

Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10123

Countries

Philippines

Project Name

Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the
Philippines

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

9/1/2020

Review completed by PM

3/29/2021

Program Manager

Jurgis Sapijanskas

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

FSP

PIF **CEO Endorsement**

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 4/23/21-All cleared, thank you.

JS 4/9/2021 - Please address the followings:

1. Please modify the expected implementation start date (1/1/2021) to a realistic future date.

2. In accordance with Council decision GEF/C.39.9, there should be ?proportionality? between the PMC covered by co-financing amounts and the PMC covered by the GEF funding, which is not currently the case. If the GEF contribution is kept at 5%, for a co-financing of \$8,910,950 the expected contribution of co-financing to PMC must be around \$445,547 instead of \$303,409 (which is 3.4%). Please amend either by increasing the co-financing portion and/or by reducing the GEF portion.

3. Budget: Project staff (Regional Coordinator, Programme Accountant, National Programme Manager/Project Coordinator) must be charged to the Project Management Costs. Staff may be charged to components only if the PMC funds, including from co-finance, have been fully utilized. In that case, when project staff charged to both PMC and project components (i.e. not only to PMC), Terms of Reference describing unique outputs linked to the respective components are required. Please revise accordingly.

4. Please paste in the section "Institutional arrangement and coordination" of the portal entry the corresponding section of the ProDoc. Please make sure to use the GEF

terminology (executing agency vs implementing agency).

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

Describe the institutional arrangements for project implementation.

Please refer to Section VII Governance and Management Arrangements of the ProDoc, which describes the Roles and responsibilities of the project's governance mechanism.

5. Please adjust the budget in the Portal entry, it is out of the margins

6. Please include in the CEO approval request an elaboration describing the involvement of the GEF Agency for applying its Fiduciary Standards in managing the grants the project will provide through the Executing Entity.

JS 1/6/2021 - Thank you for the addition of the annexed "COVID 19 analysis and action framework" and revisions to the stakeholder engagement plan. Cleared.

JS 11/30/2020

Thank you for the revisions and clarifications throughout the documents and the review sheet.

1 to 5 - Cleared.

A- COVID-19: We note the CEO endorsement request identifies some COVID-related risks in the risk section and includes some references, scattered in the documents, on its contribution to COVID relief (alleviate COVID-related financial and networking difficulties of small CSOs), on COVID-related opportunities (opportunity to rethink tourism sector and engage with larger players in that sector) and means of mitigation of the effects (short references to digital tools for stakeholder engagement, monitoring, helping SMEs with digital presence and digital payment). We also note that the Stakeholder engagement plan and the ESMF are proposed to be revised at inception giving the evolving nature of the COVID situation and its potential for exacerbating other vulnerabilities and risks. The proposal is acceptable given the reasoning provided and the fact that PPG took place in good part before the pandemic.

However, the current stakeholder engagement plan does not mention COVID once and none of the documents demonstrate that mitigation and contingency measures have been designed to ensure that the project can be successfully rolled out under current or possible future COVID-related restrictions.

Please note that the GEF expects all new PIFs and CEO Endorsements to demonstrate a strategy or action framework for the COVID-19 pandemic. This should include an

analysis of emergent risks and opportunities relative to specific context for the project. Please refer to "Project Design and Review Considerations in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis and the Mitigation of Future Pandemics" (<https://www.thegef.org/documents/project-design-and-review-considerations-response-covid-19-crisis-and-mitigation-future>) and elaborate accordingly in relevant sections of the CEO endorsement request. Please most notably elaborate on mitigation and contingency measures that will be put in place and consider elaborating further on the project's contribution to mitigate COVID's impact on targeted beneficiaries.

JS 9/14/2020

1- As in the PIF, the project is entirely proposed under the BD focal area with the BD-1-1 (mainstreaming) entry point. However, the proposed theory of change developed during PPG fails to link the project activities to global biodiversity benefits. In particular the activities related to livelihoods, agriculture and restoration/rehabilitation, that were further defined during PPG, need to be related to positive effects on biodiversity of global relevance through a solid theory of change to be eligible for BD funding. Some of the activities seem a priori difficult to link with biodiversity of global relevance (e.g., 1.3.1 solid waste management).

Please revise the theory of change and remove all activities that are not demonstrably linked to biodiversity of global relevance.

2- Compared to the PIF, prevention and management of invasive alien species (IAS) has been added to the list of activities eligible for small grants funding. Note that prevention and management of IAS has its own specific entry point (BD-2-6) in the GEF-7 BD focal area strategy, which makes clear that GEF will support only the implementation of comprehensive prevention, early detection, control and management frameworks. Small grants do not seem conducive of the comprehensive pathways approach outlined in the GEF-7 BD focal area strategy. Please remove prevention and management of invasive alien species from the scope of the project's subgrants.

3- The PIF planned to "expand the coverage of protection mechanisms over actual KBAs and critical habitats". This element, which was the most relevant to the BD focal area, seems to have disappeared. Please clarify.

4- Please revise the expected implementation start and expected completion dates, which are identical.

5- Please add the executing agency in the portal entry (Foundation for the Philippine Environment, FPE).

Agency Response

UNDP Agency Response to GEF Sec Comments from 4/9/2021

20/04/2021

1. Noted with thanks; the start implementation date has now been changed to August 1, 2021 in the CEO Endorsement and Project Document. The corresponding completion and mid-term review, and terminal evaluations dates have also been amended as a result.

2. Noted with thanks. The PMC supported through co-financing is now proportional to the amount supported by the GEF. PMC cost allocated to co-financing is now: USD 460,718.

3. Noted, with thanks. The co-financing portion allocated to PMC (\$460,718) will be utilized before charging the execution costs to the project's components to cover co-financed activities. As requested, all the Terms of Reference have been amended to reflect descriptions of activities related to specific components, or to M&E. Table 5 "Co-Financing Sources" has been amended to include further information with regards to co-financing support. Cost associated with project management are reflected in the summary table, and they are not included in the TBWP as only cash co-financing actually transferred to UNDP bank accounts is entered in the main TBWP table.

