Enabling environment at policy, field and market levels for Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in Serbia

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10814

Countries

Serbia

Project Name

Enabling environment at policy, field and market levels for Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in Serbia

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

4/22/2021

Review completed by PM

9/8/2021
Program Manager

Ulrich Apel
Focal Area

Land Degradation
Project Type

MSP

CEO Approval Request

Part I ? Project Information

1. Focal area elements. Is the project aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as indicated in Table A and as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

09/08/2021: CORRECTION REQUEST:

Expected implementation start (08/02/2201) is now already past ? please amend.

09/16/2021: Has been amended.

Cleared

Agency Response
17 Sep 2021

No response required

16/09/2021

Point taken. Start date has been amended in the portal to 1 November 2021.

Aug 2021

No response required

2. Project description summary. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

4. Co-financing. Are the confirmed amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Not fully.

As this appears to be a one-step approval we will need all co-financing letters, specifying the type and amount. Only FAO co-financing letter is provided.

08/31/2021: Co-financing letters have been uploaded.

09/08/2021: Correction requests:

(i) We did not find the translation of the letter from Pokret Gorana ? if not yet done, it needs to be translated to English.

(ii) Co-financiers from Academia should not be categorized as CSOs. If there is no drop-down menu item for ?Academia? please categorize them as ?Other?.

09/16/2021: Addressed by uploading letter and using "other" category.

Cleared

Agency Response

17 Sep 2021

No response required

16/09/2021

Point taken. We have uploaded the translation of the letter from Pokret Gorana. Additionally, cofinanciers from Academia have been categorized as ?Other?.

Sept 9 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

Cofinancing letter have been uploaded

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

05/13/2021: Comments on the budget:

- Please provide a TOR for PMU - Technical advisor as part of the agency project document. The PMU - technical advisor is charged to project components and PMC, which would need to be reflected in the TOR.

08/31/2021: TOR included in project document.

09/08/2021: REVISION REQUEST for the TOR:

After carefully reviewing the TOR, we noticed that the PMU Technical Advisor is proportionally charged to the components and PMC ? we understand that the PMU Technical Advisor will be more dedicated to technical tasks and less to management tasks mainly because the coordination of this project will be carried out by the Project Coordinator of ID 9089, which is currently under implementation. However, the PIR of project ID 9089 shows that this project started implementation in February 2018 and it is expected to finalized by December 2021. Hence, what is presented in the TOR?s seems unrealistic. To make it realistic, please amend the TOR?s by removing the mention of the joint implementation with a project that is soon to be finalized. Given the limited resources allocated to PMC and considering that the functions included in the TORs reflect the contribution of the PMU Technical Advisor to the project?s components, there is no need to modify anything in budget ? just in the TORs.

09/16/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

17 Sep 2021

No response required

16/09/2021

The Mid Term Review for project GEFID 9089 recommends that the project be extended at least for one year to finalize project activities, consolidate results, and ensure project sustainability. A PSC meeting will take place on 29 Sept. 2021, and it?s expected that project GEFID 9089 will be extended until June 30, 2023. We expect both projects to overlap for more than half of the proposed project?s lifetime.

Nonetheless, TORs have been modified to remove any reference to GEFID 9089 and to reflect the technical nature of the technical advisor position.

Sept 9 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

The proposed project will be implemented in collaboration with the GEFID 9089 ?Contribution of Sustainable Forest Management to a Low Emission and Resilient Development? project. The Coordinator for GEFID 9089 will act as overall coordinator for the proposed project given the complementary nature of both prjoect. The PMU Technical Advisor will contribute 25% of its time to coordination activities, and the rest of the time to technical activities, including links to the GCF project under preparation with the government of Serbia. The TORs have been included in the Project Document.

STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

SCCF (Adaptation or Tech Transfer)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

6. Project Preparation Grant. If PPG is requested in Table E.1, has its advanced programming and utilized been accounted for in Annex C of the document?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a - this is a one step MSP.

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

7. Non-Grant Instrument. If this an NGI, are the expected reflows indicated in Annex D?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

8. Core Indicators. Are the targeted core indicators in Table E calculated using the methodology in the prescribed guidelines? (GEF/C.54/Infxxx)

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Not fully.

- The set of selected core indicators is not fully in line with the objective and activities presented in Table B and with the Rio Marker CCM-1. A target for restoration must be selected under indicator 3 (component 2 is piloting FLR). Depending on the scale of the pilot, a CCM-target may be necessary. If the area is small and CCM benefits negligible, there is no need for a target, however, in this case, please reset CCM Rio Markers to "0", including the adaptation marker.

