

Harnessing Natural Capital - Unlocking Zimbabwe's Biodiversity Potential in the Sebungwe Landscape

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID
11987
Countries
Zimbabwe
Project Name
Harnessing Natural Capital - Unlocking Zimbabwe's Biodiversity Potential in
the Sebungwe Landscape
Agencies
UNDP
Date received by PM
8/20/2025
Review completed by PM

Program Manager
Jean-Marc Sinnassamy
Focal Area
Multi Focal Area
Project Type
FSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?

b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed. Thanks for removing the yellow highlights. Now, the version for circulation has a large of the text in bold characters. It is not a big problem, as the document is still relatively short (46p), but could be adjusted in case there is one more back-and-forth.

October 29, 2025

- Addressed, However, double check the selection of keywords. "Carbon stocks above or below ground" is not translated in significant actions or indicators for instance. Some concepts and keywords are surprisingly absent (biodiversity economy, natural capital accounting, protected area, conservancy, value chain, natural resource management, community based approaches, management plans, sustainable use...).

- Please, harmonize the list of keywords in the general project information and the annex F on taxonomy.

- We appreciate to have tracked change version to identify the changes. However, the PDF PIF Portal view, which is the document circulated to Council, has several sections with yellow shadow - please ask the Agency to remove the yellow shadows when resubmitting.

September 12, 2025

- The general project information table is correct.

- Please, confirm the project title "Harnessing Natural Capital - Unlocking Zimbabwe's Biodiversity Potential in the Sebungwe Region of Landscape"?

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

- An extended list of keywords has been included in Annex F based on the complete list of GEF taxonomy keywords and the keywords in the project cover page on the portal have been harmonized with this list to the extent possible.

- The yellow highlights have been removed from the portal view of the PIF but have been retained in the annexed PIF document

Agency response 28th October 2025:

We have corrected the name as "Harnessing Natural Capital - Unlocking Zimbabwe's Biodiversity Potential in the Sebungwe Region"?

2. Project Summary

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

In the summary, you mention an ecotourism facility at Gandavaroyi falls and a fisheries cold chain we do not see in the result framework. Please, clarify and revise.

Please, keep in mind that the GEF finances additional costs and such investments can only be financed partially if a clear demonstration has been done on the baseline situation, the role of cofinancing, and the generation of global environment benefits. Out of explanations, infrastructures as an ecotourism facility and a fisheries cold chain are not connected to the generation of global environment benefits and should not be financed by the GEF.

September 12, 2025

No

The summary is mainly a justification of the project and a description of the situation in Zimbabwe in nearly 500 words, but the purpose of the project, the strategies, the key expected results, and the global environment benefits are not clear. To be revised.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

The tourism facility and the cold chain have been removed from the project.

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The summary has been improved to include the strategies, expected results and the global environmental benefits

3 Indicative Project Overview

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

- We take note of the adjustment of the objective.

- Gender responsiveness and women empowerment have not been enough integrated in the result framework, with the exception of the outputs 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.6. Please, integrate women or gender issues in the outputs 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 2.1.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, and 3.1.3. See also how to integrate women and gender issues in the components on KM and M&E.

- The output 2.1.7 is not formulated as an output. You need to express it differently to reflect the expected result, beyond discussions/consultations.

September 12, 2025

- Gender equality and women empowerment are absent from the result framework. Other vulnerable groups may also be considered. Please revise.

Result Framework:

- The proposed objective is: Unlocking the biodiversity potential of Zimbabwe's Sebungwe Region by developing a sustainable biodiversity economy that enhances conservation efforts, improves community livelihoods, and contributes to national economic growth.

The formulation is a good intention, but not enough specific, measurable, accessible, and defined in the timeline. Please, reformulate a more specific objective.

Component 1

Output 1.1.4: "Economic incentives schemes for ecosystem services, e.g. PES developed": Please, explain the realistic expectation from this output. From the GEF experience, when service providers, beneficiaries, and the transaction mechanism are not identified at concept level, there are few chances to see a PES developed. Please, clarify.

Output 1.1.5 Landscape data management platforms developed: clarifications about the use of GEF resources for this output and sustainability issues are needed. Please, clarify.

