Generating opportunities for livelihoods and biodiversity through participatory governance of natural resources and the economic diversification of the communities of the central forest corridor of Honduras

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11213

Countries

Honduras

Project Name

Generating opportunities for livelihoods and biodiversity through participatory governance of natural resources and the economic diversification of the communities of the central forest corridor of Honduras

Agencies

FAO
Date received by PM

6/27/2024
Review completed by PM

8/1/2024
Program Manager

Pascal Martinez
Focal Area

Multi Focal Area
Project Type

FSP

PIF
CEO

Part I - General Project Information

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 30, 2024:

The ICF is not explicitely mentioned as executing partner in the Institutional Arrangement section whereas it is mentioned in the project Information table. Please clarify and ensure the information provided is consistent throughout the Portal.

October 30, 2024:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

Clarified. Note that the ICF is not considered as an executing partner, its role will be of coordination and technical support in the implementation with the operational partner which will be SERNA's Project Management Unit (PMU). ICF coordination and technical support will be provided in several

outcomes focusing on the implementation of Nature Based Solution (NbS) actions in the OECMs (component 2, Output 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3).

Agreed in several national meetings of the PPG phase, ICF will play a key role as part of the Project Steering Committee (see paragraph 96). Section B.1 on institutional arrangement states that SERNA will act as the sole lead implementing agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the project outputs entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions of the Operational Partnership Agreement signed with FAO. As the project's OP, it is accountable to FAO for the timely implementation of agreed project results, operational oversight of implementation activities, timely reporting and effective use of GEF resources for the intended purposes and in line with FAO and GEF policy requirements. Paragraph 57 states that SERNA will work in coordination with organizations such as ICF, UNAG, Indigenous Organizations, Organizations and Association of Municipalities, to achieve the expected project results.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 30, 2024:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

2. Project Summary.

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

b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project and is it within the max. of 250 words?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 30, 2024:

The summary is a bit long but it is clear and includes the elements of the projects. Cleared.

Agency Response

3. Project Description Overview

a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?

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?

c) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?

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

e) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for MSP) or 5% (for FSP)? If above, is the justification acceptable?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 30, 2024:

a) Yes, cleared.

b)

b.1. It's unclear how the first outcome, which is about enhancing capacities, can result with the of 1,000 has of land restored (GEF core indicator 3). Shouldn't is be more relevant under the component 2 which is about the implementation on the ground? Please clarify and amend if needed.

b.2. The outcome 1.2 includes one output. Will the only proposal for a PES mechanism to promote biodiversity and ecosystem conservation with technical support lead to an increase of financial support and participation in conservation? Please clarify, including in the component description, and consider adding eventually outputs as needed.

b.3 Activities related to OECMs are only considered in component 1 for their identification, monitoring and inclusion in national or regional policy frameworks. OECMs are not considered in component 2. Does it mean that the project will not support their implementation/improvement somehow? Please clarify.

b.4. In component 1, one identified indicator is 38,059.59 ha of landscapes under improved practices. This area is not consistent with the core indicator table, the explanation under this table and the project result framework. Please carify and ensure the information provided is consistent throughout the Portal description.

b.5 Please clarify what CLPI and FESM mean in the components description as those acronyms are only mentioned twice in the Portal without any explanation.

c) Gender issues are not fully considered in the project description. Please address the following: ensure that the policies, tools and plans are gender-responsive (e.g. Outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.5 and 1.2.1); that women and women?s organization are engaged and participate in decision making processes and structures, Output 1.1.3 and 1.1.4, as well as in knowledge sharing and training activities (e.g. Output 1.1.6). As good practice, please connect each activity of the GAP to the outcomes and outputs of the project description. Due to the interesting participatory approach of this project, please ensure that KM integrates gender dimensions, best practices and lessons learned which can be shared widely and during project implementation, the PIRs, the MTE and the TE should include a review and reporting of the GAP and relevant gender dimensions of the project.

d) Yes, the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC are almost proportional (respectively 5% and 4.7%). Cleared.

e) Yes, the PMC equal to 5% for FSP. Cleared.

October 30, 2024:

b.5. CLPI and FESM are still mentioned in the Project Description Overview table and FESM is also mentioned in the Annex C: Project results Framework, both without any explanation. Please clarify.

c) Thank you for the strengthened gender consideration. Cleared.

