



# Strengthening Zambezi River Basin Management towards Climate Resilience and Ecosystem Health.

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

11572

**Countries**

Regional (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania)

**Project Name**

Strengthening Zambezi River Basin Management towards Climate Resilience and Ecosystem Health.

**Agencies**

AfDB

**Date received by PM**

3/21/2024

**Review completed by PM**

3/23/2024

**Program Manager**

Astrid Hillers

**Focal Area**

International Waters

**Project Type**

FSP

## 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

(3/22/2024)

Yes, project is overall eligible but will need revisions.

1. Please fill in the countries in addition to labeling the project "regional"- in addition, please remove ?Africa?.

2. Please indicate the national focal point/counterpart agencies for the project (here or in the PIF/institutional framework section).

3. The project is complex given the number of countries and cross-sector cooperation needs. Please consider a longer implementation period.

(5/2/2024)

Responses of the agency are noted and accepted. Comments are addressed.

Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

1. the eight riparian states have been added.

2. The project will work through and with the ZAMTEC, the technical organ of ZAMCOM.

3. Stakeholders recommended that we retain the period to align with the complementary Pidacc, GCF, CIF and CAW projects.

## 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

(3/22/2024)

1. Please simplify and clarify complex formulations such as "The overall goal is to enhance multi-sectoral coordination and application of science-based knowledge in decision making processes to achieve peaceful and sustainable transboundary water resources management aimed at ensuring inclusive climate resilience and ecosystem health in the Zambezi River basin." Project goals need to be attainable and measurable to allow later on to evaluate if the project succeeded. This goal is too complex and packing in too many dimensions.

2. Please spell out acronyms when used for the first time.

3. Does "keeping pollution flows under check" mean to keep them below defined water quality limits OR does it mean to "observe/monitor" water quality. It is not entirely clear even in the project.

4. Again, simplify the following sentence. "Enhancing inter-sectoral collaboration .... by standardizing (?) and harmonizing policy frameworks ...through supporting dialogue and consensus building on key recommendations from prior studies and new propositions". That does not seem to be outline a logical path. Please reformulate.

5. The goal of the project to enhance explicitly the cooperation across the dam operators, the departments and ministries of energy and ZRA on the one hand and the ministries of water and ZAMCOM on the other. To synchronize dam releases and at the same time maintain environmental flows is part of the project and would be a major achievement. Yet, this is strangely not part of the project summary.

6. Good to see that ZAMCOM will be the executing agency on regional level. Yet, you mention that it will work "through its existing structures to implement the project". Please explain here or in the section on the institutional arrangements how and if already existing can effectively implement a Water-Food-Energy-Environment (WEFE) Nexus approach.

(5/2/2024)

Thank you for the explanations. Comments have been addressed.

## Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

1. The goal has been replaced by the one in the ToC which is simpler.
2. Acronyms have been explained.
3. The project will "observe/monitor". the formulation in the PIF has been revised to reflect this.
4. This has been removed.
5. This has been included in the revised project summary.
6. The ZAMCOM institutional arrangements has been elaborated in detail, including a presentation of the structure, to show how it works and how a WEFÉ nexus approach can be incorporated into the existing structures.

### 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

(3/22/2024)

1. See earlier comment (Project Summary, comment 1). The PDO is neither attainable nor measurable. It also differs from the goal outlined later in the Theory of Change.
2. To clarify the outcomes, please add outcome level indicators (no targets at this point; just indicators which will aid to clarify desired outcomes)
3. The outputs are so abbreviated that it is hard to see how they lead to the outcome. Also, in the project description (later in the PIF) it needs to be made more clear how the "WEFE basin planning and development system" at least in terms of "planning" builds on the existing DSS. Please also clarify (in the project description section; not in the table) what the idea and the scope of the WEFÉ 'planning and development system' is. This can mean vastly different things to different people.
4. How do MoUs with development partners support such system. Is it MoUs or finance via projects or TA?

5. Please explain the meaning of "science based transboundary river basin management instruments". Could a more common and clearer term be found here?

6. Basin-wide WEFÉ guidelines: what does standardization mean here. Also, the outcomes of WEFÉ planning vastly differ if done at unilateral/national or basin-wide level. So, does it make sense to implement WEFÉ assessments and guidelines on national level ? Please clarify.

Please also note that WEFÉ guidelines often are mostly seen as a family of WEFÉ tools and the choice of tools depends on the desired outcomes: e.g. the UNECE tools are dialogue tools , but cannot be used to make planning decisions which would need to be supported by science-based modeling driven scenario tools. The IIASA ISWEL project supported the DSS development in introducing such tools in a small and short pilot effort (hampered also by COVID travel restrictions at the time). Please discuss with IIASA if that previous effort could aid the proposed project. Contact: WILLAARTS Barbara <willaart@iiasa.ac.at>

7. Output 2.1.3 is again so abbreviated that only the component description later reveals that this embeds a flood and drought early warning system (yet seems to miss to involve the added need to consider how to get the early warning to communities and other stakeholders on the ground in order to in fact contribute to improved disaster risk management. It also missed the needed training of national counterparts to use that system). Given the size of the project and this particular component we highly suggest to leverage additional funds to feasibly include this in the project as is (e.g. explore availability of LDCF funds as was discussed some while back).

8. Pollution hotspots and priority sub-basins agreed. First: please reword to "identified". Pollution hotspots do not need 'agreement', these have objective measures. Second: will and if so "what" will the project do to address them?

9. Determination of e-flows(output 3.1.2): very much needed to aid in the modified and synchronized dam releases as 'synchronization' for dam operators will be driven by the goal to maximize power outputs while e-flows, flood protection and/or irrigation needs need to be other factors to be considered in the modified dam operation rules (output 3.1.3).

These two outputs combined would be substantial achievements (and are underpinned by the WEFÉ considerations under the earlier component). Given the WWF experiences in the Kafue: would you need to consider that e-flow determination across the basin (incl. sub-basins and down to the ecologically productive and sensitive delta) possibly need additional primary data and information collection to determine these for different seasonal flows and very different habitats and ecology along the stretch of the river ? E-DNA measurements can be very supportive and make this cheaper and faster over time but initially will need to be done side by side with traditional observations of aquatic biodiversity. Please discuss this with the WWF team that worked in the Kafue and

reevaluate the budget allocation for this effort based on additional inputs by e-flow experts (such as WWF or experts such as Jackie King and Cate Brown see e.g. "Modifying dam operating rules to deliver environmental flows: experiences from southern Africa" <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15715124.2011.639304> ).

10. Outcome 4.1 : Neither here nor in the project description it is clear what is envisioned here. Clearly it seems way beyond sustainable finance for ZAMCOM core functions, but what is envisioned ? Any finance across any WEFE investment dimensions ? Surely that would not be realistic. Please put some additional thought into that and define "finance for what"?

11. Please make outcome 5.1 more concrete; again adding a couple of indicators may aid.

12. GEF does not finance basic research.

13. Please explicitly add IW:LEARN active participation in this component.

14. While there is an output on M&E, the GEF-8 Indicative Project Overview table has a complete component for M&E (see 2.1.1) ? please include the M&E parts (outputs ? outcomes ? GEF resources, among others) in the M&E component. You are missing an M&E budget in that component; please add.

(5/2/2024)

The revisions and responses below are well noted. The comments have been addressed.

### Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

1. The PDO has been replaced by the one from the ToC.
2. Indicators have been proposed for each output.
3. The outputs in the main text have been re-written as sentences to limit abbreviations. The WEFE is limited to "planning and management" guidance and the issue of development has been dropped.
4. The output has been removed as a stand-alone output and merged into capacity building TA in the relevant outputs.
5. This phrase has been removed and replaced with "evidence-based decision making" in corresponding sections in the PIF narrative.

6. This has been changed and the section re-written.
7. This has been re-written to limit GEF work to "climate proofing" whilst "early warning" work is assigned to the Climate Action Window. more elaborate working arrangements are to be worked out during the PPG stage.
8. The term "agreed" has been replaced with "identified and prioritized for remedial actions". The project stresses action plans on selected hotspots to address the issue of pollution including awareness raising and actual mitigation measures where necessary.
9. The proposal is to bring experts and practitioners to deliberate and decide on the best course of action. this approach is what is now defined in the PIF. the desire to build on existing and apply e-flows throughout the basin is stated. This will be elaborated more in the PPG.
10. This has been re-written and restricted to raising finance only for core operations of ZAMCOM and for pre-development studies such as environmental impact assessments. The whole component now looks at raising finance from operators within the basin and from non-traditional sources of finances so as to reduce dependence on country contributions and project specific financing.
11. Component 5 has been re-written to focus on exchange visits, internships and information dissemination.
12. Basic research has been removed from the PIF.
13. This is stated as a bullet item at the start of the component.
14. M&E parts (outcome, outputs and resources) along with budget has been added in the M&E component. An output on M& has been added in Component 5 of the project.

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

Secretariat's Comments

(3/22/2024)

No.

1. Please make sure you address gender dimensions across project components more explicitly in the project description and not as a separate description. Specifically, we suggest the incorporation of gender perspectives, in particular, in Outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.

2. Please ensure that all outputs under Outcome 4.1 are gender-responsive (i.e., takes account of and responds to women's specific needs and contributions, and would benefit from these).

3. Similarly, all knowledge products in Outcome 5 must be gender-responsive and that women and women's groups are targeted in dissemination of KM products. Please ensure that gender-related results are monitored and reported on.

(5/2/2024)

The extensive revisions of the PIF are well noted including the inclusion of gender dimensions, youth and indigenous groups across the rationale and the project component description.

During the *project design* and *implementation* of the project:

- please make sure that the gender action plan implementation is budgeted for, that key actions are included in the overall project results framework and that gender-related results are monitored and reported on.

Comments addressed.

#### Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

1. The stand-alone section on gender has been removed. gender aspects have been discussed in the project rationale and the project descriptions. now, every relevant output mentions the special needs of women, the youth and in some cases, indigenous people.

2. This is done for all outputs. Fore example Output 5.1.2 on internships specifically calls for gender disaggregated data to be collected. In output 4.1.2 ZAMCOM is encouraged to consider giving women the lead in micro-finance initiatives.

3. This has been done.

**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

(3/22/2024)

The considerable co-finance and links with other PIDACC Zambezi components is well appreciated.

For component finance considerations, please see comments under 3.1 and especially comments 7, 8, and 9. (there is no need to repeat this here).

Comments addressed - cleared.

## Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

This has been summarized. The table has been replaced by a simple Venn diagram that suggests overlaps and the central position of the GEF project in relation to the other co-financing. More detailed complementarity will be defined during the PPG phase.

### **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

(3/22/2024)

1. Please adhere closer to the PIF guidance in the GEF 8 template. This submission again seems to ignore the change in format, content and length asked for in the GEF 8 template and continues the style and length of GEF 7. Please revisit and revise across the entire PIF.

While length is given as recommendation and there is not a cut off in the portal, please note that the guidance for the background and context is 3 - 5 pages which will aid to provide a better flow and focus on information most relevant to the project.

We will comment in more detail on the section once revised. Below are preliminary comments.

2. Good information that the only about 10 % of run-off reaches the sea BTW- can you please include a reference for this and all numbers). Evaporation especially in the drier part of the basin is a huge factor, but please also provide an overview of the major other uses of water by sector and country.

The same para states that combined water extractions including proposed future abstractions are 24 % during average and 30 % during low flow years. 24 % of what ? Of flows measured where? What are these numbers based on ? Please disaggregate by country and sector. If current and future (?) water uses are quite low, what does that imply ??

3. The section states that climate induced disasters are leading to extinction of some flora and fauna species in some cases. Again, besides being incredibly vague as a statement there is no reference given. Also, what are impacts on people and built assets ?

4. Please provide more up to date numbers on the extend, location and water quality impacts of mining operations. 2008 and 2010 references seem too outdated. Same is true for urbanization. And as a matter of fact for hydropower which a 2005 reference. The World Bank's MSIO and EIAs for the Kariba rehabilitation works maybe other documents to look for more up to date figures. Similarly the impacts of Kariba and Cahora need to be updated and have led to e.g. changes in aquatic biodiversity.

5. Please more clearly describe the state and content of ZAMWIS and the DSS. Both build a base for addressing WEFE nexus dimensions. It also would be important to know who feeds what type of data into ZAMWIS ? Are these real time data or what is frequency? How cross-sectoral is the information in ZAMWIS? And if not, how can a DSS be useful of e.g. dam operations are not included ? **This could be made clearer as it is highly relevant to the project.**

Other sections on the other could be substantially shortened to focus on the context of this project.