4. The "Institutional arrangement and coordination" has been pasted from the project document to the portal; it has also been added to the CEO Endorsement and the implementing and executing agencies are clearly differentiated.

5. The budget has been adjusted to fit the portal entry window.

6. The following text has been added to the Monitoring and Evaluation section of the CEO Endorsement and the ProDoc: "Capacity-building activities related to compliance with UNDP fiduciary standards, HACT provisions and GEF policies will be carried-out by the UNDP Country Office to ensure that the Implementing Partner can comply with the required processes and tools related with HACT and GEF policies, and UNDP fiduciary standards. Annex 19 of the Project Document describes in detail the duties and responsibilities of the Implementing Partner in on-granting, which will be monitored by the UNDP CO. The Global SGP Operational Guidelines, approved by Council, will serve as the primary reference for guidance on administrative, financial and implementation protocols and procedures for the SGP Country Programme.."

21 Dec 2020

Thank you; the Stakeholder Engagement Plan now includes several references to COVID-19, identifying potential strategies to address challenges in stakeholder engagement (pp 1-2; 11; 13-14)

An additional annex has also been appended to the project document: Annex 16- **COVID-19 Analysis and Action Framework** to highlight the risks and impacts posed by the pandemic and how these will be managed by the project and on the project's contribution to mitigate COVID's impact on targeted beneficiaries.

23 Nov 2020

- 1- The theory of change (TOC) has been revised in line with GEFSEC comments to reflect the rationale for achieving biodiversity-level results and global environmental benefits. Activities that do not address achievements under the biodiversity focal area, or that were reflecting elements of the broader SGP global programme have been removed. The 'Strategies' to achieve results have been amended to reflect the biodiversity-related rationale for the outputs and outcomes. For greater specificity, outcomes and output boxes have been added to reflect the theory underpinning the results framework. The solid waste management element has been removed from the outputs, both in the text and the TOC for clarification, although the solid waste management element was in the originally approved PIF. The element of organic waste has been clarified as the intention is to process organic waste so that it is kept out of water courses and can be used to offset inorganic fertilizer use. By doing so eutrophication can be decreased with substantial benefit to aquatic biodiversity. For ease of reading, the TOC is in an excel file as an attachment and annex.
- 2- Prevention and management of invasive alien species have been removed from the scope of the project's subgrants, as requested.
- 3- SGP-07 will indeed seek to increase the coverage of protection mechanisms over KBAs, Critical Habitats and other vulnerable zones. While this was implicitly stated in the project's adherence with E-NIPAS, this is now explicitly clarified in several sections. On page 42 of the ProDoc, under the alignment with E-NIPAS, the following text has been added: 'By promoting biodiversity protection and sustainable activities in the selected sites, which also happen to be KBAs and Critical Habitats, SGP-07 will support grantee activities in KBAs and CHs (see Section 3.3 for additional information on activities in KBAs). The project will also seek to identify, through local level insights, which vulnerable zones in the landscapes require protection under environmental governance frameworks. The project will feed these recommendations up to appropriate government entities so as to expand the area under government protection mechanisms. Given the menu of options of potential grant projects that can be included in the landscape strategy, the

intention of increasing protection mechanisms over actual KBAs and Critical Habitats will include establishment of local Marine Protected Areas and Local Conservation Areas (for upland areas) which are considered Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs). These are anticipated to be part of the landscape strategy and portfolio that will be developed per landscape.?

Reference to expanding the coverage of protection mechanisms over actual KBAs and critical habitats, has also been added in Section 3.3, page 45 of the ProDoc, ?In this phase, the project will further support initiatives with the aim of expanding protection and sustainable use over Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and Critical Habitats (CHs), through habitat conservation, protection and rehabilitation of landscapes and seascapes resulting from activities conducted by civil society groups located in these sites within landscapes. The multi-stakeholder group in each landscape will identify conservation/ protection/ rehabilitation needs and activities for the KBAs and CHs (Component 2). Landscape strategies, planned for Component 2, will support increasing protection mechanisms over actual KBAs and Critical Habitats, and will include establishment of local Marine Protected Areas and Local Conservation Areas (for upland areas) which are considered Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs).

Activities have also been added under the descriptions of Outputs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 respectively: ?Identify and follow-up on the expansion of protection mechanisms of KBAs, PAs or Critical Habitats? and ?Identify which zones of PAs, KBAs, CH?s and vulnerable ecosystems should be included under environmental governance frameworks, and which areas should be expanded for increased protection under environmental regimes?.

4- Kindly note that there was a technical limitation in the portal which prevented the appropriate implementation date from being entered. We have worked with colleagues from GEFSEC to ensure that the accurate implementation dates are reflected.

5- The executing agency has been added in the portal entry (Foundation for the Philippine Environment, FPE).

Project description summary

2. 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

JS 9/14/2020 - Table B is almost identical to that of PIF stage and the slight modifications (outcome 2.2) are justified. Compared to the PIF, we welcome the slightly

higher budget allocation to component 1, which will deliver the small grants. We also note the increase in PMC co-funding. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Co-financing

4. Are the confirmed expected 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, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 1/6/2021 - Thank you, cleared.

JS 11/30/2020 -

1- Indeed, well noted, thank you and apologies for the oversight. However, the \$950,000 investment mobilized from the Foundation for a Sustainable Society is presented as grants in the portal when, according to the co-financing letter, only \$30,000 are grants and \$920,000 are loans and equity.

Please break down the co-financing into (i) grants, (ii) loans and (iii) equity, with specific lines for each category in the portal entry. As the current co-financing letter does not distinguish between loans and equity, please upload an email from the co-financier that clarifies the breakdown of the \$920,000 into loan and equity. If the distinction between loan and equity is not possible at this stage, e.g. because it will depend on future CSO project proposals, please tag in the portal entry the \$920,000 as either loan or equity, depending on what will be the likely main form of this co-financing.