Outcome 2: Please, explain how you may reach a target of 400,000 ha under improved management only by providing guidelines, plans, policy briefs, an awareness materials. Hopefully, partnerships and cofinancing may help to explain this ambitious target. Please, clarify.

Output 1.2.2. Integrated Land Use Plans produced and approved for implementation at the district level: Is the GEF the only financier here? or is there a role for domestic finance and/or cofinancing? Please, clarify.

The output 2.5: "Gender action plan being implemented" is a low bar to address gender inequality and women empowerment. We would like to see gender and women issues mainstreamed in the whole result framework. In the text, we would like to see a rapid analysis of past and on-going projects to define proactive measures for gender. Only in the UNDP/GEF portfolio, there are rich lessons. If you extend the analysis to LDCF, WB, and FAO portfolio, you should come up with a robust set of principles to include at PIF stage. Please, revise.

Component 3: in the BD strategy, there are basically two entry points to improve the effectiveness of protected area management: 1) reinforcing capacities and 2) ensuring a sustainable financing of the PA. We are taking note of the output 3.1 to reinforce capacities. However, the project is silent about the financing aspects. Please clarify.

Output 3.2. Ecosystem restoration initiatives implemented to enhance ecological and socio-economic connectivity: This formulation seems a little bit overwhelming for a target of 5 ha of restored landscapes. To be revised in the context of a new Theory of Change.

All in all, the result framework should be adjusted after the revision of the Theory of Change. We would like to see a more appropriate response to problems faced by local stakeholders, with relevant mechanisms to reinforce capacities, provide knowledge, provide opportunities, including financing incentives. All in all a project closer to the beneficiaries and less consultant-based products.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

- The listed outputs have been improved to strengthen the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Output 2.1.7 has been renamed as *'Discussion paper for an incentive mechanism for communities for the conservation of rhinos developed and discussed with stakeholders'*

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The project objective has been improved

Components, outcomes and outputs and core indicators have been improved to be clearer and to achieve the project objective

The Theory of Change has been improved with the assumptions clearly stated

The theory of change has been edited to make it more inclusive. Changes were made on the indicators in Outcome 2.1, Output 2.1.1., Output 2.1.4, Output 2.1.6

The objective has been edited to become more specific, measurable and achievable

Output 1.1.4 has been restructured to focus on community beneficiation

The target under Outcome 2 has been changed to align with the outcome and outputs

Output 1.2.2. has been removed from the TOC as the District Councils are already developing the land use plans

Gender equality and women's empowerment elements have been streamlined into the framework with output 2.1.6 emphasizing this

An analysis of past and ongoing project has been done to help define proactive measures for gender mainstreaming

The project has been improved to include sustainable financing of the PA. Output 3.1.1 has been maintained but the explanation under the alternative scenario details that strengthening capacity for conservation includes sustainable financing and reinforced capacities

Output 3.2 has been removed

The result framework has been improved

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

Not fully addressed. See comments above on gender.

September 12, 2025

- See the comments on the result framework, the Core Indicator 11, and about the lessons from the GEF portfolio.
- The project misses the need for proactive measures to fight gender inequalities, empower women, both as beneficiaries of project and parties in the decision making mechanisms. To be revised.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

See response to 3.1. Gender dimensions have been strengthened in the indicated project components.

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The project has been improved by taking up lessons from the GEF portfolio. Proactive measures to fight gender inequalities and empower women have been included

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

- We are seeing a risk of a top-down approach with many consultants, studies, plans, and a lack of specific mechanisms to improve the situation on the ground both on biodiversity conservation and local economy. The financing per component may evolve under a revised Theory of Change, with a better analysis of the baseline situation, cofinancing opportunities, and lessons from the portfolio. To check at the next round.
- The insufficient benefits for local communities is identified as a barrier. We would like to see a clear response to this: strengthening capacities of local communities, providing access to knowledge (for instance on SLM), providing access to finance, supporting appropriate local organizations for sustainability. to be revised.
- Cofinancing ratios for technical components and pmc are similar: 1:4.5.
- pmc are under 5%.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The number of studies and plans has been reduced. More funds have been allocated to mechanisms to improve the situation on the ground. The TOC has been improved with more activities on communal land and better support to local organisations, for example through inclusion of a substantial small-grants component to benefit local communities

