



# Adaptive management and restoration of degraded Aleppo pine forest in the Kasserine governorate (Tunisia) to strengthen resilience to climate change, conserve biodiversity, improve productivity and food security

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

11389

**Countries**

Tunisia

**Project Name**

Adaptive management and restoration of degraded Aleppo pine forest in the Kasserine governorate (Tunisia) to strengthen resilience to climate change, conserve biodiversity, improve productivity and food security

**Agencies**

FAO

**Date received by PM**

10/18/2023

**Review completed by PM**

10/25/2023

**Program Manager**

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy

**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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

Not fully.

- We understand that the Commissariat is the regional entity representing the Ministry of Agriculture. However, it would be better to use the same wording in the different sections where this information is included (in view of future evaluations and references):

- o The Letter of Endorsement includes the Ministry of Agriculture, Hydraulic Resources and Maritime Fishing as the Executing Partner (again: this is not the right template ? but we

will assume that they meant 'execute' instead of 'implement': otherwise a new LoE will be required). However, in Portal there is another executing partner (Commissariat Régional au Développement Agricole de Kasserine (CRDA)) that not included in the LoE. Please ask the Agency to remove Commissariat Régionale au Développement Agricole de Kasserine (CRDA) as this is not endorsed by the Government (they can be included later during the preparation phase as needed).

**Subject: Endorsement for: "Restoration and integrated management of the Aleppo pine forest in the governorate of Kasserine (Tunisia) facing the effects of climate change"**

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Tunisia, I confirm that the above project proposal (a) is in accordance with my government's national priorities and our commitment to the relevant global environmental conventions; and (b) was discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points.

I am pleased to endorse the preparation of the above project proposal with the support of the GEF Agency listed below. If approved, the proposal will be prepared and implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Hydraulic Resources and Maritime Fishing. I request the GEF Agency FAO to provide a copy of the project document before it is submitted to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement.

<b>Project Title:</b>	Adaptive management and restoration of degraded Aleppo pine forest in the Kasserine governorate (Tunisia) to strengthen resilience to climate change, conserve biodiversity, improve productivity and food security		
<b>Region:</b>	Tunisia	<b>GEF Project ID:</b>	11389
<b>Country(ies):</b>	Tunisia	<b>Type of Project:</b>	FSP
<b>GEF Agency(ies):</b>	FAO	<b>GEF Agency ID:</b>	748248
<b>Executing Partner:</b>	Commissariat Régionale au Développement Agricole de Kasserine (CRDA)	<b>Executing Partner Type:</b>	Government

**Agency's Comments** We do confirm that the Commissariat Régional au Développement Agricole de Kasserine (CRDA) is the decentralised entity representing the Ministry of Agriculture in the Kasserine governorate. The Endorsement letter and the PIF have been modified, noting that, as suggested, CRDA will be explicitly included during the preparation phase.

## 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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

#### Agency's Comments

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

#### Secretariat's Comments

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

- Gender issues: we are taking note on the annex H on the gender equality and women's empowerment, especially the different proposed indicators and the number of beneficiaries with 50% of women. However, we are not seeing really the proactive response to change the inequality. We recommend giving a better visibility to women and gender issues in the result framework (women are only mentioned in the outputs 1.3.1 and 2.2.3; gender only in the 1.2.3). To be improved.

Comment from the Senior Gender Specialist: Please include gender perspectives in Outputs 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2. Also ensure that the project's gender dimensions are included in the monitoring and evaluation component.

- KM: several KM aspects are distributed across the result framework. It is fine. However, we wonder why the output 3.1.1 about the public-private partnership are under the KM component. Please, clarify or/and correct.

#### Agency's Comments

Referring to comments 1 and 2: gender inequality in the Kasserine governorate is mainly related to access to capacity building opportunities and creation of small businesses. The project will address these gendered barriers explicitly. Therefore, the language of several outputs in the results framework has been amended. Please note that 50% of female participation will be ensured in all the capacity-building events and support will be specifically ensured to women and youth in creating small businesses related to NWFP and accessing microfinance.

Please note that during the PPG a more detailed gender analysis will be undertaken and a gender action plan developed to ensure gender is strongly integrated across the results framework.

Output 3.1.1 (public-private partnership) is under the KM component because it is strictly related to data/information gathering and dissemination. Integrating data/information production opportunities through the development of public/private partnership will allow

universities and research centres to systematically engage with the private sector. This will improve the data quality and create a strong collaboration between various sectors.

**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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

- We would like to see more details about what the parallel/cofinancing projects are going to finance, especially to figure out the added value of GEF resources. The project looks like a stand-alone investment with the GEF financing everything from scratch (except the \$300,000 FAO project "Appui ? la lutte contre la propagation des scolytes du pin d'Alep ? Kasserine").

