



# Recovering the Sustainability of Ecosystems Affected by Drought in Northeastern Argentina

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

11336

**Countries**

Argentina

**Project Name**

Recovering the Sustainability of Ecosystems Affected by Drought in Northeastern Argentina

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

10/13/2023

**Review completed by PM**

11/13/2023

**Program Manager**

Ulrich Apel

**Focal Area**

Land Degradation

**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

10/19/2023:

a) Yes.

b) Not fully:

b1) please consider removing "Provinces of Chaco, Formosa, and Santa Fe" from the executing Partners field. First of all, the LoE states that the MAyDS will be executing. That does not mean that the line agencies and other provincial institutions can be involved in the project execution as appropriate, however, they are not an official executing partner.

b2): The project is obviously designed as a LD single focal area project. It is therefore not a Multifocal Area project. Please correct that entry. (please also refer to my explanations of how the financing tables need to be filled correctly).

11/13/2023: NOT Addressed.

Please remove "Provinces of Chaco, Formosa, and Santa Fe" from the executing Partners field in Part I in the portal.

11/17/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

## Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

b1) As suggested, the provinces of Chaco, Formosa, and Santa Fe were removed from the Executing Partners field.

b2) Information regarding the GEF Focal Areas(s) was updated to indicate that the project is a single focal area project: Land Degradation. The financing tables were also updated in the corresponding sections of the PIF (Annex A: Financing Tables) as indicated.

UNDP response from 11/15/2023:

Names of Provinces of Chaco, Formosa, and Santa Fe were removed from the executing Partners field in Part I in the portal.

<b>Executing Partner</b> ⓘ	<b>Executing Partner Type</b>
Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyD)	Government ▼

## 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

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

## Agency's Comments

### 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

10/19/2023: Not fully.

a) Yes.

b) Please include a gender perspective in Output 3.1.3.

11/13/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

#### Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

b) As suggested, Output 3.1.3 was updated as follows: Knowledge and lessons learned, including on gender mainstreaming, systematized and disseminated, contributing to institutional and local knowledge with the participation of women, and supporting SLM in line with LDN

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

#### Secretariat's Comments

10/19/2023: Yes.

The project design includes a component dedicated to K&M.

Cleared

#### Agency's Comments

**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

10/19/2023:

a) Yes.

b) Yes.

c) Yes.

Cleared

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

10/19/2023:

a) Yes.

b) Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

##### **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

10/19/2023: Not fully.

a) Yes.

b) Yes.

c) Yes.

d) Please clarify if stakeholders relevant for drought mitigation, in particular the UNCCD focal points have been engaged. Are there other stakeholders who are responsible for drought mitigation in the context of the project?

11/13/2023: Clarified & Addressed.

Cleared

### Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

d) The UNCCD Technical Focal Point, housed within the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS), was fully involved in the elaboration of the PIF and will be part of the implementation. The UNCCD Political Point, housed within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship, was informed as were the other institutions who are involved in the National Advisory Commission of the National Action Plan at its second annual meeting held in October 11. In addition, Argentina has a Drought Technical Commission (Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries [SAGyP, Spanish acronym], the National Meteorological Service [SMN, Spanish acronym], the School of Agriculture of the University of Buenos Aires [FAUBA, Spanish acronym], among others), which will be part of the Steering Committee of the project and also responsible for drought mitigation in the context of the project. This Commission is under the National System of Risk Reduction Management (Law 27.287), coordinated by the National Directorate of Risk and Agricultural Emergencies? (SAGyP) and co-coordinated by the National Directorate of Environmental Land Use Planning.

## 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

10/19/2023: Not fully.

a) The ToC is basically only a project logframe that does not make the causal pathways clear, neither in a causal nor in a time sequence. Please add a ToC statement that further explains the ToC in (figure 1) and addresses these shortcomings.

b) Yes.

11/13/2023: Addressed.

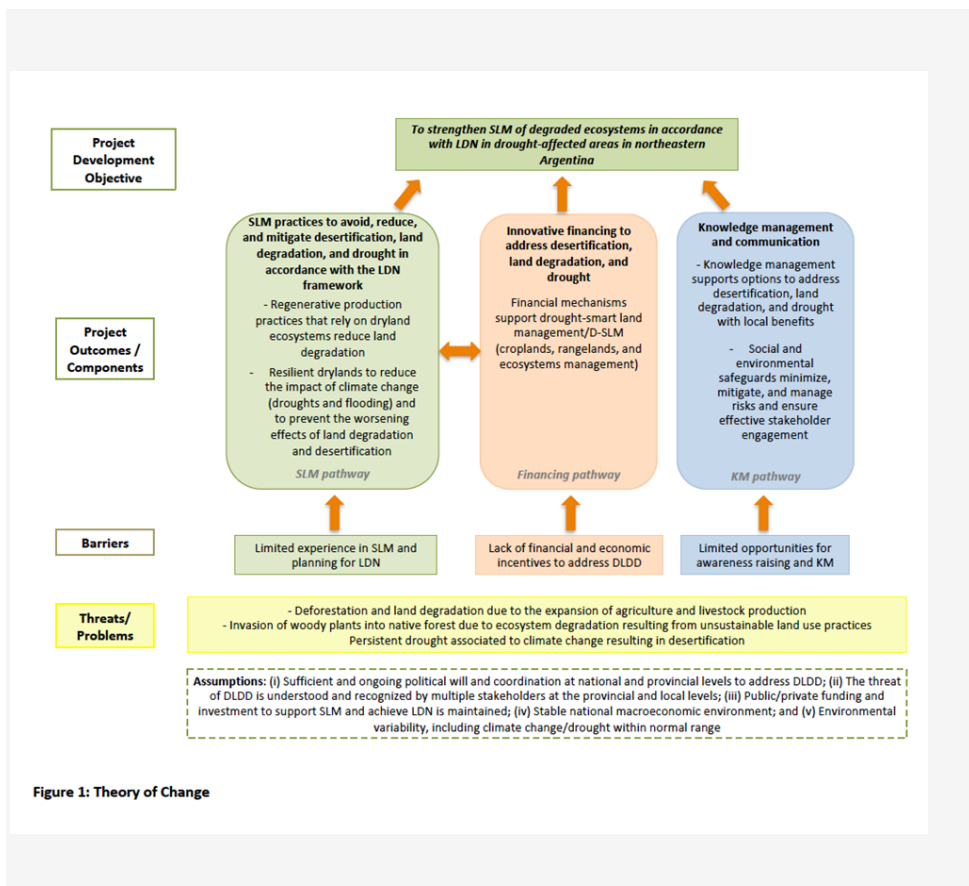
Cleared

### Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

The following ToC statement has been added and the TOC has clarified as follows:

If SLM practices are adopted by local communities and producers, and they have access to innovative financing to address DLDD, and there is increased and better knowledge about LD; then, the level of degradation and desertification of drylands and ecosystems in Northern Argentina that result from inadequate management of agriculture and livestock, aggravated by more frequent and prolonged droughts associated to climate change, will decrease, resulting in more resilient landscapes and local communities and the delivery of GEBs.



## 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

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

**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

10/19/2023:

a) Yes.

b) Yes.

c) Yes.

d) Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

**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

10/19/2023:

a) Yes.

b) Yes.



Cleared

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 n/a

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

10/19/2023: Not fully.

a) Risks are described by category. However, please insert the comments from SEPS into the risk assessment table for completeness.

(NOTE: the SEPS will not be web-posted to Council. So, all information has to be in the PIF template.)

b) Please elaborate on the climate change risk, especially on drought. The information provided here is very generic.

c) Yes.

11/13/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

The risk table was updated by including the comments from the SESP (please refer to Section B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION, Risks to Project Preparation and Implementation).

The climate change risk is detailed as follows: Project activities and outcomes may face vulnerability and potential undermining due to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. The project's targeted regions are highly susceptible to both droughts and flooding, stemming from heavy rainfall. Argentina has witnessed temperature increases since the 1960s, with most non-Patagonian areas experiencing an average temperature rise of 0.5°C between 1960 and 2010. While the average temperature increase remains below the global average, significant trends indicate rising extreme temperatures and prolonged heatwaves over recent decades. Projections indicate that temperatures across Argentina will continue to rise, with median annual temperatures expected to increase by +1.6°C by the 2050s and 3.3°C by the end of the century under a high emissions scenario (Representative Concentration Pathway [RCP] 8.5).

In northern Argentina, there has been an observed lengthening and drying of winter dry periods, leading to water availability issues for certain populations. While precipitation trends vary across the country, most scenarios point to a projected decline in annual precipitation by the end of the century under a high emissions scenario (RCP8.5) for the entire nation. In the past two decades, Argentina has faced severe droughts, such as in 2006-2007, 2008-2009, and 2011-2012, affecting multiple regions, including northern Argentina. More recently, northern Argentina experienced drought following consecutive La Niña conditions (2016-2019 and 2020-2022), significantly impacting ecosystems, human well-being, and the economy. Projected temperature increases and decreased rainfall affirm that drought will continue to pose a challenge in northern Argentina, where the project is set to be implemented.

#### **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**

10/19/2023: Yes.

GEFSEC especially welcomes the attention to DLDD issues and the focus of the project on drought mitigation.

Cleared

#### **Agency's Comments**

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

N/A

## 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

10/19/2023: Not fully.