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

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

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

- Some parts of the text are probably missing. Please, revise.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The description of the current situation has been improved under the project rationale. Key barriers and enablers have been identified

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

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

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

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

- There is a missed opportunity to not take benefit of the past and on-going GEF/LDCF projects and their lessons at mid-term or in the Terminal Evaluation. The Theory of change, the risk analysis, the ways and models to work with local communities, and gender/women aspects would have been better addressed in referring to the GEF portfolio, notably from UNDP:

- See the TE from the GEFID 9660 from UNDP with lessons to reduce poaching, illegal activities, promote behavior changes, improve the PA network, define SLM for local communities (capacities, SLM practices, access to markets).

- See the TE from GEFID4960 from UNDP with lessons to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities, especially women, new agriculture practices (short value chains, interactions with the private sector), design of Village Saving and Lasting Associations. See also the Theory of Change and the responses to climate change.

- See GEFID 4665 with the World Bank in the Hwange Sanyati Biodiversity Corridor: with 52% of women as beneficiaries, reinforcement of capacities on NRM, the importance of continued investments (this aspect is completely absent from your analysis), the difficult access of women in decision making structures in a strong cultural norms standards, the need to explicit actions to overcome this situation.

- See the on-going GEF 10257 with FAO.

- There is no explanation about the choices. Please, explain if other scenarios were foreseen.

- Please, consider if the project will reinforce resilience against future changes. At the same time, consider aspects related to sustainability, innovations, and up-scaling.

- Please, describe the role of the different stakeholders.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

We have included a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments.

Relevant stakeholders and their roles are now adequately described and a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development has been included.

Lessons from the mentioned projects have been included.

Aspects related to sustainability, innovations and up-scaling have been considered.

The roles of different stakeholders have been described.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed. The TOC diagram is now readable in the pdf version for the Council and the STAP. We take note that a separate file has been logged under the Documents Tab, but please remind that STAP does not have access to these files: the PIF in the portal and the pdf version should contain all information reviewed by the STAP.

October 29, 2025

Not fully addressed.

- The ToC diagram (Figure 1) is not readable, both in the portal at our level and in the pdf document that will be shared to STAP and Council. Please, revise.

September 12, 2025

To be revised.

- We would like to see a review of the past and on-going portfolio on NRM to highlight the lessons and best practices. Please, revise the baseline analysis.

- The project rationale is based on five key barriers - but only three are described. There might be a glitch in filling the portal. Some text seems missing (both in the portal and the pdf document). Please, revise and complete.

- We do not have the elements neither a convincing rationale to figure out the pathways for change. to be revised and completed.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

The ToC has been uploaded as a separate annex so that it should now be readable

Agency response 28th October 2025:

We have provided a concise Theory of Change, showing how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the casual pathways and the key assumptions.

The key outputs of each component have been defined.

A review of past and on-going projects on NRM has been provided.

The error on the number of barriers has been rectified. The project identifies and addresses three barriers.

The elements and the rationale have been improved to show the pathways for change.

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

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

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

No.

- It seems that some parts of the text may be missing. Please, confirm and complete.
- We would like to see an analysis of the baseline situation, including the role of cofinancing partners as the Ministry, Forest Commission, Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, Marondera University, WWF-Zimbabwe, African Parks, and IFAW.
- In the stakeholder analysis, we would like to understand the barriers for each group to change their behavior and how the project can respond by capacity building, access to knowledge, notably on SLM practices, and financing. A special attention to women is needed to correct the current situation.
- This analysis (baseline situation, stakeholders, environmental, social, and economic indicators) should help to understand pathways for change in terms of biodiversity conservation, governance, market pressures, and poverty, and in fine, generate global environment benefits, with associated socio and economic benefits. Please, provide this analysis.
- The response should fit BD1-1 and LD1 objectives.
- For the time being, we are not able to appreciate the causal links between interventions, outputs, outcomes, and impacts logical and evidence based. Please, correct.
- Assumptions should also help in justifying the proposed pathways. Risks and external factors should be expressed in support of the proposed pathways (existing governance and capacities, climate impacts as droughts, level of local dialogue). Mitigation measures should also be formulated.