- The project 'Appui ? la lutte contre la propagation des scolytes du pin d'Alep ? Kasserine' (0.3 M USD) is announced as cofinancing but is planned on 2022-2023. It seems to us that this \$300,000 project provided useful baseline information, but will be closed before the project starts. Please, clarify.

- Depending on the clarifications given to cofinancing as public investment from DGF, we will see if it can stay as " recurrent expenditures or should be defined as ?investment mobilized? for DGF.

Recipient Country Government	DGF	Public Investment	Recurrent expenditures	9,000,000.00
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Agency's Comments

- More details have been added in the PIF.

- The Emergency Response Project to Combat the Pine Bark Beetle Outbreaks in the Kasserine Region (Tunisia) has been eliminated as co-financing, but is highlighted as an important investment the GEF project will build upon, as it equips all relevant actors from local to regional to cope with the spread of pine bark beetles, contributing to the restoration of 2,000 ha of the Kasserine forest. It is particularly working with local

communities, engaged in forest surveillance to reduce the economic losses resulting from its degradation. The Emergency Response Project is equipping the Ministry of Agriculture to deal with a forest health issue that will be recurrent due to climate change. Despite limited to years 2022 and 2023 the machinery and capacity building provided will be used by the CRDA also during following years.

-Details on DGF's co-financing has been provided.

#### **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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

**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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

**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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

The added value of the GEF needs to be better demonstrated, notably in explaining what the cofinancing projects will finance. Please, clarify.

Agency's Comments

The mobilized investment includes the Integrated Agricultural Development Project in Kef and Kasserine Governorates (2023-2028), a multi-donor investment which aims to promote sustainable agricultural development and economic growth and improve the welfare of the rural population in the most depressed rural areas of the governorates of Kef and Kasserine. It particularly focuses on improved land and water resources management for increase and sustainable agricultural production and productivity and better access to rural infrastructure. The overall project investment includes a USD43.57 million IsDB investment, IDB financing, and USD9 million inputs from the Government of Tunisia. The proposed project will build on this initiative by filling the gaps that

currently exist in integrating forest management at landscape and local levels, and facilitating the multi-stakeholder information systems on forest management and restoration that can be enhanced, monitored and measured, and supporting restoration of degraded forest areas. It will also seek to promote improved participation of local populations so that restoring and sustainably managing degraded forest resources becomes a systematic step in natural resource management. This baseline project will complement Components 1 & 3.

The Emergency Response Project to Combat the Pine Bark Beetle Outbreaks in the Kasserine Region (Tunisia) ? though not mobilised as co-financing, but critical for successful GEF investment - is equipping all relevant actors from local to regional to cope with the spread of pine bark beetles, contributing to the restoration of 2,000 ha of the Kasserine forest. It is particularly working with local communities, engaged in forest surveillance to reduce the economic losses resulting from its degradation. The Emergency Response Project is equipping the Ministry of Agriculture to deal with a forest health issue that will be recurrent due to climate change. Despite limited to years 2022 and 2023 the machinery and capacity building provided will be used by the CRDA also on following years.

This language has been included in the PIF.

### **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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

- The section on potential coordination with other partners is empty. Please, confirm you did not identify any potential bilateral/multilateral initiatives to coordinate with.

- The section on possible agency execution support is empty. Please write clearly yes or no: is FAO planning to ensure execution support? If yes, explain.



- KM: see comment above.

#### Agency's Comments

-The section has been completed duly.

-FAO has no role in project execution. It will secure the implementation role exclusively.

-KM: See response above.

**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

**October 24, 2023**

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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

- Environmental and social safeguards (comment provided by Ikuko): The project overall ESS risk is classified as moderate, and FAO attached the Project Risk Certification. However, the "Risks to Project Preparation and Implementation" section (page 21) said Environment and social risk as "Substantial?". 1) Please make them consistent and correct. Also, it is not clear what is a plan during the PPG to address moderate (or substantial) environmental and social risks at the screening stage. 2) Please provide a plan for any further environmental and social assessment during the PPG stage and development of environmental and social risk management and monitoring plan as a next step.

### Agency's Comments

Please, note the difference between risks from the project (Environmental and Social Safeguards) and the risks to the project. The screening of the first showed a medium risk. The screening is attached. For moderate-risk projects, FAO requires a limited social and environmental assessment and review. The ESIA will describe the potential environmental and social risks and impacts, and the appropriate mitigation measures. The ESIA will focus on the application of recognized good practices that will ensure the relevance of the interventions. Once the potential environmental and social risks and impacts of programme or project activities are identified, measures to mitigate, monitor and manage the impacts need to be established.

Measures to manage and mitigate risks and impacts shall be reflected in an ESMP and included in the assessment.

