



CoHABITAT ? Conservation and sustainable management of wetlands, forest and grasslands to secure the population of Migratory species along Central Asian Flyway in India

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11478

Countries

India

Project Name

CoHABITAT ? Conservation and sustainable management of wetlands, forest and grasslands to secure the population of Migratory species along Central Asian Flyway in India

Agencies

UNDP

Date received by PM

10/23/2023

Review completed by PM

12/20/2023

Program Manager

Hannah Fairbank

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

FSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 2/27/24:

All cleared.

HF 11/30/23:

TWO FORMAT NOTES:

1. PLEASE HIGHLIGHT CHANGES TO TEXT IN CER AND PROJECT DOCUMENTS (WHILE ALSO PROVIDING PAGE/SECTION REFERENCES IN REVIEW SHEET) TO ALLOW FOR QUICK RE-REVIEW BY GEFSEC.
2. PLEASE REFER AND ADHERE TO THE PAGE LIMITS IN THE GEF-8 PIF TEMPLATE.

1.b.i) Depending on the correction to the "programming of funds" table/Annex A then the characterization of this project as an MFA may also need to be adjusted (e.g. if it goes from a MFA to a single focal area, or not).

1.b.ii) Cleared.

HF 10/30/23:

1.a.) Yes.

1.b.i) Depending on the correction to the "programming of funds" table/Annex A then the characterization of this project as an MFA will also need to be corrected.

1.b.ii) Project title in Portal (?CoHABITAT-Conservation of Migratory Wildlife and Habitats in the Central Asian Flyway and River Basins of India?) is different than in LoE (?CoHABITAT ? Conservation and sustainable management of wetlands, forest and grasslands to secure the population of Migratory species along Central Asian Flyway in India?). Please change the title in Portal to match that in the LoE (note: it can be modified after PIF approval if necessary).

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

1.b.i) Well noted and is now corrected to MFA

1.b.ii) Thank you for the feedback. The project title has been revised in PIF and portal to match the LOE

16 Feb 2024

Thank you for these comments.

1. Changes to the text are highlighted with references to page/section

2. The PIF has been reduced by seven pages to adhere to the page limitations in the template.

1.b.i) In accordance with the flexibility provided for programming of GEF STAR resources, the CC and LD FA STAR for India are being used to program for BD FA.

2. Project Summary

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23:

Cleared.

HF 10/30/23:

1.) Please include in the project summary the 'problem to be addressed'. In the case of the GEF BD strategy please ensure this is articulated as the drivers of loss of migratory bird and globally significant land/seascapes along the CAF sites **within India** and the strategies to address these and deliver GEBs. This is important as it sets up how this project intends to conserve and sustainably manage globally significant biodiversity key landscapes/wetland-scapes.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

1) The project summary has been revised to articulate key threats to the loss of migratory bird populations and globally significant landscape/seascape sites the CAF that are critical for the maintenance of the migratory populations of birds. It also lays out the strategies to address these threats and ensure conservation and sustainable management of these wetland-scape.

3 Indicative Project Overview

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23:

Cleared

HF 10/30/23:

3.1 a.) Please clarify the use of 'secure' in this project objective to better understand the ultimate objective of this project.

3.1 b.) The Theory Of Change is currently missing depiction of the threats to/drivers of migratory bird and globally significant land/seascape loss and how the project will address those drivers/threats through the project. The GEF-8 strategy entry point 1 is focused on integrated landscape approach that is designed to work across sectors to address the drivers of biodiversity loss. Please revise in the TOC and throughout PIF.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

3.1 a) Project objective revised to ?Conservation and sustainable management of wetlands, forests and grasslands to conserve the population of migratory bird species along the Central Asian Flyway in India?. To conserve in this context refers to strengthen protection, improve restoration of critical habitats and ecosystems and promote sustainable use of resources within the target wetland scapes.

3.1 b) The TOC is revised to include threats, barriers and drivers and focus on the integrated approaches. This will be further strengthened at PPG stage.

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23:

Cleared

HF 10/30/23

Please include gender perspectives in Output 4.3

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for the comment. Gender concerns are now included in Output 4.3.

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23

Yes

Agency's Comments

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

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

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23:

Cleared

HF 10/30/23

a.) Please see/address previous comment on the problem statement and key drivers. This situational analysis needs to be the basis for the TOC and the TOC needs to directly address the situation described.

b.) Yes.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for the comment. The problem statement and drivers (situational analysis) have been revised to make it more directly related to the situation. This will be further revised at PPG stage.