6. Please comment more clearly on the Zambezi Strategic Plan and please upload it in the portal at resubmission. Our understanding is that the ZSP is infrastructure heavy and one may wonder if all included investments would be economically, socially and environmentally viable AND a USD 28 billion price tag would not beckon prioritization. Will the WEFE nexus approach aid in this ? and does "implementing WEFE nexus guidelines" mean that scenarios and models will examine the ZSP in that light?

7. Gender is the last para in the background and not mentioned anywhere else in the background; nor any other vulnerable groups. Please resolve in the resubmission.

(5/2/2024)

The substantial revisions of the PIF are well noted and are addressing the comments as per the responses below. Thank you for adding sections on ZAMWIS/the DSS. The challenge to keep within the page limited is noted, but please aim for shorter PIFs in future submissions/other potential projects.

Comments have been addressed. Cleared.

### Agency's Comments

30/4/2024

1. The entire PIF has been re-organized and re-written. effort has been made to make it flow from the rationale to the project design. the rationale tries to tell a story of how the issues are interwoven and interrelated. aspects of gender and private sector engagement are now presented at different sections of the rationale. the reasons for actions are stated in the rationale narrative.

NB: it was a bit difficult to address the queries and request for additional information and at the same time reduce the size of the document. So, the size has reduced slightly from the original submission.

2. The referred to statements have been removed and general water uses have been included. However, these are not per country since such available information is in the Zambezi Environmental Outlook of 2015. we think more up to date information will be obtained during the PPG.

3. The statement has been removed. A more detailed assessment of the impact of climate change on people, the build environment and the ecosystem will be provided at the PPG stage.

4. We have focused in trends and show that this is not a new phenomenon but an issue that is getting worse. we have therefore retained the old references and added later ones to show the growing nature of the problem.

5. A whole section dedicated to the explanation of ZAMWIS/DSS, how it works, its challenges and weaknesses has been added.

6. A whole section on the Zambezi Strategic plan, has also been added together with the explanation that all initiatives in the basin, including the GEF project, are guided by this plan.

7. The paragraph has been removed and the gender issue mainstreamed in the rationale discussions and the project design propositions.

#### **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**

(3/22/2024)

1. Please follow the guidance of the PIF. The Section as written is missing to describe "why this project" and "why this approach". It focusses on previous work, lessons learned and project stakeholders. Good to have these sections in the PIF but not to be the only one under "project justification". Please make the rationale stronger and move the section on project stakeholders somewhere else.

(5/2/2024)

Revisions are noted. Comment addressed.

#### **Agency's Comments**

30/4/2024

1. This section has been removed and replaced by a new one explaining why the project is relevant and why the adopted approach is considered the best.

### **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

(3/22/2024)

1. Please note that the PDO in the ToC differs from the one in the project overview and in fact is more concise here.

2. Please explain and clarify what operationalizing a joint WEFÉ planning and development system means in practice.

3. Please address the issue of needed policy reforms (para 2 of ToC) - the assumption that multi-sector dialogues lead to policy coherence, harmonized laws and adoption of innovative finance is a big leap and missing some fundamental steps in between. Please revisit.

4. The goal of the project to enhance explicitly the cooperation across the dam operators, the departments and ministries of energy and ZRA on the one hand and the ministries of water and ZAMCOM on the other to synchronize dam releases and at the same time maintain environmental environmental flows and would be a major achievement - see earlier comments. This is somewhat buried in the project by formulating the overall outcomes as "implementation of WEFÉ guidelines" which is way too vague and open to interpretation. Please make this much clearer and also address in the ToC clearly what sectors and players on regional and national level (public and private) HAVE to be engaged and how in order to get to this.

5. Pollution hotspots and priority sub-basins agreed. First: please reword to "identified". Pollution hotspots do not need 'agreement', these have objective measures. Second: will and if so "what" will the project do to address them? - see earlier comment under 3.1.

6. Component 4 needs additional thought and clarification on what is expected to be covered by this finance mechanism and some thoughts on what is envisioned. - see earlier comments. Is there something that could be learned from e.g. the Okavango CORB fund idea which will built on the extensive experience of Conservation Trust Funds? any other models that would be relevant? As written in the ToC and the project description this remains all completely vague and open ended which will not aid the project design and cannot stand as is.

7. Please revisit and address comments under 3.1. either there or in more detail in your responses here. (no need for duplication)

8. MoUs with development partners: are these MoUs or you aim to leverage TA and/or investment support e.g. through projects or advisory services? This then seems different to MoUs.