On the other hand, the risks to the project are multiple, including environment and social risks have been assessed to be substantial, due to "as explained in the comments" section "the higher than average poverty incidence in the project area.

### 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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes, the project addresses an emergent and acute problem related to the degradation of the Aleppo Pine forest in the Kasserine governorate.

### Agency's Comments

**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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

**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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

No

The restoration of Aleppo Pine Forests and the management of 30,000 ha of terrestrial landscapes with biodiversity benefits should be reported under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Please, detail the potential targets and indicators under the KMGBF.

Agency's Comments

Please, consider the following targets as probably the most relevant, though the project does contribute to a great many deal of other KMGBF targets:

Target 1 on spatial planning;

Target 2 on restoration;

Target 11 on ecosystem services.

Language has been added in the PIF.

#### **7 D. Policy Requirements**

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

Secretariat's Comments

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

**October 24, 2023**

Yes. see annex I.

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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

**Focal Area allocation?**

Secretariat's Comments

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

**LDCF under the principle of equitable access?**

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

**SCCF A (SIDS)?**

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

**SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?**

Secretariat's Comments NA

Agency's Comments

**Focal Area Set Aside?**

Secretariat's Comments NA

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

**October 24, 2023**

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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

No.

- The activities financed by the cofinancing projects should be detailed (to justify the added value of GEF investments).

- Please, note that stakeholders and their relevant roles to project outcomes need to be articulated in the Project Description. The annex 1 clearly outlines who was met but no details are provided in the project description. Please, correct.

Agency's Comments

-Please, consider the additional language provided in the Portal, on indicative co-financing.

-Furthermore, the information provided in the referenced annex has been migrated into the core text, as requested.

**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

**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

**October 24, 2023**

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

**November 27, 2023**

Addressed.

**October 24, 2023**

- Letter of Endorsement only endorsed \$2,639,725, but in Portal the Agency requested \$2,639,726 (yes: one dollar difference) conversely, one dollar was reduced to the Agency fee (\$250,774). Please ask the Agency to adjust the additional dollar to the value for the GEF Project Financing in the LoE in all tables (including the GEF Financing).


GEF Project Grant: (a)	2,639,726.00	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)	0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	250,774.00	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant: (d)	0.00

Source of funds	GEF Agency	Focal Area Source	Amount (in US\$)				Total US\$
			GEF Project Financing	GEF Project Financing Agency Fee	Project Preparation Grant (PPG)	Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Agency Fee	
GEFTF	FAO	Land Degradation	2,639,725	250,775	100,000	9,500	3,000,000
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>			<b>2,639,725</b>	<b>250,775</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>9,500</b>	<b>3,000,000</b>

- The template utilized 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?*. Per the attached email back in March when we were aiming to constitute June 2023 Work Program, 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).

- Though similar, project title in Portal (*Adaptive management and restoration of degraded Aleppo pine forest in the Kasserine governorate (Tunisia) to strengthen resilience to climate change, conserve biodiversity, improve productivity and food security?*) does not match the project title endorsed by the OFP (*Restoration and integrated management of the Aleppo pine forest in the Kasserine governorate (Tunisia) facing the effects of climate change?*). Please ask the Agency to modify the title in Portal to exactly match the title in LoE ? later it can be modified per your approval.

#### Project Identification Form (PIF) entry – Full Sized Project – GEF - 8

General Project information 			
Project Title:	Adaptive management and restoration of degraded Aleppo pine forest in the Kasserine governorate (Tunisia) to strengthen resilience to climate change, conserve biodiversity, improve productivity and food security		
Region:	Tunisia	GEF Project ID:	11389

Email: faogef@fao.org; Jeffrey.Griffin@fao.org

**Subject: Endorsement for: "Restoration and integrated management of the Aleppo pine forest in the governorate of Kasserine (Tunisia) facing the effects of climate change»**

Agency's Comments Please, see the updated Letter of Endorsement.

**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 NA

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  
**October 24, 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  
**October 24, 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  
**October 24, 2023**

Yes

Agency's Comments

## **Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet**

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

Secretariat's Comments

**October 24, 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 NA

Agency's Comments

## **9 GEFSEC Decision**

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

Secretariat's Comments

**November 27, 2023**

All comments are addressed. The PIF is recommended for clearance and inclusion in the work program.

**October 24, 2023**

The PIF cannot be recommended yet. Please, address the comments above.

Agency's Comments

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

Secretariat's Comments

- Reinforce the rationale aligning this project under the LD2 objective (reverse land degradation through landscape restoration).
- Reinforce the demonstration on the effects of prolonged drought episodes on ecosystems and economy (jobs, incomes), as well as the definition of mitigation measures.
- Confirm cofinancing.
- Confirm targets under the core indicators.

Agency's Comments

**Review Dates**

	<b>PIF Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>10/27/2023</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>11/27/2023</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		