The project as designed is correctly aligned with LD focal area objectives.

However, the financing tables are incorrectly filled, as they indicate focal area objective BD-1-1, which the project is not designed to address. This applies to the GEF Financing Table, the PPG table, and to the Indicative Focal Area Elements table. (The Source of Funds table is correct.)

Please remove the BD focal area objective from the three financing tables that inform about the PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS. The BD focal area is only the SOURCE OF FUNDS as stated in the LoE, and needs to be listed in the Source of Funding table only. In the other three tables, please add the BD funding to the appropriate LD objective that the project addresses. It appears that LD-3 is the most appropriate objective, as the project has clearly a focus on this objective.

NOTE: In GEF-8 there is a full flexibility provision in STAR. The SOURCE of funding may be different from how it is PROGRAMMED.

11/13/2023: Addressed.

#### Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

As indicated, the BD focal area objective was removed from the three financing tables (the GEF Financing Table, the PPG table, and the Indicative Focal Area Elements table) that provide details on the programming of funds and the BD funding was added to the LD-3 objective as follows:

#### GEF Financing Table

Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF	Trust	Country/	Focal	Programming	(in \$)
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Agency	Fund	Regional/ Global	Area	of Funds	GEF Project Grant	Agency Fee	Total GEF Financing
		Argentina			617,794	58,690	676,484
		Argentina			617,794	58,690	676,484
		Argentina			1,060,319	100,730	1,161,049
		Argentina			617,793	58,690	676,483
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>2,913,700</b>	<b>276,800</b>	<b>3,190,500</b>

### Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?    Yes        No

If yes: fill in PPG table (incl. PPG fee)

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG	Agency Fee	Total PPG Funding
		Argentina			18,750	1,782	20,532
		Argentina			18,750	1,782	20,532
		Argentina			43,750	4,156	47,906
		Argentina			18,750	1,780	20,530
<b>Total PPG Amount</b>					<b>100,000</b>	<b>9,500</b>	<b>109,500</b>

### Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	(in \$)
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	<b>Trust Fund</b>	<b>GEF Project Financing</b>	<b>Co-financing</b>
LD-1		617,794	4,200,000
LD-2		617,794	4,200,000
LD-3		1,060,319	7,200,000
LD-4		617,793	4,400,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>2,913,700</b>	<b>20,000,000</b>

**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

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

**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

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

Agency's Comments

**7 D. Policy Requirements**

**7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?**

Secretariat's Comments

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

#### Agency's Comments

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

#### Secretariat's Comments

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

#### 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

10/19/2023: Resources are available. However, please refer to my guidance on how to correctly fill the financing tables.

11/13/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

#### Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

Please refer to Agency's comments under Question 6.1/Secretariat's Comments above.

**Focal Area allocation?**

Secretariat's Comments 10/19/2023: Resources are available.

Agency's Comments  
**LDCF under the principle of equitable access?**

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments  
**SCCF A (SIDS)?**

Secretariat's Comments n/a

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

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments  
**Focal Area Set Aside?**

Secretariat's Comments n/a

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  
10/19/2023: Yes.

As mentioned: Please remove BD focal area objective from PPG fund programming and add to the appropriate LD objective.

11/13/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

### Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/09/2023:

As indicated, the BD focal area objective was removed from the PPG fund programming and added to the appropriate LD objective (i.e., LD-3).

**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

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

### 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

10/19/2023: Yes.

Cleared

### Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments 10/19/2023: Yes.

Agency's Comments Uploaded in the library twice on 9th November (we can't delete the repeated document from the library)

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



#### Secretariat's Comments

10/19/2023: No.

The OFP letter uses the old and outdated template. Please refrain from using the old template in the future.

11/13/2023: Addressed.

Cleared

#### Agency's Comments

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

Thanks for your comment. A revised OFP letter is provided.

**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 Comments n/a

#### 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 10/19/2023: Yes.

#### Agency's Comments

**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 10/19/2023: 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 10/19/2023: Yes.

Agency's Comments

**Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet**

**8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?**

Secretariat's Comments 10/19/2023: 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 Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

**9 GEFSEC Decision**

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

Secretariat's Comments

10/19/2023: No. Please address comments made in this review.

11/13/2023: No. Please address outstanding comment in box 1.

11/17/2023: Yes. Program Manager recommends CEO clearance.

**Agency's Comments**

UNDP response from 11/10/2023:

Please see agency's comments above in response to this review.

**UNDP response from 11/15/2023:**

**Please see agency's comment above in response to comment under Box 1.**

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

**Secretariat's Comments**

**Agency's Comments**

**Review Dates**

	<b>PIF Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>10/19/2023</b>	<b>11/9/2023</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>11/13/2023</b>	<b>11/15/2023</b>
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>11/17/2023</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		