November 15, 2024:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

b.1 Dully noted. Core Indicator 3 is now associated with Component 2. Component 1 focuses on capacity building and institutional strengthening. These changes are developed throughout the text, including the ToC and the Results Framework, respectively.

b.2 Done. The outcome has been revised with main stakeholders and two outputs were included. Please, see that the following activities have been added throughout the document: 1.2.2 implemented a pilot project in one of the potential OECMs to contain carbon credit estimation, and 1.2. 3 inclusions of the carbon credit initiative in the carbon markets based on current national legislation.

b.3 The narrative of component 2 has been reinforced. At the same time, the implementation of nature-based solutions practices for on-the-ground application in OECMs has been contemplated and included in the budget. The issue of OECMs is new in the country, and requires the development of an enabling environment, prior to the legal declaration of OECMs. The project will focus on the development of the institutional, technical and legal framework for OECMs and the implementation of NBS with specific criteria for measuring biodiversity within productive activities and conservation efforts, including the consideration of 30 potential OECMs and support to the government for the creation of the policy and regulatory framework for the recognition of these areas. Formalization of the OECMs will occur at a later stage, which will be led by the Biodiversity Direction of the Secretariat of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA).

b.4 Clarified. 163,185.86 is the general number of hectares under improved practices. 38,059 of these hectares appeared in Component 1, linked to the OECM and 125,126.27 corresponded to Component 2, linked to the NBS. Now all is concentrated in Component 2.

b.5 Clarified and corrected in the document. FPIC refers to the Free, Prior and Informed Consent that is carried out in consultation with indigenous peoples. FESM refers to the Framework for Environmental and Social Management which refers to environmental and social safeguards.

c. Done. Outputs 1.1.1,1.1.5,1.2.1,1.13 and 1.1.4 have been modified to ensure that they are linked to gender-responsive activities. In the case of output 1.1.6, it already contemplates the gender approach. The schedule of activities included in the Gender Plan (Annex K) presents a column linking each activity to a project output.

14/11/2024

b.5 Cleared. Our apologies a description of the acronyms FPIC and FESM has been made in the Project Description Overview table and Annex C.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 30, 2024:

a)

a.1. Please use the English acronym of OECM (and not OMECs).

a.2. Please clarify what LMTs stand for the first time this acronym appears in the Portal description.

b) Yes, cleared.

c) N/A

October 30, 2024:

a) Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

a.1 Well noted. The necessary changes have been made to change the acronym from Spanish to English.

a.2 LMT (Land Management Tool) is defined in the list of Acronyms and in the characterization of Barrier 2. It refers to a platform that allows the measurement of the reduction of degradation and fragmentation of ecosystems in the intervention area of the project, its development is contemplated in the Outputs 1.1.1. of the project and is described in barrier 2 as a tool for landscape management, at the same time its development is proposed in paragraph 63, it is also mentioned in paragraphs 32,

33, 46, 54 and 82, where it is defined as a weakness not having this type of tools, in the budget there is also a section for the development of the tool.

5 B. Project Description

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

b) 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?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

l) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 30, 2024:

a) Yes, cleared.

b) No, there isn't a clear description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region. Please elaborate a specific section on this topic.

c)

c.1. In the barrier description, the proposal highlights the small producers who do not own their land generating legal uncertainty related to land ownership. How the project intends to address this barrier? Please clarify in the components description.

c.2. The Portal is equivalent of the Prodoc for the GEF and all necessary information should be there. The reference to the Annex E ?Result Based Implementation Plan? of the Prodoc is not enough. Please describe clearly all the components with more details including the activities under each output and the stakeholder engagement in these activities.

c.3 In the description of the activities, please clarify what will be exactly the activities supported by the in-kind cofiancing from SERNA and ICF.

d) and e) Yes, cleared.

f)

f.1. The National Coordinator and the Administrator should be charged to the PMC. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project?s execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. That said, when the situation merits (i.e. not enough co-financing funds), the project?s staff could be charged to a certain extent to the project?s components with ?clear Terms of Reference describing unique outputs linked to the respective component? (paragraph 4 ? page 42 of the Guidelines). Please clarify and amend as needed.

