

Support the implementation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan in Senegal/PNNK

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID
12292
Countries
Senegal
Project Name
Support the implementation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan in Senegal/PNNK
Agencies
IUCN
Date received by PM
3/4/2026
Review completed by PM

Program Manager
Tasila Banda
Focal Area
Multi Focal Area
Project Type
MSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

- a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?
- b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you
2. Project Summary

Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected results?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

1. We expect the Agency to include GEBs expressed by targets under the different core indicators. The mention of "environmental benefits" is not enough.

2. Objective should be SMART (specific, measurable, accessible, realistic, defined in the time). Please reformulate the long paragraph, it is not an objective.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

Thank you. the comment has been addressed. (i) The summary now expresses the expected global environmental benefits (GEB) through quantified targets for key indicators, rather than simply referring to "environmental benefits": 913,000 ha of terrestrial protected areas under improved management (CI 1); 3,000 ha of ecosystems undergoing restoration (CI 3); 5,000 ha of landscapes under improved management practices (CI 4); and 2,000 direct beneficiaries disaggregated by sex?1,500 women and 500 men (CI 11).

(ii) The objective was reformulated into a single SMART "Over 24 months, the project objective is to restore 3,000 ha of degraded Sudanese savanna and wetland habitats and place 913,000 ha of the PNNK under improved management, while strengthening the resilience and livelihoods of 2,000 beneficiaries (1,500 women) in peripheral areas through ecological restoration, participatory governance, and the diversification of green value chains."

3 Indicative Project Overview

3.1 a) Is the project objective presented as a concise statement and clear?

b) Are the components, outcomes and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?

Secretariat's Comments
06/03/2026 TMB

The project objective is very long and too high-level. Please amend in a concise statement, clear and measurable. Please avoid adding extra content and leave the field dedicated to the objective only.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

Thank you. the comment has been addressed.

3.2 Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation included within the project components and appropriately funded?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

1. We request the Agency to ensure that project activities are gender-responsive with gender gaps explicitly linked to objectives and activities. The Gender Action Plan must be completed and uploaded before CEO Endorsement.

2. The PIF is silent on gender issues and the empowerment of women. Especially about agroforestry and community livelihoods, the role of women in Senegal is essential. Please, revise, and revise the target (500 women / 100 men).

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you. the comment has been addressed. (i) A comprehensive gender analysis and a Gender Action Plan will be developed during the PPG and uploaded prior to CEO approval; gender gaps are now explicitly linked to outcomes and activities, gender-sensitive measures are integrated into each component, and gender-sensitive indicators with sex-disaggregated data collection are included in the results framework. (ii) Section B has been revised to clarify the role of women, particularly in agroforestry, vegetable farming, value chains for non-timber forest products and beekeeping (the Api-Niokolo honey brand, Madd juice, and baobab cakes), in the organization of GPFs and GIEs, in village firefighting brigades and inter-village firefighting committees, and in governance bodies (representation quotas in advisory committees, local platforms, and participatory monitoring groups). The target number of beneficiaries has been increased and rebalanced to reflect the central role of women: 2,000 direct beneficiaries, including 1,500 women and 500 men (CI 11).

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

b) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?

c) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for FSPs or 10% for MSPs? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

1) The average budget amount of the GEF funded part for the M&E component for projects up to USD 5 million is around 5% but for this project it is 5.24%. We request the agency to revise down.

2) We also request the Agency to provide figures for co-financing for the PMC in a proportional manner. If the PMC remains at 10% and co-financing is \$4,000,000, the corresponding PMC amount should be approximately \$400,000.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments [Thank you. The comment has been addressed](#)

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key contextual drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective?

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

For the current environmental challenge of mimosa pigra invasion, we suggest a systems perspective that addresses root causes rather than symptoms. The PIF touches on this by linking ecosystem degradation to governance gaps and livelihood pressures, however, a more explicit discussion of the systemic drivers and how the project intervenes at each level would strengthen this and prove that drivers are clearly described and addressed.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments [Thank you. The analysis of the situation has been reformulated from a systemic perspective that distinguishes between the symptoms and the root causes of the Mimosa pigra invasion. Immediate pressures \(colonization of ponds, bushfires, poaching, and stray livestock\) are linked to underlying systemic drivers: the lack of sustainable funding and institutional routines for the ongoing management of invasive species; fragmented and underfunded ecological monitoring; incomplete operationalization of governance bodies; and pressures on livelihoods that lead to overexploitation of resources. The project addresses each level?symptoms \(recurring community-led cleanup campaigns at priority ponds\); capacity/leverage \(training park staff, local authorities, and communities in the biology, mapping, and control techniques for invasive species, and strengthening the monitoring database\); and root cause \(a sustainable funding mechanism; integration of recurring control efforts into the 2026?2035 Management Plan and annual work plans; and livelihood alternatives that reduce pressure\).](#)

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

a) Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

b) Does it ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?

d) are the relevant stakeholders and their roles adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

1. We request Agency to provide high definition maps for the location of Niokolo Koba NP and its corresponding map.

2. We take note of the removal of *Mimosa pigra* in the ponds. However, the experience with invasive species shows that a one time removal operation does not work: the success depends on the continuous management of these invasive species. We would need more information on the current baseline, eventually the role of co-financing, and how the concerned institutions will manage a certain continuity.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you. Noted. (i) High-definition georeferenced maps? a location map of Niokolo-Koba National Park in Senegal and a detailed map of the park? have been included in the Project Justification and in Annex C, in print-ready resolution. (ii) We fully agree that a one-time eradication operation does not work and that success depends on ongoing management. The baseline report now documents the recurring control regime carried out by the DPN? combined manual, mechanical, and biological campaigns at waterholes reaching the critical coverage threshold (e.g., Simenti, Kountadala, Nianaka), planned via the SMART/biomonitoring system. The project funds the system, the capacities of field staff and communities, and a protocol for recurring campaigns rather than a one-time operation; institutional continuity is ensured through co-financing by the DPN (2,500,000 USD) and IUCN (1,500,000 USD), the integration of monitoring into the PAG and annual action plans, and a sustainable financing mechanism (conservation trust fund, contributions from tourism and the private sector) developed under Components 2 and 3. The baseline infested area and a quantified reduction target will be established during the PPG.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

a) Is there a concise theory of change that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the expected causal pathways, and the key assumptions underlying these?

b) Are the key outputs of each component defined (where possible)?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

1. The PIF presents the project logic in a descriptive manner but does not present a standalone, clearly labeled Theory of Change (ToC) narrative making the project logic merely implicit. We expect the Agency to demonstrate transformative pathways, not just activities, through a concise ToC narrative that explicitly describes causal pathways, the scientific basis for the interventions, and key assumptions.

2. Several studies have been conducted on the Niokolo Koba. All mentioned the importance of law enforcement and antipoaching patrols. The ToC is completely silent or blind on this aspect. The proposed institutional pathway, with participative governance and monitoring, do not seem enough robust strong. Please, revise.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you this has taken into account. (i) A standalone, clearly identified Theory of Change (ToC) narrative, accompanied by a diagram, has been added, structured as follows: barriers ? outputs ? outcomes ? objective ? impact, and articulating three causal pathways (restoration and livelihoods; ecological monitoring and governance; knowledge and policy influence), the scientific basis for the interventions?recent population assessments documented in the 2026?2035 Management Plan: the world's last viable population of Western Derby eland (~537 individuals; Brandlov? et al., 2025), the West African lion (28?56 individuals; Lindshield & Ndiaye, 2021), the African wild dog (24?38 individuals; Drouille et al., 2021), and the West African chimpanzee (>45 individuals), as well as aerial wildlife counts, biomonitoring, and IMET/EOH management effectiveness assessments?and key assumptions (sustained government commitment, effective community participation, security conditions, and continued funding). (ii) Law enforcement and anti-poaching efforts are now explicitly included in the Theory of Change and in Components 1 and 2. The project strengthens the existing surveillance system?25 guard posts (six of which are equipped with a first-aid station), six mobile brigades, and a motorized anti-poaching brigade (environmental crime), with patrol planning via SMART/QGIS, in accordance with the 2026?2035 Management Action Plan (PAG). ? through equipment, anti-poaching and IWT (LAB) training, the integration of the ecological monitoring and surveillance interface (camera traps, telemetry where applicable, basic drones), and coordination with Panthera's 2026 surveillance plan. Participatory governance complements?without replacing?this approach to law enforcement.

