

# Child Project Title: Strengthening Marrakech?s sustainable development through innovative planning and financing

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10486

**Countries**

Morocco

**Project Name**

Child Project Title: Strengthening Marrakech?s sustainable development  
through innovative planning and financing

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

6/18/2021

**Review completed by PM**

11/8/2021

**Program Manager**

Aloke Barnwal

**Focal Area**

Multi Focal Area

**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**

Adjustments required:

In Table A, the outcome text should be revised to Transforming cities through integrated urban planning and investments in innovative sustainability solutions.

The Rio Marker for Climate Change Mitigation has a value of '2' in the CER document and PRODOC, which is required to justify CCM from the GEFTF. However, in the GEF portal the Rio marker for CCM is still defined as '1'. This should be adjusted to '2'. CCA is marked as 1. Please elaborate the adaptation rationale more in the benefits section.

Otherwise noted that no changes have been made in regarding the alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies since PFD stage.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks. Comment cleared.

**Agency Response**

The Rio marker for CCM has been defined to 2 in the GEF Portal.

More details on climate change vulnerabilities and adaptation rationale were added in CER and ProDoc. in Part II 1a. of CER and Chapter II of PRODOC.

**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**

Clarifications are requested:

In general, the dimensions of integration and sustainability are well articulated, and the rationale behind the project design is clear in the Moroccan context. The four components complement each other to achieve integrated urban planning for sustainability solutions.

Overall, the central role of the Urban Municipality of Marrakech could be more emphasized, especially under Component 1 and 4. Please specify more clearly how the will project build the city's capacity and ownership as an orchestrator among all other urban actors and stakeholders?

It is positive to see how investments under Component 2 feed into other Components of the project and contribute to build capacity and frameworks at national and local level.

On Component 2 ? it is clear the three specific sectors (waste management, biodiversity and water resources) are chosen given their importance in terms of sustainability, environmental conservation and climate change. The project could also elaborate a bit more on how these sectors can benefit from synergies and nexus between them, and also look at initiatives and best practices that integrate these successfully. The project should go beyond just analyzing initiatives and international experiences for low-carbon, and also look at initiatives that simultaneously can support urban biodiversity and circularity (linking to waste management).

Also, under Component 2: The interventions at the Palm Grove are still unclear, is this still part of the project design or has it been fully replaced by other green areas? Please note that removing this will remove the core indicator 1 completely which will affect the overall PFD outcome. The project should consider an alternative that results in delivering either indicator 1 or indicator 4 with sufficient scale related to remain consistent with concept note and also to justify the LD and BD funds for this project.

Component 3 on Innovative financing and scaling-up is promising and contains many important aspects to remove existing barriers and create sustainable results

More specific details on the project design and alternative scenario can be found in Part II Review Item 3.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks. Comment cleared.

**Agency Response**

The role of the Urban Communes of Marrakech in core execution activities were detailed in Tables 3 and 6 and in Boxes 1 and 5 of PRODOC to indicate their involvement at different levels, from the political steering to the planning, design and

implementation of all project activities. To ensure a strong ownership and that project activities are aligned with the city level needs, technical representatives from both urban communes will be involved with the Project Management Unit activities through different Technical Committees (see revised Project organization structure and PMU functions in PRODOC Section VII and Annex 2). The proposed Technical Committees are geared to cover all key areas tackled by project components and to ensure the appropriate synergies among sectors.

Following GEFSec review, consultations were conducted on the 23rd of September 2021 with the Mohamed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection and other key stakeholders (see Prodoc, Annex 9). It provided a clear vision on how to reintegrate the Palm grove in the project (see Output 2.1.5 and activities 2.1.5.4 to 2.1.5.6 in Prodoc). This allowed for reviewing core indicators 1 and 4 (see Annex 16 of Prodoc and section 6 of CER).

**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

Yes, with request for clarification.

The supporting evidence in the form of co-financing letters has been uploaded in the portal and is consistent with the figures in the CEO Endorsement Request.

The high ratio co-financing is welcome, with a large increase in co-financing since PFD stage, from \$50,500,000 to \$298,556,388.

