined in section B of the Pro-Doc, pg. 23. Information on awareness creation has been included in the Pro-Doc on pg. 26 under the knowledge management section. Table 4 of the BTR/NC indicative budget (pg. 8-9) shows that countries will set aside some funds to be used for gender related activity. This is expected to be outlined in the Project Implementation Plan (PIP) - output 1.

Information on 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' has been added under the project coordination at regional and global level section, pg. 14 and Table 6, on pg. 12 provides a description of national initiatives that will be coordinated with this new proposed NC/BTR project.

Comment on Germany appreciates the recognition of the Information Matters project, carried out by GIZ noted

Germany's comment on what specific 'measures' UNEP intends to put in place to mitigate the risks from 'political unrest/ instability'. This is elaborated in Table 11 under political risks on pg.26

The suggestion to explicitly mention possible links with the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) have been added in the Pro-Doc, pg. 11. Information for each of the participating countries' linkage of the new proposed NC/BTR project with other initiatives based on survey responses is presented in Table 6 on pg. 12.

STAP Comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
PM 8/18/2021:

N/A.

Agency Response

N/A

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
PM 8/18/2021:

N/A.

Agency Response

N/A

CSOs comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
PM 8/18/2021:

N/A.

Agency Response

N/A

09/20/2021: In responding to GEF comments dated 09/16/2021 on project timelines;

The project expected completion date has been updated to 10/1/2025, i.e. 46 months from the implementation start date of 12/01/2021.

The BTRs and NCs are expected to be submitted to the UNFCCC by December 2024. Afterwards, the project will continue to support dissemination/uptake of report findings at national level, as well as conduct an assessment and stocktaking exercise (i.e. component 3) until the end of 2025. The clarification on timeline has been included in the last para under component 2.

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO Endorsement/approval recommended?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

PM 8/18/2021:

The GEF is returning the CEO Endorsement Request to the Agency to address further comments/requests for clarifications.

PM 9/16/2021:

No. Please address the following minor comment: "As per the CEO Endorsement request the project duration is 46 months. However, the implementation start date is 12/1/2021 and the project submission date 12/31/2024, i.e. 37 months instead of 46 months. Please update these dates/numbers to make them consistent".

PM 10/4/2021:

No. Please address comments above highlighted in yellow.

PM 10/29/2021:

Cleared.

Review Dates

**Secretariat Comment at
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

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

**Secretariat Comment at
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

**Additional Review
(as necessary)**

**Additional Review
(as necessary)**

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations