Transformation Approach to Large Scale Investment in Support of the Implementation of the Great Green Wall (TALSIG)

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID
11465
Countries
Regional
Project Name
Transformation Approach to Large Scale Investment in Support of the Implementation of the Great Green Wall (TALSIG)
Agencies
UNEP
Date received by PM
6/20/2025
Review completed by PM

Program Manager
Jean-Marc Sinnassamy
Focal Area
Land Degradation
Project Type
FSP

CEO

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

- You should avoid bringing modifications without justifying them or highlighting them - we may miss some problems that the Control Quality will find afterwards, adding delays in the review process.

- This project is financed by the LD set aside and report under the LD1 Objective. In the General Project information, we do not know why you change this LD project into a Multi-Focal Area Project (check focal areas) and a Multi-Trust Fund Project (check Type of Trust fund). Please, correct.

- Project Sector (CCM Only): as this item is formulated, it is only when there are CCM resources that this item should be filled in: remove the text "Climate Change Adaptation Sector".

- On the project information: Please request the agency to remove the two empty executing partners

Project Executing Entity(s):	UNEP Biodiversity People and Landscapes Unit	**Project Executing Type:**	GEF Agency
	- PANAFRICAN AGENCY OF THE GGW - NATIONAL GGW AGENCIES		Government
			Private Sector
			Donor Agency

July 17, 2025

General Project Information

- Please, confirm the executing partners. Only BPLU is mentioned in the table, while in the budget, there is mention of PAGG and ?other partners?. To be clarified.

- Even is UNEP is both an implementing and executing agency, we are expecting partnerships with international, regional, or sub-regional partners, based on their comparative advantage. To be revised.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

Thank you for the comment. We take note of this and will ensure that any modifications are clearly justified and highlighted to avoid issues during the quality control process and prevent delays in the review.

a) The erroneous info captured at PIF stage Fields have been now updated as requested by the reviewer:

? Update Type of Trust Fund = GET

? GEF Focal Area = Land Degradation

b) "Climate Change Adaptation Sector" Information has been removed in the portal as requested

c) Thank you for the comment. Information on the private sector and the other executing partners has now been provided. The two empty executing partner fields resulted from an oversight in properly saving the information during the previous submission.

November /17/2025

The executing partners have now been Added. Ref: Project information page and in Section on Institutional Arrangement.

The project implementation arrangement section has now been amended and executing partners are included and their role clarified. Ref: Project information page and in Section on Institutional Arrangement.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 21, 2025

Addressed.

July 17, 2025

Rio Markers

? Please, justify your selection for Biodiversity as principal objective, Land Degradation as significant objective, and no contribution to CCM and CCA?

? This choice seems difficult to understand for a programmatic approach targeting sustainable land management and restoration and also financed by the LDCF for adaptation.

? As a reminder the word ?adaptation? is present 82 times in the CEO endorsement request, climate 154 times, climate change 48 times, land 169 times, land degradation 32 times. Please, revise.

Agency Response

November /17/2025

The Rio Markers table has now been corrected to reflect the main project contribution and significance. Ref: Project information Table.

2. Project Summary.

a) 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 outcomes?

b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?
c) [If a child project under a program] Does the project summary include adequate and substantive link with the parent program goal and approach?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

Addressed, but we made some comments that may be reflected in the summary at the end (women, youth, IPLC, farmer organizations, risks, partnerships...).

July 17, 2025

Project Summary

? The summary is four times the requested length. We suggest reducing the summary and focusing on explaining the ambition and contents of this regional project.

? The first half of the summary is mainly general and can be shortened.

? There are elements in the summary that are not reflected in the project document. You need to explain and probably modify: for instance you mention FAO, WB, GCF, IUCN, among the partners of the GGW, but none of these partners are included in this project or have provided letters of cofinancing.

? The summary will need to be updated after review and adjustment of this regional coordination project.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

A new paragraph has been added to the Summary, following the third paragraph, to explicitly address risks, partnerships with farmer organizations, CSOs, and IPLCs, as well as the project?s focus on empowering women and youth.

November /17/2025

The summary has been redone. It now identifies the problem and issues to be addressed, the project objective, how

the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved, what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits are and other key expected results.

3. Project Description Overview
a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?
b) [If a child project under a program] Is there a project Theory of Change that is aligned and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?
c) 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?
d) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?

e) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?
f) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 21, 2025

- KM are under 3%; this the range for a project grant (minus pmc) between 5 and 6 million US.

- pmc are just under 5% ($339,132 vs. $340,019)

- All other points are also addressed. Thanks for the efforts.

July 17, 2025

Project Description Overview

? We note recognition of the complex vulnerability of the GGW region, however the document in its current state provides limited detailed evidence to substantiate this strong vulnerability. We suggest incorporating more robust quantitative data, specific regional vulnerability indicators, and concrete case-based evidence would significantly strengthen its adaptation rationale.

? Reference vulnerability assessments or climate studies specific to the Sahel such as IPCC reports, FAO/CILSS analyses, UNEP vulnerability assessments, ND-GAIN Index including metrics such as frequency and intensity of drought event, land degradation, economic losses due to climate extremes etc, would be useful.

? Also, please, include information on impacts of climate hazards on vulnerable groups (women, youth and internally displaced persons, IDPs...).

? There is a caucus on gender at UNCCD. And since the last UNCCD COP, there is one on Indigenous People, and another one on Indigenous People. The caucus on gender will be instrumental in implementing the UNCCD Gender Action Plan (2017) and the Gender Equality Policy and Plan (2024-2030). This project, however, completely missed the gender and IPLC aspects. These aspects need to be integrated in every component in the formulation of outcomes and outputs and reflected in the nature of actions and activities. Please, revise. Please, do the same with IPLC and the youth.

? Pmc

Agency Response

November /17/2025

Vulnerability context: complexity, volatility, insecurity, and uncertainty

Nine new paragraphs have been added to the Project Rationale chapter, providing in-depth analysis of Sahel vulnerability and describing climate change as a "threat multiplier" that exacerbates environmental, social, and economic challenges. Seventeen references have been added, including IPCC AR6 WGII, FAO/CILSS analyses, UNEP vulnerability assessments, and IOM displacement data, with specific projections showing 20-40% crop yield losses by 2050 under RCP8.5. Particular emphasis has been placed on women's vulnerability, noting that women are responsible for up to 80% of household food production yet face systemic barriers in land ownership (only ~10% in rural Niger), and vulnerability aspects have been systematically captured in Table 3: "Baselines, Key Barriers, Enablers and Outcomes."

Quantitative data and regional vulnerability indicators

ND-GAIN Country Index data has been provided for all nine GGW countries with specific vulnerability scores, readiness scores, and global rankings (see Table), revealing that all countries rank in the bottom third globally (ranks 133-187 out of 187) with a regional average score of 36.4, well below the global average of ~49. Chad has been identified as the second most vulnerable country worldwide (rank 187, score 25.0), and specific vulnerability indicators have been integrated including drought frequency (events every 2-3 years in Chad, Niger, Mali), land degradation (80% of agricultural land affected), food insecurity (over 30 million people in IPC Phase 3+), economic losses (USD 1.5-2.5 billion annually), water scarcity (Lake Chad shrunk 90% since 1960s), and displacement (5.5 million IDPs across Sahel).

ND-GAIN Index with specific indicators

A complete ND-GAIN table has been added showing all nine countries with ranks, scores, vulnerability status, readiness status, and income groups, with methodology explained to show how it measures vulnerability across six life-supporting sectors (food, water, health, ecosystems, habitat, infrastructure) and readiness (economic, governance, and social capacity). Specific indicators have been integrated including drought risk, land degradation, food insecurity, economic losses, gender disparities (women own <15% of land), IDP figures (5.5 million displaced, 2.1 million in Burkina Faso alone), and IPLC knowledge systems. An interpretive paragraph has been added explaining that the extreme vulnerability revealed by ND-GAIN scores validates the need for transnational cooperation, harmonized policies, shared knowledge platforms, and sustained institutional strengthening through this Regional Coordination Project.