It is noted that the co-financing letter from SDL Bus City Motajadida (which stands for 164,282,500 USD out of the total 298,556,388 USD) does not seem to provide evidence for co-financing mobilized but rather states that the company is ?looking for possible co-financing?. Similarly, Professional Association of Sidi Ghanem Industrial Zone confirms it will be ?targeting? investments of 1 million dollars.

It is positive to see co-financing of 1 million dollars from the Private Sector. If possible, the project could consider additional sources for Private Sector co-financing.

It is noted that despite of increased co-financing, the project GEB targets have been reduced significantly from the concept stage. The project's overall GEB targets are very low and the project is encouraged to explore alternatives to increase this.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks. Comment cleared.

#### Agency Response

Thank you for these suggestions. The co-financing letter of the Professional Association of Sidi Ghanem Industrial Zone has been modified. It clearly indicates providing a co-financing, rather than seeking a co-financing.

As well, the project GEB targets have been revised and increased (see Annex 16 of Prodoc and section 6 of CER).

#### 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  
Yes.

#### 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

Yes. The status and utilization of PPG are reported. However, according to Annex C only \$24,186 of \$150,000 (ca 16%) of the budgeted amount has been spent to date. Is there a clear plan for how the remainder will be used within one year of CEO Endorsement?

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks for the details. Comment cleared.

Agency Response The PPG utilization has been updated and reflected in the Annex C of the CEO ER. The amount spent to date is \$118,720 while the remaining \$31,280 is committed.

#### 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

No, clarifications and justifications of significant reductions in core indicator targets are required.

Changes to Core Indicator targets are indicated in section 6 in the CER template (not in Table E) and in PRODOC Annex 16 (not Annex 17 as stated in the CER template, please revise). Some major changes are noted between PFD to CER stage, under Core Indicators 1 and 6:

Core Indicator 1 - Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use, was at 15,500 ha in PFD but has been removed entirely as the rehabilitation of the Palm Grove has been replaced by others related to the restoration and development of green areas (e.g., historic gardens, public gardens), greening of schoolyards, including creation of 2 agroecological gardens. Please clarify if these are new green areas are expected to contribute to any Core Indicators (CI.1 or CI.4?)

Core Indicator 4 - Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas): Has been reduced from 450 ha to 330.50 ha due to more accurate assessments.

Core Indicator 6 - Total GHG emission reductions (tCO<sub>2</sub>) eq: have been reduced significantly, from 11,034,954 to 1,690,445 tCO<sub>2</sub> eq. Please elaborate on the methodology. Also, this level of reduction is not acceptable at CEO ER stage compared to concept stage as it will impact the overall program's targets. Also, this raises question on the value for money of the project which was approved at EOI and concept stage.

Core Indicator 11 - Number of beneficiaries: Only very minor adjustments have been made, from 1,000,000 to 928,850 and with a similar distribution between women and men.

Overall- the GEB targets need to be revised upwards significantly and revisions in the project design should be made accordingly.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks for the revisions. The core indicator targets are fine now. Comment cleared.

## Agency Response

Consultations conducted on the 23rd of September 2021 with the Mohamed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection and other key stakeholders (see Prodoc, Annex 9) provided a clear vision on how to reintegrate the Palm grove in the project. Accordingly, Core Indicators have been reviewed (see Annex 16 of Prodoc and section 6 of CER), considering that Indicator 1.1 "Terrestrial protected areas newly created" relates to the Marsh Site North-Ouest of the Palm grove (see details in Prodoc, Activity 2.1.5.6). Whereas Indicator 1.2 "Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness" relates to the overall Palm grove (see Prodoc, Activity 2.1.5.4). As such, the value of Indicator 1 "Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use" at Project Endorsement is the same as at PIF stage.

Also, Core Indicator 4 "Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)" have been revised by considering the surface area covered

by agroecology and organic certification at the Palm grove (see Prodoc, Activity 2.1.5.5).

These additional elements increase significantly the GHG emissions, which are summarized below:

**Direct emissions: 5,543,580 in tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

**Consequential emissions: 5,404,605 in tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

**Energy savings: 10,834,907,153**

These figures are very close to what was indicated at PIF stage. The direct emissions increased by 882,096 tons (from 4,661,484 to 5,543,580), while the indirect or consequential decreased by 968,865 tons (from 6,373,470 to 5,404,605). Therefore, the total emissions (direct + indirect) decreased slightly by 86,769 tons: from 11,034,954 at PIF stage to **10,948,185 at CEO endorsement.**

## **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**

Yes, with suggestions. Challenges linked urban expansion in Marrakech are well described in Part II 1a. of CER and PRODOC, including specific barriers related to isolated approaches in urban planning and the lack of overall planning and coordination in Moroccan cities.