FAO Cost Categories	Unit	No. of units	Unit cost	1.1	1.2	Total	2.1	2.2	Total	3.1	Total	4.1	Total	PMC	Operational Partner Budget (OCP SERNA)	FAO Support Services	Total GEF	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
National Coordinator	Months	72	2,300	13,800	13,800	27,600	13,800	13,800	27,600	13,800	13,800	18,482	18,482	78,160	87,482	78,160	165,642	27,607	27,607	27,607	27,607	27,607	27,607
Monitoring and Evaluation	Months	66	1,400		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	92,400	92,400		92,400		92,400	15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400
Administrator	Months	72	1,800	7,680	7,680	15,360	7,680	7,680	15,360	12,362	12,362		0	72,118	43,082	72,118	115,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200
TOTAL				658,393	390,593	1,048,986	2,967,714	357,161	3,324,875	390,527	390,527	311,687	311,687	253,378	5,076,075	253,378	5,329,453	716,125	1,052,100	1,007,200	1,093,933	1,029,667	430,428

f.2. The expenses for the National Coordinator and the Administrator are partially under the resposability of FAO. This corresponds to executing functions handled by the GEF Implementing Agency. Such exception is not requested in the proposal, not supported by the GEF OFP and not justified. Please remove this expenses from FAO responsability.

f.3. Please clarify what "FFS" means in the budget table.

f.4. Please use the acronyms "OMEC" and "SbN" in English.

f.5. The expenses for office equipment, secretarial chairs, office rental and office running should be charged to the PMC or supported by co-financing, and not the components of the project. Please amend accordingly.

g) Yes, cleared.

h) No, as mentioned above, the components are not described. Please, include a presentation of the relevant stakeholders and their respective roles in the description of the components.

i) As mentioned above, gender consideration is unclear in Component 1. In the requested desrciption of the components/outcomes/outputs/activities, please make sure the gender issue is properly consider and aligned with the findings of the gender analysis.

j) Yes, this is embedded in component 3. Cleared.

k) Yes, in particular the project will foster interstate/intersectoral cooperation and aligning conservation, restoration, and rural development policies at regional, subnational, municipal and community levels. Cleared.

l) Yes, particularly through intersectoral coordination, implementation of OECMs and the use of financial and market mechanisms. Cleared.

October 30, 2024:

b) Thank you for the additional information and clarification. Cleared.

c)

c.1 and c.3 Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

c.2. Partially. The description of the outputs of the component 3 is missing. Please complete.

f)

f.1. Partially. Please note the following:

- In the uplaoded budget in Excel format, the Administator is still partially charged to the components. Please amend as needed.

- According to the TORs, the National Coordinator is by far mainly handling managerial activities. Nevertheless, nearly 60% of his/her cost is charged to the component. This is not justified by the TOR nor doable as the National Coordinator will not have time to manage the project. Plesae revise increasing significantly his/her cost charged to the PMC and strongly clarifying in the TOR his/her concrete technical contributions.

- In the budget table (both in word and Excel format), the total cost of the National Coordinator is wrong. Please check all the numbers in the budget table and correct as needed.

- In the Prodoc in the TORs section, there is a core staff named "Planning, Finance and Monitoring Manager" who is not in the budget. Please clarify.

f.2 and f.3. Thank you for the amendment and clarification. Cleared.

f.4. We still find the acronyms acronyms "OMEC" and "SbN" in the budget table. Please use the English acronyms.

f.5. Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

h) Partially. We acknowledge the additional information, but the component description remains very succinct (not much more than what is included in the Project Description Overview table listing the components/outcomes/outputs). As a consequence, the stakeholders engagement is unclear. Please describe for each outputs the stakeholders involved and their role.

i) Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

November 15, 2024:

c.2, f) and h) Thank you for the clarification, additional information and amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response

b. Done. There is already a specific section in paragraphs 102 to 109 of the PRODOC, however, the opportunity is used to add
two new paragraphs (102 to 105), related to experiences in the country with GEF 6 and GEF 7 that the project will integrate. It has also been expanded on in the lessons learned section in paragraph 125 about GEF 7.

c.1 Duly noted. To address this barrier, the project proposes the following elements to reduce land tenure conflict:

i) Focus on micro-watersheds declared water reserve areas: Intervention will be carried out in micro-watersheds that have been declared by the state as water reserve areas. These areas have legal protection and established management guidelines, providing a stable and safe environment for project activities and facilitating sustainable investments in conservation and natural resource use.