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

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

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

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 2/27/24

All clear.

HF 12/18/23

a. 1.) Noted. Please ensure this is included and clear in the PIF.

a. 2.) Noted. Please ensure this is included and clear in the PIF.

b. & c. Cleared.

HF 10/30/23

a.1.) This is a national project embedded within a large regional flyway (CAF). Please revise to include what else is going on within this flyway in terms of significant investment and engagement in flyway conservation? Further, how and why will this targeted set of interventions in India have a major positive impact on the flyway/species that use the flyway in isolation? Or is there a regional effort within CAF that this feeds directly into? If so it is not clear from this concept. Please address.

a.2.) This project is funded through India's STAR which can only support activities within India. The scope of this project's activities need to be clarified and focused within India. For activities that imply a regional function must be funded by co-finance, not GEF STAR, such as: Output 1.5. Establishment of a Central Asian Flyway Coordination Cell in India, and Output 4.3 among several others. Please revise and clarify throughout PIF.

b.) Unclear, please elaborate.

c.) Somewhat under component 4. Please further elaborate particularly given GEF's previous portfolio of flyway projects. This must build on lessons learned and foundation of previous and current flyway investments.

d.) Yes.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

a.1) The Government of India has already developed a national action plan for the conservation of migratory birds in the CAF. That calls for the integrated management of wetland systems, cross-sectoral institutional systems, integration of CAF species and habitat conservation objectives into PA management, capacity development, strengthen stakeholder capacity and engagement and establish a national CAF office in India, all of which are being supported by the proposed project. In the project areas, a number of national, state and donor activities have been initiated (although not within a integrated wetland scape approach) such as state and national level support to enhance PA management, public participation in joint forest management and ecodevelopment activities, addressing the conflicts between development and conservation through the (i) Integrated management of wildlife and their habitats, (ii) management of aquatic biodiversity integrating sustainability and climate change adaptation, (iii) promotion of ecotourism, nature Education and participatory management, (iv) wildlife research and monitoring and development of human resources in wildlife conservation, and (v) enabling policies and resources for conservation of wildlife in India.

In terms of wetlands, the Government has developed action plan for conservation of aquatic ecosystems (2019) that calls for the (i) development of policy guidelines for conservation and sustainable management of wetlands; (ii) supporting, promoting and strengthening conservation of prioritized wetlands through integrated management; (iii) facilitating the development of a national inventory and setting up an information decision support system for the management of wetlands; (iv) strengthening the capacity of wetlands managers and stakeholders for effective management of wetlands; and

(v) strengthening the implementation of international commitments related to wetlands. All of these activities are relevant will be addressed in the proposed GEF 8 project.

Complementary to the effort to support migratory bird conservation in the CAF, the Government of India is actively supporting a Project Dolphin Program to conserve both riverine and oceanic dolphin species launched in 2021. The program supports targeted initiatives and multi-stakeholder approaches with various Line Ministries, State Governments, Organizations, and Institutions, taking up and following best practices, identifying and filling gaps in research and supporting conservation initiatives. The project interventions in the project landscapes is directly aligned to and will contribute

towards the vision of the project Dolphin to conserve and establish ecologically functional socio-culturally valued populations of the dolphins within their historic range, ensure ecological integrity of their habitat, minimize threats, and promote sustainable livelihood of people.

On the broader global scale, India has been an active supporter of the regional effort to support the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). Following up on previous COPs, the upcoming COP 14 of CMS (scheduled for February 2024, Uzbekistan) is to discuss proposals (prepared by Government of India) for the adoption of a draft resolution and draft decisions establish the Initiative for Central Asian Flyway under CMS. India has taken a lead in advancing regional efforts in conservation of the CAF. These activities will be supported through regional collaborative efforts, rather than through the proposed GEF 8 project.

The targeted set of interventions in India will help to conserve migratory species and the ?bottle neck? and transition sites that are used by the birds within the CAF. This effort is not in insolation, but will contribute to the regional efforts (involving 30 countries and multiple international and national organizations) that calls for a coordinated effort to protect migratory birds and their habitats within the CAF. Lessons from India and other regional countries will be shared along with best practices, sharing of data and information and collective training efforts as part of the regional effort within the CAF.