The specific global environmental problems could be elaborated further. It is stated that the city faces several environmental pressures which are impacted by climate change which could be described in more detail. This is partly touched upon under the 'Ecology and Climate' bullet point but the project could better specify what are the main environmental problems caused by urban expansion and siloed approaches to urban planning are.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks for the additional information. Comment cleared.

### **Agency Response**

Thank you for these suggestions. The below text input is added to the CER in Part II 1a. of CER and Chapter II of PRODOC.

Ecology and Climate: Almost all of the impacts of climate change and land use change have direct or indirect consequences for urban ecosystems, biodiversity, and the critical ecosystem services they provide for human health and well-being in the city. Climate change and urbanization are likely to increase the vulnerability of biodiversity hotspots,

urban species, and critical ecosystem services which are key strategy for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. Even if the strategic urban documents attempt to integrate sustainable development, the fact remains that effective consideration is weak, especially following this phase of continuous exemptions experienced by Marrakech. Climate change is even less considered. Urban sprawl comes at the expense of the city's biodiversity, ecosystems and resources, further increasing its vulnerability to climate change. An integrated approach involving scientists, territorial institutions, local communities and policy-makers will be necessary to develop successful response to climate change, make the city's infrastructure and population more resilient and its infrastructure development sustainable. Urban ecosystems and green infrastructure can provide cost-effective, nature-based solutions for adapting to climate change while also creating opportunities to increase social equity, green economies, and sustainable urban development.

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

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

Yes, with suggestions. This is partly also described in in Part II 1a. of CER and under IV. Results and Partnerships in PRODOC, where programs and projects concerned by partnerships and synergies are listed in Table 5. Please provide a summary of the baseline scenario under Part II section 2 in the CER template, so that the GEF funding's contribution compared to baseline becomes clearer.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks. Comment cleared.

Agency Response Section 2 of the CEO ER is amended to provide a summary of the baseline summary.

**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**

Overall, the impact of GEF funding, and the outcomes and components, and activities to achieve this are well described. The agency is also requested to review the alternate scenario make necessary adjustments to ensure that significant GEBs are generated through the project. Specific comments based on the current scenario is provided below:

Under Component 2, please clarify if or to what extent interventions at the Palm Grove will be part of the project. In PRODOC, Output 2.1.5 states that "Resilient investments are performed at the Palm grove?", however this has been revised in the CER template and its section 6 it also says that the rehabilitation of the palm grove were replaced by others related to the restoration and development of green areas due the legal barriers. In



Annex 11 Gender Action Plan, one of the recommendations still is: ?4. Greater participation of women as beneficiaries of the Marrakech palm grove safeguard and development program?. Please remove if this is no longer relevant.

Activity 2.1.1.1 aims to support the city of Marrakech in the development of its own PMUD initiated in 2017, please explain how GEF investments are catalytic and incremental, i.e. what value-add it brings compared to the baseline scenario.

Under Activity 2.1.4.1, please provide some more details on how the project will include sustainable waste management at the ECO-PARK of Sidi Ghanem. Currently the energy efficiency and renewable energy investments under 2.1.3.3 but less is mentioned on business plan of the used oil waste stream in the ECO-PARK.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks again for the revisions and for clarifications regarding PMUD. Comment cleared.

### Agency Response

The project GEB targets have been reviewed (see Annex 14 and 16 of Prodoc and section 6 of CER).

As indicated in response to Item 7 ?Core Indicators? of Part 1: Project Information, the Palm grove has been re-introduced as part of the project (see Output 2.1.5 and activities 2.1.5.4 to 2.1.5.6 in Prodoc) and accordingly Core indicators 1 and 4 were reviewed.

In Annex 11, Gender Action Plan (Prodoc): recommendation n?4 ?Greater participation of women as beneficiaries of the Marrakech palm grove safeguard and development program? is maintained.