Concrete national case-based evidence

Country-specific evidence has been provided from IPCC, FAO/CILSS, UNEP, and IOM for Niger (3.6 million needing food assistance in 2021, only ~10% of women owning land), Burkina Faso (2.1 million IDPs from climate-conflict nexus), Chad (Lake Chad shrunk 90% since 1960s, women walking longer distances for water), and Mali (rank 169, recurrent droughts every 2-3 years). Regional evidence includes IPCC AR6 WGII findings that "Women in the Sahel face compounded risks due to social constraints on land, decision-making, and mobility," projections of 20-40% crop yield losses by 2050, and documentation that 18 million people were affected by the 2021-2022 drought.

Gender, IPLC, and Youth aspects

Two new paragraphs have been added focusing specifically on gender dimensions of climate vulnerability and land degradation, systematically presenting ten categories of gender needs from secure land tenure to intersectional approaches, and emphasizing that women face systemic barriers despite their central role in agriculture and natural resource management. IPLC integration has been strengthened through reference to the UNCCD COP15 (2022, Abidjan) Indigenous Peoples' Caucus and Gender Caucus mandated to co-lead implementation of the Gender and Social Inclusion Framework, with IPLC safeguards embedded in the GEF Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (2024-2030). Youth vulnerability has been addressed with data showing 64.5% of the Sahel population is below 25 years, facing unemployment exacerbated by environmental degradation and migration pressures, while IDP data (5.5 million+ across Sahel, with women and children disproportionately affected) has been integrated throughout the vulnerability analysis.

Gender, IPLC, and Youth integration in project components

The project outcomes have been reformulated to integrate gender-responsive targets across all four components, with specific goals for women's participation (53.6% of beneficiaries), women's leadership in governance platforms, and women's access to climate-resilient livelihoods (see Theory of Change and Results Framework). The outputs have been reformulated to specify gender-sensitive deliverables including joint land titling, quotas in governance platforms, tailored training for women and youth, gender-responsive early warning systems, and women-led enterprise development (see Theory of Change and Results Framework). The actions and activities have been reformulated to embed gender mainstreaming throughout implementation, with specific interventions targeting women's empowerment (secure land tenure, access to finance, capacity building), youth engagement (employment opportunities, skills training), and IPLC inclusion (recognition of traditional knowledge, participatory decision-making), while the Theory of Change positions gender equality and social inclusion as cross-cutting enablers with causal pathways showing how addressing gender barriers leads to more effective restoration and sustainable development outcomes (see Theory of Change and Results Framework).

4. Project Outline
A. Project Rationale
a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?
b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?
c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

- Not a big deal, but the character format is very big and in bold for the version for circulation.

- On stakeholder engagement: It is well noted that agency has now provided a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). Please, however, ask agency to provide further on the roles of the different stakeholders related to project components and outputs as well as details on the approach, timing and means of engagement all project key stakeholder groups and organizations in project implementation.

- To reinforce the point below, we met several partners at the UNCCD CRIC23 (WOCAT, GEO-LDN, OSS, Birdlife). They do not seem informed about this regional project meanwhile they took part in several preparation meetings. Please, clarify whether these partners were associated in the project design and if they are empowered in the project execution. As said in several items, we would like to see long-term partner involved in the execution of this project. Please revise and reflect the changes in the project arrangements and the budget.

July 17, 2025

Project outlines

Global Environment Problems

? The project rationale need to be revised. There is a mix of information from different sources in too many directions that make the text difficult to understand.

? The project analysis (and then the result framework, the activities, and the budget) missed drought. You need to revise the reasoning and include drought. In the result framework, it is probably in the output "conduct policy analysis and identify areas where policy reforms is necessary to support the Great Green Wall Initiative". Further, the activity needs to be expanded so that it looks into policy coherence. The GCP project needs to support countries in analyzing and aligning their national drought plans and related policies with the GGWI. In order to do that the GCP needs a solid budget line of at least $500,000 (not like $100,000 as is now proposed).

Stakeholders

? The result framework looks at the same time ambitious and vague. For each component, we would like to see anchorage in existing initiatives and partnerships either at the scale of UNCCD or Africa or the sub-region.

For instance, we would like to see eventual roles and partnerships with UNCCD supported iniatives, as the following:

- o WOCAT, who is the official depository and partner on SLM technologies,
- o Economics of Land Degradation (ELD), see the recent Economics of Drought report? presented at the COP16 and their work on restoration.
- o See the work from the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) on ?the Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils? (VACS)
- o See possible connections with the International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA), its Observatory, and their atlas: Drought is not addressed in the Program and this regional project. It is just not possible anymore to finance a programmatic approach on Land Degradation in Sub-Saharan Africa without including drought issues and drought smart actions. Please, revise (beyond the output 3.2.2 that integrates drought and climate risks aspects).
- o GEO-LDN: on satellite data, mapping, and GIS. Please contact them.

Your current discussions with the accelerator may help you to move forward these UNCCD-related aspects.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

? Thank you for the comment. Efforts have been made to improve the quality and formatting of the document prepared for circulation during the document upload process.

? The roles the different stakeholders have now been include in the project design. Ref: (i) Implementation and Execution Arrangements (ii) Stakeholder roles and engagement and (iii) Project?s components, outcomes, outputs and activities, Sub-sections.

? We acknowledge that WOCAT has not been involved in the process but WOCAT tolls and resources have been exploited and use in the design as the platform is public and serve as UNCCD Global good practices platform. However, the Africa branch of WOCAT recently created will be fully engage in the implementation of the project particularly as it has been created under AU-NEPAD which is an AU entity. As the AU Commission through the department of environment has been fully engaged in the process, the collaboration with the AfrOCAT will strengthen this collaboration. However, Birdlife International and OSS cannot claim to not be aware of the process as they have invited and participated in more than regional meeting of the program. The lack of inclusion of these two institutions is due to the fact that instead of collaborating to develop a robust common program, they decided to develop their own programme titled: ?Integrator Program? in collaboration with UNDP.

November /17/2025

The project rational has been completely revised. It now (i) describes the current situation in the Sahel; (ii) develops narratives of how an uncertain future could unfold, based on an understanding of trends and interactions between the key elements of the system and its drivers; (iii) barriers to achieving transformative change; (iv) key enablers for transformative change; (v) why TALSIG is best suited to catalyze change and stakeholder roles to make this happen; (vi) baseline projects and linkages; and (vii) the incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline. This aligns with the UNEP guidance for developing project overview.

Drought has been comprehensively integrated throughout the project document with 35 occurrences across the Project Rationale, Result Framework, activities, and monitoring systems. In the Project Rationale, drought is addressed through four key paragraphs describing persistent droughts as drivers of desertification, projections of more frequent and intense droughts leading to food insecurity and displacement, intensified droughts with crop yield losses of 20-40% by 2050, and country-specific evidence of recurrent droughts in Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali affecting millions of people. The ND-GAIN Country Index explicitly includes drought risk as a key vulnerability indicator, and six literature references focusing on drought have been integrated, including IPCC AR6 WGII projections, FAO/CILSS food security analyses, and UNEP water scarcity assessments. In the Result Framework, drought is explicitly addressed in Output 3.1.1 (training programs on National Drought Plans), Output 3.1.3 (multi-country policy analysis on climate threats including drought, floods, etc.), and Output 3.2.2 (gender-responsive climate and drought risks assessment system for reporting droughts, floods, and disease outbreaks). Activities under Output 3.1.3 include elaborating comprehensive guidelines for alignment of National Drought Plans (NDPs) with NAPs, NDCs, NBSAPs, and other national strategies, while activities under Output 3.2.2 supports learning from UNCCD Drought Initiative to support participating countries to develop National Drought Plans (NDP) with due consideration of the GGW initiative.

The activities under Output 3.1.1 have been expanded to explicitly address policy coherence, with the Regional Coordination Project now mandated to support countries in analyzing and aligning their National Drought Plans (NDPs) with the Great Green Wall Initiative and other national strategies.

A budget line, as recommended, is now included in the budget to support NDP

Result Framework revised:

Annex C fully revised

Aligned with activities (revised) in chapter project description

Anchorage and links with existing initiatives and partnerships (UNCCD or Africa or the sub-region) better detailed and explained

WOCAT, Economics of Land Degradation (ELD), Science-Policy Interface (SPI), International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) and GEO-LDN:

Now integrated fully in chapter ?Role of relevant stakeholders, private sector and local actors?.