Please, complete.

A diagram will help to understand the reasoning, the pathways for change, and expected outcomes and results.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The document has been edited to adequately describe the incremental reasoning

An analysis of the baseline situation has been done including the roles of co-financing partners and different stakeholders.

The stakeholder analysis now includes the barriers for each group to change their behaviour and relates how the project can respond to capacity building, access to knowledge and financing. Special attention has been paid to women by making all processes gender-inclusive.

The analysis which provides an understanding of the pathways for change has been included.

A diagram showing the linkages has been included.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

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

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

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

Not fully addressed.

The Section "coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs" is empty. Please, complete. The response "not applicable" is not acceptable.

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Does the GEF Agency expect to play an execution role on this project?

If so, please describe that role here. Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing

Not Applicable

- Implementation arrangements to be confirmed at CEO endorsement

September 12, 2025

This part may be missing. Please, correct.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

Apologies for this oversight. The Coordination and cooperation section has been added.

Agency response 28th October 2025:

Institutional setting is provided together with executing partners and the rationale.

The project will cooperate with the ongoing BIOFIN project, this is mentioned now.

Elements to capture and disseminate knowledge have been included.

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

- You wrote below that the target under the CI3 has been removed, but it has been replaced by 37 ha of wetlands restored. Moreover, the text under the Core Indicators Table has not been updated and still mentions 5 ha. Please, correct and justify.

- Please, remind that the core indicator 4.3 on SLM is mainly for production landscapes (agricultural lands, rangelands, forests) per policy (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01). The explanation that SLM will be applied in wetland protection below seems erroneous. Please, correct.

September 12, 2025

- Please, check the number/targets included in the result framework (493,800 ha of PA; 400,000 ha of communal lands) and the core indicators. Please, correct.

- GEF projects aim to generate Global Environment Benefits (GEB). The target for the Core Indicator 3.3 (5 ha) is just not serious or there is a confusion about the use of GEF resources. Not all anti-erosion devices are eligible if there is no significant GEB. We recommend either clarifying the intention or more surely remove these 5 ha. We recommend exploring cofinancing opportunities to do this anti-erosion work.

- Core Indicator 4.3 is welcome to reflect Sustainable Land Management interventions. Please, clarify the nature of interventions that will allow to reach 51,300 ha under SLM. Please, note that a management plan is not enough to justify 51,300 ha under SLM: clarify the investments on the ground, access to knowledge, and/or the transfer of SLM technologies.

- Core indicator 11: We welcome the ambitious targets of 30,000 female beneficiaries and 20,000 male beneficiaries. However, in male dominated societies, the mention of "Gender equality and women's empowerment will be ensured" is not enough convincing. Even at PIF level, if you want to promote women empowerment and reduce inequalities, you need to secure a proactive upstream strategy and strong principles to reverse natural trends. We recommend checking on-going or past NRM projects in Zimbabwe describing "gender sensitive approaches" and the need for specific actions to include women in decision making structures (see for instance GEFID 4645 with the World Bank and GEFID 10257 with FAO). Please, correct.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

The 37 ha of wetlands have been removed from Core Indicator 4.3 and have been added instead to Core Indicator 3.4 of wetlands to be restored.

The 5 ha of land restoration have been removed.

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The core indicators have been corrected in consultation of guidelines (GEF/C/54/11/Rev.01)

The output of land restoration (5ha) has been removed

SLM will be applied in wetland protection, natural habitats where communities harvest NTFPs, to ensure sustainable harvesting, in areas where communities will plant tamarind for the processing plant and in agricultural livelihood projects

To address gender equality issues, the activities have been improved to make them inclusive based on the lessons learnt in the highlighted projects

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

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

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

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

The Sebungwe Region is home to the Tonga and San people, who are recognized as Indigenous Peoples by international standards, though not by Zimbabwean law. The projects have the potential to deliver significant environmental and social benefits but also pose risks of exclusion, loss of access, and cultural impacts. Robust safeguards, meaningful consultation, and culturally appropriate project design are essential to ensure positive outcomes for Indigenous Peoples in the region. PIF mentioned ?Indigenous Peoples?, ?Indigenous men and women? in different places.