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

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

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

The PIF describes the baseline situation in Niokolo-Koba and articulates what the project will achieve, but does not present a formal, structured incremental cost analysis. Incremental reasoning needs to be made more explicit.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Noted. A structured analysis of incremental costs has been added, in accordance with the guidelines in document GEF/C.31/12. The baseline scenario (status quo) describes fragmented park management funded on an ad hoc basis, as well as isolated micro-projects leading to continued degradation, funded by the \$4,000,000 in co-financing. The GEF alternative funds the increment?landscape-scale restoration, an integrated invasive species control system, a consolidated ecological monitoring and information system, robust multi-stakeholder governance, and green value chains. The incremental effect?that is, the difference between the two scenarios?generates global environmental benefits that would not occur under the baseline

scenario: improved management of 913,000 ha, restoration of 3,000 ha, 5,000 ha under improved practices, the conservation of threatened species?including the world?s last viable population of Western Derby eland, the West African lion, and the African wild dog?and measurable contributions to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, funded by the GEF grant of 1,258,702 USD.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

a) Is the institutional setting, including potential executing partners, outlined and a rationale provided?

b) Comments to proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception).

c) is there a description of potential coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area

d) are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

The situation on the NK Park has also improved thanks to the role of partners as Panthera or Academia (Thies, Bruxelles, Liege). We would like to see a role for these key-partners, especially Senegalese ones. They are absent from the concept.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsNoted. Section B and the stakeholder table have been revised to assign explicit roles to key partners, with a particular focus on Senegalese institutions. Panthera is involved in supporting anti-poaching efforts and surveillance, monitoring large carnivores, and the 2026 monitoring plan; ZSL and ULB-Coop?ration are involved in ecological monitoring and community engagement. Defined roles have been assigned to academic and research partners in the areas of ecological monitoring, species research, capacity building, and knowledge generation: Cheikh Anta Diop University (UCAD), Iba Der Thiam University of Thi?s (UIDT), IFAN, and IRD in Senegal, as well as the Free University of Brussels (ULB), the University of Li?ge, and Antelope Conservation/CZU Prague (monitoring of the western Derby eland). National institutions (DPN, UCAD, UIDT, IFAN) are positioned as key partners, building on existing agreements between DPN and Panthera, DPN and ULB/ZSL, and the eland monitoring agreement; coordination protocols (MoUs) will be formalized during the PPG..

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

b) Are the project?s indicative targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you

5.5 NGI Only: Is there a justification of financial structure and use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category?

b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?

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

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

The project risks need to be articulated alongside the mitigation measures for each risk. The risk table currently contains only what look like mitigation measures without the risk they are aiming to overcome.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Noted. The risk matrix has been restructured so that each entry clearly and explicitly states: the risk category, the specific risk involved, the residual risk score after mitigation, and the corresponding mitigation measure. For example, for the environmental and social category, the risk (increased poaching, bushfires, land-use conflicts, and mining/agricultural pressures degrading habitats and wildlife) is now stated separately from its mitigation measures (enhanced monitoring, awareness-raising, and economic alternatives); each rating reflects the residual risk once the mitigation measures have been implemented. The overall residual risk remains rated as Moderate.

5.7 Qualitative assessment

a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?

b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?

c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

We note that innovative elements (such as the use of drones and camera traps for ecological monitoring, integration of green value chains in beekeeping, non-timber forest products, for livelihood diversification) are present however the transformation and scaling narratives need to be elaborated. Given GEF-8's strong emphasis on transformation levers (governance, financial leverage, innovation, multi-stakeholder dialogue), a more deliberate discussion of how this

project contributes to systemic change, and how its model could be replicated in other Sahelian landscapes would strengthen the PIF considerably.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Addressed :. A narrative focused on transformation and scaling up has been added, aligned with the GEF-8 transformation levers. Governance: operationalization of the biosphere reserve committees, revitalization of the mayors' network and local platforms, scientific committee, and roadmap toward the IUCN Green List. Financial Lever: Establishment of a sustainable financing mechanism through a conservation trust fund, carbon mechanisms, and contributions from tourism and the private sector. Innovation: SMART patrol planning, camera traps, basic drones, and telemetry for ecological monitoring, and green value chains (the Api-Niokolo honey brand?approximately 12% of local honey production already comes from modern apiaries supported by ULB-Coop?ration?and NTFPs). Multi-stakeholder dialogue among government agencies, communities, women's and youth organizations, NGOs, and researchers. The scaling-up pathway describes how the Niokolo-Koba integrated landscape model?which anchors globally unique values such as the last viable population of western Derby eland ? can be replicated in other Sudano-Sahelian World Heritage sites and biosphere reserves, including the Niokolo-Badiar transboundary complex and the broader PICVERT landscape, with knowledge outputs and policy integration through the SND 2025?2029 and the SNBPA.

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with focal area and integrated program strategies and objectives, and/or adaptation priorities?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors)

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e. BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you

7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations, provided?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

We encourage the Agency to hold consultations with the key and relevant stakeholders and not operate under the assumption of synergy with the PICVERT and SENRM projects.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Noted. The project will not be based on the assumption of synergies with PICVERT and SENRM. Project-specific, direct consultations with key and relevant stakeholders?indigenous peoples and local communities, women?s GPFs/GIEs, civil society organizations, the private sector, local governments, and decentralized sectoral agencies?will be conducted and documented during the PPG, accompanied by a Stakeholder Engagement Plan that includes the names and dates of the consultations. Coordination with PICVERT (IUCN) and SENRM will be sought through a formal coordination framework or MoU, rather than assumed, to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication..

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

8.2 Is the PPG requested within the allowable cap (per size of project)? If requested, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you

8.3 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?

Secretariat's Comments

05/26/2026 TMB

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThe total indicative co-financing amounts to 4,000,000 USD. The confirmation letters and the mobilized investment sub-set will be documented upon the CEO's approval.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country's(ies) GEF OFP and has the OFP at the time of PIF submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you

Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you

Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you

8.5 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project to be submitted?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments
Annex C: Project Location

8.6 Is there preliminary georeferenced information and a map of the project's intended location?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.7 If there are safeguard screening documents or other ESS documents prepared, have these been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsThank you

Annex E: Rio Markers

8.8 Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

The PIF marks "**No Contribution**" for both Climate Change Mitigation (CCM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), when in fact the project rationale explicitly describes ecosystem resilience strengthening and water resource protection both of which are outcomes that carry clear adaptation co-benefits. We request the Agency to clarify.

06/17/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's CommentsNoted. The Rio "Climate Change Adaptation" (CCA) indicator has been raised from "No Contribution (0)" to "Significant Objective (1)," reflecting the adaptation co-benefits described in the rationale: strengthening ecosystem resilience, restoring gallery forests, ponds, and wetlands, bushfire management, and protection of water resources which reduce communities' vulnerability to climate-related hazards. The "Climate Change Mitigation" (CCM) indicator remains at "No contribution (0)": although the restoration of 3,000 ha and assisted natural regeneration generate incidental co-benefits of carbon sequestration, climate change

mitigation is not a project objective, and no GHG mitigation targets (CI 6) are claimed at this stage.

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments
05/26/2026 TMB

Cleared.

Agency's Comments Thank you

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) 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 to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

9.1 Is the PIF and PPG (if requested) recommended for technical clearance?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments Thank you for the review of the project. The project team greatly appreciates the insightful comments and has done its best to address them in the current version. We will further refine and comprehensively integrate these recommendations during the PPG phase.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO Endorsement/ Approval

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments Thank you for the review of the project. The project team greatly appreciates the insightful comments and has done its best to address them in the current version. We will further refine and comprehensively integrate these recommendations during the PPG phase.

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	5/26/2026	6/16/2026
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/3/2026	
Additional Review (as necessary)	6/16/2026	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		