2- Thank you for clarifying that the second column in the co-financing letters is the one reflecting the co-financing commitments. Cleared.

3- Thank you. Cleared.

4- Well noted. Cleared.

JS 9/14/2020 - We welcome the increase in "investment mobilized" compared to PIF stage and note that the total amount of co-financing remains as planned as PIF stage. However:

1- the co-financing letter from the Foundation for a Sustainable Society mentions co-funding of 920,000 in investment mobilized and \$30,000 in recurrent expenditures when these amounts are respectively reported as \$950,000 and \$40,000 in the portal.

2- the co-financing letter from the Province Aurora contains several, sometimes contradicting figures (e.g. for "investment mobilized"; the letters shows PHP5,807,136.90 ; PHP 5,770,000 and PHP4,039,000; two figures are presented for "recurrent expenditures" as well).

Please correct.

3- The letter from the Palawan Council of Sustainable Development does not provide a breakdown between recurrent expenditures and investment mobilized. Please clarify how the breakdown was identified.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

An email from the co-financier Foundation for a Sustainable Society that clarifies the breakdown of the \$920,000 into loan and equity has been uploaded on the portal, with reference to loans amounting to USD 800,000 and equity investments amounting to USD 120,000.

23 Nov 2020

1- For the co-financing letter from the Foundation for a Sustainable Society please note that co-financing in investment mobilized is a total of \$950,000 (\$920,000+\$30,000), whereas co-financing in recurrent expenditures is \$40,000. This is reflected in the portal.

2- For the co-financing letter from Aurora, please note the *Allocated Budget* column reflects the total budget of the local government unit for the identified PPAs. The contributions are reflected under the *70% of the Budget* column for investments mobilized while the *30% of the Budget* column is for recurrent expenditures. The total amount of co-financing is Php 5,807,136.90 of which co-financing in investment mobilized of Php 4,039,000, and co-financing in recurrent expenditures of Php 1,768,136.90.

3- Please note that a new co-financing letter from the Palawan Council of Sustainable Development has been provided with breakdown as well as an overall increased amount in co-financing.

4- Please note that an additional USD 3,146,188 in co-financing by the National Steering Committee, on behalf of CBOs and NGOs, was committed to the project during this review. This information is included in the CEO Endorsement and the corresponding co-financing letter has been submitted through the portal.

GEF Resource Availability

5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request JS 9/14/2020 - Table D is identical to PIF's table and cost-effectiveness remains at least as good as the one approved at PIF stage. Cleared.

Agency Response Project Preparation Grant

6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request JS 9/14/2020 - Yes, the status is reported. Cleared.

Agency Response Core indicators

7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E? Do they remain realistic?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request JS 11/30/2020

Thank you for the revisions and the explanations. In sum, the targets total now 100,000 ha (65,000 ha on core indicator 4; 30,000 ha on 5 and 5,000 ha on 3) and 21,000 beneficiaries vs. 20,000 ha and 16,000 beneficiaries at PIF stage.

All cleared.

JS 9/14/2020 - Compared to PIF stage, a new target as been introduced (10,000 ha on core indicator 3), 1,000 ha have been moved from 4.1 to 4.3 and there are 4,000 additional expected beneficiaries.

1- In total, a target of 30,000 ha is set for this investment, which is too low for a \$4.4 million project with an additional \$5.4 million in co-finance. The GEF-5 SGP project that benefited from a similar level of GEF funding and was implemented in good part in the same landscapes had a total target of 500,000 ha and claimed to have achieved impact over more than 800,000 ha (134,863 ha of new area under protection in community-managed or community-supported protected areas and 684,495 ha of production landscape/seascape under improved management). We recognize that the terminal evaluation of the GEF-5 SGP investment concluded that target landscapes may have been too large and the targets were exceeded only because of the legal instruments that covered such expanse, not because actual interventions took place. Nonetheless, the targets proposed for the GEF-7 investment appear an order of magnitude too low.

Please revise the targets for the GEF-7 investment and clarify in the CEO endorsement the methodology to set the targets.

2- Please note that core indicators 3 and 4.3 are related to the LD focal areas. The BD focal area funds restoration only in limited cases, when it is demonstrably more efficient to produce global biodiversity benefits than conservation measures. While we welcome co-benefits, please make sure that core indicators targets for this BD-funded project are mainly related to the BD focal area and please clarify the type of restoration activities that are anticipated and how they are to provide cost-effective global biodiversity benefits.

3- In annex F and in the ProDoc, 10,000 ha are reported under indicator 5.2 *Number of large marine ecosystems (LMEs) with reduced pollution and hypoxial* instead of core indicator 5 (no sub-indicator). Please revise.

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

1- The targets have been revised and justifications have provided in the Project Document and CEO Endorsement's results framework. Baseline figures are from previous SGP phases but *only* from the same sites, which is why they are not the same as those in the Terminal Evaluation. It is worth noting that the methodology for calculating hectares covered will be different from SGP-05 which took entire communal areas into account when conducting work in a particular area, given the lack of clarity with tenure agreements. In SGP 07, the project will be assessed against a new results architecture and identifies areas of direct impact. In particular, it uses the LGU (local

government unit) structure as a means to demarcate boundaries of areas that are served, with a clearer understanding of the constituencies that are served by each unit. The baseline serves to highlight previously accomplished achievements in the same sites (through a different results methodology)?SGP 07 targets do not include the baseline figures in their estimates, rather the targets are *new* work, funded by funds made available under SGP-07. It is estimated that about 20% of the funds will support the upscaling or replication of SGP-05 work, but these will be new interventions.