Activity 2.1.1.1: Indeed the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PMUD) is a powerful tool that will ensure the coherence and the alignment of the different means of transport of people and goods and improve the complementarity between the different ways that seek to rationalize the global system of transport, without neglecting the strengthening of the links between urban planning, transport and road safety.

Therefore, the activity 2.1.1.1 aims to support the city of Marrakech in the development of its own PMUD, based on the achievements and failures identified during the implementation of the city?s PDU. The project contribution will cover 50% of the PMUD cost. Without such project contribution, the PMUD can be delayed, and its scope of work will be limited to the generic ToRs set by the Ministry of Interior with support by MobiliseYourCity initiative. GEF investment contribution will be key in extending the scope of the PMUD to include other issues such as carbon neutrality targets.

Activity 2.1.4.1: the description of the activity is revised to include more details on circular economy and linkages with waste management.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

The project responds to and reflects the sustainable cities impact program approach, with a strong focus on integration vertically and horizontally to achieve sustainable results. See more specific comments under Review Item 2 under Part I further up.

Comment cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

No. Request for clarification.

This is included under heading 5 in the CER. The project states that "The basic investments planned for the City of Marrakech will not be sufficient to remove barriers and ensure sustainable and innovative development for the city". Here, more information is requested concerning the specific value-addition of the GEF grant, its catalytic role and contribution compared to baseline. This will likely be clearer once the baseline scenario is better defined. Currently, the project rather compares changes between targets at PFD stage and CER stage.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks. Comment cleared.

Agency Response

The baseline scenario has been described more in details. As well, the Global environment benefits have also been detailed and increased. In this regard, the GEF incremental reasoning is now clearer. The below text has been added to section 5 of the CER.

The GEF support is of paramount importance in catalyzing long-lasting reforms and targeting GEB. The project design and implementation structure through a multilevel, multidimensional and multistakeholder policy dialogue will lay the ground for appropriate framework conditions to raise "sustainable and integrated urban planning" to the top priorities of the country's policy reforms and areas of investments. The GEF support offers accordingly an unprecedented added value to the City of Marrakech to upscale its green investments through innovative financial solutions in a context where the country is seeking viable alternatives from local stakeholders to sustain the advanced regionalization. Through this particular process, and thanks to the GEF support, the urban municipalities of Marrakech by leading key project activities, will have a unique

opportunity to showcase their local experiences, build their capacities and share their urban development model with other cities be it at the national, regional and global level.

**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

Please refer to comments above. There is a drastic reduction in GEBs from the concept stage which needs to be revised upwards to justify the project investment and its contribution to the SCIP PFD.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks for the revised targets. Comment cleared.

Agency Response The project GEB targets have been reviewed (see Annex 16 of Prodoc and section 6 of CER).

**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

Yes. This is elaborated on in PRODOC, Section IV ? Subsection Innovativeness, sustainability, and potential for scaling up.

Innovation is well described in terms of integrated planning and governance at the city level, specific technology interventions and financing models.

Sustainability considerations further elaborated. Creating commitment among stakeholder will be important, and as mentioned ?The design of the project has mobilized the commitment of all stakeholders who should then ensure proper management and maintenance?.

Potential for scaling up in other Moroccan territories and nationally is included, as well as the contribution to the SCIP Global Platform.

Comment cleared.

Agency Response

**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

Yes. Annex E in the CER / Annex 3 in PRODOC contains project map and coordinates.

Agency Response

**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

Yes.

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

Yes, with request for clarifications. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been submitted as Annex 9, where stakeholders and their roles are well defined. A description of Roles and responsibilities is not included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan but found in Table 2, 3 and 4 in IV. Results and Partnerships in PRODOC.

Please elaborate a bit on the roles and responsibilities of the city (Urban municipality of Marrakech and the Urban municipality of M?chouar Kasbah) to ensure their involvement is clear and sustainable in terms of ownership and capacity building.

Please clarify in the SEP that ?Urban Agency? is referring to Urban Agency of Marrakech (AUM) in the list of Institutional partners (listed as number 12).

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks for the details regarding involvement of city authority in the project. The revised organizational structure is fine. Comment cleared.