While national plans and programs have suggested integrated landscape approaches to manage wetlands, this approach has been promoted only in a very limited way, and hence the GEF 8 project provides an opportunity to actively support such an approach in a concerted manner.

Specific programs at the target way that are recent or on-going are presented in Table 1 of the PIF. However, as the flyway extends way beyond the five project sites, there are a multitude of national programs that offer co-financing for a range of activities that could complement investments from GEF both within the five project sites and other numerous wetlands and their bird (and other species) aggregates throughout the country (refer Annex A Table A.1)

a.2) The intent is that GEF project will support the establishment of the CAF national coordination cell. The national Coordination Cell through co-financing support will also

lead dialogue with member range countries for promoting the establishment of a CAF Secretariat within the region with a view of increasing interaction and cooperation between governments, conventions, technical experts and conservationists from countries in the flyway as a basis for promoting concrete actions to ensure the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats throughout the flyway.

b) This is elaborated under Section A of the PIF, where 3 future changes in drivers are considered.

c) There are no GEF projects directly addressing the CAF in India, although there are many projects that cover other important flyways in the world. The GEF 8 project will seek to build on lessons and best practices developed under these projects. These are discussed in more detail in Table 3.

16 Feb 2024

a.1) This is now added to the 'baseline' Section of the PIF

a.2) The intent is that GEF project will support the establishment of the CAF national coordination cell. The national Coordination Cell through co-financing support will also lead dialogue with the members of range countries for promoting the establishment of a CAF Secretariat within the region with a view of increasing interaction and cooperation between governments, conventions, technical experts and conservationists from countries in the flyway as a basis for promoting concrete actions to ensure the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats throughout the flyway.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23

Cleared.

HF 10/30/23

a.1) Please provide a simplified theory of change narrative. Suggest simplifying and removing jargon from the "logical pathways" narrative so the basis for this project's TOC can be easily understood the assumed relationships between action and impact/result.

a.2.) Please revise TOC (narrative/graphic) so it is clear how the project's proposed interventions are assumed to address the drivers/threats identified.

a.3.) Further, **in PPG**, the M & E and adaptive management system should be based on - monitoring of assumed relationships between action and result/the causal pathways (e.g. did what we thought was going to happen, happen? If so, great, if not, why not? What did we miss? What do we do differently?)

b.) Yes, though please note that activities and outputs funded via GEF India STAR must be focused on producing GEBs in India, any transboundary or regional efforts need to be funded via co-finance-please revise/clarify throughout.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for the comments.

a.1) a simplified TOC is provided that will be further improved at PPG stage

a.2) The narrative is revised to provide a better description of interventions and relationships to threats/drivers

a.3) The M&E and adaptive management relationships will be developed at PPG stage

b) Agreed (see the response to preceding comments above)

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23

Cleared.

HF 10/30/23:

No, please elaborate per GEF Guidelines.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for this comment. A new table has been added that looks at the baseline, additional cost reasoning and proposed GEF 8 project incremental achievements that will be further elaborated at PPG stage.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

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

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

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 3/14/24:

Cleared. Please note, self-execution is not assumed and remains the last resort option for execution support and should be avoided unless there are exceptional circumstances. Third-party options are the preferred approach to avoid real or perception of a conflict of interest with the Implementing Agency and to build in-country capacity.

Please remove remaining highlights in PIF and annexes in order to be ready for technical clearance.

HF 2/27/24:

Please mark To Be Determined (TBD) since self execution cannot be pre-determined given the review/consideration of execution arrangements will take place during PPG.

HF 2/27/24:

Again, if the response is "No" to self-execution, then please remove the text that follows in relation to potential role in self execution, prior to resubmission to the GEFSEC. Thank you.

HF 12/18/23:

a.) Cleared.

b.) Noted. If response is "No" to self-execution, then please remove the text that follows in relation to potential role in self execution.