- The scope of the project is very small even for the comparable low investment. Please explain how the targets of 200 ha and 50 beneficiaries have been derived at and/or set targets that are commensurate with the project investment.

08/31/2021: Not fully

Table B indicates that the target of 37,104 ha is SLM in production systems. Therefore, the target should be listed under 4.3 "Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems" - it is wrongly listed under 4.1.

09/08/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
17 Sep 2021

No response required

Sept 9, 2021

Noted. SLM target has been moved to Core Indicator 4.3

Aug 2021

- The CC Markers have been set back to 0. The project will be implemented in conjunction with the GCF proposal, this is, the tested FLR approaches will be shared and applied within the framework of a follow-up GCF project currently under development, where more than 20,000 ha of degraded and deforested landscapes are planned to be restored. These hectares will be accounted for in the GCF project.

-The project will develop Forest Management Plans for an area equal to 37,104 ha (equal to 35,715 ha in Dimitrovgrad, where 63% of the lands are private, and 1,392 ha in Zrenanjin. These have been included into the Core Indicators and will be the basis for upscaling using co-financing.

At the same time, the project will have direct interventions (with project funds) in approximately 200 ha. The area is a rough estimate of potential areas for piloting the FLR approach in the two target municipalities and the number of 50 beneficiaries is a rough estimate of the households to be involved for the 200 ha. The figures have been derived from the meetings held in the two target municipalities during the formulation of the project. These pilot activities will be upscaled with GCF resources.

9. Project taxonomy. Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as in Table G?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Part II ? Project Justification

1. Project Description. Is there sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Not fully.

Context has a few missing elements:
-The current situation as it relates to COVID impacts, including risks and opportunities for green recovery.
- Climate change context including projections and scenarios, as relevant.
- In addition, in reference to ?The mountainous pilot landscape is an area that covers devastated forest and abundant eroded grasslands. The area is affected by mining and industrial sites in the surroundings?- what is the prospect for continued mining in the area? How will this be handled given the plan to rehabilitate the landscape?

08/31/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
Sept 7, 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

(a) regarding COVID, the following text was added:

The national -food system and rural economy of Serbia has been affected by COVID-19 in two fundamental ways:

1. While it disrupted food value chains, disrupted logistics, decreased demand and generated markets uncertainties, it also brought alternative business models - e-commerce, a focus on short VC, innovation and collaboration. On balance, it highlighted the importance of resilience and risk management capacities.

2. It strained the livelihoods of rural population, particularly of vulnerable groups such as women, the elderly, informal workers and small holders, due to difficulties in taking advantage of emerging income and market opportunities. As such, COVID-19 highlighted the important role that information flows and inclusive processes and policies represent for vulnerable groups in crisis situations.

Containment measures, notably restrictions of movement, were the governmental measure that most affected producers and food supply chains. They affected not only overall routines of daily life but also governance and production cycles. In retrospect, products predominantly sold on domestic markets experienced a decreased demand due to the temporary closure of green markets and the HoReCa industry, which added to the difficulties in logistics that were experiencing functional value chains. Negative impacts of Covid 19 are mostly recorded for perishable vegetables, strawberries, fresh meat, meat products, fish, milk and dairy products and live young animals (lambs and piglets).

The proposals for program interventions here described are aligned to national development policies and strategies, as well as the UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID19:

1.?build back better? - promotion of sustainable, innovative and green development that supports the country?s strategic priorities. This includes improvements in policy measures, data collection, communication and support to VC organisation and participation in social dialogue for rural population. It particularly entails rethinking governance and improving dialogue processes.

2. ?leaving no one behind? which in Serbian context points at the need for inclusive and more equitable recovery response, but also enabling better understanding and targeting the needs for poverty reduction and improved quality of life in rural areas.

(b) regarding climate change, the following text was added to the PRODOC

The analysis of the local meteorological data [Meteorological yearbook of the Republic Hydrometereological Service of Serbia (2020)] shows that Climate Change has already impacted Serbia. Both annual average temperature and annual maximum temperature are showing significant increasing trends in the period 1960-2020 (AVG temperature + 0.3 ?C per decade and MAX Temperature +0.5?C per decade). Heat waves increased by 20 days annually in the period 2008-2017 period and up to 30 days in lowlands and western parts, and extreme heat waves by 2-3 days per year [Third National

Communication, 2020]. The 2017 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) presented by Serbia estimated that the total damage caused by extreme climate and weather conditions since 2005 exceed 5 billion euros, and that more than 70 percent of the losses are associated with drought and high temperatures.

According to the National Communications and NDC, the most vulnerable sectors in Serbia are agriculture, forestry, hydrology, human health and biodiversity. Average long-term trends in river discharges (excluding large rivers) is negative with significant spatial distribution. These changes are expected to bring problems related to water availability, quality and intensity and frequency of floods and droughts. Forest ecosystems have been significantly affected by droughts, insect invasions and forest fires. In the long run, climate change may transform Serbian forest ecosystems, altering their composition and distribution. Adaptation measures for the forestry sector include (i) the reduction of biotic and abiotic disturbance through building the adaptive capacity of forests (eg. Building fire protection measures, early treatment of pests, management of thinning in conifer plantations, promotion of mixed and uneven aged forests), (ii) selection of adequate tree species, provenances, populations and genotypes that show higher tolerance to altered climate, (iii) introducing the practice of adaptive management of forests, (iv) more intense rehabilitation of degraded lands by afforestation, (v) prevention of erosion and landslides, and (vi) improved water resource management, among others.

Regarding agriculture, climate change is expected to affect the spatial variation in agroclimatic conditions, the conditions for plant breeding and selection suitable varieties, as well as the phenology of plants. Some scenarios predict reductions in yields (eg. Corn, maize and wheat), particularly for agriculture without irrigation. Soil erosion is a problem that affects roughly 80% of the agricultural soil in Serbia. Soil erosion can be exacerbated by climate change, particularly under conditions of extreme rainfall combined with bare soil in steep areas. Adaptation measures for the agriculture sector include (i) improved water management, (ii) breeding of more productive cultivars, (iii) changing cultivation and sowing times in field operations, (iv) introducing and breeding drought and heat resistant cultivars, (v) introducing minimum tillage or reduced soil cultivation. The Second National Communication provides a detailed list of adaptation measures to reduce risk from climate change, to improve the enabling environment, to ensure adequate monitoring and to improve capacity building and awareness.

While Serbian greenhouse gas emissions (67,148 Gg in 2014) are low compared to the World Total (10 million Gg), the country has nonetheless committed to reduce its emissions in accordance to its capabilities, national circumstances and development

goals. Serbia committed in its INDC to reduce its emissions by 9.8% by 2030 relative to 1990.

(c) regarding mining, it was clarified that there are abandoned coal mines in the project area

As stated in the ?Tables and pictures: Land cover and land degradation types in pilot site: Central Serbia, Pirotsky, Dimitrovgrad? we are talking about ?Abandoned coal mines have not been re-cultivated (small area with mine tailings)? and in view of phasing out fossil fuels in the coming decades, there will be no revival of mining in the area.

2. Project Description. Is there an elaboration on how the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects were derived?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Aug 2021

No response required

3. Project Description. Is there an elaboration on the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there more clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Aug 2021

No response required

4. Project Description. Is there an elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

5. Project Description. Is the incremental reasoning, contribution from the baseline, and co-financing clearly elaborated?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

6. Project Description. Is there a better elaboration on the project?s expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Not fully.

- The project makes reference to: "? strengthening of key value-chains will lead to improved income generation opportunities and more diversified livelihoods for around 50 people (of which 30% are women) in the target landscape". The value chain activities have been mentioned in different sections of the document, however this has not been clearly incorporated in Project Description.

- Please explain how benefits estimate has been derived at. See also comment above and bring scope of the project in line with scope of Table B.

08/31/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
Sept 7, 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

-The following text was added to section 10 (Benefits):

The proposed project is being developed in parallel with a GCF proposal focusing on Forelst Landscape Restoration (FLR). The proposed project will test FLR activities to be upscaled by the GCF proposal. The pilot area (200 ha) is a rough estimate of potential areas for piloting the FLR approach in the two target municipalities, and will reach a target of 50 households to be involved for the 200 ha. The FLR approaches tested in these 200 ha will be shared and applied within the framework of a follow-up GCF project currently under development, where more than 20,000 ha of degraded and deforested landscapes are planned to be restored. The latter hectares will be accounted for in the GCF project.

?

7. Project Description. Is there a better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

It is noted that the project intends to prepare Serbia for a larger GCF investment to scale FLR in Serbia.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

8. Project Map and Coordinates. Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

9. Child Project. If this is a child project, an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

10. Stakeholders. Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase? Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Not fully.