•ii) Work with agroforestry groups: The project will work with agroforestry groups that have legal rights to land allocated by the state for sustainable forest management. This guarantees legal security for investments and allows for long-term planning, promoting sustainable practices in areas with

secure land tenure, with agroforestry cooperatives, declared micro-watersheds and associated producers (outcome 2.1, outputs 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3).
•iii) Working with producer associations: The project will collaborate with established producer associations in the coffee, basic grains and livestock sectors. These associations, with formal structures and collective bargaining power, will help small producers address land tenure challenges and improve their access to resources and markets, even if they do not individually own the land they farm.

c.2 Well noted. Section B has been expanded and contains a more detailed description of the components, outcomes and outputs. It has been reworked in Annex E, extending the reference to all components and outputs.

c.3 Clarified. Paragraph 57 defines SERNA's participation and role in the implementation of the component. Paragraph 64 incorporates the role of ICF and SERNA in the implementation of NbS and OECMs and paragraph 66 also refers to SERNA's participation in the implementation of component 3. Also, the tables showing the co-financing have been transferred to In Kind, this in PRODOC.

f.1 Noted. Changes have been made in the budget and ToRs sections. The total budget of the administrator has been charged to the PMC. In the case of the project coordinator, please consider that he/she will be responsible for the implementation of outcome 1.2 of component 1, consequently there is a proportion that has been added to component 1 and other to the PMC. Please see the revised project budget and to the ToRs section.

f.2 The National Coordinator's and Administrator's expenses have been charged 100% to the operational partner.

f.3 Duly noted. FFS refers to Field Farmer Schools. Changes have been made to the document and in the budget file.

f.4 Done. The change has been made throughout the document by changing the acronym from Spanish to English.

f.5 Duly noted. These costs have been included in the project's PMC.

h. Stakeholder description have been included in the component section.

i. Done. Outputs 1.1.1,1.1.5,1.2.1,1.13 and 1.1.4 have been modified to ensure that they are linked to gender-responsive activities. In the case of output 1.1.6, the gender approach is already included. The Gender Plan (Annex K) includes a column linking each activity to a project output.

14/11/2024:

c.2 Cleared. The description of component 3 was improved. Now it includes the description of outcomes, outputs and stakeholder involved in its execution. From paragraph 70 to 73 you can find the information added.

f.1

- Duly noted. Please note that the budget for the ?administrative and financial specialist? is totally (100%) charged in the PMC line.

- Regarding the coordination of the project, the ToRs of the ?Technical Chief Advisor? were amended. Please refer to Annex L in which the tasks related to the coordination of the project, and the tasks needing a strong technical profile, are detailed. In view of this skill mix needed for the project management and technical guidance, the salary of the CTA has been distributed in the project budget in equal terms (50/50). This also allows us to keep the PMC below 5%. All changes have been included in the Word and Excel files.

- Finally, our apologies for the incorrect name in the ToRs section. The name of "planning, finance and Monitoring Manager" was corrected. It refers to the monitoring and evaluation specialist.

f4. Duly noted. Changes have been made to the budget file.

h. Kindly note that the section ?project description? has included a detailed analysis by outcome of stakeholder's involvement and participation. Please refer to paragraphs 57 (outcome 1.1), 58 (Outcome 1.2), 68 (outcome 2.1), 74 (Outcome 3.1) and 76 (Outcome 4.1).

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 31, 2024:

a)

a.1. The ICF is mentioned as executing partner in the Project Information table but not in the institutional arrangement table. Please clarify and if the ICF is executing partner, please describe its role in the project.

a.2. in paragraph 17, we learn that "This unit will be responsible for hiring project staff and consultants". Please clarify what this "unit" is and confirm FAO as IA will not be hiring project staff and consultants.

b) N/A

c) Yes, cleared.

October 30, 2024:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

a.1 As explained in comment 1), the ICF is not an executing partner, it is considered a partner for the implementation in the field, since it has the responsibility to dictate and ensure the forest management policy in the country. ICF will be part of the Steering Project Committee, so it will be a strategic ally for the successful implementation of the project. ICF will be key for coordinating with main stakeholders in the field, since the implementation in agroforestry cooperatives and declared micro-watersheds is their direct responsibility.

a.2 The unit refers to the Project Coordination Office, which is a decentralized unit of SERNA (OCP-SERNA) that will be the executing agency. OCP-SERNA has national responsibilities for the implementation of projects related to the conventions on desertification and drought, biodiversity and climate change, being focal points for these conventions on behalf of Honduras. FAO is the implementing agency, so it will not hire staff or consultants.

5.3 Core indicators
a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)?
b) Are the project's targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators and additional listed outcome indicators) /adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?
Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 30, 2024:

1. There is no area reported for the OECMs (core indicator 4.5). Please complete.

2. While the project plans to invest in strenghtening 40,442 ha, this area is not reported in the core indicator table. Please clarify.

3. Under the core indicator table, we learn that 122,000 has are linked with Nature Based Solutions through best productive practices. Nevertheless, this area is not reported in the core indicator table. Please clarify.

4. In the project description we learn that 125,126.27 ha will be under improved practices. Nevertheless, it is not clear how this number is reflected in the core indicator table. It is also different from the number below the core indicator table for the core indicator 4. Please clarify.

5. The target under core indicator 4 is reduced substantially from 162,000 to 63ha. This seems to be an oversight. Please correct accordingly.

6. The expected result for the core indicator 6.1 is extremly low and it is not consistent with the explanation below the core indicator table. Please correct as needed.

7. Please upload the EX-ACT tool in the document tab of the Portal so that we can check the asumptions and the consistency with the project description.

October 30, 2024:

1., 2., 3., 4., 5. and 6. Thank you for the clarification and amendments. Cleared.

7. The calculation period used in the Ex-ACT tools is wrong. Please revise considering it should be 5 years for implementation + 15 years for capitalisation.

November 15, 2024:

Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

Agency Response

1. Clarified. 163,185.86 is the general number of hectares under improved practices. 38,059 of these hectares appeared in Component 1, linked to the OECM and 125,126.27 corresponded to Component 2, linked to the NBS. Now all is concentrated in Component 2.

2. Clarified. It refers to the 38,059.59-ha to explore opportunities for OECMs on 23 micro-watersheds and 7 assigned areas, selecting zones that not only contribute to conservation but are also viable within the project's investment capacities). The number is rectified.

3. Clarified, as explained above, 163,185.86 is the general number of hectares under improved practices. 38,059 of these hectares appeared in Component 1, linked to the OECM and 125,126.27 corresponded to Component 2, linked to the NBS. Now all is included in Component 2.

4. Clarified in previous answer.

5. Dully noted. Core Indicator 4 in table B.2 is defined as 163,185.86 ha, which are distributed in 125,126.27 ha for nature-based solutions and 38,059.5 ha of OECM.

6. Revised. Please note that the calculation was revised. Results now show a potential reduction of 1,205,944 Ton CO2eq. Changes have been included throughout the document. EX-ACT analysis is attached.

7. Dully noted. EX ACT documents have been attached.

14/11/2024:

7. Apologies, the EX-ACT is now uploaded with the new calculations. Please note that the analysis now considers an implementation of 5 years and a capitalization of 15 for a total period of accounting of 20 years, as per GEF requirements.

5.4 Risks
a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?
b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?
c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

a)

a.1. For the Environmental and Social Risk, the description says "the project will carry out a ... stakeholder and gender action plans to minimize social issues". Aren't these plans already elaborated as we can see in the Portal and the Prodoc? Please clarify.

a.2. For the Institutional and Policy risk, the description is a copy-paste of the one for the Political and Governance risk. Please elaborate a specific explanation of risk and mitigation measures for this risk.

b) Some risks are not rated (under innovation and under capacity). Please complete the rating for all the risks.

c) Yes, cleared.