HF 10/30/23:

a.) Please clarify the proposed execution arrangement and capacities as it is somewhat unclear as it seems that SACON is predominantly a research arm, whereas GEF BD strategy doesn't fund research and only targeted and applied assessment etc.

b.) The PIF indicates potential future Agency dual/self-execution by UNDP without providing any clear explanation of what that role is or justification for why (e.g. there is no mention in the LOE for UNDP to carry out any executing function, nor is there a Letter of Support signed by the OFF). Dual/self-execution will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. In exceptional circumstances we would request the GEF Agency to procure a third-party to execute as a preferred way forward. Without such request and documentation present, please remove any mention of UNDP self-execution in order for further consideration of this PIF for clearance and potential work program inclusion.

c.) Yes

d.) Yes

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for the comments.

a) The execution entity for this project will be the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) that will work in collaboration with State agencies. Technical support will be obtained through SACON and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII)

b) The intent is to implement this project through National Implementation Modality (and not UNDP providing execution support). However, the determination for limited UNDP execution support will be assessed following the completion of the HACT and partner assessment and in agreement with MOEFCC at PPG stage as noted in the audit checklist. As an initial step, third party execution will be the first preference. If UNDP execution support is required this will be discussed and agreed to with the GEF program Manager at an early stage of PPG phase, following which, a letter of support will be obtained from the OFP. We would also like to note here that the possibility for UNDP execution support services has been reflected at the PIF stage given the experience from several projects from GEF-7 cycle where the Executing Agency (MoEFCC) has requested for UNDP's execution services and the request has been agreed by OFP. Please refer to those projects where OFP has requested for execution services and approved by GEF SEC (EA projects - GEF ID 10914; 10493; 10194; GEF FSP 10876). The other project which the EA and OFP has requested for execution services in GEF-7 is 10776 which is currently at the CEO endorsement stage). If a support request letter is required at the PIF stage, UNDP can discuss with the EA and OFP and submit later.

16 Feb 2024

Thank you for the comment.

b) The response to Execution Support has been left open as this cannot be determined at the PIF stage but will be fully explored as part of the PPG phase. As mentioned in the PIF, the project is expected to be implemented through the National Implementation Modality (NIM) with possible UNDP Country Office support, if deemed necessary and agreed with the GEF OFP following HACT assessment and Partner Assessment of the executing agency and partners. UNDP will engage the government to carefully assess and jointly determine the scope and extent of the CO support, if needed to support with the implementation of the project (i.e. CO support to NIM or any other third-party engagement in execution). A decision on UNDP's execution services or third party option

will be determined at PPG stage following assessments and upstream discussion and agreement with the GEFSEC Program Manager.

5 March 2024

Thank you for the comment.

The response to execution support has been checked as ?YES? in both the PIF and the GEF Portal where the project reasoning remains the same as mentioned in the 16 February 2024 response. UNDP will explore all the options including third party execution support during the PPG phase and have an upstream discussion with GEF Program Manager prior to submitting for CEO ER.

14 March 2024

Thank you for the suggestion on the execution support. We have checked ?yes? and added a text that this will be determined at PPG stage. If we just keep it blank, the portal checks ?no? for execution. Here is the text that we have revised in the PIF.

To be determined (TBD) at PPG stage. The proposed Executing Agency (EA)/Implementing Partner (IP) for the project will be the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) and the project will be implemented over a period of six years with UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency. Execution support if required for the implementation of the project (i.e. CO support to NIM or any other third-party engagement in execution), will be determined at PPG phase following HACT Micro Assessment and Partner Assessment of the executing agency and partners. UNDP will engage the government to carefully assess and jointly determine the scope and extent of the execution support including presenting third-party options. An upstream discussion will be held with the GEF Program Manager during PPG.

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

a.) Yes

a.) Yes.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

- a) Are climate risks and other main risks relevant to the project described and addressed within the project concept design?**
- b) Are the key risks that might affect the project preparation and implementation phases identified and adequately rated?**
- c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately screened and rated at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes.

Agency's Comments

5.7 Qualitative assessment

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/2023

Cleared.

HF 10/30/23

a-b.) Yes

c.) The plans to enhance policy coherence and better align policy/legal incentives via Component 1 of this project needs to be further considered and described in this PIF and developed during PPG.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for the comment. This is incorporated in the PIF.

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

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 3/14/23:

Cleared.

HF 3/8/24:

The formatting for table C1 in the portal still makes it unreadable. I would suggest redacting and instead uploading as an attachment to the Portal PIF in the "Documents" tab. Thank you.

HF 02/27/24:

1.) Cleared. The formatting for table C1 in the portal still makes it unreadable. I would suggest redacting and instead uploading as an attachment to the Portal PIF in the "Documents" tab. Thank you.