The following changes have been made:

- The target for ?Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (Million Hectares)? has been changed to **65,000** hectares. The number has been enhanced to include the area that will be covered by landscape strategies, environmental governance instruments. It is anticipated that there will be 20,000 hectares (approximately 4 municipalities) covered in Samar; 10,000 hectares (approximately 2 municipalities) in Aurora; 15,000 hectares (approximately 3 municipalities) in Calamianes Group of Islands and 20,000 hectares (approximately 3/4 municipalities) in Siargao).
- The target ?Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (hectares)? has been increased to **30,000** hectares. It considers the coastal zones covered by planned interventions. SGP-07 anticipates 10,000 hectares of seascape covered in Samar, 8,000 hectares in the Calamianes Group of Islands; 10,000 hectares of seascape in Siargao and 2,000 hectares in Aurora.
- 2- The restoration work planned for this project is specifically to reverse degraded ecosystems, enhance biodiversity, reforest and re-vegetate biodiversity corridors, coastal zones, and areas that have been heavily deforested. SGP in the Philippines has had experience in this regard. The target has been adjusted to **5,000** hectares for direct restoration work.
- 3- The correction has been made and the amount reported under indicator 5.2 has been removed.

Part II ? Project Justification

1. Is there a 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

JS 9/15/2020 - The elaboration is consistent with and more precise relative to PIF stage, with three additional barriers identified. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 1/6/2021 - Cleared.

JS 11/30/2020

Thank you for the clarification.

1- A reference to the World Bank project "Transforming Communities toward Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Tourism" has been added in the incremental cost section of the CEO endorsement request (Siargao landscape). However, it is not reflected in the baseline. Please provide information on the World Bank project.

JS 9/16/2020

A detailed listing of baseline initiatives in each targeted region is provided in the ProDoc section 2.3.

1-The development of four small grant facilities (Foundation for Philippine Environment, Forest Foundation Philippines, Foundation for a Sustainable Society and the Philippine Eagle Foundation) in two KBAs in Northern Palawan is mentioned. Please clarify how these grant facilities do not duplicate what this GEF-7 project proposes to do in Palawan.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

Duly noted. The following text has been added to the baseline sections of both the project document and CEO Endorsement: "The project will also build upon the results from the World Bank funded: "Transforming Communities toward Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Tourism" project, which has strong linkages to SGP-07 and seeks to green tourism activities. The World Bank project aims to (i) improve access to infrastructure services; (ii) promote local tourism development; and (iii) strengthen capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness in select tourism destinations in the Philippines[1]. Of the sites included in the World Bank project, Siargao is common to SGP-07. While the World Bank project will work on a greater infrastructural level,

SGP-07 will seek to improve biodiversity protection considerations, enhance sustainability of natural resources being used by tour operators and industry.

The multi-stakeholder platform in Siargao will include partners from this project, so that there is alignment and coherence among the projects.

23 Nov 2020

1- Clarifications of these four small grant facilities have been provided in the baseline sections (ProDoc ? page 35- and CEO Endorsement) and the incremental cost reasoning section (CEO Endorsement). Clarification that SGP-07 will not be operating in the same zones targeted as the other small grant facilities has been added.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion
JS 1/6/2021 - Thank you for the revisions. Cleared.

JS 11/30/2020

1-3: Thank you, cleared.

4 Thank you, the breakdown by landscape is most welcome. However, the question of the German council member was on additional activities compared to SGP-05 in the same landscapes. The elaboration provided does not highlight the increment compared to SGP-05. It notably describes a baseline scenario in which SGP-05 had seemingly no impact at all. Please revise.

JS 9/16/2020

1- A theory of change diagram is provided. However, the barriers and outcomes therein do not exactly reflect those elaborated on in the dedicated sections of the CEO endorsement request template. The proposed theory of change also fails to link the project activities to global biodiversity benefits when the project is entirely funded by the BD focal area. In particular, the many activities related to livelihoods, agriculture and restoration/rehabilitation that are proposed need to be related to positive effects on biodiversity of global relevance through a solid theory of change to be eligible for BD funding. Please revise.

2- see comment on IAS in this review sheet's first comment box

3- Please clarify to what extent the following activities have not already been carried out by the GEF-5 SGP or other baseline projects (e.g. GEF-6/UNDP *Integrated Approach in the Management of Major Biodiversity Corridors*), and what would be the value-added of this project :

- identification of biological corridors (output 1.1.1)

- identification of community options in the harvesting, sustainable use and management of NFTP (output 1.2.1)

- ecotourism guidelines and ecotourism pilots (output 1.3.1)

4- As per the German council member request, please clarify by region what additional activities planned under GEF-7 and what outcomes are to be expected. Currently, the project description does not distinguish between landscapes.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

Duly noted. The incremental cost reasoning section in the CEO ER now includes a brief summary of the achievements made per landscape under SGP-05.

23 Nov 2020

1- The theory of change diagram has been amended; please see Annex 15. The outcomes and barriers now exactly reflect the dedicated sections of the project document and CEO Endorsement. The strategies described now make the link to the BD global environmental benefits.

2- The IAS issue has been addressed. Prevention and management of invasive alien species have been removed from the scope of the project's subgrants as requested.

3- Please note the following clarifications:

- The Integrated Approach in the Management of Biodiversity Corridors Project (or the Biodiversity Corridor Project) covers sites outside those being targeted by SGP-07. The Biodiversity Corridor Project will be implemented in Mindoro Biodiversity Corridor and Eastern Mindanao Biodiversity Corridor. While there may be lessons drawn from this project, and there already have been, as the PPG team for this project consulted the team of the Biodiversity Corridor Project and discussed issues such as how to measure

change in biodiversity values, as well as the importance of buffer zones, the actual activities conducted will be in different sites/islands. The Biodiversity Corridor Project protected maps and data and shared information on baseline conditions.

