

Living Landscapes: Integrated management for biodiversity conservation through pollinators

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID
12261
Countries
Mexico
Project Name
Living Landscapes: Integrated management for biodiversity conservation through pollinators
Agencies
WWF-US
Date received by PM
12/23/2025
Review completed by PM

Program Manager
Sarah Wyatt
Focal Area
Biodiversity
Project Type
MSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

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

Secretariat's Comments

6/15/2026

Yes.

5/20/2026

No. Thank you for the substantial revisions and reframing.

Please address the following - Please enter each Executing Agency in a separate field; currently they are combined which will show only one EA in the Portal system. Please revise.

3/18/2026

No.

a. This project is not aligned with the programming directions. Overall, this project takes a narrow view of conservation based on the services a group of species provides. It's not clear if they mean pollinators broadly or only those that pollinate crops. Crop pollination is a local biodiversity benefit, which should provide for the cost of undertaking these efforts. For insects, the project is only focusing on one phase in their lifecycle and ignoring the critically important and often tighter dependency on specific species in the larval stage. At the same time, seed dispersers aren't mentioned which would be another necessary phase in the lifecycle. It is not clear that the umbrella species concept would apply to pollinators as providing for their conservation doesn't necessarily provide for many other species.

Therefore, the GEF strategy encourages a more holistic approach to conservation decision-making and action.

The activities which provide support for farmers to change practices and mainstream biodiversity would be eligible for a project. However, many of the activities and the approach overall do not align with the GEF programming directions.

Given the overall concerns, much of this review sheet has not been completed and it has not been sent for Policy review as significant changes are needed.

Agency's Comments

06/15/2026

Thank you for the note. The change has been made in the portal, and each Executing Agency is now entered in a separate field.

04/24/2026

Thank you very much for your detailed feedback. We appreciate the time taken to review the proposal and the constructive comments provided. Following our discussions, we have carefully revised the project to address the concerns raised and to ensure stronger alignment with GEF programming directions.

In the updated proposal, the project no longer adopts a narrow focus on pollinators. Instead, it takes a broader, ecosystem-based and integrated landscape management approach to biodiversity conservation, where pollinators are positioned as a practical entry point rather than the central

objective. The revised design explicitly focuses on restoring ecological functions, enhancing habitat connectivity, and improving ecosystem integrity across productive and natural landscapes.

The role of pollinators has been reframed to reflect their function as indicators of ecosystem health and as a catalytic element to promote biodiversity-friendly practices, rather than as an umbrella group. The project now more clearly recognizes the importance of multiple ecological interactions and processes, including habitat restoration, vegetation diversity, and ecological connectivity, which support a wider range of species and ecosystem functions beyond pollination alone.

Additionally, the revised proposal strengthens its alignment with GEF priorities by:

- Emphasizing systemic drivers of biodiversity loss, including policy misalignment, unsustainable production systems, and knowledge gaps;
- Promoting integrated solutions across policy, practice, and knowledge systems;
- Expanding the scope of conservation outcomes to include broader biodiversity benefits, rather than focusing on a single functional group;
- Reinforcing the role of adaptive management, participatory monitoring, and knowledge integration to support long-term sustainability and scaling.

The components supporting farmers in adopting biodiversity-friendly practices and mainstreaming biodiversity into policies and financing mechanisms have been retained and further strengthened, ensuring they are embedded within a holistic and scalable framework consistent with GEF programming directions.

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

5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

a. See above

b.

Component 1 - For example, it's unclear why protected areas should have management plans that already look at the key species that they are in a position to measure and protect. For 1.1.2, pollinators seem like far too limiting of a lens to approach this work that should be about broader biodiversity and environmental improvements and engagement rather than a piecemeal approach.

Component 2 - While we're very encouraged to see a shorter GEF project, but farm demonstration plots seem like a strategy that requires a longer time horizon for implementation and then support to the farmers implementing them. Technical support in agriculture is routinely identified as key to successful change, and this would be limited with such a timeline. At the same time, hedgerows and trees take real time to implement.

There are a number of other specific concerns. But, because we have requested significant changes to the project overall, it would be better to discuss the overall shift in direction.