October 30, 2024:

a)

a.1. Not addressed. The description still says "the project will carry out a ... stakeholder and gender action plans to minimize social issues". Please clarify.

a.2 Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

b) Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

November 15, 2024:

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

a.1 Clarified. The description now says: ?the project includes stakeholder and gender action plans to minimize social issues".

a.2 Done. The description of this section was also improved in paragraph 114. Added to the table of Risk Management: Institutional and Policy Risk - Low: There is a risk that changes in government policies or institutional structures could affect the implementation of the project. This could include modifications to laws, regulations, or institutional priorities that influence the planned activities. To mitigate this risk, strong partnerships will be established with key institutions, and constant communication will be maintained with relevant authorities to adapt promptly to any regulatory or institutional changes.

b. Duly noted. Information and rates were included in paragraph 115 to 293.

11/14/2024

a.1 Duly noted. The information was modified. The Project will implement the gender and stakeholder action plans.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities
6.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or the LDCF/SCCF strategy?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 31, 2024:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 31, 2024:

The 2 paragraphs 18 and 21 on the contribution to the GBF are separate and don't appear consistent identifying different targets. Please unify the paragraphs and clarify the GBF targets the projet is contributing to.

October 31, 2024:

Thank you for the additional information. However, the description is unclear. Target 2 of the GBF is related to restoration and should indded be identified, but the description says the project can "contribute to the improved management of key biodiversity areas". Target 3 is about conserving 30% of Land, Waters and Seas and the description says the project "can contribute to reducing pollution from excess nutrients [target 7] and to preventing the introduction and establishment of invasive alien species [target 6]". Some targets are missing such as target 10 (Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture), target 14 (Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making) and target 23 (Ensure Gender Equality). Please revise the alignment of the project with the relevant GBF targets.

November 15, 2024:

Thank you for the clarification. Cleared.

Agency Response

Duly noted. The wording of project contributions to GBF targets has been better structured, please see paragraph 123.

14/11/2024:

Noted. Paragraph 126 has been rewritten, updating the alignment of the project with GBF targets 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14 and 23.

7 D. Policy Requirements
7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

Yes. cleared.

Agency Response
7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

The Gender Action Plan is included in the Prodoc as an annex. For an easier access, please upload it as a separate document in the documents tab of the Portal.

October 31, 2024:

Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

Agency ResponseDone. The Gender Action Plan was uploaded separately.
7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

Yes, but considering the central role of local communities, indigenous people, and smallholder farmers in this project, the Stakeholder Engagement plan should provide further details on the targeted communities and groups, including their specific roles and responsibilities, as well as the timing and means of engagement.

October 31, 2024:

The paragaph 295 doesn't refer to local communities, indigenous people, and smallholder farmers. Please clarify where the stakeholder engagement plan has been improved to present their specific roles and responsibilities, as well as the timing and means of engagement (the tables alone are very succinct and there are 2 columns with the same title "How the findings were incorporated into the project" which should be corrected).

November 15, 2024:

Thank you for the additional information. Cleared.

Agency Response

The Annex J: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN was improved (see paragraph 295). A section on indigenous peoples has been included in the matrix of stakeholders in the consultation stage, while indigenous peoples have been incorporated in the matrix of Methods of involvement and participation of stakeholders (paragraph 300). Note that in the case of communities they are included in water boards and producers' associations.

14/11/2024:

Duly noted. Annex J was revised and now presents an analysis of the consultation and participation process of indigenous peoples and key stakeholders. Please refers to paragraphs 270 to 275.

7.4 Have the required applicable safeguards documents been uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 31, 2024:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 31, 2024:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response
Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

Yes, cleared.

Agency Response
LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response
SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

1. The sum of the amounts spent and committed is below the budgeted amount ($146,460). Please note and follow the GEF guidance: "any PPG funding not fully used at CEO Endorsement should be indicated. The Agency can continue to use the remaining funds only on the eligible expenditure items

under PPG as presented in Table 1 within one year after the project has been CEO Endorsed. Thereafter, any unused PPG funds must be returned to the Trustee, for credit to the respective GEF Trust Fund."

2. Please note that the amounts do not add up as $150,000 - $98,793 = $51,207 and not $47,667. Please review and correct where necessary.

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

	GET/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)		
Project Preparation Activities Implemented	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Total	150,000.00	98,793.00	47,667.00

October 31, 2024:

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response1 and 2 Dully noted. PPG amount committed has been amended.

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?

Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 31, 2024:

No, the table should include the total amounts (including project budget, fees and PPG). Please correct.

October 31, 2024:

Please apology: the table "Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation" should not include the total amounts (including project budget, fees and PPG), but only project budget and project fees (no the PPG and PPG fees). It was a mistake. Nevertheless, The total amount and the LD amount are currently wrong in this table. The total should be $5,835,751 (with $4,863,125 from BD, $29,179 from CCM and $943,447 from LD). Please correct the table accordingly.

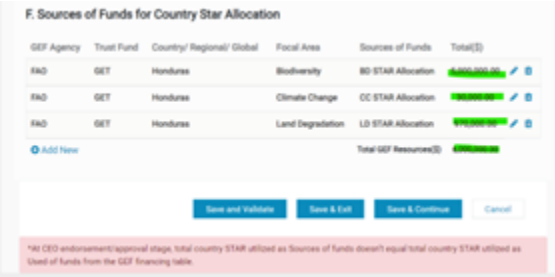
Normally the Agency should be able to edit the table. If it is not the case, please ask for support to the ITS team: ITSOP_GEF_Portal_technical_team@worldbankgroup.org

November 15, 2024:

Thank you for the amendments. Cleared.

Agency Response

Noted. Regrettably, the GEF portal does not validate the amounts corresponding to the total resources requested to the GEF. Hence, PPG resources and PPG fees requested earlier were removed from the amounts inserted in this section.



14/11/2024:

Duly noted. Changes have been made in the GEF portal.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

July 31, 2024:

According to the letter, FAO co-financing will be in-kind. Nevertheless it is reported as Grant/Investment mobilized in the co-financing table. Please clarify and be consistent.

October 31, 2024:

Thank you for the amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

Duly noted. The co-financing is in-kind, consequently the co-financing tables have been corrected and changed, as established in the co-financing letters.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

Yes, the endorsement letter was uploaded at PIF stage. Cleared.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

Yes, the endorsement letter was approved at PIF stage. Cleared.

Agency Response
Annex C: Project Results Framework
8.6 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?
b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of total project financing (too high? Too low?)
c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?
d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 31, 2024:

a) Yes but some are not consistent with the project description and the core indicator table. Please amend the Project Results Framework so that the information provided is consistent.

b) and c) Yes, cleared.

October 31, 2024:

Thank you for the consideration. Cleared.

Agency Responsea. Duly noted. Changes have been made throughtout the project document.
Annex E: Project map and coordinates
8.7 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 30, 2024:

Excellent map! Cleared.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
July 30, 2024:

a)

a.1. Please copy the budget under the Annex G of the Portal entry as it is the CEO Endorsement Request (pdf of the Portal entry) that will be circulated to Council.

a.2. Please upload in the document tab of the Portal the budget in Excel format so that we can check the calculations.

b) The M&E cost is high representing 6.2% of the budget while the average known based on a GEF-6 portfolio anaysis is 3% for projects from USD 5 to USD 10 million. Please revise and justify if the M&E cost remains high.

c) Yes, as an annex of the Prodoc. Cleared.

October 31, 2024:

a) and b) Thank you for the consideration and amendment. Cleared.

Agency Response

a.1 Duly noted.

a.2 The budget has been uploaded in Excel format in the portal.

b. The M&E budget has been revised and reduced. M&E actions and budget included follow FAO and the GEF standards and guidelines.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement RequestN/A

Agency Response

Additional Annexes
9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1.GEFSEC Recommendation
Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
August 1st, 2024:

Not yet. Please address the comments raised above and consider the following:

1. In addressing the comments, please clearly indicate in the review sheet where the amendments/additions have been made and highlight them in yellow to facilitate the review (except for the component description which is relatively long and easy to find).

2. In addition, the Annex I "Responses to project reviews" is missing. Please complete this annex providing responses to Council and STAP comments at PIF stage.

October 31, 2024:

The project is not ready yet. Please address the few remaining comments.

November 15, 2024:

The remaining comments have been addressed. The CEO endorsement is now recommended.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	**8/29/2024**	**10/17/2024**
Additional Review (as necessary)	**10/31/2024**	**11/14/2024**
Additional Review (as necessary)	**11/15/2024**	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		