WOCAT has been operationalized in Output 1.1.1 through a dedicated activity to access the WOCAT database of proven SLM technologies, facilitate knowledge exchange with WOCAT network members, support national child projects in adapting WOCAT-documented practices (water harvesting, agroforestry, soil conservation) to local contexts, and contribute GGW implementation experiences back to the global knowledge base, with additional references to WOCAT-based evidence integrated into policy revision and regional strategy development activities.

The Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) has been operationalized in Output 3.1.3 through a dedicated activity to conduct economic analysis using the 'Economics of Drought' methodology, providing cost-benefit evidence to inform policy reforms and resource mobilization (Output 3.1.4), while the International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) has been integrated into Outputs 3.1.1, 3.2.2, and Outcome 3.2 through activities to access the Drought Observatory for real-time monitoring, engage IDRA experts for National Drought Plan development, contribute GGW data to the IDRA Resilience Atlas, and participate in IDRA knowledge-sharing platforms, directly addressing the concern that 'drought is not addressed in the Program' by embedding drought-smart actions and proven IDRA tools throughout Component 3.

The UNCCD Science-Policy Interface (SPI) ?Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS)' has been operationalized in Component 1 (Output 1.1.2) through a dedicated activity to identify and promote climate-resilient, locally adapted crop varieties and soil management practices recommended by VACS for Sahelian agroecological zones, facilitate knowledge exchange between SPI experts and GGW technical teams on soil health assessment and crop-soil-livestock integration, and integrate VACS principles into participatory land use planning and restoration mapping, while Component 2 (Output 2.1.1) has been enhanced to develop value chains for VACS-recommended crops (drought-tolerant cereals, indigenous vegetables, nitrogen-fixing legumes) with specific activities for processing, market linkages, branding, and business development support to women-led enterprises, ensuring that both restoration efforts and livelihood interventions are scientifically grounded in VACS principles and contribute to ecosystem recovery and sustainable agricultural productivity.

Formal partnership with the Group on Earth Observations - Land Degradation Neutrality (GEO-LDN) will be established and operationalized in Component 4 (Outputs 4.1.1, 4.1.3, and 4.1.4) through a dedicated activity to access satellite-based monitoring, GIS tools, and high-resolution geospatial data for baseline assessment and progress tracking, with specific actions to: (1) establish a data-sharing agreement and technical support mechanism for accessing satellite imagery and remote sensing products, (2) integrate GEO-LDN geospatial data into the regional Knowledge Management System and M&E framework to track restoration progress, land productivity trends, and carbon stock changes with high spatial and temporal resolution, (3) build capacity of national child project teams in using GEO-LDN tools and interpreting satellite data for adaptive management and reporting to UNCCD PRAIS platform, and (4) collaborate with GEO-LDN on ground-truthing protocols remote sensing data with field observations, ensuring accuracy and credibility of reported results, thereby operationalizing cutting-edge geospatial technologies for evidence-based monitoring and reporting of GGW outcomes.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?

b) [If a child project under a program] Is the Theory of change aligned with and consistent with the overall program goal and approach?

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? [If a child project under a program] Does the description include how the alternative aligns with and contributes to the overall program goal and approach?

d) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

e) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?

f) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?

g) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?

h) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this FSP/MSP)?

i) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?

j) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and description/s?

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

l) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?

m) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? [If a child project under an integrated program] Are the specific levers of transformation identified and described? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

- Thanks for the improvements. In coherence with observations made above, two aspects may be lacking in the result framework and potential partnerships: 1) connection with farmer organizations and their regional networks and 2) ecosystem services provided by wetlands (food security, biomass, resilience, water..).

July 17, 2025

Project Description

? A better description of problems (requested above) should help a more streamlined reasoning, a better Theory of Change, and a result framework more adapted to the purpose of this project: coordination of eight country projects and knowledge generation and management. it is not clear if the intent is to develop a project for the whole Great Green Wall Initiative or if it is a coordination project as part of a programmatic approach. To be revised.

<u>Baseline situation</u>

Lessons

- After three GEF cycles supporting countries and the sub-regions on SLM and the GGW, after several MSPs to enhance the scientific aspects of SLM, or to support the PanaAfrican Agency, we would have expected a deep analysis of the past and on-going portfolio. Please, clarify the work done to identify applicable lessons from the portfolio.
- Before the GGW, countries as Burkina Faso tested programmatic approaches as the CPP; Niger developed strategic approaches covering several regions from the South (Maradi, Zinder, Diffa); Chad tested restoration methods at scale; Ethiopia developed successful SLMP1, SLMP2. Several countries were part of the Resilient Food Systems Pilot Program.
- We are expecting an elaborated analysis of lessons and best practices, especially on how to position such regional project.

<u>Result framework</u>

- The main purpose of this project is to support regional collaboration and knowledge exchange. However, the way to do this is unclear, as the budget connected to the expected activities. Please, revise.

- The list of activities looks like a draft document and need to be completed. Please, ensure a logical flow of activities in coherence across the components.

- Certain activities are overlapping (see private sector and resource mobilization capacity building). Please streamline or differentiate for clarity and efficiency. To be revised.

- We note that specific adaptation interventions (through LDCF resources) are envisaged in selected countries, however it would be useful to demonstrate how the regional project would explicitly track climate adaptation outcomes. Please, clarify.

- We will need to review all outputs and activities related to coordination, knowledge management, and policy coherence, once the ToC will have been changed and the result framework significantly updated.

Component 1

? Output 1.1.1: the list of activities needs to be revised.

o The role and action of the regional project is not to substitute the child projects or to invest in field activities in the considered countries. You need to rethink the added value of the regional project and its role at regional level.

o The formulation of some activities is too vague: ?promote the sustainable use of water resources?, ?Design integrated agro-sylvo pastoral management systems, ?promote the use of renewable energy??

? Output 1.1.3: Please reformulate this output and clarify the intention: ?Stakeholder capacity for promoting community-based natural resource management systems that ensure the equitable distribution of benefits and encourage the sustainable use of natural resources?.

o See also the list of activities: is the intention to do this work in all countries? It does not seem very plausible. Please, clarify and revise.

Component 2

? The component 2 on the private sector seems laudable. However, the precedent large scale operation with the private sector was undertaken by the LDN fund. About two dozen of small scale and medium enterprises were selected, but none of them was able to go through the screening process and no enterprise finally received the support from the LDN Fund. You need to better explain the baseline situation and eventually the role of cofinancing to make this component credible.

? Output 2.1.3: Please, revise the formulation and provide an output more specific, measurable, and better defined: ?Public-Private Partnerships to enhance sustainable natural resource management and value-chain development for NWFPs *Facilitated*?.

? Based on the GEF experience, if the main partners and the kinds of transactions are not identified at the stage of CEO endorsement, the design of PPP is not credible. To be revised.

Component 3

? **Output 3.1.1**: Training programs on technical, adaptation, policy, and communication aspects of GGWI to build stakeholders capacity. developed and delivered.

o Under this output 3.1.1, there is an activity named "conduct policy analysis and identify areas where policy reforms is necessary to support the Great Green Wall Initiative". In the current result framework, it is probable the most appropriate item to support countries in analyzing and aligning their national drought plans and related policies with the GGWI. In order to do that the GCP needs a solid budget line of at least $500,000 (not like $100,000 as is now proposed).

o Several activities may be developed under this component to reinforce the policy coherence aspects. Please, revise.

Output 3.1.4: Resource mobilization mechanisms established: please explain how this regional project will be in position to influence and support the creation of Resource Mobilization and partnership mechanisms, whatever it means.

Cofinancing

? Please, confirm that the cofinancing from countries is not already included in the child project (double counting).

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

Farmers and pastoralists organization consideration in the project framework is now included in the project framework. Ref: Annex C: Project Framework

Addressing challenges of wetlands in providing relevant ecosystem services has been addressed in the project results framework (see core indicator 3 and core indicator 1).

A paragraph has been created under the project rationale describing the current state of ?*Wetland ecosystem services in the Sahel region*?. This explores the topic for countries of the TALSIG project and serve as a baseline understanding of major challenges and trends on ecosystem services provided by wetlands in the region.

November /17/2025

The Theory of Change has been comprehensively revised to clearly articulate TALSIG's role as a regional coordination and knowledge management project, distinct from the nine national child projects that directly implement land restoration, biodiversity conservation, and livelihood activities on the ground. The revised ToC follows a structured causal pathway from the core problem (regional coordination gap) through eight barriers and eight strategic levers implemented across four components (see Annex M on the theory oc change causal pathways and a component-by-component analysis of tasks towards achieving change for TALSIG and child projects), explicitly showing that TALSIG coordinates, harmonizes policies, generates knowledge, builds institutional capacity, and aggregates regional-scale results.

The results framework has been completely overhauled, with SMART indicators and a better alignment with the project design.

An elaborated analysis has been developed for the baseline situation and related lessons learned. See ?***Baseline projects and linkages to the TALSI***G?. Besides the descriptive narrative in this section, there is a table which identifies the specific lessons learned from specific projects/programs and how they are incorporated into the TALSIG project design.

Component 4 explicitly details regional collaboration and knowledge exchange mechanisms through four outputs (KMS, coordination platforms, M&E, RBM/RBF); budget-activity alignment matrix provided in Annex G showing allocation across activities.

Besides the content revision of activities, all activities have been consecutively numbered (1.1.1.1, 1.1.1.2, etc.), shortened to 1-2 sentences each, and logically sequenced across all four components to ensure coherence and clarity.

The entire Components, Outcomes, Outputs, and Activities section has been comprehensively redone to align with the project's newly developed Theory of Change, which clearly articulates TALSIG's role as a regional coordination project (not a direct implementation project) addressing eight critical barriers through eight strategic levers implemented across four components. All outputs and activities have been restructured with consecutive numbering, clarity, and explicitly linked to the Theory of Change's causal pathway showing how TALSIG coordinates, harmonizes policies, generates knowledge, and builds capacity to enable nine national child projects to implement more effectively. The revised structure ensures logical flow across components, eliminates overlapping activities through clear differentiation of roles (e.g., private sector engagement in Component 2 focuses on value chain PPPs while resource mobilization in Component 3 focuses on innovative financing mechanisms), integrates UNCCD partnerships (WOCAT, ELD, IDRA, SPI/VACS, GEO-LDN) operationally, and includes explicit climate adaptation tracking mechanisms with specific indicators for LDCF-funded interventions.

In relation to the overlap, Component 2 private sector activities now focus specifically on NTFP value chain PPPs, while Component 3 resource mobilization activities focus on innovative financing mechanisms; clear differentiation established throughout.

The revised Output 4.1.3 includes explicit climate adaptation tracking mechanisms with specific indicators for LDCF-funded interventions integrated into the regional Knowledge Management System and M&E framework.

All outputs and activities related to coordination, knowledge management and policy coherence have been revised. In the same vein, the theory of change has been completely revised and the revision of the outputs and activities has been made to align to this revised theory of change and project logic.

All Component 1 outputs have been revised to explicitly clarify that TALSIG provides regional coordination, technical assistance, and standardized tools while national child projects implement field activities.

The revised Component 2 description now includes comprehensive baseline situation detailing six specific challenges (funding, R&D, market knowledge, regulations, taxation, market access) and explicitly states co-financing role in addressing barriers. It cites work done during the PPG to understand the baseline conditions of small- and medium-scale NTFP enterprises in moving beyond the raw material stage of value chain development (including challenges faced by women).

Output 2.1.3 has been revised to specify development of three distinct gender-responsive PPP models with clear deliverables, measurable targets, and specific partnership structures for NTFP value chains.

Output 2.1.3 activities now explicitly identify specific partner types (private sector enterprises, women-led cooperatives, microfinance institutions) and transaction types (equity investments, concessional loans, technical assistance grants).

Output 3.1.1 has been comprehensively revised with detailed description and five specific activities covering training needs assessment, NDP development support, guidelines elaboration, training modules, and M&E systems.

A budget line, as recommended, is now included in the budget to support NDP

Output 3.1.3 has been added with comprehensive description and three specific activities addressing multi-country policy analysis, participative strategy building, and ELD-based economic analysis for policy coherence.

Output 3.1.4 description now explains innovative local financing mechanisms piloted in Senegal, Niger, and Chad; six detailed activities specify mechanism design, implementation, and scaling approaches.

We confirm that care has been taken to ensure that the components of co-financing allocated to country projects is not included in the regional project

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project
a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?
b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?
c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).
d) [If a child project under an integrated program] Does the framework for coordination and collaboration demonstrate consistency with overall ambition of the program for transformative change?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

Thanks for the significant improvements.There are still pending questions:

- We welcome the budget decrease for staff. We welcome partnership with WOCAT, UNCCD/GGW Accelerator, private sector, and existing KM initiatives with FAO and CIFOR-ICRAF. You may have included IFAD who is developing a $10 million KM project with LDCF resources. Please, complete.

- You mention as "other key partners" institutions as OSS and the World Bank. It is a reminder of the first GEF support to the GGWI with the GEF5 SAWAP developed by the World Bank. There is certainly no obligation to work with the same partners, but it seems that organizations as OSS, CILSS, Agrhymet as a CILSS's specialized Agency, or even IUCN could have been involved and/or empowered. Please, clarify.

- Some NGOs are mentioned. We urged UNEP to develop operational partnerships with NGO and avoid criticisms of top-down approaches and the lack of civil society. Farmer organizations and their networks may appear as natural partners (ROPPA for instance), as well as women and youth representatives. Please, complete.

- Another element is missing: during the PFD preparation and the successive meetings, new topics were raised, as new partners, as Wetlands International and BirdLife who highlighted the importance of wetlands both for biodiversity, ecosystem services, and transboundary collaboration. Innovative aspects related to wetlands that are often ignored were highlighted (food security for instance). These elements have completely disappeared in the diagnosis and the reasoning. Please, correct.

July 17, 2025

Institutional arrangements

? We are having difficulties figuring out how the proposed arrangements are going to support the coordination of eight projects and provide added value to generate knowledge, synergies.

? We are not seeing how UNEP can work alone with the Panafrican Agency for the Great Green Wall. A deep analysis of active political, institutional, and technical stakeholders is missing. Once the project document will have been revised, you will need to adjust the project arrangements ? better reflecting the partnership approach we can expect in such regional initiatives.

? UNEP is leading several GEF programs, including Integrated Programs. We would recommend being inspired on the frameworks UNEP already developed. See for instance the Congo IP, with institutional connections with regional entities (ECCAS, COMIFAC) and technical partnerships on key issues (WCS, ARRC task force, US Forest Service, REPALEAC, etc).

? The value for money is not there, especially if there are not mobilized investments to join the coordination work. If the GEF is the only financier in cash, you even need to develop more partnerships to counterbalance this situation: using 40% of the budget for UNEP staff cannot happen.

? The proposed arrangements and the budget show discrepancies. To be corrected when the project will have been revised.

? There is a mention of COMIFAC and ECCAS that reflects either an uncomplete analysis of regional economic bodies along the GGW area or a mistake: please clarify.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

? IFAD : Now completed as per the guidance. Ref: Stakeholder roles and engagement sub-section

•? We can confirm that OSS, Agrhymet/CILSS have been fully involved in the project design and participated in the inception workshop in Mauritania, the validation workshop in Bamako, Mali and in Niamey Niger programme framework validation. OSS, Agrhymet, IRD and ICRAF develop a common engagement framework in Bamako and this is will the basis for engagement of these institutions during implementation. IUCN, like all other GEF Implementing Agencies have been convened to all the workshop but only IFAD participated as global level at Lome

Workshop and UNDP, FAO were represented in some meetings by their local offices. UNEP will continue to engage with all these partners during implementation.

•? During the Lom? Programme Validation meeting a specific NGO working group has been put in place which made reflexion on their possible role in the program implementation. The same approach has been used with other stakeholders. The recommendation of these working groups will be used as entry points in engaging the NGO in the project taken into consideration that the national ONG have been encouraged to work with the National Great Green Wall Agencies. The child projects reflect the engagement plans with these NGO. UNEP, through the regional project will ensure that the NGO and other identified partners are fully engaged in the implementation. It is important to mention that the GGW Stakeholders made it clear that UNEP partnership has favoured different stakeholders? participation in the GGW implementation both at regional and national levels.. Based on the above, it will not be fair to consider UNEP approach as top down. If needed justification of the above statement can be either provided or list and contact of both national and Regional NGO can be provided. While APAC Regional Coordination has participated to all the workshops, ROPPA even though invited has never attend the meetings despite commitment to cover the cost of their participation.

•? The participative nature of the program design has been included and the discussion with birdlife International on its possible role in the programme has now been added. **Ref: Stakeholder roles and engagement sub-section**

November /17/2025

The institutional arrangement has been amended and the discrepancies removed. Ref: Project institutional Arrangement

5.3 Core indicators
a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)? [If a child project under a program] Is the choice of core indicators consistent with those prioritized under the parent program?
b) Are the project?s targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable? Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 20, 2025

Addressed.

December 17, 2025

- The information in the core indicators table is fine with 132,900 ha under CI 3 (Restoration) with grasslands (3.3) and not forests (the explanation below stays wrong though).

- CI 4.3: Addressed.

November 21, 2025

- We take note of the target of 193,000 ha of newly created protected areas (Core Indicartor 1.1). Please, confirm the nature of ecosystems targeted (drylands? wetlands?).

- Under CI 1.1., Please provide Name of the Protected Area, WDPA ID, IUCN Category, if avaiable.

- Core Indicator 3: The CI3 target is 132,900 ha. However, we find 132,900 ha under 3.2 (forests) and 3.3 (grasslands). Please, confirm

- Core Indicator 4: 459,560 ha under 4.1 to benefit biodiversity: please justify the use of 4.1 and not 4.3, as areas under SLM may be a targeted benefit of proposed interventions.

July 17, 2025

We will review the core indicators and the targets at the next submission. Field interventions are not expected from such Coordinatinon Project: you can remove all the land-based indicators or carbon related.

Agency Response

December 19, 2025

We confirm that the CI3 132,900 ha are under 3.3 (grasslands).

December 16, 2025

The target of 193,000 ha is a combination of newly created protected areas in all of the national projects of the TALSIG regional project. The ecosystems of these potential protected areas may vary greatly through the 9 participating countries and will be reflected in the national project documents.

It is not possible to have names of the protected areas, their WDPA IDs, and IUCN categorization before the protected areas are created. The names of protected areas are designated during the process of their creation. When they have been created, the relevant authorities will send the metadata of these newly created protected areas to IUCN who can then update the information into the WDPA, assigning an ID and category.

We confirm that the CI3 132,900 ha are under 3.2 (forests) and 3.3 (grasslands)

Core Indicator 4: 459,560 ha have been moved to Core 4.3 as suggested by the reviewer.

November /17/2025

The Core indicators table has been revised

5.4 Risks

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?

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 assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

- On Environmental and Social Safeguards: We note that UNEP attached the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) and stakeholder engagement plan, and an overall ESS risk is classified as High in the Portal. However, provided SRIF said moderate environmental and social risks.

a. Please revise SRIF consistent with the environmental and social section of the Key risk table (High), which recognizes sever security risks particularly in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, and importance of strong engagement with vulnerable population including IPLCs, internally displaced populations, women and youth and incorporation of traditional and local knowledge.

b. For high-risk projects, please provide more comprehensive environmental and social risk management plan (including indigenous peoples plan with FPIC) with clear budget, timeline and responsibilities. Risk mitigation measures need to be integrated into the project design with clear monitoring indicators. For examples, the risk table mentioned ?by Month 48, all countries will have active national GGW coalitions with women, youth, and IPLC representation? (as a part of indicator 3.1.1?), ?by Month 48, legal recognition of customary and communal land rights will be secured in 100% of project zones with IPLC presence across child projects? (as a part of indicator 1.1.3?), and integration of traditional knowledge (as a part of indicator 1.1.1 or 1.1.2?). These need to be captured as monitoring indicators.

c. We see that six workshops were organized between 2022 to 2025. However, it is not clear how different stakeholders engaged in different workshops and how vulnerable populations including indigenous peoples, small scale farmers and herders, women, and youth were engaged in project design. Please elaborate further on how these vulnerable populations or representatives of them were engaged in the workshops and how the results of the workshops were integrated into the project design.- Stakeholder risks are considered low. We would like to invite UNEP to not underestimate the importance of mobilizing CSO, IPLC representatives (completely absent from the risks), as well as other vulnerable groups, as women. Several GGW related projects and programs were subject to criticism of opacity and lack of Civil Society involvement/empowerment. You should develop and budget mitigation actions and eventually associate CSO and their network in the project execution: we are especially thinking about ROPPA for farmer organizations in West Africa, PAFO (Pan-African Farmers Organization), REPAOC (West Africa Civil Society Forum), SOS Sahel, RESAD, and international NGOs as Birdlife and IUCN. Please, complete.

- We welcome however the involvement of CIFOR-ICRAF.

July 7, 2025

- See comments above on climate risks, vulnerability.

- On managing political and governance risk, we note the project's reference to national mitigation measures. We recommend project to articulate details on specific contingency measures for dealing with political instability and security risks at the regional level including efforts to strenghten collaboration and partnerships across the countries. Please, uggest clearer, proactive strategies to mitigate potential disruptions caused by regional insecurity or governance instability.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

The risk categorization has been reassessed. Environmental and social risk has been assessed as moderate. Other risks such as transboundary issues and land tenue conflicts have been reassessed to be moderate.

The general risk profile has been reassessed based on the new categorization to be moderate.

The project has been assessed to be of moderate risk. There is therefore no need for a comprehensive environmental and social risk management plan.

Annex P provided almost all the responses to the comments. Except ROPPA which has not responded to any of the invitation, most of the key stakeholders have been engaged.

November /17/2025

Addressed- See Risk table last paragraph of Political and Governance Risk revised .

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

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

6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy? b) [If a child project under an integrated program] Is the project adequately aligned with the program objective in the GEF-8 programming directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 21, 2025

Addressed.

July 7, 2025

- in section C, please show project's alignment with regional priorities such as the AU, ECOWAS/ECCAS etc development, climate and environment strategies.

Agency Response

November /17/2025

Addressed. The project is designed to align with regional priorities by supporting and reinforcing ECOWAS/ECCAS efforts to promote sustainable resource management, strengthen regional cooperation, and advance coordinated landscape restoration.

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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

Yes, if key regional networks, especially CSO, women, IPLC groups, farmer organizations, can be empowered; as well as youth networks, especially if there is a focus on job creation. To be demonstrated.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

The engagement of private sector particularly on value chains, is evidence of the intention of the job creation

November /17/2025

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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 21, 2025

See table 10.

Addressed.

Agency Response

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 21, 2025

Addressed.

July 17, 2025

No, the policy requirements are not completed.

? The gender action plan is not available and gender responsiveness and women empowerment are not integrated into the result framework and the activities.

? Stakeholder Engagement Plan: not available. The details of consultations during the PPG phase are not available either.

? Private Sector:

- o The project writer ticked the box that that the private sector was described in the Section B. Please, describe who you met and when, and please revise the strategy with the private sector (as said in the section on the result framework above).
- o A list of private sector players engaged in GGWI is available (pg46 of the CEO document) , however there is no clear indication of how they are involved in the project description, particulalrly in component 2. Please, clarify.

? Depending on how the project document will be modified after this round of review, some elements related to the risk analysis and/or the integration of more aspects related to climate risks, adaptation, vulnerability, or drought, may be changed. Please, advise.

Agency Response

November /17/2025

The gender action plan is now included at the adequate section and gender responsiveness and women empowerment are now mainstreamed in all relevant project Outcomes and outputs.

Stakeholders action plan is now available. Details of consultations during the PPG are available and were constituted mainly of 3 key items:

- Thematic studies consultants who engaged with various stakeholders related to the theme and a narrative of these encounters have been included in those reports
- Regional consultations workshops organised by UNEP as the EA. Two main meetings organised in May 2025 in Addis Abeba under the leadership of African Union and in collaboration with UNCCD Accelerator, CIFOR ICRAF, IFAD, WFP and FAO. These regional meetings were innovative in bringing specific stakeholders not always engaged which included parliamentarians, Innovative Start-ups. Youths, women and other types of NGO were engaged. It is clear the GEF/UNEP Regional Project has been recognised as more inclusive and innovative in bring new approach of project and program formulation, which indeed were already anchor as GEF principes of engagement.
- Bilateral meeting with various stakeholders both physically and online.

The private sector engagement is very well conducted and reflected in project design.

The risk table has now been amended to consider guidance and comments from the review.

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 21, 2025

Addressed.

July 17, 2025

Document missing

Agency Response

November /17/2025

Yes, the gender action plan is now included in the document

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

Addressed. see the various observations on stakeholders.

- Please, note that the involvement of parliamentarians may be an excellent point related to improving policy coherence. To be reinforced.

July 17, 2025

Document missing.

- Given the scale and complexity of this regional program, suggest the project should include a comprehensive stakeholder engagement and management plan, outlining how the various stakeholder groups including the vulnerable and marginalized groups (women, youth, and IDPs etc) will be systematically identified, engaged, empowered, and monitored throughout implementation. The plan should also include GRM, communication plans etc..

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

The idea is now reinforced the commitment of establishing GGW Parliamentarians Network. ***Ref: Stakeholders Engagement Section***.

November /17/2025

Stakeholders engagement plan now included

All the thematic studies have provided a thorough analysis of different categories of stakeholders and how they have been engaged, and suggestions were done on how they will be engaged in the project implementation. During the PPG phase all these groups were represented during regional workshop and it is quite to witness their engagement and their commitment to continue working with UNEP on this interesting project as they said. We appreciate and are happy that the GEF secretariat colleague was able to attend these regional meeting and witness the engagement with different stakeholders.

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestYes

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: 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 comment at CEO Endorsement RequestYes

Agency Response

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestYes

Agency Response

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestYest

Agency Response

8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

a) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 20, 2025

Cleared.

December 17, 2025

- The second line still includes several consultancies together. Let see if colleagues from the Quality Control find it acceptable.

November 21, 2025

Not addressed. The formulations are still the same. Please, refer to the eligibility of items in PPG in the guidelines, if needed.

- Please request the agency to list the activities implemented during the PPG phase rather than listing broad categories to better assess the validity of each. These items are not eligible without additional details to be validated: ?Policy, Legal, Institutional contexts analysis and coordination mechanisms?, ?Adaptation in Great Green Wall Region?, ?Resources mobilization?.

	GET/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)		
Project Preparation Activities Implemented	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Policy, Legal, Institutional contexts analysis and coordination mechanisms	18,340.00	18,340.00	
Adaptation in Great Green Wall Region	12,000.00	12,000.00	
Environment context & GIS/georeferencing of child projects sites	14,000.00	14,000.00	
Resources Mobilization and Gender Analysis Consultant	13,000.00	13,000.00	
Knowledge Management and communication Consultant	15,000.00	15,000.00	
Regional consultation meeting	127,660.00	127,660.00	
Total	200,000.00	200,000.00	0.00

July 17, 2025

Please, refer to expense categories that are acceptable in the GEF project cycle (see the guidelines).

? The first two lines are not acceptable formulation: ?Policy, legal, Institutional contexts analysis and coordination mechanisms? and ?adaptation in GGW regions?.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

With the PPG resources, five thematic studies were conducted in order to have update information for consideration but also to have baseline data that will guide the implementation of the project. The thematic studies will also be valorised as knowledge products for publication and use by different stakeholders. An international consultant was also committed to support exploitation of the large information to update the project package using the CEO endorsement template as entry points. All the thematic studies are available in the folder.

November /17/2025

Formulation amended

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?
Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?
e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 20, 2025

Addressed.

December 17, 2025

- The cofinancing from Green United, if confirmed as "investment mobilized" should be classified as grant. Please, correct.

Other comments are addressed.

November 21, 2025

- General comment 1: The grants from projects should not be considered as "recurrent expenditures". Please, correct.

- General comment 2: The point is not to announce big numbers just to announce big numbers, but propose baseline financing projects or parallel projects that are directly connected to the GEF investments with potential interactions. Please, remind that you will have to report on this cofinancing at MTR. The definition of cofinancing is very broad at the GEF to not disavantage some types of GEF agencies, but the reasoning of cofinancing and the added value of the GEF investment should be demonstrated. Here for most of projects (except maybe the direct partners), there is no information on the role of this cofinancing.

- Please, 1) clarify the cofinancing from Chad (Desert to Power, Djearmaya energy); 2) Please reconsider the classification in recurrent expenditure if the grant is confirmed; 3) as there are no energy component in this coordination project, it would be better to remove it. Please explain and justify.

- The unusual cofinancing amount of $309,316,000 raises a number of concerns: 1) some projects already served as cofinancing or partners to GEF projects (PRASP II from WB, P2PRS from AfDB) and should be removed, 2) the $150 million from WB is half a loan and half a grant and should not be counted as recurrent expenditures. However, we do not see how the limited resources of this coordination project is going to benefit from the WB project and how they are going to interact. This is a parallel financing without any connection to the TALSIG prpject. We would recommend removing it.

- The cofinancing letter from Mali is bizarre, with different characters sizes, different colors, and texts missing because of cut and paste operations. Moreover, the amounts do not match with the numbers in the portal. We recommend removing this lette and this cofinancing.

- Cofinancing from Nigeria: The grants from projects should not be considered as "recurrent expenditures.

- Cofinancng from Gambia: the letter mentioned the GEFID9772. Please, be aware that GEF grants cannot be included in cofinancing. Please, remove this letter.

- Cofinancing from Future Agribusiness: 1) correct the name in the table; 2) in-kind cofinancing cannot be -in general- counted as investement mobilized. Moreover, the letter mentions $500,000 in kind and $20 million in project grants. Please, correct.

- One Billion Trees for Africa: $120.000 is a surprising cofinancing for an initiative targeting 1 billion trees. However, 200,000 in kind cannot be considered as investments mobilized. Please, correct.

- Cofinancing from Mauritania: 1) One more time in-kind cofinancing cannot be considered as investment moblized; 2) The WB project on pastoralism has already been included in other projects; 3) we recommend removing this letter.

July 17, 2025

? Please, confirm that the cofinancing from countries is not already included in the child project (double counting).

? We will review the cofinancing letters at the next round, as some changes are expected.

Agency Response

December 19, 2025

Addressed - The co-financing from Green United has now been classified as a grant.

December 16, 2025

? Thank for the comment, huge amount of cofinancing has been revised to USD 58,074,920 .

? Cofinancing letter of Chad corrected

- ? cofinancing letter from Mali has been revised.
- ? Cofinancing from Nigeria: The grants from projects now considered as " Investments mobilized.
- ? Cofinancing from Gambia: the letter mentioned the GEFID9772 removed
- ? Cofinancing from Future Agribusiness, name corrected and finding classification corrected
- ? Cofinancing from Mauritania removed as suggested

November /17/2025

We confirm that care has been taken to ensure that the components of co-financing allocated to country projects is not included in the regional project.

Well noted. The above consideration should be done when doing that review.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) If ? and only if - this is a global or regional project for which not all country-based interventions were known at PIF stage and, therefore, not all LOEs provided:
Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?
b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)
c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?
d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?
e)[If a regional/global coordination child project under an integrated program] Does the results framework reflect the program-wide result framework, inclusive of results from child projects and specific to the regional/global coordination child project? [If a country child project under an integrated program] Is the child project result framework inclusive of program-wide metrics monitored across child project by the Regional/Global Child project?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

November 21, 2025

Point taken.

July 17, 2025

- We appreciate the reference to job creation and livelihoods, which are indeed key pillars for advancing climate resilience?particularly in a fragile, and migration-prone region. The project suggests 1.2 million jobs will be created, however the mechanism on how the jobs will be created, measured need to be clarified. Please, complete.

Agency Response

November /17/2025

It should be recalled that the RCP will not have physical activities on the ground. These will be done by child projects each with the area planned to support the Job creation. The RCP will support child project to establish a tracking system of these creation but also will ensure that the planned activities which will create jobs are effectively planned and implemented within the child projects, The 1.2 million Job creation is based on the fact

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

Not addressed. Please, respond.

July 17, 2025

Project map and coordinates

? Please confirm you cannot fill in the third column with the GEO Name ID.

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

We confirm that the GEO Name ID for all project sites has now been provided.

November /17/2025

Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Documentation and Rating

8.8 Have the relevant safeguard documents been uploaded to the GEF Portal? Has the safeguards rating been provided and filled out in the ER field below the risk table?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 17, 2025

Addressed.

November 21, 2025

- The ESS risk level is **moderate** while the Table on risks concludes to an overall risk rating **"High"**.

- Please, revise to make the information consistent.

July 2017, 2025

Yes, but see the item on risks. The relevant documents may be adjusted.

Agency Response

Agency Response

December 16, 2025

Moderate overall

November /17/2025

Annex G: GEF Budget template
8.9 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?
b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?
c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

January 6, 2026

Addressed. Forwarded to PO for the quality control.

January 5, 2026

- Please, reduce the costs for car rental. Based on our knowledge on car rental in Mauritania, the probable expenses for missions in neighboring countries should not go beyond 20,000$. Please, correct and please to not reassign the resources to more staff/consultants/contracts, but to concrete things as work or training or products. Thanks.

- See the three following gender related activities. Please 1) adjust the formulation to better reflect the nature of the work and expected results - a) value chain analysis an training, b) review and updating of nine climate risk policies including on drought and flood, with appropriate training, c) the third one on PPP is difficult to understand, please revise. See if you can reduce these budgets, especially the first one estimated at 530,000 USD. Please, reassign the resources to concrete works or training and not more staff or consultancies.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	**Appendix A: Project Budget Template**												
2													
3	**Expenditure Category**		**Detailed Description**	**Component (USDeq.)**								**Total**	**Responsible Entity**
4		**Category**		*Compone*	*Compone*	*Component 3*		*Compone*	*Sub-Total*	*M&E*	*PMC*		(Executing Entity receiving
5	**Expenditure Category**	**Category**	**Detailed Description**	*Outcome*	*Outcome*	*Outcome*	*Outcome*	*Outcome*	*Sub-Tot*	*M&E*	*PMC*	**Total**	
9	**Contractual service individual**	**Contractual service individual**	Identify Gender sensitive enterprise, business development, tools, value chain analyses and related training for national child projects teams in 9 countries	100,000	330,000	100,000			530,000			530,000	BLPU
10		**Contractual service individual**	Gender responsive Review of Multi-countries (9 national) policies including in relation to climate change risks (drought, floods, etc.) adaptation to support GGW implementation at national levels and related training sessions to support national child projects teams,	200,000		100,000			300,000			300,000	BLPU
11		**Contractual service individual**	Community based natural resources management assessment and related training sessions to support national child projects teams	200,000					200,000			200,000	UNEP Biodiversity Landscape and People Unit (BLPU)
12		**Contractual service individual**	Gender responsive Public-Private Partnerships to enhance sustainable natural resource management and value-chain development at national level under the leadership of national child project teams		259,636				259,636			259,636	BLPU
13		**Contractual service individual**	Communication tools, methodologies, training and products to support national child projects communication strategies in 9 countries			300,000	100,000		400,000			400,000	BLPU
20	**Contractual Services – Individual**	**Contractual service individual**	Consultant to conduct trainings for national Child Projects team to support SLM good practices deployment	40,000					40,000			40,000	BLPU
21	**International Consultants**	**International Consultants**	Int'l consultant 1 to help national team to adapt to their national context SLM good practices in 9 child project countries	50,000					50,000			50,000	BLPU
22		**International Consultants**	Int'l consultant 2 Capacity building & training expert	50,000					50,000			50,000	BLPU

December 20, 2025

In opposite of what it is written the response below, not all the points have correctly been addressed.

- The request for a vehicle was never expressed. We do not have any element about the current fleet of the Panafrican Agency. We have no element that show that UNEP has discussed with partners and cofinancing partners to support a vehicle. No cofinancing has been explored for a vehicle at UNEP level. Without these elements, the request is denied, but you can still rent a vehicle. Please, modiffy the budget for the vehicle.

- Other points are tentatively addressed. to be confirmed by PO.

December 17, 2025

1. It is highly recommended to confer with the GEF team inside of UNEP to review previously accepted GEF budgets and to follow the same approach. There are basic deviations from longstanding GEF budgeting guidelines that can be easily addressed in future submissions by ensuring quality control within the Agency prior to submitting via the Portal.

2. Please note that ?Works? as a GEF budget category is referring to the building of structures such as dams, bridges, and other engineering projects. Of the nine entries in this section, none of them appear to be ?Works? in this sense. It seems as though these are outputs that will be produced by project personnel and/or firms. Please revise and include these activities in the proper sections: Consultants ? Local, Consultants ? International, Contractual Services ? Individual, , Contractual Services ? Company, or Salary and benefits / Staff costs as appropriate.

3. Please note that there is a category for ?Equipment? that should be used instead of ?Goods? as currently presented in the budget. Please revise. Please also be specific as to what will be procured, and separate different items into different lines. Please specify what ?communication gadgets, etc.? are proposed to be procured.

4. Please clarify if the vehicle(s) are to be rented or purchased, keeping in mind that the use of GEF funds to purchase vehicles is strongly discouraged. Such costs are normally expected to be borne by the co-financed portion of PMCs. Any request to use GEF funding to purchase project vehicles must be justified by the exceptional specific circumstances of the project/program. Please also clarify how many vehicles will be rented.

- It is our understanding that the $50,000 budgeted for vehicles are for renting. There was not request to buy vehicles and therefore no agreement for it. Please, confirm.

5. Please remove any budget lines that are empty, such as Grants, Revolving funds.

6. For the budget line ?Consultancies on National policy analysis?? for a total of $721,121, please separate each individual role to be hired, it appears to be 3 individual roles. Please also move the other costs lumped into this line (?2 sets of consultations? and ?consultants travels?) to the appropriate section, which would be training/meetings/workshops and travel, respectively.

7. Please indicate the expected number and cost (expressed as a daily rate and estimated number of days engaged) for the ?Ad hoc consultants? under Local Consultants.

8. Please include the costs under ?Premises? in the ?Other Operating Costs? section as ?Premises? is not a recognized GEF budget category.

November 21, 2025

- We take note of the changes and evolutions of the budget. However, the terms of reference in annex still mention a P5 and a P3, 2 Program assistants including one in Nairobi and one financing assistant in Nairobi. Please, make the terms of the reference and the budget coherent.

- Project personnel costs account for 36% of the project budget, which is high when compared with similar projects. Please, reduce.

- If you need guidance on the details, here are some options:

1) The ?Program Technical Coordinator? and ?Project Technical Expert? are heavily charged to components - the costs of both positions are above the average cost for similar positions in the region ($400,000 is the average cost for a 5-year project). TOR provided shows a portion of overlapping functions between these two positions. Most of the Agencies only have one Managerial/Technical position. Please ask the Agency to merge the two positions in one and let us know to which project activity the remaining funds will be reallocated.

2) A finance assistant based in Nairobi should not be covered by the project grant but provided by UNEP in its GEF Agency mission;

3) A program assistant in Nairobi does not seem justified to manage this regional project.

Contractual Services – Individual	Consultant to conduct trainings for national Child Projects team to support SLM good practices deployment	40,000					40,000			40,000	BLPU
International Consultants	Int'l consultant 1 to help national team to adapt to their national context SLM good practices in 9 child project countries	50,000					50,000			50,000	BLPU
	Int'l consultant 2 Capacity building & training expert	50,000					50,000			50,000	BLPU
	National policy analysis on droughts, resources mobilization, natural resources Management in support of child projects policies analysis and review	763,923	193,121	10,077			967,121			967,121	BLPU
Salary and benefits / Staff costs	Program Technical Coordinator (P4 Nouakchott Based)	413,321	150,000			100,000	663,321		18,349	681,670	BLPU

	Project Technical Expert (P2)- **UNV**	100,000			140,106	160,004	400,110			400,110	BLPU
	Finance Assistant						-		266,653	266,653	BLPU
	UNV-Program Assistant Nouakchott Based		60,000		60,000		120,000			120,000	BLPU
	Programme Assistant Nairobi Based	-					-			-	

- Additionally, the Finance Assistant position represents 80% of the PMC budget, which rises concerns about the technical component's funds being used to support project management tasks for the ?Program Technical Coordinator?.

Salary and benefits / Staff costs	Program Technical Coordinator (P4 Nouakchott Based)	413,321	150,000			100,000	663,321		18,349	681,670	BLPU

	Project Technical Expert (P2)- **UNV**	100,000			140,106	160,004	400,110			400,110	BLPU
	Finance Assistant						-		266,653	266,653	BLPU

- Please ask the Agency to disaggregate the details (number of consultants, daily rate, number of days, deliverables, etc.) for the consultancy " National policy analysis on droughts, resources mobilization, natural resources Management in support of child projects policies analysis and review", whose cost is nearly $1 million, representing 13% of the total cost of the project

	National policy analysis on droughts, resources mobilization, natural resources Management in support of child projects policies analysis and review	763,923	193,121	10,077			967,121			967,121	BLPU

- For the MTR and the TE, a budget increase may be considered to allow a quality work, including field visits. to be considered.

- The support to National Drought Plans = $399,000 - and the national policy analysis on drought = 967,121? Please, clarify the scope of the work.

- It is not clear if the below is a consultant position or a consultancy. Please request the agency to improve the details or relocate the item to the respective category.

	National policy analysis on droughts, resources mobilization, natural resources Management in support of child projects policies analysis and review	763,923	193,121	10,077			967,121			

- Please include a description for each item.

Office Supplies	...						-		12,151	12,151	BLPU

- Please provide more details regarding thematic ad-hoc reports charged to M&E

	Thematic ad-hoc reports						-	37,220		37,220	BLPU

July 17, 2025

Budget

? The attached budget is name "indicative budget". It reinforces the impression that the current project document is a draft. You cannot submit an "indicative" budget. Please, revise.

? Basically, the budget gives the impression of a stand-alone SLM project. We do not see the connection with the child projects and how the coordination will take place. We do not see the strategic role of this project for transformation. The administrative and staff costs are just outrageous. Deep revisions will be needed in association with the changes expected in the project document, as well as with a finalized list of activities.

? As said above, the main purpose of this project is regional collaboration and knowledge exchange. However, we are not seeing how this role is reflected in the budget. It should probably be easier when the project framework would have been modified after this review. Please, clarify.

? USD 1,400,000 for tools and good practices for SLM and institutional capacity + International Consultant for SLM tools: USD150,000:

o We wonder the added value of an international consultant for such a task, as UNCCD for instance has developed an initiative as WOCAT. The Coordination project should not miss such opportunity to develop a long-term between the Panafrican Agency and WOCAT.

o 1,400,000 represents 20% of the GEF grant. More explanations are needed to understand the added value and the

? 300,000 USD for ?Resource Mobilization mechanism at national and regional level?: Please clarify the nature of this item and the expected results.

? 80,000 USD; Communication equipment: please, explain and justify

? USD 500,000: Pilot SLM and good practices: Implementing and executing a small grant component for SLM generate high transaction costs for disputable benefits. This kind if field intervention is not expected in such coordination project. To be removed.

o You mentioned several partners and projects with millions of USD in field investments. The role of this project and this budget may be used to scale up or make some of these investments sustainable (in connecting with the domestic budget for instance). Please, revise.

o You may also influence the existing SGP in each country to focus on some SLM actions.

o However, we are not agreeing on such SGP mechanism at the regional level: to be re-oriented.

? Some expenditure category should be modified at the next round of review:

o consultant to support SLM good practice deployment for USD 40, 000

o Contract with executing partners: we will welcome more partnerships with institutions or partners, but this formulation is not self-explanatory.

o International consultant "1 tool for SLM": the intent and modalities of this item is highly disputable. We are expecting partneships with other institutions or networks.

? The STAFF budget is just outrageous. How do you want justify the following staff and costs for such coordination project?

o 1 x P5 at USD 1,500,200

o 1 x P3 for USD 433,284

o 1 x Finance Assistant for USD 342,000

o 1 x Program Assistant for 210,000 USD

o One program assistant based in Nairobi: USD 342,000

= 2,827,484, or 40% or the project.

? UNEP should cofinance at least 50% of these positions. Having two Technical Assistants P5 and P3 and two program assistants, one in Nouakchot and one in Nairobi, is just not possible.

? USD 300,000 for travel, or $50,000 per year for six years seems very high. Please, justify.

? The budget includes SLM activities under "works" for 1.4 million and pilot SLM practices for $500,000. It should be noted that the Coordination Project is not about additional field implementation. This budget should be significantly reduced and made available for policy coherence activities for instance, as requested above.

? Another budget line is needed for helping other interested countries (e.g. Togo) to be supported through readiness activities and to engage other countries in the regional activities.

? It is not clear which budget line will support regional collaboration and knowledge exchange.

? USD150,000 of office equipment seems high without more explanation. Please, revise.

Agency Response

?

D Agency Response

January 5, 2026

The car rental costs have been reduced to USD 20,000 as recommended. The remaining resources have now been allocated to strengthen the role of women, parliamentarians, and youth groups in supporting advocacy for Great Green Wall (GGW) activities.

The related activities have been reformulated, and the resources reallocated from these activities are now directed to concrete works and training to strengthen capacity development on drought and weather monitoring.

December 19, 2025

Thank you very much for your detailed and constructive comments. We would like to confirm that all the points raised have now been fully addressed in the revised budget, in line with GEF guidelines and UNEP internal practices

December 16, 2025

The positions designated P5 and P3 have been revised to P4 and P2 in alignment with the budget.

? The 2 positions are merged. The cost for technical expert has now been converted to consultancies on specific new themes like wetlands, transboundary issues etc - to be executed with specialized partners like WWF, Wetlands Int, IUCN on subcontract basis

? The position of finance assistant based in Nairobi has been removed.

? The position of finance assistant based in Nairobi has been removed.

? The finance Assistant position is now reduced from $266,653 to $180,000 the 86,653 saving are now added to Office rental (The Panafrican Agency is now making arrangement to rent offices with cost sharing with partners FAO, UNCCD Accelerator, IFAD, AfDB, UNEP) and office equipment including server to host the regional observatory, etc.

? The details (number of consultants, daily rate, number of days, deliverables, etc.) for the consultancy " National policy analysis on droughts, resources mobilization, natural resources Management in support of child projects policies analysis and review", has now been provided.

? MTR and TE budget amount has been increased as per the guidance

? National drought plan and national policy analysis on drought have been merged as single budget line and amount amended. However, the 399,000 USD has now been added to the budget line now increase to support collaboration with special agencies (Birdlife International, IUCN, Wetland International and AfroCAT) to support the new thematic areas addressing Wetland biodiversity, food security etc.

November /17/2025

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes
8.10 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.
b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments.
c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestNA

Agency Response November /17/2025

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation

Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Janauary 6, 2025

All points are addressed. The project is forwarded to PO for the quality control and Council circulation.

Devember 20, 2025

Please, revise the budget

December 17, 2025

Thanks for the improvements. Please, address the pending comments on cofinancing, PPG, and especially the budget

Please, include the CEO Endorsement Request Portal view + the Project Document in uour next submission,

November 21, 2025

- Please, stop classifying all documents as official documents (it is a recurrent problem in all submissions under the GGW program). It is not correct. Please, include in public documents the GEF request for CEO endorsement and the equivalent of the prodoc (the requeste template + all annexes in a single document). Only public documents can be circulated to the Council.

The project cannot be recommended yet. Please address the comments above. Please, highlight the sections modified, especially if you add modifications we did not request. Please, note that we will forward the project to PO for the control quality.

July 17, 2025

The project cannot be recommended yet and significant modifications are needed. We stay available for parallel discussions as we tried to maintain a review reasonable in terms of length and contents. Please, note that we do not transfer this project at this stage to the quality control. Additional comments may further be expected.

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	7/17/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/21/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)	12/17/2025	

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
Additional Review (as necessary)	**12/20/2025**	
Additional Review (as necessary)	**1/5/2026**	