Agency's Comments
04/24/2026

Thank you for your detailed feedback and for highlighting these important considerations. Following our exchanges, we have undertaken substantial revisions to the project to address these concerns and ensure stronger alignment with GEF programming directions.

Component 1:

The revised project no longer frames its approach around a narrow focus on pollinators. Instead, it adopts a broader biodiversity and ecosystem-based approach, where biodiversity-supportive criteria aim to strengthen ecological functions, habitat connectivity, and ecosystem integrity across productive and natural landscapes. Pollinators are now positioned as a practical entry point rather than the central focus.

Regarding protected areas and management instruments, the project does not seek to duplicate existing management plans or species-specific approaches. Instead, it focuses on enhancing policy coherence and operational criteria across sectors, particularly by integrating biodiversity-supportive criteria into agricultural and rural development programs and financing mechanisms. This ensures that conservation efforts extend beyond protected areas and address key drivers of biodiversity loss in productive landscapes.

For Output 1.1.2, the scope has been broadened to ensure that financing mechanisms support biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration more holistically, rather than focusing on a single functional group. The revised approach emphasizes aligning financial incentives with biodiversity-positive outcomes at the landscape level.

Component 2:

We recognize the concern regarding the project timeframe. In response, the role of demonstration plots has been refined to function as targeted pilots to test, adapt, and validate biodiversity-friendly practices, rather than as long-term extension systems. The project prioritizes practices that can generate early signals of environmental and productive benefits within the project period, while laying the foundation for longer-term adoption through integration into policy and financing mechanisms under Component 1.

The project also places strong emphasis on capacity building, participatory approaches, and peer-to-peer learning (farmer-to-farmer) to accelerate adoption and reduce perceived risks. Technical support is embedded throughout implementation and linked to existing local actors and institutions to ensure continuity beyond the project duration.

Regarding restoration activities such as hedgerows and tree establishment, the project focuses on initial establishment, enabling conditions, and community agreements for long-term maintenance, recognizing that full ecological maturation extends beyond the project lifecycle. These actions are designed to initiate processes that will continue delivering benefits over time.

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

Secretariat's Comments

5/20/2026

Yes.

During PPG, Under Outcome 3.3, please ensure that best practices related to advancing gender equality/gender perspectives and women's empowerment are documented and widely disseminated for scaling up and replication.

On the M&E budget, please note that average M&E budgets for GEF projects are 5% and we encourage projects to stick close to this number.

3/18/2026

See above

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above

Agency's Comments
04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments
04/24//2026

Adjusted.

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

5/20/2026

Yes.

During PPG and prior to submission for CEO Endorsement, the agency should provide to the GEF Secretariat for review and clearance a description of the stakeholder engagement undertaken, including on the specific groups, including communities, community-based organizations, Indigenous Peoples, and civil society organizations that have been consulted and the dates of these consultations.

In addition, during PPG, given the short timeframe of the project, please describe how this project relates to others in the region and how the work will be carried forward after project close.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

04/24/26

Adjusted.

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

5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

No.

a. ToC - The assumptions identified in the ToC are actually risks to be managed by the project. The assumptions should be focused on the interior logic of the process and are what are being tested as part of the theory of change. If the project takes a direction focusing on agricultural mainstreaming, then understanding the logic of how to get from the activities to the desired behavior change is critical to project success.

Agency's Comments
04/24/2026

Thank you for this important clarification regarding the distinction between assumptions and risks in the Theory of Change. We appreciate the guidance, as it has helped strengthen the internal logic of the project.

Following this comment, we have revised the Theory of Change to ensure that assumptions focus on the causal logic underpinning the pathways of change, rather than on external uncertainties or implementation challenges. Assumptions are now framed as the conditions necessary for the expected behavioral and systemic changes to occur, particularly in relation to the adoption of biodiversity-friendly practices and the integration of biodiversity-supportive criteria into policies and financing mechanisms.

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
5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments
07/24/2026

Adjusted.

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

6/15/2026

Yes.