How will the inputs and views of the local communities feed into the expert group process? We note ?The local level working group will be closely linked with the national level expert working group to ensure alignment and mutually beneficial leveraging?. However how will this happen? Will a local level representative be included in the national level expert group? Please clarify.

08/31/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
Sept 7, 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

A local level representation in the national level expert group will be ensured by appointing/assigning two delegates (male and female) from the two target municipalities to participate in the national level expert group.

11. Gender equality and women?s empowerment. Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

12. Private sector engagement. If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

13. Risk. Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Not fully.

- COVID-19 related risks should be included in the risk table.
- More details on the specific climate change risks and mitigation measures should also be included as appropriate.

08/31/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
Sept 7, 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

-Covid-19 ristks have been included in the risk table

-More detail has been provided for climate risks

14. Coordination. Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

15. Consistency with national priorities. Has the project described the consistency of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

16. Knowledge management. Is the proposed ?Knowledge Management Approach? for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

17. Monitoring and Evaluation. Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

18. Benefits. Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Clarification request

No adaptation benefits are described. If the project tags itself to CC-A "1" Rio-Marker, adaptation benefits need to described. Please address.

08/31/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
Sept 7, 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

As discussed in question 8 above, the Rio Markers have been set to zero.

19. Annexes:
Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021: Not fully

08/31/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response
Sept 7, 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

Comments on the results framework have been addressed. TORs included

20. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS):
Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

05/13/2021: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

Aug 2021

No response required

Project Results Framework

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

05/13/2021: The annexed Project Results Framework should include the GEB related targets. Please address.

08/31/2021: Addressed.

09/08/2021: ADDITIONAL REQUEST:

The Project Results Framework also needs to be inserted in Annex A in Portal ? please include.

09/16/2021: Only the heading of the columns appears in the portal. Please double check and re-upload if necessary.

09/21/2021: After consultation with IT, the issue was fixed in the portal.

Cleared

Agency Response

17 Sep 2021

Logframe uploaded again.

16/09/2021

Point taken. Results Framework has been inserted in Annex A in the portal.

Sept 7, 2021

No response required

Aug 2021

GEB Targets included in Results Framework

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a - this is a one-step MSP.

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Council comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a - this is a one-step MSP.

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

STAP comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a - this is a one-step MSP.

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

CSOs comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a - this is a one-step MSP.

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request Included in portal submission.

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Part III ? Country and Agency Endorsements

1. Country endorsements. Has the project/program been endorsed by the country?s GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
05/13/2021:

Yes. OFP letter filed in documents section.

Cleared

Agency Response
Aug 2021

No response required

Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
n/a
Agency Response

Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response
Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

1. RECOMMENDATION.

Is CEO endorsement/approval recommended?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

05/13/2021: No. Please address comments made in the review.

08/31/2021: No. Please correct the entry in the core indicator table as per review comment.

09/08/2021: No. Please refer to the correction requests made in this review.

09/16/2021: Please double check the upload of the Project Logframe in Annex A.

09/21/2021: Yes. Program Manager recommends CEO approval.

Review Dates

	1SMSP CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	**5/13/2021**	**8/20/2021**
Additional Review (as necessary)	**8/31/2021**	**9/7/2021**
Additional Review (as necessary)	**9/8/2021**	
Additional Review (as necessary)	**9/16/2021**	
Additional Review (as necessary)	**9/21/2021**	

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

This MSP aims at improving the enabling framework for LDN in Serbia. It will promote FLR and LDN practices for the recovery and restoration of prioritized landscapes that sustain environmental services and food security and establish support mechanisms for achieving and monitoring LDN at the national level. The project will generate a range of global environmental benefits in the land degradation focal area with co-benefits related to climate change mitigation through improved land use. The global environmental benefits include 200 ha of area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems, and will reach 50 direct beneficiaries with improved access to services for FLR adoption, at least 50% are women. This pilot activities will be upscaled by a GCF project on 20,000 ha. In addition, strengthening of key value-chains will lead to improved income generation opportunities and more diversified livelihoods for around 50 people (of which 30% are women) in the target landscape.

The proposals for program interventions here described are aligned to national development policies and strategies, as well as the UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID19: (1) build back better - promotion of sustainable, innovative and green development that supports the country?s strategic priorities. This includes improvements in policy measures, data collection, communication and support to VC organization and participation in social dialogue for rural population. It particularly entails rethinking governance and improving dialogue processes; and (2) leaving no one behind - which strives for more inclusive and equitable recovery response, enabling better understanding and targeting the needs for poverty reduction and improved quality of life in rural areas.