- Interventions of SGP5 did not include identification of biological corridors. It concentrated on community protected areas declared through various instruments such as provincial, municipal and barangay ordinances, Community-Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA), Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT)/Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs), Co-Management Agreements and Local Conservation Areas (LCAs). SGP5's approach did not have a biological corridor perspective, although, a few of the interconnected interventions highlighted the synergies among different grant projects within the broader landscape where these grant projects were being undertaken.
- The identification of community options in the harvesting, sustainable use and management of NTFPs was also not an element undertaken by SGP5.
- SGP5's projects on ecotourism were focused on setting up micro ecotourism infrastructure. SGP7 intends to provide capacity-building activities for POs whose grant projects will involve ecotourism on the following areas:
 - (i) development of ecotourism circuits within the target landscapes. With the landscape perspective, interconnected and complementary ecotourism ventures will have to be identified within a landscape strategy portfolio. This approach will consider the comparative advantage of the areas where these ecotourism ventures will be located.
 - (ii) ecotourism guidelines that highlight mitigation measures related to environmental and social risks, compliance with the industry standards, especially at present when the tourism sector is incorporating COVID-19 related standards and protocols and requirements of accelerating green jobs within the landscapes.
 - (iii) identification of priority ecotourism products and services that build in conservation principles.
- 4- The incremental cost reasoning section now includes a breakdown of activities per landscape. It is worth noting that all the outcomes are anticipated for each landscape, although with expected variations in the way these are achieved. The variations depend on the baseline circumstances in each landscape as well as on the CSOs that will be awarded grants to deliver results.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 11/30/2020 - Thank you, cleared.

JS 9/16-2020 The project requests funding through the BD-1-1 window, which is dedicated to mainstreaming through either (i) spatial and land use planning, (ii) improving and changing production practices in key sectors, (iii) developing policy and regulatory frameworks to remove perverse subsidies and provide BD-positive incentives. Please be clearer on the project contributions relative to the BD-1-1 window (How will the project advance spatial and land-use planning, which key sectors are targeted, and how, etc.).

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

The project document and CEO Endorsement now includes the following text to highlight how the project fulfills BD1-1 window (page 14 CEO Endorsement; pgs 47-48 ProDoc):

The project will support interventions dedicated to mainstreaming biodiversity, with the aim of internalizing the goals of biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of biological resources into economic sectors and development interventions, policies and programmes. The activities described below will contribute to:

- Improving and changing production in key sectors specifically in agriculture and tourism, to decrease and reverse degrading impacts on biodiversity, and with inputs into the development/construction sector to prevent encroachment onto vulnerable areas; this will be addressed by activities covered under Component 1.

- Land-use planning, with an eye to integrating biodiversity into municipal and barangay decision-making, specifically in local development planning and budgeting processes, to ensure landscape connectivity. These will be addressed in large part by activities planned by multi-stakeholder platforms under Component 2. One of the key features of the activities is to foster greater collaboration between CSOs and government to ensure alignment among objectives, lack of duplication or counter-acting practices, and to develop a shared vision of what the vulnerable hotspots of each landscape are, how they are to be protected, how to mitigate negative impacts from buffer zones and other zones of commercial activity.

- There will also be an eye to strengthening and providing policy-relevant recommendations and upscaling of lessons learned into regulatory frameworks and policies. The multi-stakeholder mechanisms established under Component 2 will provide the coordination with the potential to provide strategic inputs into environmental governance mechanisms for ecological considerations and conservation

planning in a land use context at a landscape scale. Recommendations for critical ecosystems that need to be covered by regulatory frameworks will also be made.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS -1/6/2021 - Cleared.

JS 11/30/2020 - Thank you for the revisions and improvements. However, the elaboration provided does not highlight the increment provided by this project compared to SGP-05. It notably describes a baseline scenario in which SGP-05 had seemingly no impact at all. To notably answer one of the GEF Council's comments, please add an elaboration on the specific increments brought by this project compared to SGP-05 for the landscape that are common with SGP-07.

JS 9/16-2020- Incremental reasoning is very generic and does not explain the increments provided by this project compared to baseline projects. In particular, the increments compared to the GEF-5 SGP investment that occurred in good part in the same landscapes, the four small grant facilities (Foundation for Philippine Environment, Forest Foundation Philippines, Foundation for a Sustainable Society and the Philippine Eagle Foundation) developed in Northern Palawan, and to work supported by the Forest Foundation Philippines or USAID (e.g. Fish Right which has an overlapping geography). Please revise and consider organizing this section per target geography.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

Duly noted. The incremental cost reasoning section in the CEO ER now includes a brief summary of the achievements made per landscape under SGP-05.

23 Nov 2020

The incremental reasoning section has been revised to highlight the baseline projects and circumstances, and anticipated results per landscape.

6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 11/30/2020 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 9/16-2020 The section currently does not articulate global environmental benefits but lists activities to be undertaken through the project. Please revise and be explicit about the benefits for biodiversity of global relevance the project will deliver, with a link to the targets that were set on GEF core indicators.

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

The section now explicitly states global environmental benefits for biodiversity with a link to target indicators; please see CEO Endorsement.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 11/30/2020 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 9/16/2020

1- The elaboration on innovation is quite long, and mixes elements at different levels, many not being really innovative (e.g. promotion of integrated pest management, reduced tillage, agroforestry etc.). Please streamline this section and retain the truly innovative features of the project, notably removing everything that was already present in the GEF-5 SGP project.

2- On sustainability, please clarify how this GEF 7 project, contrary to the GEF-5 project, would achieve sustainable results without another phase of GEF funding.

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

1- The text on innovation has been shortened and now only includes reference to innovations being piloted in SGP-07 in both the project document and CEO Endorsement.

2- Each strategy to enhance sustainability now includes text on how/why it is anticipated that those elements will be sustainable without future funding.

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

JS 11/30/2020 - Cleared, thank you.

JS 9/14/2020 - A general and several detailed maps are provided as an annex and in the Prodoc.

Please provide coordinates as text in the portal.

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

Coordinates are reflected in the portal.

Child Project

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

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

JS 1/6/2021 - Cleared.

JS 11/30/2020 - Thank you for the revised stakeholder engagement plan (SEP). We note that it does not contain any information related to COVID and how the project intends to carry out stakeholder engagement in the current and possible future COVID-impacted environment. Given that PPG consultations took place pre-COVID, and given the

evolving nature of the COVID situation, we note that the SEP will accordingly be revisited at inception. Please provide the revised SEP and information on its implementation and related COVID management measures with the first PIR.