5/20/2026

No.

c. Section "Coordination and Cooperation with other Initiatives" lacks information - please amend.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

06/15/2026

Thank you for the feedback. The section has been revised and strengthened to provide a clearer description of how the project will coordinate and cooperate with relevant national and international initiatives to maximize synergies, avoid duplication, and enhance sustainability.

Particular emphasis has been placed on coordination with the WWF GEF-8 project From Conflict to Coexistence: Safeguarding Wildlife Corridors in Mexico for Sustainable Development, which is being implemented in complementary landscapes within the Yucatán Peninsula. While the Coexistence Project focuses on strengthening ecological connectivity, reducing human-wildlife conflict, and promoting integrated landscape management across priority biological corridors, the Living Landscapes project will complement these efforts by promoting pollinator-friendly production systems, habitat restoration, and biodiversity conservation within productive landscapes. Both projects share common objectives related to landscape resilience, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land management, creating opportunities for collaboration in stakeholder engagement, landscape governance platforms, restoration activities, knowledge management, and monitoring efforts. The projects will also engage many of the same institutional partners, including SEMARNAT and local stakeholders, allowing for coordinated implementation and the scaling of best practices across the region.

The revised section also describes synergies with PoliLAC (GIZ), particularly regarding policy dialogue, sustainable landscape management approaches, biodiversity-friendly production practices, and knowledge exchange on pollinator conservation and ecosystem restoration. In addition, coordination with national restoration initiatives has been further articulated to align restoration actions, promote native species recovery, and contribute to broader landscape connectivity objectives. The project will also support the implementation of the National Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators (ENCUSP) by generating field-level experiences, strengthening local capacities, and contributing lessons learned that can inform national policy and implementation efforts.

During the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) phase, a more comprehensive mapping of relevant initiatives, stakeholders, coordination arrangements, and opportunities for collaboration will be undertaken and incorporated into the final project design.

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
6/15/2026

Yes.

5/20/2026

No. The contributions to GEBs remain too low for the resources provided. It seems like there should be a value for CI 4 related to farmers adopting different practices for improved management for biodiversity.

1. On CI 1, the project explicitly operates within the Puuc Biocultural State Reserve and the Balam-Beh Biological Corridor. If any project activities directly target management effectiveness within these protected or conserved areas, CI 2 should be included.
2. On CI 4: The Balam-Beh Biological Corridor is a named target geography. If the 255 connectivity units being rehabilitated contribute to a formally recognized corridor, CI 4 (area of biological corridors strengthened) should be assessed for inclusion.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments
06/15/2026

Thank you for the feedback. The GEF Core Indicators have been thoroughly reviewed, and the proposal has been adjusted to more accurately reflect the expected Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) of the project. Under this revised approach, pollinators are considered not only as a conservation priority, but also as a catalyst for landscape-level transformation that delivers broader biodiversity benefits through habitat restoration, ecological connectivity, and biodiversity-friendly production systems.

In response to this recommendation, the following adjustments have been made:

Indicator 1.2 ? Terrestrial Protected Areas Under Improved Management Effectiveness

This indicator has been incorporated, covering a total area of 1,408,876 hectares across four Natural Protected Areas located within the project landscape and coordination. Project interventions will contribute to improved management effectiveness by strengthening ecological connectivity between protected areas and surrounding productive landscapes, restoring habitats that support biodiversity and pollinator populations, improving biodiversity monitoring and information management, and strengthening stakeholder participation in conservation actions. These interventions are expected to contribute to improvements in METT

elements related to conservation planning, habitat condition, ecological connectivity, biodiversity monitoring, and stakeholder engagement, thereby supporting the achievement of the conservation objectives of the protected areas.

Indicator 4 ? Area of Landscapes Under Improved Practices

This indicator has also been incorporated in response to the recommendation and includes the relevant sub-indicators under improved landscape management practices.

A total area of 465 hectares is proposed, encompassing forest habitats, productive landscapes, and community territories where biodiversity-friendly productive practices, restoration actions, and ecological connectivity measures will be implemented. These interventions are designed to improve habitat quality, strengthen landscape connectivity, and enhance biodiversity conservation outcomes beyond the boundaries of protected areas. The area reported under this indicator may be further expanded during the PPG phase if the Balam Beh and Puuc State Reserve corridors are selected for project support.