Agency Response

The role of the Urban Communes of Marrakech in core execution activities were detailed in Tables 3 and 6 and in Boxes 1 and 5 of PRODOC to indicate their involvement at different levels, from the political steering to the planning, design and implementation of all project activities. To ensure a strong ownership and that project activities are aligned with the city level needs, technical representatives from both urban communes will be involved with the Project Management Unit activities through different Technical Committees (see revised Project organization structure and PMU functions in PRODOC Section VII and Annex 2). The proposed Technical Committees are geared to cover all key areas tackled by project components.

Reference to Marrakech Urban Agency has been clarified in the SEP (Annex 9, Prodoc).

### **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

Yes.

Agency Response

#### **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

Yes. The private sector will be engaged in project design, implementation and financing, especially under Component 2 on 'Sustainable integrated low-Carbon, resilient, and land conservation and restoration investments' and Component 3 on 'Innovative financing and scaling-up'.

It is also positive to see a wide engagement by operators, managers, and private sector as described in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

The contribution of private sector stakeholder is also elaborated in Table 4. in PRODOC.

[Comment 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

Yes, with suggestions. Potential risks, including risk related to Covid-19 and climate change, are discussed in PRODOC under Annex 6: UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) and Annex 7: UNDP Atlas Risk Register.

In Annex 6, please be consistent with the use of letters denoting Probability of risk; both P and L are currently used across the table. Also please add 'risk level?' to all risks in a consistent manner.

Thanks. Comment cleared.

Agency Response Thank you for the suggestion. For both Annex 6 (SESP), and Annex 7 (UNDP Risk Register), the P (Probability) was modified by L (Likelihood) for the sake of consistency, and the levels of Risks were adjusted.

#### **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

Institutional arrangements are discussed under VII. Governance and Management Arrangements in PRODOC. Further to the comment on Stakeholder engagement, please elaborate on the role of the Urban Communes of Marrakech in core execution activities such as planning, designing and implementation of solutions. It is stated in Table 3 in PRODOC that they will be 'involved in strategic steering and implementation of project activities?', which can be explained in more detail.

Coordination with other projects and initiatives are described in PRODOC under Section V. Results and Partnerships ? Partnerships, Table 5. Various initiatives and project are listed, and their relevance described. Please also provide some more details on how the GEF project will coordinate with them.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks. Comment cleared.

### Agency Response

The role of the Urban Communes of Marrakech in core execution activities were detailed in Tables 3 and 6 and in Boxes 1 and 5 of PRODOC to indicate their involvement at different levels, from the political steering to the planning, design and implementation of all project activities. To ensure a strong ownership and that project activities are aligned with the city level needs, technical representatives from both urban communes will be involved with the Project Management Unit activities through different Technical Committees (see revised Project organization structure and PMU functions in PRODOC Section VII and Annex 2). The proposed Technical Committees are geared to cover all key areas tackled by project components.

More details are provided to explain how the project will coordinate with the past and on-going programs and projects (see PRODOC under Table 5).

### 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

Yes, with suggestions. This is briefly described in the CER template. The project is aligned with Morocco's NDC and its multisectoral approach, as well as other National Policies such as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD).

Given its focus on Biodiversity, Land Management and Resilience, the project can also make link city level interventions with efforts to influence national policies related to urban biodiversity and land degradation caused by urbanization, as well as climate change adaptation and resilience.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks for the revisions. Comment cleared.

### Agency Response

Thank you for the suggestion. The below text is also added to the CER ? Part II ? section 7. Consistency with National Priorities.

On another hand, the advanced regionalization reforms adopted in 2015 in the country has led to a redefinition of the relationship between the central government and the newly elected regions which now have exclusive, shared and transferred competences and financial resources. Accordingly, through a 'bottom-up' approach, the unique project expected results and outcomes on urban sustainability will be key to set key insights on policy design and adjustment at the national level. Accordingly, given project focus on Biodiversity, Land Management and Resilience, the project can easily

make link city level interventions with efforts to influence national policies related to urban biodiversity and land degradation caused by urbanization, as well as climate change adaptation and resilience.

### **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**

Yes, with suggestions. Under Component 4 on KM and M&E, outputs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 are dedicated to sharing and dissemination of results, which is well elaborated in PROCOC under IV. Results and partnerships.