a. Please clarify whether Indigenous Peoples are present in the project areas or may restrict access to land and resources by the project (including project area of influence and seasonal use of fishing, hunting and gathering). If so, Indigenous Peoples involvement of

project design and implementation is critical, and this needs to be emphasize in PIF particularly related to improving biodiversity corridor.

b. Please consider integrate Indigenous and local knowledge into the project design, particularly Component 2 and 3.

c. Human-wildlife conflict is one of the key risks of this project. Please include this risk and mitigation measures in the environmental and social risk section of Key risk table.

d. Please ensure obtaining FPIC with Indigenous Peoples during PPG if they are present in the project areas or may affect due to project activities, particularly Component 2, 3, 4, and 5.

September 12, 2025

We recommend revising the risk analysis once the Theory of Change will have been revised.

We invite the project team to check on-going and past projects to propose a more robust risk analysis. A more comprehensive risk analysis is needed at PIF level to adjust the PPG needs. With such analysis, some mitigation measures may be identified (and eventually corrected during the PPG).

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

a. Binga District in Sebungwe region is home to the Tonga people and they are the majority population, holding key positions in local government. Tonga is one of the 16 official languages in Zimbabwe. Five Tonga traditional chiefs were consulted in the production on this PIF, and further in-depth consultations will be held during the PPG phase. A risk of marginalization of Tonga people in connection with this project is not a concern. Other groups present in the area will also be fully included in consultations during the PPG phase and as beneficiaries of the project. The San people, on the other hand, who are internationally recognized as an indigenous group, are found in Southwest Matabeleland in Bulilima district and in the Northwest in Tsholotsho district and are not present in Sebungwe. The preliminary safeguards evaluation of the project under UNDP policy (pre-SESP) does therefore not trigger Standard 6 for Indigenous Peoples. However, intensive consultations with local communities will be held during the PPG and full involvement and leadership of local communities and government during the project design and implementation will be ensured, in line with UNDP and government policy.

b. Thank you for this suggestion. Indigenous and local knowledge have been included into components 2 and 3 and will play a key role also in component 4 on KM.

c. Apologies for this oversight. Human Wildlife Conflict is a key risk of this project and has been included in the risks table.

d. As explained above, there are no indigenous peoples in the project area, the Tonga being the majority in the region and strongly represented in local government. No San or other minority, indigenous groups reside in the project area, therefore FPIC does not apply. However, traditional chiefs from the local population have already been consulted and much more extensive consultations will be held during the PPG phase.

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The risk analysis has been revised

5.7 Qualitative assessment

- a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?
- b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?
- c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

To be checked at the next round.

Agency's Comments

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

No

Please refer to the GEF8 strategies for BD and LD and develop a narrative to explain how the project fits the BD1-1 and LD1 objectives.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

A narrative explaining how the project fits the BD1-1 and LD1 objectives has been developed

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

Secretariat's Comments Yes.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

We can read the following "The project will contribute to the realisation of the following action areas and GBF targets (1,2,3,5,7,9,10,13,14,17,18,22)". However, it is not clear how and what this project will do to contribute to the identified targets. A revised narrative would be welcome.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The narrative has been revised to explain how the project will contribute to the GBF goals and targets.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments

October 29, 2025

Addressed.

September 12, 2025

The policy requirements section is completed. However, please address the following:

- Gender aspects are not mainstreamed in the result framework.
- The risk analysis is not complete.
- There is no information on the private sector, except a "yes" under the question about the private sector involvement.
- We welcome the number of meetings with CSO and local communities representatives. However, we would like to know the potential partners who will be involved in the project implementation, including the cofinancing partners (WWF-Zimbabwe, African Parks, University, IFAW).
- The text to explain the KM strategy may be missing. Please, correct.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

The result framework has been improved to include gender aspects

The risk analysis has been improved

The table on page 20 shows the list of stakeholders to be involved in the project and their roles. The stakeholders include private sector actors

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

Secretariat's Comments Yes

Agency's Comments

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

1- Accidentally the Agency flipped the PPG and PPG Agency Fee figures in Portal compared with the allocated amounts in LoE ? please ask the Agency to amend.

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount (\$) 150,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$) 14,250

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	PPG(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total PPG Funding(\$)
UNDP	GET	Zimbabwe	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	100,000	9,500	109,500.00
UNDP	GET	Zimbabwe	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	50,000	4,750	54,750.00
Total PPG Amount						150,000.00	14,250.00	164,250.00

I am pleased to endorse the preparation of the above project proposal with the support of the GEF Implementing Agency(ies) listed below. If approved, the preparation of the proposal will be supported by and the project executed by Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife ¹. I request the GEF Implementing Agency(ies) to provide a copy of the project document before it is submitted to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement / Approval. The total financing from GEFTF being requested for this project is US\$6,385,589, inclusive of project preparation grant (PPG), if any, and Agency fees for project cycle management services associated with the total GEF Project Financing. The financing requested for Zimbabwe is detailed in the table below.

Source of Funds	GEF Agency	Focal Area Source	Amount (in US\$)				Total
			GEF Project Financing	GEF Project Financing Agency Fee	Project Preparation Grant (PPG)	Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Agency Fee	
GEFTF	UNDP	BD	2,162,677	205,454	50,000	4,750	2,422,881
GEFTF	UNDP	LD	3,518,911	334,297	100,000	9,500	3,962,708
Total GEF Resources			5,681,588	539,751	150,000	14,250	6,385,589

Yes

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

This mistake has been corrected

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments Yes

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's CommentsYes

Agency's Comments

8.3 Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

To be checked at the next round

Agency's Comments

Annex B: Endorsements

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

Secretariat's Comments

Yes, the LoE was signed on August 25, 2025 by the current OFP: Mr. Tanyaradzwa Mundoga.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments Yes

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments Yes, with the footnote.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Project Location

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

Secretariat's Comments

Yes, geographical coordinates are already provided for a number of sites: Chizarira National Park, Chete Safari Area, Chirisa-Sengwa, Kavira Forest, and Sijarira Forest.

Agency's Comments

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

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

Secretariat's Comments Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex E: Rio Markers

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

Yes: BD2, LD1 and CCM 1. These ratings fit the intent of the project, at least for BD2 and LD1. Explanations about the selection of CCM1 would be welcome.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

We have changed the CCM selection to 0

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

Addressed.

October 29, 2025

Not fully addressed. See the comment related to the list of keywords in the General Project Information: this list should be the same than those in the annex F. Please, harmonize.

September 12, 2025

Not fully.

A list of key words is available. However, this list does not reflect the full intent of the project. You may wonder to add some keywords, as land degradation, climate change, natural capital, ecosystem services, natural resource management, economic development, tourism, NTFP, local communities, integrated planning, nature-based enterprises,...

Agency's Comments

Agency response 9th January 2026:

- The keywords/taxonomy had been incorrectly entered. This has been corrected. The taxonomy in the project information page and in Annex F are now harmonized.

Agency response 28th October 2025:

Keywords have been added.

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

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

Secretariat's Comments

January 12, 2025

All points have been addressed. The PIF is forwarded to PO for the quality control before technical clearance.

October 30, 2025

The PIF cannot be recommended yet. Please, address the comments above

October 29, 2025

The PIF is in better shape and ready to PO's quality control.

September 12, 2025

The PIF is largely incomplete and cannot be recommended. Please, address the comments above.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

- Develop a project strategy closer to the needs on the ground. Develop the support mechanisms to local communities: capacity building, access to knowledge, access to finance, incentives, role of domestic finance.
- Mainstream the Gender Action Plan in the project framework. Develop specific actions to insure the commitment of women in project decision making mechanisms.
- Justify and explain the role of cofinancing; take this opportunity to develop partnerships, also in view of sustainability.
- Develop synergy and complementarity with other NRM projects and partners.
- Confirm the targets under each Core Indicators.

Agency's Comments

Agency response 28th October 2025:

All the mentioned suggestions have been addressed in the document

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	9/12/2025	9/12/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/29/2025	11/11/2025
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/12/2026	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		