Sub-indicator 4.1 covers 265 hectares within the Yucat?n Peninsula where management interventions will be implemented to improve habitat quality, strengthen ecological connectivity, and enhance biodiversity conservation outcomes. Activities will focus on the establishment and maintenance of ecological corridors and native vegetation patches through the production of native plant species in forest nurseries, site preparation, planting, maintenance, monitoring, and community-based management arrangements that support the long-term conservation of restored habitats.

These interventions will improve the ecological functionality of the landscape by increasing habitat availability for pollinators and other native species, strengthening connectivity between natural and productive areas, and contributing to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

Sub-indicator 4.3 ? Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Sub-indicator 4.3 covers 200 hectares of agricultural landscapes where biodiversity-friendly and sustainable land management practices will be implemented through demonstration plots and producer engagement activities. Practices will include the establishment of native flowering vegetation, maintenance of vegetation cover, reduction of pesticide use, conservation of ecological connectivity features, implementation of agroecological management approaches, diversification of productive systems, and the establishment of nesting and refuge habitats for pollinators.

These interventions will strengthen the sustainable management of productive landscapes by reducing pressures on biodiversity, improving habitat quality within agricultural systems, enhancing ecological connectivity, and promoting the adoption of sustainable production practices that contribute to biodiversity conservation, ecosystem resilience, and long-term productivity.

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

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

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

6/15/2026

Yes.

5/20/2026

No.

1. The Innovation dimension should be revised. Given that the project proposes a novel pollinator-based management model, community digital biodiversity monitoring tools, and integration into national financing mechanisms, specific innovation risks should be articulated under Institutional/Policy, Technology, and Financial/Business Model sub-categories. Please restructure the risk section accordingly.
2. Innovation dimension specificity: Risks must be tied to the project's specific innovative elements, for example, the scalability of the pollinator-as-lever approach, the reliability and uptake of the prototype digital monitoring tool, or the risk that NAFIN financing guidelines are not successfully adjusted. Please beef up under this dimension.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

06/15/2026

Thank you for the feedback. The Innovation Risk Dimension has been substantially revised to more clearly articulate the risks associated with the project's innovative elements across the institutional and policy, technological, and financial/business model categories.

Institutional and Policy Risk: The section now includes risks associated with the replication and scaling of the project's innovative approaches beyond the target landscape, including limited prioritization by government institutions, budget constraints, differing environmental and socio-economic conditions across states, and potential resistance to adopting new

approaches. Additional risks related to staff turnover, changes in political priorities, limited institutional capacity, and challenges in integrating project-generated tools and recommendations into formal planning, regulatory, and budgetary frameworks have also been incorporated. Corresponding mitigation measures have been strengthened, including institutional engagement from project inception, formal governance arrangements, designation of focal points, capacity-building activities, and alignment of project outputs with institutional mandates and policy priorities.

Technological Risk: The section now reflects risks associated with the development, adoption, and long-term sustainability of the proposed monitoring prototype, including potential challenges related to user uptake, data quality, integration into existing monitoring workflows, and post-project maintenance. The proposal clarifies that the tool is intended to complement, rather than replace, existing monitoring systems. Mitigation measures include a technical feasibility assessment during project preparation, pilot testing with end users, evaluation of opportunities to adapt existing platforms, and formal agreements with the anchor institution regarding technical specifications, ownership, and maintenance arrangements.

Financial and Business Model Risk: The section has been revised to address risks associated with the adoption of biodiversity-friendly practices and the incorporation of conservation criteria into financial mechanisms. These include reluctance by financial institutions to modify existing procedures, lengthy internal approval processes, competing institutional priorities, and the possibility that producer adoption may be slower than anticipated or initially dependent on incentives. Mitigation measures have been strengthened through the inclusion of participatory cost-benefit analyses, targeted engagement with institutions most likely to adopt the proposed approaches, facilitation of access to adjusted financing mechanisms, and the use of non-monetary incentives and communication strategies to encourage long-term behavioral change and scaling.