Under 4.1.1 on Awareness raising and Advocacy, please provide some more details on how the project will ensure that the Urban Municipalities of Marrakech has a central role in Knowledge Management, so that campaigns targeting various stakeholders (private sector, youth, CSO etc.) can contribute to the city's long-term sustainability vision.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks for additional information. Comment cleared.

#### **Agency Response**

Thank you for the suggestion. A box has been added to the description of Output 4.1.1, as below:

##### **BOX 5: Role of the Urban Municipalities under Component 4.**

The Urban Municipalities of Marrakech, as any other urban municipalities, are in charge of planning, budgeting and delivery of a set urban services (e.g., waste management, transport, public lighting, leisure & culture, green spaces, etc.). To ensure an appropriate implementation of these services up to the expectations of the city's citizens, elected councils and municipal servants are expected to engage in close consultations and partnerships with different categories of citizens, be it from the private sector, public institutions, civil society, academia, etc.. To ensure that the activities under this output will contribute to the City's long-term sustainability vision, the two Urban Municipalities of Marrakech, mainly their Communication departments, will be strongly be involved in all the activities of this output, including the mapping of stakeholders, development of an awareness plan on urban sustainability , preparation of awareness-raising material, organization of awareness campaigns and events and organization of advocacy learning and capacity building sessions adapted to the local context.

### **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

Yes.

Agency Response

**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

Yes.

Agency Response

**Annexes**

**Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

[No. Annex 10: Environmental Social Management Framework can't be located. Please provide this or refer to where this can be found.](#)

GEFSEC 25 October: Ok. Thanks. Comment cleared.

Agency Response The ESMF is provided as a separate document.

**Project Results Framework**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Yes. Please refer to comments above regarding the project's GEB targets.

Comment cleared.

Agency Response  
GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

The agency is requested to address the following comments and resubmit the project:

1. On PMC Proportionality: there is not proportionality in the co-financing contribution to PMC. If the GEF contribution is kept at 4.73%, for a co-financing of \$298,156,388 the expected contribution to PMC must be around \$14,013,350 instead of \$400,000 (which is 3.6%). As the costs associated with the project management have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to the PMC, the GEF contribution and the co-financing contribution must be proportional, which means that the GEF contribution to PMC might be decreased and the co-financing contribution to PMC might be increased to reach a similar level (note: reasonably one cannot expect that the co-financing resources allocated to PMC will increase up to 14 million, but the distribution has to be more even). Please ask amend either by increasing the co-financing portion and/or by reducing the GEF portion

2. M&E budget under Section 9 shows \$285,000 while budget table under Annex E shows \$781,000 M&E budget:

There are three positions charged to M&E in the budget table included in Annex E that are neither related nor included in the M&E Plan: National expert to map the actors to be sensitized on urban sustainability at national and local level (decision-makers, institutions, civil society, companies, young people?.); National expert to develop an awareness plan on urban sustainability combining standard (workshops, press, etc.) and digital (social networks, web ...); and National expert to design and implement a national and local capacity building plan in advocacy to promote urban sustainability.

3. Core Indicators: In Annex A "Project Results Framework", please ensure that each GEF Core Indicator is correctly numbered (e.g. Mandatory Indicator 2 and corresponding GEF Core Indicators) and targets are aligned with those provided in Core Indicator Table (e.g. for GEF Core Indicator 6). Please kindly go over all indicators to double check for misnumbering or misaligning targets. This will greatly help us in monitoring and reporting results.

4. Gender: It is well noted that the submission includes a gender analysis and action, but please agency provide some summary information in the portal section on gender

5. On co-financing:

- a. On the co-financing from the government of Morocco please change the name of the co-financier from Department of Environment to Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment ? Morocco.
- b. Please change the source from Grant to Public Investment

- c. On the Co-financing from SDL Bus City: the co-financing letter does not provide a strong commitment to provide \$164,282,500 in co-financing but rather stipulates the need of that amount to start the implementation of some projects. Please request the agency to clarify if this co-financing will be committed and in what form (in-kind, cash, public investment, loan, etc?)
- d. On the co-financing from SDL Hadirat Al Anwar: we tried looking for this online but did not find much. As this co-financier seems to be a corporation (S.A.) then we would request to change the source from Recipient country government to Private Sector and from Grant to Public Investment
- e. On the co-financing from RADEEMA: Please change the name of the co-financier from RADEEMA to Autonomous Water and Electricity Distribution Authority of Marrakech (RADEEMA) and change the type of co-financing from Grant to Public Investment.
- f. On the co-financing from EMOB: Change the type of co-financing from Grant to Public Investment.
- g. On the co-financing from Professional Association of Sidi Ghanem Industrial Zone: Please change the Source of co-financing from Grant to Public Investment and correct the type of co-financier from CSO to Other.