HF 12/18/23:

1.) Please ensure that every project site meets the criteria for determining '**global biodiversity significance**' for a wetland-scape. From the criteria mentioned these include: a.) Ramsar site; b.) A site that meets Ramsar criteria but hasn't been declared; c.) a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA); d.) A site that meets KBA criteria, even if not yet formally designated. The remaining criteria in the revised PIF do not meet the level of "global biodiversity significance", please see annotations. Please revise the criteria and sites accordingly as/if needed.

--Wetlands complexes that provide convenient and critical stopover and wintering areas for migratory birds using the Central Asian Flyway (these are often not high global value for terrestrial biodiversity);

- Wetlands that provide breeding and staging areas for the migratory birds (see above);
- Presence of threatened CAF species or other threatened species. (presence of threatened species in an of itself, are not sufficient);
- Presence of sites of high significance for biodiversity of the region. (see above criteria, need more precision here);
- Presence of sites which provide key ecosystem services to the communities. (this is a local and national benefit versus global)
- Significant political support from Government at the Central or State levels. (not a biodiversity significance criteria but of course could be used as a second layer for final selection)

Please revise/reformat tables C1 and C2 to be single spaced and readable in the Portal format.

HF 10/30/23:

1.) Generally aligned with entry point 1 of the GEF-8 BD strategy, though: GEF BD resources must produce GEBs for globally significant biodiversity. Via entry point 1 of the strategy the focus must be on the conservation of global significant biodiverse land/seascapes.

Please describe the global biodiversity significance of the target sites (e.g. KBAs or equivalent values, Ramsar sites etc)-this must be beyond the biodiversity value of the migratory species that use these sites, but the sites themselves. Please revise throughout (including alignment and site selection criteria and description etc).

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for this comment. Additional information on the biological value of project sites (beyond value for migratory birds is provided), along with criteria and importance of each site from a CAF significance). All five sites have biologically important PAs or Ramsar sites attracting some level of government protection and investment.

Please refer to Annex C for criteria for selection of target wetland-scapes with a description of the biological value of each site (beyond CAF significance), and inclusion of Ramsar sites, KBAs and Pas

Annex C, in its table C.2 Site Threat matrix provides a quick reference to the main threats in the individual project sites.

16 Feb 2024

Thank you for these comments.

1) The criteria have been revised to include criteria (a) through (d) mentioned in GEFSEC comments. Furthermore, tables C1 and C2 have been revised to be single spaced and readable in the Portal format

5 March 2024

1) With regard to Annex 3 Table C1 the suggestion to redact it in the Portal PIF and instead upload it as an attachment to the Portal PIF in the "Documents" tab has been done. Thus, in the GEF Portal please see the "Documents" tab for Annex 3 Table C1

14 March 2024

Table C1 as suggested has been removed from both the portal and PIF document, and uploaded as an attachment in the 'Document' section of the portal.

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 2/27/23:

Cleared.

HF 12/18/23:

Noted. In table 6 in Section C: "please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to **and explain how.**"

HF 10/30/23:

Please revise to make the alignment and contribution of this project to the CBD Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework more clear/prominent in the PIF-particularly in section C.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

This is now reflected in table 6 under Section C.

16 Feb 2024

Thank you for the comment.

Table 6 is revised to provide an additional column to describe how the project contributes to the KM-GBF targets.

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 2/27/23:

Cleared.

HF 12/18/23:

As noted above please include HOW this project will contribute to GBF targets.

HF 10/30/23:

The PIF identifies 9 GBF targets, please describe how the project contributes to the identified targets.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for the comment. The contribution of the project to GBF targets are now provided in table 6.

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes

Agency's Comments

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes

Agency's Comments

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

HF 2/27/24:

Cleared-this issue was addressed with a new LOE.

HF 11/30/23:

Noting here that the funding allocated to the three focal areas in the "Annex A/Programming of Funds" table indicates that this project is **predominantly a Climate Change Mitigation project (\$9 million). Is that the intent? Please see options below and revise accordingly. Please speak with GEFSEC PM or PPO officer if this is unclear or there are further question.**

If YES: The project must be redesigned to ensure that it is eligible for the GEF-8 CCM entry point on NbS 1-4 and must set ambitious, evidence based/justified GHG emission reduction targets. Once this has been completed please resubmit project and it will undergo a full review by CCM specialists. Noting that any project for GEF-8 CCM entry point must focus on high-mitigation potential NbS. (Otherwise would recommend ensuring this is a BD or BD-LD project.)