9. Please clarify the difference between dialogues and meetings (Component 1; outcomes 1.3. and 1.4). What is endgame of these?

10. Data-sharing /1.5: agencies/sectors mentioned include hydrology, ecology, environmental ... yet not urban, energy, and agriculture which are major water users and underlying the WEF logic as such. Please include.

11. Component 2: additional basin studies and primary data may be needed to establish eflows - see comment in 3.1. of the review sheet. The complimentary use of eDNA in addition to more traditional ecological assessments will make future surveys and assessments much quicker and cheaper. It is good to see that such innovative methods are being considered which are also simple for sample taking including after short training by communities/citizens and schools.

12. Outcome 2.3: additional e.g. LDCF funds would be needed to design and implement what seems to be envisioned in the INS (Please more clearly describe this system if it remains part of this project) including real time flood and drought early warning. In addition please note that DRM measures are NOT only a technical /modeling exercise but are essentially useless if not couple with community preparedness, resilience and early warning and response planning.

13. Component 3: Pollution - please clarify what the project intends to achieve in more concise terms. It is unclear from the ToC and overview of this stops at the identification stage, creates capacities to detect and enforce, and/or addresses any of the key pollution sources and how. What is within the scope of this project and what would need to be addressed by other investments ?

14. Component 4 - please see earlier comments to clarify the scope of the intended finance and financing models to be explored.

15. Component 5. Please indicatively provide a list of deliverables and approximate timeline. Is there any consideration of e.g. internships from countries to ZAMCOM e.g. for training on the DSS, e-flow methodologies and other inputs. Partnerships with universities in the region could build a useful complement and create a community of practice across the basin. Please clearly indicate that 1 % of the grant will be allocated active participation in IW:LEARN.

We cannot guarantee that we will not raise additional comments after resubmission but hope that a shortened and more focused resubmission will resolve most concerns raised. Please also shorten the project description.

(5/2/2024)

The revisions are well noted and are addressing the comments. Cleared.

### Agency's Comments

30/4/2024

1. The ToC PDO has been adopted. The ToC has been revised and the outputs in the ToC referenced with their respective numbering in the project description.
2. This has been replaced and re-written.
3. This has been replaced and re-written.
4. A new output 1.1.1 has been prepared. it explains the rationale for adopting the WEFE, recommends that a core team be established to lead the process. the composition of the core team includes practitioners from the water, energy, agriculture, and environment sectors. but the exact team set up, its ToR will be defined during the PPG stage.
5. This item has been re-written as 3.1.2. the focus is to identify, prioritize and pilot solution approaches where feasible.
6. The component has been re-written to focus on mobilizing resources for ZAMCOM core operations to limit dependency on country contributions and external project funding. The funds will be needed to support ZAMCOM core functions and sponsoring upstream studies to guide sustainable investments. Mobilization will target contributions for operators in the basin, non-traditional funding sources and also improved engagement with the private sector.
7. This is as addressed in 3.1 above.
8. This is also explained in 3.1 above.
9. the original 1.3 and 1.4 have been merged and elaborated in a new Output 1.1.3: "Multi-sector, multi-stakeholder dialogues are organized and made sustainable". the intention is to have the being stakeholder driven and self-financed so that they become a permanent feature of basin management.
10. This has been changed to reflect WEFE sectors.

11. This has been incorporated in the project design.

12. This output is linked with the CAW project which is targeting this kind of work. exact cooperating arrangements will be worked out in the PPG phase of the project.

13. This has been revised. Pollution is now under a renamed component: COMPONENT 3: "Enhancing transboundary environmental health and climate risk monitoring". under which monitoring and the piloting of remedial measures is promoted.

14. This has been revised completely. See explanation in 6. above.

15. The recommendation has been adopted and is elaborated in the opening section to Component 5. A more detailed ZAMCOM training and knowledge management program will be prepared as a main deliverable.

## **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

(3/22/2024)

The underlying incremental reasoning of the effort is sufficiently clear.

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

30/4/2024

## **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

(3/22/2024)

1. Please list the ZAMCOM counterpart/focal agencies in each country or at minimum provide the rationale who that should be? The ministries of water alone will not be sufficient to bring energy-agriculture-water-urban and environment interests together. Latest during PPG/before endorsement an effective cross-sector focal institutional approach needs to be defined and agreed by the countries.