November 8, 2021

Thanks for the responses. Comments are technically cleared for final review by PPO.

November 10, 2021

Please address the following additional comment on the project and resubmit the project.

- Core Indicators ? not yet addressed. Annex A ?Project Results Framework? is missing GEF core indicator 11 (beneficiaries disaggregated by gender), and has a confusion in a sentence ?GEF Core Indicator 4: Mandatory Indicator 2 (GEF Core Indicator 3)?.

November, 12, 2021

Thanks for the revisions. Comment cleared.

## Agency Response

**November 12, 2021:**

Kindly refer to the first line of the table for GEF core indicator 11 in the Project Result Framework. To make it easy for reference, it has been highlighted in yellow for this submission.

The text of Core indicator 4 is corrected with the right terminology from the GEF core indicator.

8 November:

1. PMC cost has been revised to increase the share of the cofinancing budget. It equals now to \$12 million. Both GEF and Cofinancing ration are almost the same, slightly above 4%.
2. In line with GEF Secretariat comments, GEF budget template is revised. Component 4 is subdivided into 2 categories: Knowledge Management and M&E. The Total Budget table in section 9 and GEF budget template in Annex 1 of the Prodoc reflect this change.
3. Core indicators have been adjusted and corrected in the Project Results Framework (Annex A of the CEO ER and section 5 of the Prodoc)
4. A gender assessment was conducted by identifying key gaps between women and men according to the classification recommended in the GEF implementation strategy on gender in its projects and programs. This assessment was focused on: (i) Access and control of natural resources; (ii) The participation of women in decision-making; and (iii) Socio-economic benefits and services, and gaps were derived based on available national and local SDG data.

Based on the gap assessment, a set of 10 recommendations and measures were proposed to promote gender equality and empower women. A detailed gender action plan was designed comprising a set of gender specific indicators for each project activity. To support the implementation of the gender action plan a set of 14 gender-specific activities were identified with key indicators, for which targets, baselines, budgets, timelines and responsibilities were defined.

Summary information on gender analysis and action has been added to portal.

5. As requested, co-financing and source of co-financing have been revised in the CEO ER. Particularly on point C on the Co-financing from SDL Bus City, UNDP confirms that the co-financing will be committed, and in the form of public investment.

#### **Council comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**STAP comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Yes, with suggestions. STAP general comments on the PFD have been taken into account in the design of the project. STAP's comments on the need for clarification of methods used to calculate carbon savings are relevant for this project, see previous points asking for clarifications on estimated GHG reductions.

GEFSEC 25 October: Thanks. Comment cleared.

Agency Response Detailed calculations have been provided in Annex 14 of the Prodoc.

**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

Agency Response

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request Yes

Agency Response

**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 NA

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Not yet. The GEFSEC is returning the CEO Endorsement Request to the Agency to address additional comments and requests for clarifications.

Yes, the project recommended for CEO Endorsement.

October 30, 2021

The Agency is requested to address additional comments provided under the GEF Secretariat Comments section above in the review sheet. Please provide responses to the comments in the box below.

November 8, 2021

The Agency has addressed the PPO's comments well and therefore the project is technically cleared for endorsement.

November 10, 2021

The project is returned to address the following additional comment. The comment is also provided in the GEF SEC comments box above.

- Core Indicators ? not yet addressed. Annex A ?Project Results Framework? is missing GEF core indicator 11 (beneficiaries disaggregated by gender), and has a confusion in a sentence ?GEF Core Indicator 4: Mandatory Indicator 2 (GEF Core Indicator 3)?.

November 12, 2021

The above comment has been addressed now. Project is technically cleared.