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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

5/20/2026

Yes.

c. The project includes working to improve national policies as well as the small-scale lending of national banks.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments
04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments
04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
5/20/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments
04/24/2026

Adjusted.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments
5/20/2026

Yes.

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

Secretariat's Comments
6/15/2026

Yes.

5/20/2026

No. It is well noted that Agency has provided a stakeholder table. However, please provide information on the specific stakeholders, including communities, community-based organizations and civil society organizations that have been consulted and the dates of these consultations.

Agency's Comments
06/15/2026

Thank you for the feedback. A stakeholder list has been included in the project document and reflected in the portal in Table No. 1: Roles and Responsibilities of Project Stakeholders, located after the Project Description section. This table identifies the key stakeholders involved in the project, including communities, community-based organizations (CBOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs), along with their respective roles, responsibilities, and contributions.

It is important to note that, given the project is currently at the Project Identification Form (PIF) stage, the stakeholder consultation process is still ongoing. A more detailed account of specific consultations conducted, including dates, methodologies, and outcomes, will be documented and provided during the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) stage, in accordance with the level of detail expected at that phase.

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments
3/18/2026

Yes.

Agency's Comments
Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments
6/15/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

No, while the amount is fine, it should be classified as BD 1-4 (mainstreaming) and not BD 1-1 (protected areas).

Agency's Comments
06/15/2026

Thank you. It has been adjusted.

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments
SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments
SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's 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 Comments
3/18/2026

Yes.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments
6/15/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments
04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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
6/15/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

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

Secretariat's Comments

6/15/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Yes. Due to the project name change, a revised Letter of Endorsement reflecting the updated project title has been uploaded to the GEF Portal.

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

Secretariat's Comments

6/15/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Yes, We have updated the letter and follow the format.

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 CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Project Location

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

Secretariat's Comments

3/18/2026

Yes.

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

6/15/2026

Yes. Thank you for the thorough response.

5/29/2026

No.

i. An Environmental and Social section of the Key Risks table said that "a social and land tenure and ownership assessment will be carried out at all demonstration plot sites and critical habitat rehabilitation sites." Please clarify whether this assessment will be conducted during PPG or project activities and integrate this assessment as part of the project or as actions during the PPG.

ii. Please ensure obtaining Free, Prior and Informed Consent from Indigenous Peoples in the project area about the project design and integrating their priority, needs, and governance are integrated into the project design during the PPG.

iii. PIF said that "local communities, ejidos, and civil society organizations will be central actors in the adoption of biodiversity-friendly practices." Please consider local communities not only as beneficiaries, but also as project partners and a part of governance mechanism of the project throughout the project implementation, especially on Component 2 and 3.

iv. Please also consider respecting Indigenous Peoples and local communities? governance in the project and supporting local communities? capacity building as a part of the project.

v. Please consider incorporating monitoring indicators related to a) integration of traditional and local governance, and traditional and local knowledge, b) capacity building for local communities in the project, c) securing land tenure, and d) socioeconomic benefits to local communities during the PPG.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments 06/15/2026

Thank you for these valuable recommendations. The project recognizes the central role of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, ejidos, producer organizations, and community-based organizations in achieving long-term biodiversity conservation outcomes. The PIF has been revised and the recommendations will be further operationalized during the PPG phase through the development of the project's safeguards instruments, stakeholder engagement processes, and monitoring framework.

i. Social and Land Tenure Assessment

The project confirms that a social and land tenure desktop assessment will be conducted during the PPG phase and will inform the development of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). The assessment will cover the proposed demonstration plot sites and habitat restoration areas and will analyze land tenure arrangements, resource use rights, community governance systems, stakeholder relationships, and potential social risks.