JS 9/17/2020 - A stakeholder engagement plan is provided and the ProDoc includes a targeted partnership strategy (section 3.2). However, the stakeholder engagement plan is limited to a table with relatively broad categories of actors and reasons for engagement.

As per policy SD/PL/01, please provide a detailed report on stakeholders engaged during PPG and elaborate on "means of engagement, dissemination of information, roles and responsibilities in ensuring effective Stakeholder Engagement, resource requirements, and timing of engagement throughout the project/ program cycle".

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

Please see response under the first section under Project Information, above. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan now includes several references to COVID-19, identifying potential strategies to address challenges in stakeholder engagement (pp 1-2; 11; 13-14)

An additional annex has also been appended to the project document: Annex 16- COVID-19 Analysis and Action Framework to highlight the risks and impacts posed by the pandemic and how these will be managed by the project and on the project's contribution to mitigate COVID's impact on targeted beneficiaries.

23 Nov 2020

A revised stakeholder engagement plan is now appended to the document. Due to the length, it is in a separate file. It now includes a report on the stakeholders met, roles and responsibilities, means of engagement, etc.

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

JS 11/30/2020 - Thank you, cleared.

JS 9/17/2020 - Annex 9 of the ProDoc contains a gender analysis that includes

landscape-specific elements, as well as a gender action plan with associated indicators, baselines and targets.

Please clarify whether the project is intending to report on all indicators taken from the "Philippine Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) Indicators" that are presented in the gender action plan. If not, please clarify which ones will be reported on.

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

The Gender Action Plan now specifies which targets will be reported on. Kindly refer to the Gender Action Plan Annex?where indicators that will be reported on are highlighted. These additional indicators will be reported against to improve understanding of actual results achieved related to gender and to provide results against nationally agreed to gender-targets and regulations.

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

JS 9/17/2020 - Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

JS 1/6/2021 - all cleared.

JS 11/30/2020

1-Thank you for the addition. However, using native species does not per se automatically confer resilience to climate change (see e.g. *Timpane-Padgham, et al. (2017). A systematic review of ecological attributes that confer resilience to climate change in environmental restoration. PLoS One, 12(3), e0173812*). We note that "all GEF SGP proposals are reviewed and approved by a National Steering Committee to

ensure that proposals will consider climate vulnerability of proposed actions and outputs". During project implementation, please make sure that adequate, geographically-specific climate risk assessments and technical assistance are made available to candidate CSOs and selection committee to ensure that the projects, including restoration interventions, designed and carried-out are indeed climate-relevant.

2 Thank you for the clarifications. We note the justification for finalizing ESMF at project inception. Please provide as part of the MTR submission: (a) any revised/new Environmental and Social Management Plans ; (b) information on the implementation of management measures; and (c) any revisions to identified risks. Cleared.

JS 9/18/2020

1- On climate risks, please clarify how the type of restoration activities and agriculture the project will promote have been or will be proofed against projected future climatic conditions in the targeted geographies?

2- Please clarify why the ESMF was not prepared during PPG.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

1 ? Duly noted, thank you. During project implementation UNDP will ensure that adequate, geographically-specific climate risk assessments and technical assistance are made available to candidate CSOs and the NSC to ensure that projects, including restoration interventions, are designed and carried out as climate-relevant.

2 ? Noted As part of the MTR submission, UNDP will provide a) any revised/new Environmental and Social Management Plans; b) information on the implementation of management measures; and c) any revisions to identified risks.

23 Nov 2020

1- The following text has been added to the Risk Register in the project document and CEO Endorsement: ?The project will support the restoration of degraded ecosystems, through revegetation and reforestation with native species. The planting of native species and supporting restoration work will support both greater climate resilience and carbon sequestration. The recovery of soil through revegetation of diverse, native species will support both soil biodiversity and a more stable soil for sustainable agroforestry to combat climate change-related food insecurity. The assumption is that restored landscapes sequester more greenhouse gases than degraded ones, and the native and diverse vegetation will be more climate resilient. It is anticipated that restoration will primarily happen in coastal

zones to further buffer communities, as well as in watersheds, particularly in Catubig Watershed and Siargao; other sites will depend on the proposals submitted.?

2- Please note that a draft ESMF is underway in the Philippines. The ESMF was not submitted with project documentation, as the COVID threat was identified late in the PPG phase. As the COVID threat also exacerbated other threats; out of due diligence the project was changed to high risk at a latter point during the PPG. The work on the ESMF, however, is ongoing, and is also taking into account the vulnerabilities exposed by the recent Typhoon Goni. It will be shared with key stakeholders, in particular indigenous communities and vulnerable groups, prior to inception to ensure that no new factors have emerged in the interim and to discuss and confirm conclusions. It will be presented at inception for endorsement by project partners.

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

JS 1/6/2021 - Cleared.

JS 11/30/2020

1-2- Thank you, cleared.

3- Please clarify in the CEO endorsement request the institutional arrangements using GEF terminology, that is Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) is the Executing Agency (not implementing partner) and UNDP, as implementing agency, will not assume any execution role in the project.

JS 9/18/2020

1- Please clarify the steps that have already been taken during PPG to coordinate with the projects listed.

2- Please clarify the chairing arrangements for the NSC and notably how the recommendation of the GEF-5 SGP terminal evaluation was taken into account (i.e. that the NSC should not be chaired by the national project director).

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

The terminology in the CEO ER has been corrected using GEF terminology, as indicated. UNDP, as implementing agency, will not assume any execution role in the project.

23 Nov 2020

1. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan includes the names of entities that manage baseline projects; coordination agreements were discussed on the dates when they were convened, which are included.
2. The chairing arrangements have been changed in this phase of SGP in response to the concerns raised during the last phase. This has been clarified in the text of the project document which now reads: "As per the recommendations in the Terminal Evaluation of SGP-05, the SGP National Steering Committee will be jointly chaired by DENR and a Civil Society Representative, who will change on a rotating basis, in line with the [SGP Operational Guidelines](#). This will allow greater accountability, and separation of powers and promote collaboration between civil society and government." (page 88 ProDoc)

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 1/6/2021 - cleared.