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>9/14/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>10/27/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>11/8/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>11/10/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>11/12/2021</b>	

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**

The project ?Strengthening Marrakech?s sustainable development through innovative planning and financing? with GEF ID 10486 is a child project of the Sustainable Cities Impact Program. It aims to foster integration and innovative urban planning and financing for Marrakech?s sustainable development. Through a GEF grant of \$9.4 million and co-finance of \$298 million (1:31 ratio), the project will result in 280 hectares of new protected areas, 11,720 hectares of protected areas under improved management and 460.50 hectares of landscapes under improved practices. It will also lead to GHG mitigation of 10.9 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e. The project will directly benefit over 900,000 people.

The City of Marrakech has gone through substantial urban transformation during the last two decades, but is still in need to advance local leadership, coordination, urban policy efficiency and investment frameworks to overcome challenges of weak vertical

integration and the lack of long-term visions. The city will be supported to develop its capacities to better assess the interdependency of different sectors, and seek alternative financial sources needed to finance sustainable urban projects in large scale to ensure transformational change, spur inclusive socioeconomic development and deliver various GEBs. The project will lead to cleaner energy systems and more sustainable mobility to reduce pollution and GHG emissions, as well as resilient investments in urban and peri-urban green spaces to ensure biodiversity restoration, conservation and sustainable land management.

The project is organized around four components to ensure these achievements and impacts:

1. **Evidence-based sustainable and integrated urban planning & policy reform** ? which will improve the enabling conditions to support vertical integration at the national level and support implementation of integrated planning and processes in the City of Marrakech
2. **Sustainable integrated low-Carbon, resilient, and land conservation and restoration investments** ? including business plans and investments in sustainable urban mobility, renewable energy, resource efficiency and waste management, and biodiversity restoration in urban and peri-urban garden areas.
3. **Innovative financing and scaling-up** ? supporting the City of Marrakech to improve its creditworthiness, develop new business, revenue and procurement models to engage private sector, and design and test innovative financial mechanisms.
4. **Advocacy, knowledge exchange, capacity building and partnerships** ? through specified and differentiated outreach and awareness campaigns, and in collaboration with global project of the Sustainable Cities Impact Program.

The GEF Agency UNDP will collaborate with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment as the implementing agency, and bring together stakeholders from the National level, Territorial level and the Private sector. A Project Board will be set up to ensure that the project achieves the desired results, and include representatives from Ministries, Regional Councils, Urban municipalities, and utility and service providers from relevant sectors such as transport, tourism, and industry.

Innovation on the basis of a new integration and governance approach at the territorial level will strengthen integration and enhance urban planning in a multisectoral dynamic, by involving various stakeholders at several scales. Technical innovation in electrification, digitalization and Nature Based Solutions (NbS) form part of the project's strategic components, and include sustainable mobility in the form of electric, shared public transportation systems, and a new smart grid system with the intelligent management of electricity production by renewable energy. The adoption of NbS in degraded environments is designed to improve ecosystem services, including urban



climate regulation, and benchmarking of new business models to implement climate change plans will help leveraging financing from the private sector and financial institutions.

The project will ensure sustainability beyond its end-date by adopting sustainable urban planning policies, frameworks and enhanced institutional arrangements that set the city's processes on new, longer-term, and more sustainable trajectories. A central multi-sectoral data management unit will monitor the progress of the initiatives launched, and ensure a continuation of successful activities. By providing new tools to improve its creditworthiness and financing methods, along with the appropriate legal framework, the project will help ensuring that planned and future sustainable investments can become reality. Particular attention is given to empowerment, and societal and individual involvement in restoration and NbS, to reconnect people with nature, raise awareness, and find new forms of social engagement as instruments for sustainability.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on central and local government budgets in Morocco. In the city of Marrakech, which relies heavily on incomes from touristic activities, the economy and social life has been negatively impacted by the absence of tourists since March 2020. In this context, the project will support vertical integration between national and local governments, centered around evidence-based and integrated urban planning and policy reforms which will contribute to an economic transition towards a green economy. New models and mechanisms to increase flow of financing to the city will also support the economic recovery. Through the promotion of renewable energy, clean mobility, enhanced waste management and conservation of green spaces, the project will create favorable conditions for improving air quality, tourist attractiveness, human well-being, and health, as well as create green jobs and reduce social exclusion, all of which will directly contribute to a greener recovery from COVID-19.