The assessment will be used to inform site selection, stakeholder engagement processes, safeguards instruments, and implementation arrangements, ensuring that project activities are consistent with existing land tenure arrangements, customary governance systems, and resource-use rights. The findings will also support the identification of culturally appropriate engagement approaches and risk mitigation measures, helping to strengthen community participation and ownership throughout project implementation.

ii. Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and Indigenous Peoples' Priorities

The project acknowledges the presence of Indigenous Peoples within the project landscape and confirms that FPIC processes will be undertaken, where applicable, during the PPG phase in accordance with WWF safeguards requirements and GEF policies. An Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) will be developed to guide engagement processes and ensure that Indigenous Peoples' priorities, needs, customary governance systems, traditional knowledge, and development aspirations are reflected in the final project design, implementation arrangements, and monitoring framework.

iii. Local Communities as Project Partners and Governance Actors

The project fully agrees with this recommendation. Indigenous Peoples, local communities, ejidos, producer organizations, and community-based organizations will not be considered solely as beneficiaries of project interventions. They will be recognized as key project partners and active participants in project governance, planning, implementation, participatory monitoring, adaptive management, and decision-making processes, particularly under Components 2 and 3. Community participation and leadership will be reflected through community agreements, participatory monitoring networks, restoration activities, knowledge generation, and representation within project coordination and governance mechanisms.

iv. Respect for Indigenous and Local Governance Systems and Community Capacity Building

The project is committed to respecting and strengthening Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' governance systems, customary institutions, and decision-making processes. During the PPG phase, project activities will be further refined to ensure culturally appropriate implementation approaches that build upon existing governance structures and local institutions. Capacity building will be integrated throughout project implementation, including training, technical assistance, participatory monitoring, adaptive management, biodiversity-friendly production practices, restoration activities, and leadership development, enabling communities to play a central role in project implementation and long-term sustainability.

v. Monitoring Indicators

The recommendation is accepted. During the PPG phase, the project's Monitoring and Evaluation framework will be strengthened to include indicators related to: (a) the integration of Indigenous and local governance systems and traditional knowledge; (b) community participation, leadership, and capacity building; (c) land tenure and resource governance considerations, where relevant; and (d) socioeconomic benefits generated for Indigenous Peoples and local communities. These indicators will complement existing biodiversity, gender-responsive, and project performance indicators and will help assess the project's contribution to inclusive governance, local empowerment, and the long-term sustainability of project outcomes.

Given that the project does not seek to modify land tenure arrangements or resource rights, monitoring will focus on understanding and respecting existing land tenure and governance systems and ensuring that project implementation is consistent with local governance structures and safeguards requirements.

04/24/2026

Updated.

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

Secretariat's Comments

6/15/2026

Yes.

5/20/2026

No. Without more discussion about how the project design has been influenced by CCA needs, it should not be a 1 for CCA.

3/18/2026

No. Even if the project changes substantially, it's difficult to say that this project should be a 1 for both CCM and CCA and if this is a biodiversity project then biodiversity should be a 2.

Agency's Comments

06/15/2026

Following this recommendation, the Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) score has been removed from the project.

04/24/2026

Thank you for your comment. This was an oversight on our part, and we have made the necessary adjustments to ensure the project is correctly aligned with the relevant focal area priorities.

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments

6/15/2026

Yes.

3/18/2026

See above.

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Adjusted.

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

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

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

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

Secretariat's Comments

6/15/2026

Yes.

Please note the information requested to be submitted and approved during PPG.

5/20/2026

Not at this time. Thank you for the substantial revisions, but a few issues remain. The most significant is the low hectare number for the core indicators.

3/18/2026

No, substantial revisions to the project are required. The GEF Secretariat would be happy to discuss options to move forward.

Agency's Comments

04/24/2026

Thank you for your feedback and for offering to discuss options to move the project forward. Following our discussions, we have undertaken substantial revisions to the project to address the concerns raised and ensure alignment with GEF programming directions. We would welcome any further feedback and remain available for continued engagement to refine the proposal as needed.

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

Secretariat's Comments

Stakeholder engagement:

During PPG and prior to submission for CEO Endorsement, the agency should provide to the GEF Secretariat for review and clearance a description of the stakeholder engagement undertaken, including on the specific groups, including communities, community-based organizations, Indigenous Peoples, and civil society organizations that have been consulted and the dates of these consultations.

Agency's Comments

Review Dates

PIF Review

Agency Response

First Review

Additional Review (as necessary)

Additional Review (as necessary)

Additional Review (as necessary)

Additional Review (as necessary)