JS 11/30/2020 Thank you, but the changes do not seem to be reflected in the portal entry.

JS - 9/18/2020- Please revise language on support to the Paris Agreement as this project as not set any target on climate mitigation and LDN refers to UNCCD, not UNFCCC.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

The reference to the Paris Agreement has been removed in the portal and LDN is appropriately linked to UNCCD and not UNFCCC

23 Nov 2020

The reference to the Paris Agreement has been removed and LDN is appropriately linked to UNCCD and not UNFCCC.

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

JS 9/18/2020 - The KM approach is well elaborated on. Timelines are integrated in Annex 2: Multi Year Work Plan of the ProDoc. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

JS 11/30/2020 - Thank you for the clarifications. We note the justification for finalizing ESMF at project inception. Please provide as part of the MTR submission: (a) any revised/new Environmental and Social Management Plans ; (b) information on the implementation of management measures; and (c) any revisions to identified risks. Cleared.

JS 9/18/2020 An ESS screening is attached but no Environmental and Social Management Plans or equivalent. The project is rated with high/substantial risks overall. As per guidelines SD/GN/03, supporting documentation such as a management plan is required for high risk projects (such as e.g. environmental and social management plans or frameworks, resettlement action plan or frameworks, livelihood restoration plan, indigenous peoples plan, natural resource management plan, and labor management procedure).

Please provide the required additional documentation.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

Noted. As part of the MTR submission, UNDP will provide a) any revised/new Environmental and Social Management Plans; b) information on the implementation of management measures; and c) any revisions to identified risks.

23 Nov 2020

1- Kindly note that a draft ESMF is underway in the Philippines. The ESMF was not submitted with project documentation, as the COVID threat was identified late in the PPG phase. As the COVID threat also exacerbated other threats; out of due diligence the project was changed to high risk at a latter point during the PPG. The work on the ESMF, however, is ongoing, and is also taking into account the vulnerabilities exposed by the recent Typhoon Goni. It will be shared with key stakeholders, in particular indigenous communities and vulnerable groups, prior to inception to ensure that no new factors have emerged in the interim and to discuss and confirm conclusions. It will be presented at inception for endorsement by project partners.

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

JS 1/6/2021 - cleared.

JS 11/30/2020 Thank you for the clarification. However, the budget for M&E provided in the portal is not consistent with the overall budget. The consultancy services for Mid-Term and Terminal evaluations are assessed at \$90,000 in the M&E budget when only \$65,000 appear in the overall budget in annex 16 of the ProDoc. Please correct.

JS 9/18/2020 Yes, the budgeted M&E Plan is \$169,000.

Please clarify why there are no costs associated with PIR and supervision missions.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

Please note that the M&E budget has been adjusted and is now in line with the overall budget. Kindly note that the M&E budget includes the travel costs for evaluators for mid-term and terminal evaluations, while the overall budget disaggregates those according to budget lines. The Mid-term evaluation costs are USD 31,000 and Terminal evaluation costs are USD 46,000, inclusive of travel.

23 Nov 2020

There are no costs associated with the supervision missions because these are carried out by the UNDP Country Office/Regional Technical Advisors in their oversight capacity, which are covered by the GEF agency fee and not the project budget. The PIR is part of the project manager's responsibilities and is not considered an added cost.

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

JS 9/18/2020 Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 1/13/2021 - All comments below cleared. Please however resubmit with the Checklist for CEO Endorsement Template duly filled out for this project.

JS 11/30/2020

1a The GEF budget template is annex 16 of the ProDoc and is pasted at the end of the portal entry. Please upload it as a separate excel file with the next submission.

1b -We note that the budget presented in the ProDoc states that 5% of each project line item will be allocated to the Implementing Partner for management costs?. This is not acceptable. Please ensure that all fees related to managements costs are explicitly reflected in the budget breakdown, in particular in PMC. Note that the GEF amount allocated to PMC should not be increased as a result since it is already at 5% of GEF project financing. However co-financing of the total PMC could be increase to improve the proportionality of the GEF share of PMC costs (currently GEF share is 41% of total PMC cost).

1c- Please confirm that grant budget lines reflect the actual amounts that CSOs will receive and that management fees, if any, are explicitly shown as management costs in other parts of the budget. Please ensure that the amounts actually received by CSOs as grants from GEF funding be at a minimum 70% of total GEF project financing.

1d-The budget for M&E provided in the portal is not consistent with the overall budget. The consultancy services for Mid-Term and Terminal evaluations are assessed at \$90,000 in the M&E budget when only \$65,000 appear in the overall budget in annex 16 of the ProDoc. Please correct.

2 -Some of the other required annexes are still not fully adequate. Please see below.

3- Cleared.

JS -9/18/2020

1- Please provide the budget using the dedicated template (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_Project_Budget_Template.xlsx) as per the 2020 update of the GUIDELINES ON THE PROJECT AND PROGRAM CYCLE POLICY (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF_Guidelines_Project_Program_Cycle_Policy_20200731.pdf).

2- Some of the other required annexes are not fully adequate at this stage. Please see below.

3- Please clarify why the following items are checked in the taxonomy and consider untagging:

- Protected Areas and Landscapes when there is no targets set on protected areas (core indicators 1 and 2)

- Illegal Wildlife Trade

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

1a) ? budget uploaded to portal as separate excel file, as requested.

1b) - The budget note referred to has been revised to reflect the fact that the 5% of each line item is not intended to cover project management costs but rather project execution costs (or administrative costs for the NGO). Project execution costs have historically been charged separately from project management costs in SGP project budgets. For the past 25+ years, these costs have been charged to each budget line in SGP projects, and this project's budget is aligned with this precedent. These additional execution costs do not relate directly to project staffing costs or project-related activities of the NGO. They are administrative costs provided and treated as direct costs to the project, e.g. use of NGO infrastructure, equipment and operation.