If NOT: Please adjust "Annex A/Programming of Funds" table to accurately reflect the intent/objective of the project, alignment with GEF-8 focal area strategy/ies and expected results/GEBs that it will produce (e.g. heavily, if not all, BD by the look of the Core Indicator targets set and design of the project).

HF 10/30/23:

Please correct/update the "Annex A/Programming of Funds" table to reflect the intended programming of funds for this project (e.g. sourcing from CCM and LD to program for BD). Please correct accordingly.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Thank you for the comment. Tables in Annex A have been revised accordingly.

16 Feb 2024

Thank you for the comment.

Based on the full flexibility to program GEF-8 STAR, GoI has decided to program CC and LD FA STAR exclusively to BD FA and this is now reflected in the financing tables. Core indicators are set to meet BD FA targets.

However, we have noticed challenge while entering the figures in the GEF portal under Annex A/programming funds. In the portal, we have to enter figures according to FA and can't enter CC and LD STAR all in one under BD FA. If we do this, then an error shows up and won't allow us to make the submission.

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments
SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's CommentsNA

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

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments
Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's CommentsNA

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes. Significant co-financing from a diversity of sources. Great!

Agency's Comments

Annex B: Endorsements

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23:

- a.) Cleared. PM uploaded email from OFP (via UNDP) that contains the LOE footnote. See documents tab in Portal.
- b.) Cleared (as the source of funds table is now consistent with the LOE).

HF 10/30/23:

- a. The LOE template used for this project removed the footnote that conditions the selection of the executing partner to the following: "Subject to the capacity assessment carried out by the GEF Implementing Agency, as appropriate?". In March 2023, GEF Agencies were informed that LOEs "with modifications cannot be accepted and will be returned?". While the removal of the footnote seems to be trivial, it is not: this footnote reduces the chances of having an executing partner that does not meet the fiduciary and procurement standards required to safely execute the project. Please get an email from the OFP accepting this footnote to be part of the LOE (this is an alternative to request a new LOE), or have a new LOE issued and signed, that adheres to the template.
- b. Break-down of country STAR allocation among BD, CC, LD are different between LOE and Portal's Sources Of Funds table, please revise to make them match.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

The comments are well noted.

- a) A new LOE is in process and will be ready for the next submission.
- b) The source of funds table has been made consistent with the LoE.

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

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Project Location

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 12/18/23:

Cleared.

HF 10/30/23:

Please provide maps of proposed sites at a scale that is easily legible and that contains the coordinates for geolocation. The two maps in Annex C are blurry and don't provide sufficient granularity of the proposed sites/wetland complexes.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

Five additional maps have been provided. One for each wetland-scape

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex E: Rio Markers

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 2/27/24:

Cleared

HF 12/18/23:

Noted. "Programming of funds" section does not align with Rio Markers and visa versa. If the Rio Fund markers is the intended focus of the project, please revise the "Programming of Funds" table accordingly as previously commented above.

HF 10/30/23:

Please revise the Rio Marker designation to align with the "programming of funds" and the intended results of this project (presumably: BD; LD; CCM).

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

The Rio markers have been revised to reflect with programming of funds

16 Feb 2024

The Rio-makers have been revised in accordance with the programming of funds

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial

additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's CommentsNA

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 3/14/24:

Yes, technical clearance is recommended.

HF 3/8/24:

Not yet. Please address remaining comments in review sheet.

HF 2/27/23:

Not yet. Please address remaining comments in review sheet.

HF 12/18/23:

Not yet. Please address comments in review sheet.

HF 10/30/2023:

Not yet. Please address comments in review sheet.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

addressed

5 March 2024

Remaining comments in the review sheet have been addressed in accordance.

14 March 2024

Remaining comments in the review sheet have been addressed in accordance.

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

Secretariat's Comments

HF 10/30/23:

See comments for PPG in review sheet.

HF 03/14/24

Please note, self-execution is not assumed and remains the last resort option for execution support and should be avoided unless there are exceptional circumstances. Third-party options are the preferred approach to avoid real or perception of a conflict of interest with the Implementing Agency and to build in-country capacity.

Agency's Comments

29 Nov 2023

well noted

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	10/30/2023	11/29/2023
Additional Review (as necessary)	12/18/2023	2/16/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	2/27/2024	3/5/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/8/2024	3/14/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/14/2024	