2. Please answer the question with YES/NO if AfDB will have an execution role. If YES a justification and approval by GEFSEC would need to be sought.

3. The table on the overall set-up of PIDACC Zambezi is a good start but please refine to show how the different efforts are aligned, reinforcing and adding up to a whole and avoiding overlaps and duplication. A clear diagram outlining this complementarity will aid ZAMCOM, countries and development partners to stay aligned.

4. What is the role of the CIF SIP. Does this complement the ZSP? Why a TDA (or SAP) which is mentioned in the project description and could there be a more aligned approach to avoid duplication?

5. Given the complementarity of finance and number of partners supporting the Zambezi basin, please consider supporting an annual/regular Partners Forum for countries and ZAMCOM to report both progress, steps and gaps and for partners to realize and address coordination needs among funding streams.

(5/2/2024)

The additions are helpful to explain the institutional set-up in the basin and across sectors. In addition the additions to show the complementarity with PIDACC, UNCCD support, CAW, and CIFS is very helpful. Noted that a development partner forum will be discussed at PIF stage.

Comments addressed and cleared.

## Agency's Comments

30/4/2024

1. The project will work through the established ZAMCOM system and request that WEFE ministries be engaged. this request will be elaborated in the PPG stage of the project.
2. NO
3. The table has been replaced by a Venn diagram.
4. We think the complementarities of the varying co-finances will be best elaborated during the PPG stage when consultations will be more detailed. We have retained the complementarity in scope at this stage.
5. The coordinating arrangements will be fully defined in the PPG stage. simple suggests have been highlighted in the PIF narrative.

**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

(3/22/2024)

1. Please note that indicators at PIF stage for IW are to be assessed at PIF stage and not end of project stage. Just as example: the participation in IW:LEARN right now should be rated as "1" not "4". please explore across the board.
2. Direct beneficiaries - this is extremely low.
3. Implementing E-flows and pollution control measures: will these lead to improved management of ecosystems ? Please add and estimate additional GEBs on land and BD.

(5/2/2024)

Core indicators have been modified and comments addressed. Cleared

## Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

1. Addressed.
2. This has been increased to 100,000 assuming 1000 beneficiaries in each riparian state.
3. These have been added to the PIF narrative to include benefits in national parks and at the Delta.

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

Secretariat's CommentsNA

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

1. Environmental and Social; List both risks BY the project and TO the project.
2. Political and governance and Execution/stakeholder: has the PIF been discussed and is supported by departments of energy and dam operators ? Else this risk would indeed be HIGH.
3. Execution/fiduciary: what are ZAMCOM 's financial, procurement and other fiduciary capacities? Will the project and/or co-finance assure that solid systems are in place to allow ZAMCOM to successfully administer large sums of funds ?
4. We note that the overall ESS risk of the project is classified as low and AfDB attached preliminary safeguard screening. 1) please consult with the AfDB's Security Department about any potential fragile and conflict-related risks to the most vulnerable communities in the areas by the project implementation, particularly in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. 2) Please also consider conducting additional fragile and conflict assessments and analyses in the areas during PPG, if appropriate. Also, the Environmental and Social Risk in the Key Risk section of the portal said ?Moderate? risk. 3) Please make these risks consistent with overall ESS risk.

(5/2/2024)

The comments have been addressed.

The addition in the climate section that fragile contexts in the basin will be further assessed during PPG is noted.

It is also understood why the ES rating of the Bank rates the project as low (which we agree with) as this focusses on the potential risks of the project with regards to environmental and social impacts which are overall considered as positively contributing and/or minor.

The risk rating in the risk table differs as it in addition captures the risks TO the the success of certain aspects of the project which here captures and addresses the risk by e.g. polluters incl industry and municipalities to agree on the impacts or their emissions and remediation needs. This is reasonable and explains the PIF level risk as being seen as "moderate" (and not low).

Comments addressed and cleared.

### Agency's Comments

1. This has been done.
2. The concept note was shared with the Council of Ministers who took it back to their respective governments. The subsequent issuance of LoEs by all eight riparian states indicate high political buy-in.
3. The ZAMSEC has been managing donor funds since 2011 without any challenges. Fiduciary challenges are not expected for the GEF project which is small by comparison.
4. The project has been discussed with Bank departments who also recommend more detailed assessment during the PPG.

### 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

(3/22/2024) The project aim at integrated planning and management of the basin across sectors. Establishment of basin e-flows will form an input into modifying dam releases and cross-sector costs and benefits. This could vastly enhance benefits and sustainability across sectors. The project has the potential to be transformative and aided by a large group of development partners and co-finance.

Cleared.

Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

Agreed.

**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(3/22/2024) Yes.

Agency's Comments

**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(3/22/2024) Yes.

Agency's Comments

**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(3/22/2024) Yes.

Agency's Comments

## 7 D. Policy Requirements

### 7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments(3/22/2024) Yes

### Agency's Comments

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

### Secretariat's Comments

(3/22/2024) yes, but please comment on the apparent lack of counterparts from side of the dam operators and ministries of energy.

(5/2/2024)

Explanation noted and agreed. Also noted is the new annex with the stakeholders consulted.

Comment addressed and cleared.

### Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

Through ZAMCOM the project has been presented to the Zambezi Dam Operators Joint Operations Technical Committee Joint Operations Technical Committee (JOTC). Further and more detailed discussions are planned during the PPG stage. Also, the project has political buy-in from the Council of ministers and has been discussed in each of the riparian states' governments where the ministers of energy are represented. This explains why eight LoEs were received.

## 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

(3/22/2024)

1. Please instead of 'Africa' include 'Regional' in the **GEF Financing and PPG Tables.**

(5/2/2024)

**Comment addressed.**

Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

1. done

**Focal Area allocation?**

Secretariat's Comments(3/22/2024) Yes.

Agency's Comments

**LDCF under the principle of equitable access?**

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

**SCCF A (SIDS)?**

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments  
**Focal Area Set Aside?**

Secretariat's Comments NA

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 (3/22/2024) yes

Agency's Comments

**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  
(3/22/2024)

1. Please add additional detail on the investments mobilized sources of finance.

(5/2/2024)

This has been done and in fact detailed information and a diagram on the substantial co-finance provided.

Cleared.

Agency's Comments  
**Annex B: Endorsements**

**8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country? (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



(3/22/2024) Please submit missing LOEs.

(5/2/2024)

The LOEs from Angola (incl today's revised one) and Tanzania are well noted.

Cleared.

Agency's Comments1. done

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

Secretariat's Comments(3/22/2024) Yes, the ones that have been submitted have been uploaded (6 out of 8)

Agency's Commentsthe last two have been added.

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

Secretariat's Comments

(3/22/2024)

1. The LoE template used Malawi removed the footnote that conditions the selection of the executing partner to the following: *?Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate?.* Agencies were informed that LoEs *?with modifications cannot be accepted and will be returned?.* While the removal of the footnote seems to be trivial, it is not: this footnote reduces the chances of having an executing partner that does not meet the fiduciary and procurement standards required to safely execute the project. Please get an email from the OFP accepting this footnote to be part of the LoE (this is an alternative to request a new LoE).

(5/2/2024)

A revised LOE for Malawi has been submitted and uploaded in the portal.

Comment addressed.

Agency's Comments This has been addressed.

**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 NA

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

(3/22/2024) Please provide geo-coordinates in addition to the map.

(5/2/2024)

Noted. Cleared.

Agency's Comments

4/30/2024

These have been added

**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 (3/22/2024) Yes.

Agency's Comments

**Annex E: Rio Markers**

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

Secretariat's Comments(3/22/2024) Yes.

Agency's Comments

**Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet**

**8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?**

Secretariat's Comments(3/22/2024) Yes.

Agency's Comments

**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 CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

**9 GEFSEC Decision**

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

Secretariat's Comments

(3/22/2024) The project has the potential to make a significant contribution to cross-sector and cross-country sustainable basin-management while assuring the conservation of world-class ecosystems which are also an important base of tourism income in some of the countries.

Please address the comments and revise the project including aligning the PIF with GEF 8 guidance (including to please reduce length) and providing a clearer scope and possibly more focused design.

(5/2/2024) Yes, the PIF has been revised with attention to detail and all comments have been addressed. The close cooperation with development partners leveraging substantial co-finance and cooperation with the UNCCD secretariat is commendable. The project is technically cleared and recommended for a future work program.

**Agency's Comments**

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

**Secretariat's Comments** Please see comments in the gender section to be addressed during project design and implementation.

**Agency's Comments**

**Review Dates**

	<b>PIF Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>3/23/2024</b>	<b>4/30/2024</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/2/2024</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		