The SGP Implementation Arrangements paper for GEF 7 mandates UNOPS and NGOs as the only Implementing Partners to execute SGP projects. While UNOPS charges 6% in execution costs, the selected NGO in the Philippines project charges 5%. Please note that these rates compare favorably to project execution costs in other GEF-financed projects.

1c) - As mentioned above, past and current practice regarding execution costs assessed against budget lines is a matter of historical precedent. The overall proportion of GEF funding allocated to grants remains at a level consonant with past practice regarding overall approved funding amounts and project management and execution costs.

1d) ? The budget has been corrected to be consistent with the overall budget.

2) ? The required annexes have been provided.

23 Nov 2020

1- The budget has been revised according to GEF requirements and is now broken down by Outcome. The dedicated template is attached as a separate document.

2- Noted. See below for responses e.g. annex on taxonomy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

3- The suggested element on illegal wildlife trade has been untagged. It was previously tagged because the work of SGP grantees would have an impact on this element: e.g. in some landscapes, community-enforcement to prevent illegal hunting/poaching may be practiced thereby impacting illegal wildlife trade. The element on Protected Areas has remained?it was also present and approved in the PIF. It is anticipated that working with governance mechanisms and partners that are implicated in protected areas, key biodiversity areas and critical habitats, makes the project relevant to activities within the PAs and their buffer areas. Moreover, Siargao Protected Landscape and Seascape (SIPLAS) is a protected area. We are also anticipating upland and coastal Local Conservation Areas work, which are considered Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs).

UNDP Response: 23 March 2021 Checklist for CEO Endorsement template submitted.

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 12/12020 - Thank you for the clarifications. Cleared.

JS 9/18/2020 - A results framework is provided.

1- However, the ways increments from the baseline are reflected is not consistent within the table. For instance, indicators 3, 4, 5, 9, 15 have higher baselines than mid-term and/or end of project targets. Please revise.

2- Please clarify how the baselines have been set for core indicator 3, 4, and 5 and what they represent. Is it on the same ha that the project is to improve further practices or restoration? The baseline figures presented do not seem coherent with the GEF-5 SGP project that reported having improved practices on more than 400,000 ha.

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

1- The results framework has been revised. However, it is important to note that the baseline reflects what was accomplished under SGP-05, while the mid-term and targets reflects what will be accomplished under SGP-07. So, for instance, for indicator 15, indeed there were 3 landscape case studies produced under SGP-05, but under SGP-07, we envisage 4. There are no case-studies foreseen at mid-term as it will be too early for a full case study. This is why the increments are portrayed this way for some of the targets.

2- The baseline figures reflect work accomplished under SGP-05, but only in the sites where SGP-07 will be carried out. SGP-07 is being carried out in only 2 of the 5 areas covered by SGP-05. This why the baseline figures appear lower than what has been reported in SGP-05 final reports, which covered areas not addressed in this phase. It is also worth noting that the results architecture has changed between SGP-05 and SGP-07. For SGP-07, we are following more rigorous guidance to reflect continuous improvement of GEF's results practices. SGP 5 defined coverage as the areas covered not only by direct physical interventions but also those areas covered by active instruments, such as management plans, tenure arrangements, consensus-based implementation plans etc. This was further acknowledged by the Terminal Evaluation.

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 1/6/2021 - all cleared.

JS 12/1/2020

1- Cleared, thank you.

2- Thank you for the revisions to the incremental cost reasoning. However, to fully answer the Council member's comment, please add, in the incremental cost reasoning section, an elaboration on the specific increments provided by this project compared to SGP-05 for the landscape that are common with SGP-07.

3- Please add accordingly in the response matrix that USAID has been consulted during PPG.

JS 9/18/2020

1- We note the response to the comment by Canada but, as commented above, the work on invasive alien species is not eligible as proposed. Small grants do not seem to be adequate to fulfill the requirements of GEF-7 BD focal area strategy's IAS entry point. Please revise.

2- We note the response to Germany's first comment but it does not address the question on expected outcomes per landscape. Please revise. As a response, please consider organizing the "incremental reasoning" section per target landscape.

3- Please clarify whether USAID has been consulted during project preparation.

Agency Response

21 Dec 2020

The incremental cost reasoning section in the CEO ER now includes a brief summary of the achievements made per landscape under SGP-05.

The response matrix now suggests that USAID has been consulted during the PPG, and agrees to the USAID request for coordination prior to onset of project implementation.

23 Nov 2020

1- The response to Canada has been changed to reflect the GEF review.

2- The response to Germany has been changed to reflect the changes in the incremental cost reasonings section, which now demonstrates changes per landscape.

3- A bilateral meeting with the Project Team of USAID Protect Wildlife which covers Aurora Province was conducted to gather information on interventions provided by

the Project, specifically on Project elements on which SGP7 can build on. USAID also participated in the site-level inception workshop.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request Yes, cleared.

Agency Response

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 12/1/2020 Cleared, thank you.

See comment in a similar comment box in this review sheet further up.

Agency Response

23 Nov 2020

Coordinates are reflected in the portal.

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

NA

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 NA

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

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO endorsement recommended? (applies only to projects and child projects)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

JS 4/23/2021 - Yes, the project is recommended for endorsement.

JS 4/12/2021 - Thank you for the resubmission. Please address comments in the first comment of this review sheet and resubmit.

The audit template submitted with this endorsement request has been reviewed and cleared from a technical and programmatic perspective. The financial, operational, and policy due diligence may reveal issues that may still need to be addressed by UNDP. We also note the submission of the PCAT (partner capacity assessment tool) and HACT microassessment.

JS 1/13/2021 Not at this stage. Please resubmit with the Checklist for CEO Endorsement Template duly filled out for this project.

JS 12/4/2020 Not at this stage. Please address remaining comments above and resubmit.

JS 9/21/2020 - Not at this stage. Please address comments above and resubmit. Do not hesitate to contact jsapijanskas@thegef.org for any clarification you may need.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	9/21/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)	12/4/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/13/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/29/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/23/2021	

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations