

Integrated Forest Landscape Management for Strengthening the Northeastern and Eastern Forest Corridors

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10390

Countries

Thailand

Project Name

Integrated Forest Landscape Management for Strengthening the Northeastern and Eastern Forest Corridors

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

11/30/2021

Review completed by PM

10/2/2022

Program Manager

Hannah Fairbank

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

FSP

PIF
CEO Endorsement

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

March 3, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared.

December 07, 2021 HF:

1.) Suggest revision to the end of the project goal from: "improved management of forests between and around protected areas" to "improved management of forest landscapes." And ensure outcomes/output language is consistent.

Agency Response

Response to Dec 07

Project objective revised to: *To strengthen the conservation of globally significant biodiversity in four landscape complexes of North-eastern and Eastern Thailand through improved management of forest landscapes*

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

December 07, 2021 HF:

Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Co-financing

4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

October 2, 2022 HF:

All comments cleared.

May 26, 2022 HF:

Co-financing: We note that all the co-financing table summarizing all co-financing from Thai partners is included in the letter issued by Royal Forest Department (Lead gov't agency). Please see below for specific comments:

- 1.) Amount reported in the co-financing table can NOT be higher than the amount indicated in the co-financing letter. Please revise.
- 2.) Unable to locate co-financing letter from DNP. Please upload.
- 3.) Type of co-financing: typically, "Grant" and "Public investment" are classified as "Investment mobilized"; and "In-kind" as "Recurrent expenditures". Each "Investment

mobilized? co-financing needs a summary, in the Investment Mobilized description section, of the funding source (i.e., co-financier's own budget or original funding source), funded activities and implementation timeframe (needs to overlap GEF project implementation), and the explanation of how the funded activities will support the GEF project. Several entries are not aligned with the above classification standard. Please rectify those entries (e.g., BAAC, Eastern Hugchanghungpa Community Enterprise).

4.) Grant/Investment mobilized: co-financing provided ?in cash? directly to the GEF project, typically from the entity's own budget, given that, please revise: Royal Forest Dept \$4M grant: the co-financing table included in the co-financing letter shows this amount as ?in-kind?. Once again, ?in-kind? needs to be classified as ?recurrent expenditures?.

5.) Royal Forest Dept \$9.93M public investment: please provide a summary in the Investment Mobilized description section (see above for the content).

March 4, 2022 HF:
Comments cleared.

December 7, 2021 HF:

1. Please upload evidence of co-financing for each co-financier (so it is clickable in far right column of CER in Portal).
2. Please explicitly note the changes in co-financing from PIF to CER stage. The CER now only contains a general statement that eludes to changes in co-finance and partners.

Agency Response

Responses to May 26 review comments

1. The RFD summary table was prepared early to account for time it takes for government to process and issue the letter. However, during the time some of the cofinance identified had changed - The amount reported in cofinance table is consistent with the letters provided for most cofinanciers but has two major differences: 1) RECOFTC cofinance was obtained after the RFD summary was prepared, and 2) the initial indicative cofinance provided to RFD by FAO was greater than actual cofinance that was identified later.

2. DNP co-finance letter has been uploaded

3. BAAC and Huangchap cofinance entries in the portal have been revised.

4. In kind cofinance have been changed to recurrent expenses.

5. The RFD cofinance investment mobilized has been summarized - with details in a new annex. N, and has also been summarized in the box below cofinance, and also uploaded in document section separately.

1. The cofinance letters have been uploaded - and please note that some institutions have been entered twice as they have committed different types of cofinance but have issued one letter.

2. Additional text has been added to to clarify changes in co-financing from the PIF under Section 8) Summary of changes in alignment with the project design with the original PIF but the cofinance is within the original range committed at PIF stage overall.

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
December 10, 2021 HF:

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
March 4, 2022 HF:
Comment cleared.

December 10, 2021 HF:

Please complete Annex C of the ProDoc.

Agency Response Annex C has been filled.

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

May 19, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared. Please upload revised EX-ACT tool to accompany new calculations.

March 4, 2022 HF:

1-2.) Comments cleared.

3.) Over 1.355 million ha under improved management was included in the ExAct tool (not 1.365 million ha as is stated). This has resulted in an unusually large GHG emission reduction result compared to the size of the investment. Will the project (\$3 million from the GEF + \$27 million co-financing (half as in-kind)) have a concrete and tangible impact on the ground reducing the forest degradation, which is already low, in all the 1.355 million ha? On what assumptions and previous experiences/references is this based?

We see two alternatives here:

- Alternative 1: We understand the project to encompass 2 kind of areas: 1- the 1,290,000 ha under improved landscape-level forest management plans and 2- 50,000 + 15,000 ha under improved practices. If this is the case and if the Agency can?t demonstrate concrete impact over the 1,290,000 ha from past experiences, we recommend removing the 1,290,000 ha from the GHG calculation to get a conservative estimate (it would be 3.3 M tCO₂e). Could also add the 10,000 ha of forests which are under SFM certification. Using only the 50,000 ha + 15,000 ha + 10,000 ha, then the result would be 3.8 M tCO₂e.

- Alternative 2: If the Agency do think the landscape planning exercise will have an impact on the degradation level, then they could use the Tier 2 level of Ex-ACT decreasing 1% or 2% the level of degradation. With this and including the 10,000 ha of certified forests, the result would be respectively 11.1 M tCO₂e or 17.7 M tCO₂e.

-

- Alternative 2 with 1% would be the preferred option if some impact on the 1,290,000 ha is expected. Please consider, address and revise.

4-5.) Comments cleared.

December 7, 2021 HF:

- 1.) Please clarify how the targeted hectares per the outputs add up to the totals in the Core Indicator table? For instance there is 50,000 hectares under Output 3.2 but only 10,000 under Core Indicator 4.2.
- 2.) Please include a response to "**Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided**" which clearly explains and annotates the core indicator results for this project, including a response to #1 above.
- 3.) Of the 1,290,000 ha under improved landscape-level why is there only one of these areas (10,000 ha) used in the Ex-ACT tool to calculate GHG emission reductions? Further, if the remainder of the hectareage isn't used for GHG calculations what are the expectations in terms of impact on biomass throughout the 1,290,000 ha under improved landscape-level forest management plans; 15,000 ha of community forests incorporating biodiversity objectives; 50,000 ha of private forest and agricultural land applying the biodiversity guideline and 10,000 ha of community forests under SFM certification?
- 4.) What do the 120,000 ha in the Ex-ACT tool correspond to? This area is not mentioned in the project description of the Portal entry.
- 5.) If the project is expected to lead to some reduction of forest degradation and deforestation as mentioned twice in the project description, why is this not considered in the Ex-ACT tool? Please note that this is acceptable if such reduction is not significant or difficult to predict as it is not a main objective of this project.

Agency Response

Response to May 19 comment: ExAct sheet has been uploaded

Response to March 4 comment

The GHG emission reduction calculation is now based on alternative 1 suggested by the GEFSEC reviewer.

The total project area that was considered in the greenhouse gas (GHG) calculations is 75,000 ha of which :

- ? **50,000** ha of private production forest areas will be under improved management applying the biodiversity guideline;
- ? **15,000** ha of community forests will be under improved management plans, including biodiversity objectives;
- ? **10, 000** ha of community forests will be under SFM certification

The 1,290,000 ha under improved landscape-level forest management plans for biodiversity conservation was not considered in the ex-ante GHG estimates due to insufficient evidence of demonstrating concrete GHG impact.

The emission factors used in Tier 2 section are shown in tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Carbon stocks of a tropical moist deciduous forests (Forest zone 2 in EX-ACT)

Carbon stocks	tC/ha	Source
Above-ground biomass (AGB)	30.77	Above-ground biomass carbon stock for a deciduous forest based on national forest inventory data (NFI cycle 3) obtained from the forest reference level report submitted to the UNFCCC in 2021 The AGB stock of a deciduous forest is estimated at 65.465 t dry matter / ha/ A carbon fraction of 0.47 (from the IPCC guidelines 2006) was used to convert dry matter to carbon.
Below-ground biomass (BGB)	5.7	based on national forest inventory data (NFI cycle 3) obtained from the forest reference level report submitted to the UNFCCC in 2021 The BGB stock of a deciduous forest is estimated at 13.093 t dry matter / ha/ A carbon fraction of 0.47 (from the IPCC guidelines 2006) was used to convert dry matter to carbon.
Litter	4.3	Tier 1 default value for tropical moist deciduous forest obtained from Table 2.2, IPCC 2019
Dead wood	8.4	Tier 1 default value for tropical moist deciduous forest obtained from Table 2.2, IPCC 2019
Soil carbon	47	Tier 1 default value for tropical moist deciduous, from IPCC 2006

Table 2: Carbon stocks of forest plantation in a tropical moist climate (Plantation zone 2 in EX-ACT)

Carbon stocks	tC/ha	Source
Above-ground biomass (AGB)	56.4	Tier 1 default value, IPCC 2006

Below-ground biomass (BGB)	11.3	Tier 1 default value, IPCC 2006
Litter	4.3	Tier 1 default value for tropical moist deciduous forest obtained from Table 2.2, IPCC 2019
Dead wood	8.4	Tier 1 default value for tropical moist deciduous forest obtained from Table 2.2, IPCC 2019
Soil carbon	47	Tier 1 default value for tropical moist deciduous, from IPCC 2006

A comparison of the With- and Without-Project scenarios reveals that implementation of this project would lead to a reduction in GHG emissions as compared to the business-as-usual scenario. Over the full 20 year timescale of the analysis, the project results in a carbon-balance of - 2,686,325 tCO₂eq of avoided emissions. This is equivalent to -35.8 tCO₂eq per hectare of reduced emissions over the full timescale or -1.8 tCO₂eq per hectare annually.

1. A more detailed footnotes 5 and 6 have been included in the project core indicators in project document and in the text to explain how the target indicators were derived.

a. Core Indicator 4.2 comprises 10,000 ha including community forests (5000 ha), private forest plantation and rubber plantation (2,000 ha), and FIO forest plantation (3,000 ha) under SFM certification.

b. Core Indicator 4.1 comprises 1,290,000 ha of forest under improved landscape level forest management plans [OP 2.2] (600,000 ha natural forest under the management of RFD and 690,000 ha of forest land allocated to poor farmers by the Agricultural Land Allocation Office (ALRO) and via the National Policy on Land Commission (NPLC)), 15,000 ha of community forests incorporate biodiversity objectives [OP 2.2], and 50,000 ha of private forest plantation and agricultural land applying the biodiversity guideline voluntarily [OP 3.2].

2. Details of how targets were determined have been added, information on Aichi has been added.

3. The ExACT tool was revised to include management improvement to 1.365 million hectares. The text in the ProDoc and Table E has been amended and anew ExACT file provided

4. The 120,000 ha is now irrelevant given the ExACT tool calculations have been revised. Reference to 120,000 ha has been deleted

5. The main focus is on improving management of forests which has now been properly accounted for in the ExACT tool calculations. The level of deforestation is not significant.

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

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared.

December 7, 2021 HF:

1.) The project description 1.a. #9 includes this statement: " The forest complex approach in the east and north-east of the country has not yielded the conservation and livelihood results that were anticipated." Please briefly include what this approach has been, why it has been ineffective and how will this project be different? Or reference Box 1 that does just this below.

Agency Response

Please see paragraph 9 in project document. Text has been revised as follows - While the forest complex approach has achieved considerable progress in the west of the country, it has not yielded the conservation and livelihood results that were anticipated in the east and north-east of the country. One key factor influencing the lack of progress in the east and north-east is that limited attention has been given to biodiversity corridor management within community forests.

A brief summary of lessons learned on the forest complex approach is provide in Box 1. The Government of Thailand has recognized an urgent need to adapt and more effectively implement the forest complex approach to biodiversity conservation and that it needs new approaches and models to improve livelihoods and conserve biodiversity in the forest complexes in the east and north-east, including through a greater focus on engaging the private sector and using market-based approaches.

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared.

December 10, 2021 HF:

Yes, though please see Council comment regarding a specific baseline project.

Recommend reviewing for relevance.

Agency Response Project referred to by Council member has been added to baseline projects and referred to in text ? please see highlighted text in para 62, 66 and Table 5 of project document.

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

March 4, 2022 HF:

1.)-3.) Comments cleared.

4.) Comment cleared. Would expect that the project's approach to sustainability directly incorporates and addresses the sustainability of the BIS.

5.) -10.) Comments cleared.

December 07, 2021 HF:

1.) The alternative scenario for this GEF biodiversity investment must clearly describe the alternative scenario for the conservation of globally significant biodiversity. Para 73 of the CER (alternative scenario) focuses on LD, watershed management and SFM (which are not the primary outcomes/GEBs the GEF is seeking here) without linking back to the ultimate goal/objective of the project. Please rework to align with the project goal and GEF-7 BD strategy and close the loop between the alternative scenario, objective, components. Thank you for the extensive work on the TOC for this project during PPG. Please include the TOC in clear narrative format (to accompany the boxes and arrows) in support of this alternative scenario.

2.) The project Output 1.1: highlights inter-departmental cooperation which critical to landscape management. The departments listed all seem to have forest management and biodiversity conservation within their purview, whereas cooperation is needed also with those departments who may have an interest and/or impact on the landscapes in order to build on opportunities for improved management and mitigate drivers/threats of BD loss. A multi-sectoral landscape planning approach seems critical given the list of "key direct drivers" in the CER (below). Further please describe how the project will engage

the Ministry of Agriculture given the critical importance of the MIN in the success of this renewed effort for conservation and sustainable landscape management in the Eastern Forest Complex. Elsewhere in the ProDoc this is clearer-so please revise CER 1.1 for clarity/consistency of multi-sectoral coordination/arrangements.

- ? Forest loss/encroachment ? reserved forest is being converted to agricultural and settlement areas.
- ? Illegal wildlife poaching and trading.
- ? Overharvesting of NTFPs.
- ? Overgrazing by domestic livestock.
- ? Infrastructure development (highways, roads, dams)

3.) Output 1.3 is critical, but wondering about a \$1.47 million price tag for guidelines? From the budget it looks like this is co-finance mostly, but just wondering how much it would take to develop these guidelines if this Output doesn't include actual implementation?

4.) Output 2.1: Please describe/clarify how this BIS will interface/contribute to the multi-sectoral land-use planning tools and approaches being supported under Component 1 since BD is just one element of competing data/information that will need to go into high-quality integrated decision-making. Also, what model or previous experience with development and use of a BIS is this Output drawing from? And what are the lessons learned and how does this project address those?

5.) Please further develop and explain how Output 3.2: contributes to the goal of the project? How will the project work with forest plantations to ensure that they are not further driving forest fragmentation, and biodiversity loss via expansion? And are the 50,000 hectares certified? Is this being funded with co-finance? Please clarify. See GEFSEC comment at PIF stage on this point.

6.) Output 3.3: Recommend outreach and coordination with the GEF-World Bank Global Wildlife Program (GWP) global coordination grant given resources and investment in HWC globally.

7.) Please remove "program management" from Component 4 (output 4.1) as all "program management" should occur under the PMC.

8.) Please further develop Component 4 with a commensurate level of discussion/detail of the other components.

9.) The black background of the TOC and the Component titles in the Portal makes it very difficult to read. Could you please fix? Thanks.

10.) Please write-out the names of project partners when you first use them in the documentation, and include the acronyms to improve clarity.

Agency Response

1. Text has been revised ? please see para 72-74 in Prodoc.
2. The text has been revised to make it clearer that non-biodiversity focused agencies are also closely involved in the project and the development of improved inter-agency cooperation
3. The budget was agreed in consultation with Thai partners and it is considered reasonable given extensive consultation, testing and refining will be necessary to ensure the guidelines are relevant, useable and adopted. Text has been amended to say "The guideline will be developed through extensive consultation with various stakeholders at the forest complexes and at national level then have the draft guideline tested before finalization."
4. Previous experience with biodiversity information systems has been described in the 'Barriers' section and relevant projects and lessons listed in Table 5. Text added to Output 1.1 The Biodiversity Information System (BIS) to be developed through Output 2.1 will enable sharing of information that is critical for inter-departmental collaboration and for agencies focused on water, infrastructure and agriculture to better incorporate biodiversity friendly and climate resilient practices. Text added to Output 2.1.
5. Sentences under Output 3.2 improved to reduce confusion about 50,000 ha certified Thailand Forest Certification Council (TFCC) is identified as key agency to carry out activities under OP 3.2 and has been added to the text in the ProDoc. On the concern about private forest plantation driving forest fragmentation, the project will work with private forest plantation that has clear boundary and tenure rights, and it is most likely that the traditional mono crop will be changed to agro-forestry or forest plantation for better income. Aerial photos and satellite images will be used to ensure private forest plantation and agriculture land under this project is not new encroached land on existing natural forest.
6. Text amended to show links to GWP
7. Text removed as requested
8. Text amended
9. The diagrams in the prodoc have clear background but the portal seems to convert that to dark one. However, they have been repasted and hopefully is are more legible
10. Changes made to clarify partners and their acronyms

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 10, 2021 HF:

Yes

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 10, 2021 HF:

Yes

Agency Response

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

December 10, 2021 HF:

Yes

Agency Response

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

December 10, 2021 HF:

Yes

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

December 10, 2021 HF: Yes.

[October 25, 2019 HF: Would be reviewed for a revised future draft of the PIF if it were to be eligible under the GEF-7 programming directions.

November 7, 2019 HF: Yes, map provided. At CEO endorsement stage please include a clear, legible map of project area and project sites and geo-reference data.]

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

NA

Agency Response

Stakeholders

**Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase?
Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 10, 2021 HF:

Yes

Agency Response

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

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared. Please take into account the incorporation of gender equality considerations / gender perspective in Component 4 on knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation during implementation.

December 10, 2021 HF:

1.) The budget for gender integration in the Gender Analysis has the following remark.
If not staff costs, what is the \$294,000 covering?

Remarks: The total budget for GAP is US\$ 294,000, which is already included in the overall project budget. The above does not include the staff cost for a gender expert.

Agency Response

Gender considerations will be integrated into knowledge management, and M&E during implementation. These have been stressed with additional text. Such as: (text in red or highlighted in red are the revisions)

? Activity 4.1.1 Establish a multi-stakeholder platform that is chaired by RFD, **ensuring equitable participation of women and men.**

- Paragraph 123 - The project will organize at least six media events; six communication materials; and one social media platform will be developed with at least 10,000 followers (**including 50% women**).

- ? Activity 4.2.1 Develop and implement a project communications and knowledge management strategy, including clear requirements for determining the languages to be used for particular knowledge and communication products, developed and implemented. **The strategy will also ensure different needs of** men and women, as appropriate, and tailor activities accordingly to ensure equitable targeting of women, men, youth and other groups.

- Output 4.3: Monitoring system established and operational to monitor biodiversity and socio-economic indicators (including gender) beyond the lifetime of the project.

- Para 124 The Project will emphasize collection of disaggregated data, including by sex of participants and beneficiaries.

.

-
-

The gender analysis included costs that are included in the overall budget including \$127,450 for a contract for Gender audit and mainstreaming and a range of other costs that are subsumed in other budget lines (travel, training and knowledge management for example. The gender staff was merged into a socio-economic and gender officer for a total cost of \$70,500

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

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared

December 10, 2021 HF:

1.) Have any potential PS partners been identified? And what will the process be for identifying potential partners?

Agency Response

Text amended to show that the project will assist private plantation holders and other private wood products to meet with RFD during the events described in Component 4 to discuss issues and to gain clarity on regulations related to plantation operations and wood production. Special event and/or meeting between private sectors and RFD as well other concerned government departments such as ALRO will be arranged as appropriate. Private plantation holders and wood production companies that will likely participate in the project are listed in the stakeholders list. (Annex 12)

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

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared.

December 10, 2021 HF:

1.) Surprised to see a low probability of the risk of resistance to BD conservation actions outside of PAs and the next risk in the table. Please further elaborate in the CER Component 3, TOC and the risk analysis how this risk will be mitigated. The current "mitigation action" eludes to a virtuous circle of relationships between livelihoods and conservation results, when this is in fact very challenging to achieve. Please address more fully.

Under Component Three, local livelihoods are improved through increased awareness and capacity to sustainably utilize livelihoods. This will create an enabling local environment for biodiversity conservation.

Agency Response

The rating was developed during the baseline when stakeholders including local communities identified strong enthusiasm for the project and to improve biodiversity conservation. The rating and proposed mitigation are considered appropriate. Some text added to clarify.

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

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared. Inclusion in coordination/institutional arrangement noted.

December 8, 2021 HF:

1.) Given WWF has pulled out "to focus on the Western Forest Complex" what biodiversity conservation capacity/partner will the project work with/retain?

Agency Response

The project clearly mentions DNP as a key biodiversity partner agency. In addition, RECOFTC and IUCN which have considerable biodiversity skills are involved in the project as are several universities.

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

December 10, 2021:

Yes

Agency Response

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

December 10, 2021:

Yes

Agency Response

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 10, 2021:

Yes

Agency Response

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

December 10, 2021:

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

December 10, 2021:

Yes

Agency Response

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

October 11, 2022 HF:

All comments cleared.

October 2, 2022 HF:

1.) Has not yet been addressed. Please address these two issues prior to resubmission:

- Regarding the Admin and Finance officer being charged to project components but not to PMC, the Review Sheet the Agency says that this position "is now charged to PMC". However, in the Budget Table still this position is fully charged to the project's components, not to PMC. Please amend.

- Regarding the Project Technical Adviser being charged to project components but not to PMC, in the Review Sheet the Agency says that this position's role "is technical" and hence it is not being charged to PMC. However, when reviewing the TORs included in the ProDoc for this position (see below), the responsibilities are managerial / coordination in nature, as it should be the case for a position that manages/coordinates the project (even if the position is called "Project Technical Adviser"). Therefore, in presence of enough co-financing, this position has to be charged to PMC as it is requested in GEF Guidelines.

May 26, 2022:

1.) Admin and Finance officer and Project Technical Adviser are charged to project components but not to PMC. Per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project's execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. For this project, the co-financing portion allocated to PMC is \$1.3 million, and \$4 million of the co-financing are represented in grants - please use the co-financing portion or explore other possibilities (Agency's own-managed trust funds or funds from

other co-financiers) to cover the costs associated with the project's execution (project's staff).

2.) Office stationery should be charged to PMC, not to project components. Please revise.

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared.

December 10, 2021:

Yes, though surprised not to see any budget notes accompanying the project budget in annex. Is this included elsewhere?

Agency Response

Responses to comments from October 2, 2022

1) We apologize for not submitting correct budget.

- The Admin/ Finance person is now fully charged to the PMC. The revised project budget has been uploaded.
- The Project Technical Advisor position is, indeed, significantly focused on technical work and this has been reflected in the revised TOR in the prodoc annex. However, in recognition of the linked roles of this job to proper project management and project M&E, some part of this position has been allocated to M&E and PMC as well. The TOR is now as follows (Annex K):

Project Technical Adviser (PTA) (Full-time)

The Project Technical Adviser is key technical person who plays the lead high technical results of all components of the project. The person will work closely with FAO, RECOFTC and the Royal Forest Department to ensure high technical inputs to project Outputs and Outcomes.

Technical Responsibilities: This will be the primary focus of this position.

- ? Ensure that the technical work of the project is built on best technical tools and expertise available globally (including from Thailand, RECOFTC, FAO and others). This will be done through provision of technical advisory notes preparation, capacity building (including mentoring of project staff and other stakeholders)
- ? Prepare policy guidance notes to ensure that lessons are being used to strengthen local to national policies- especially related to Output 1.2 and 1.3 as 3.1.

? Prepare and deliver training on relevant topics, as prioritized in annual work plan ? and review and provide guidance to other training and technical materials being prepared by other technical experts (related to 1.4)

? Ensure quality review of all project technical reports and plans (such as Output 2.2), including delivery against GEF core indicators and project results framework ? especially on biodiversity conservation and natural resources management

Project Management support and M&E: in recognition of the fact that technical work is not possible without appropriate project management, the technical advisor will also provide advice on appropriate project management approach based on best international practices.

? S/he will work closely with RECOFTC to advise on overall project implementation effectiveness through support to M&E and project management support as necessary including preparation of an Exit Strategy / Sustainability strategy.

? Ensure that the project team and partners are well prepared in advance of mid-term review and final evaluation with input materials

? Ensure that project's different plans and strategies (social and environmental safeguards, gender strategy, stakeholders involvement strategy etc.) are being implemented in mutually supportive way

? Ensure strong coordination of project work with baseline actions and with co-financing agencies

Other PMC related work of this project, as noted before, will be cofinance by RECOFTC, particularly through their Thailand country program office. This will include oversight of the project management and coordination with the Royal Forest Department and local governments; recruitment of staff, lead work planning exercises, organize project management meetings, project steering committee meetings etc.

Response to comments on May 26

1. The admin and finance officer is now charged to PMC. However, the technical advisor role is "technical" and hence it is not being charged to PMC. The coordination part of the project will be cofinanced by the project's executing agency RECOFTC and they have issued a new cofinance letter, which is now uploaded.

2. This has been revised.

Budget notes have been added. However, please note that the budget already includes headings and unit costs that explain what the budgets are for.

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
December 10, 2021:

Clear

Agency Response
GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
March 4, 2022 HF:
Comment cleared.

December 10, 2021 HF:
At PIF stage GEFSEC commented below regarding 3.2. Please respond directly in the matrix and design and in response to the same question (#5) at CER stage in the Alternative Scenario section above.

At CEO endorsement request please include a full demonstration/explanation of how Output 3.2 has been designed to contribute to the conservation of globally significant biodiversity in target landscapes, including where it sits/how it contributes to the Theory Of Change and how those contributions will be managed and measured.	An explanation of 3.2 and its link to the ToC has been provided
--	---

Agency Response An explanation of 3.2 and its link to the ToC has been provided
Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
May 19, 2022 HF:
Comment cleared.

March 4, 2022 HF:

Although the response matrix in the Agency Response below doesn't include the GEF Council Comments (only GEFSEC and STAP), they have been located in the CER and

ProDoc and pasted (below). Please specifically point to text in the CER and ProDoc (section/para/page) where/how these comments were addressed-currently, in the case of all three Council comments, it wasn't clear where/how the project documentation responds to this feedback (on BD monitoring, on Ngao Model Forest and on One Health).

GEF Council comments	
<p>Germany approves the following PIFs in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:</p> <p>Germany welcomes the well thought out proposal and particularly the significant government support and commends the inclusion of various government agencies to strengthen the implementation.</p> <p>Suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:</p> <p>Given the high relevance of the project for Biodiversity protection in Thailand, it would be recommendable to include a plan for Biodiversity Monitoring and reflect this in one of the indicators.</p>	<p>Biodiversity monitoring has been incorporated into the project design and linked to the biodiversity information system (BIS)</p>
<p>Comment by Anar Mamdani, Director, Environment Division (MSS), Global Issues and Development Branch (MFM), Global Affairs Canada, Council, Canada made on 6/26/2020</p> <p>We recommend that the project proponent consider lessons learned from the existing Ngao Model Forest in Lampang Province; this would help mitigate risk of low stakeholder engagement. The Ngao Model Forest was established in the early 2000s and focused on community gardens/forestry; potential collaboration with Ngao Model Forest could be cited on page 32 where partners with expertise in landscape management are listed.</p>	<p>Reference has been made to the Ngao Model Forest</p>
<p>Comment by Stéphanie BOUZIGES-ESCHMANN, Secretary general, Secrétariat du Fonds Français pour l'environnement Mondial, Agence Française De Development, Council, France made on 6/24/2020</p> <p>Although the reference in the introduction to the link between deforestation/degradation of ecosystems and the COVID-19 pandemic is a positive development, we notice the lack of a "one health" approach across projects, while several projects address livestock production or human-wildlife cohabitation within and outside protected areas. (Projects 70.Thailand, 73. Papua New Guinea... among others). Placing greater emphasis on this aspect would be useful</p>	<p>Reference to One Health has been included in the project</p>
GEF Council comments	
<p>Germany approves the following PIFs in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:</p> <p>Germany welcomes the well thought out proposal and particularly the significant government support and commends the inclusion of various government agencies to strengthen the implementation.</p> <p>Suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:</p> <p>Given the high relevance of the project for Biodiversity protection in Thailand, it would be recommendable to include a plan for Biodiversity Monitoring and reflect this in one of the indicators.</p>	<p>Biodiversity monitoring has been incorporated into the project design and linked to the biodiversity information system (BIS)</p>
<p>Comment by Anar Mamdani, Director, Environment Division (MSS), Global Issues and Development Branch (MFM), Global Affairs Canada, Council, Canada made on 6/26/2020</p> <p>We recommend that the project proponent consider lessons learned from the existing Ngao Model Forest in Lampang Province; this would help mitigate risk of low stakeholder engagement. The Ngao Model Forest was established in the early 2000s and focused on community gardens/forestry; potential collaboration with Ngao Model Forest could be cited on page 32 where partners with expertise in landscape management are listed.</p>	<p>Reference has been made to the Ngao Model Forest</p>
<p>Comment by Stéphanie BOUZIGES-ESCHMANN, Secretary general, Secrétariat du Fonds Français pour l'environnement Mondial, Agence Française De Development, Council, France made on 6/24/2020</p> <p>Although the reference in the introduction to the link between deforestation/degradation of ecosystems and the COVID-19 pandemic is a positive development, we notice the lack of a "one health" approach across projects, while several projects address livestock production or human-wildlife cohabitation within and outside protected areas. (Projects 70.Thailand, 73. Papua New Guinea... among others). Placing greater emphasis on this aspect would be useful</p>	<p>Reference to One Health has been included in the project</p>

December 10, 2021 HF:

Please respond directly to GEF Council comments on this project, of which there are three (Germany, Canada, France).

Agency Response

Response to March 4 comments.

The table in responses has been updated as below.

GEF Council comments	
<p>Germany approves the following PIFs in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:</p> <p>Germany welcomes the well thought out proposal and particularly the significant government support and commends the inclusion of various government agencies to strengthen the implementation.</p> <p>Suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:</p> <p>Given the high relevance of the project for Biodiversity protection in Thailand, it would be recommendable to include a plan for Biodiversity Monitoring and reflect this in one of the indicators.</p>	<p>Biodiversity monitoring has been incorporated into the project design and linked to the biodiversity information system (BIS) ? see Output 2.1 page 42, line 92 onwards.</p>
<p>Comment by Anar Mamdani, Director, Environment Division (MSS), Global Issues and Development Branch (MFM), Global Affairs Canada, Council, Canada made on 6/26/2020</p> <p>We recommend that the project proponent consider lessons learned from the existing Ngao Model Forest in Lampang Province; this would help mitigate risk of low stakeholder engagement. The Ngao Model Forest was established in the early 2000s? and focused on community gardens/forestry; potential collaboration with Ngao Model Forest could be cited on page 32 where partners with expertise in landscape management are listed.</p>	<p>Reference has been made to the Ngao Model Forest in Output 4.2 line 122</p>

<p>Comment by Stéphanie BOUZIGES-ESCHMANN, Secretary general, Secrétariat du Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial, Agence Française De Développement, Council, France made on 6/24/2020</p>	<p>Reference to One Health has been included in the project in a new sub section entitled Tackling One Health risks starting at line 207 until Section B</p>
<p>Although the reference in the introduction to the link between deforestation/degradation of ecosystems and the COVID-19 pandemic is a positive development, we notice the lack of a "one health" approach across projects, while several projects address livestock production or human-wildlife cohabitation within and outside protected areas. (Projects 70.Thailand, 73. Papua New Guinea... among others). Placing greater emphasis on this aspect would be useful</p>	

Comments

Action taken

GEFSec comments

Please provide an overview of the gender context and dimensions of the project.

A gender analysis was complete and a GAP has been developed and is annexed to the Project Document.

The included "Project Risk Certification" gives this project a "low" risk rating, whereas the section 5 of the PIF show moderate risk for issues such as "Resistance towards biodiversity conservation in areas outside of protected areas" and "Limited impact from the sustainable utilization of biodiversity benefits to incentivize behavior change at the local level". The low overall rating seems inconsistent with the moderate risk of many of the anticipated risks as presented. Please address.

The service provider undertook an Environmental and Social Analysis during the PPG phase and rated the Project as Low Risk. The rating was confirmed by FAO.

Although indigenous peoples is tagged in the PIF, IPs aren't addressed anywhere in the risk section. Please address/rectify

The consultation process and baseline development undertaken by the service provider noted there were no IPs in the target areas.

At CEO endorsement stage please include a clear, legible map of project area and project sites and geo-reference data.

Revised maps are included with the Project Document and geo-referenced coordinates provided. Additional maps are provided in the annexes and high-resolution maps are available from FAO.

At CEO endorsement request please include a full demonstration/explanation of how Output 3.2 has been designed to contribute to the conservation of globally significant biodiversity in target landscapes, including where it sits/how it contributes to the Theory Of Change and how those contributions will be managed and measured.

An explanation of 3.2 and its link to the ToC has been provided

Please provide specific indicators that will be used to monitor biodiversity impacts (outcomes/proxies) in the target forest complexes.

Indicators have been included in the results framework and in the text of the Project Document

STAP comments

PPG action

Overall, this is a comprehensive and ambitious project that addresses habitat loss and degradation outside of protected areas through landscape planning and by mainstreaming biodiversity into forest and land use plans. This is a sound general approach which has been proven effective in past GEF projects (see Biodiversity Mainstreaming in Practice: A Review of GEF Experience). STAP notes, however, that while spatial planning and analysis is a good first step ? particularly if used as a means for collaboration among stakeholders ? planning is a means to an end and will not guarantee action on the ground. In this respect, more clarity is needed to explain what incentives will be provided to convince people to abandon current practices including those identified as major threats to biodiversity (i.e. forest encroachment, illegal wildlife poaching and trade, unsustainable collection of non-timber forest products) in favor of ?biodiversity-friendly? activities.

The Project Document provides an explanation as to how incentives can be used to alter behavior and promote sustainable practices. Output 2.5 in particular focuses on developing and piloting incentives.

The project identifies numerous outputs intended to mainstream biodiversity, address human-wildlife conflict, connect SMEs to local communities to provide employment, develop SFM certification, etc. However, they are not logically connected in a clear and comprehensive way, including articulation of underlying assumptions. The project would benefit greatly from the development of a robust Theory of Change that draws these connections more clearly and clarifies the steps involved in reaching the overall objective.

A ToC has been developed and a set of assumptions identified that link the outcomes, see [Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#)

The project offers little detail on how this project will tackle wildlife poaching and infrastructure development. If this is not part of the project, it would be good to offer assurance that these threats are being addressed through another project or that not addressing them won't negate any potential success that accrue from this project

The Project will work closely with the GEF 6 project- Combatting Illegal Wildlife Trade. Infrastructure development will be addressed through inter-departmental collaboration and policy formulation. Community forestry and improving livelihoods and agricultural productivity are also seen as incentives to reduce poaching.

Outcomes may have adaptation benefits though this is not the stated primary purpose of the project.

Adaptation benefits are listed as a co-benefit

This is a relatively small project at \$3 million in GEF Funding. Yet there are 17 outputs listed ? some of which are clearly outputs (i.e. practical guidance for incorporating BD standards and principles into private forest and agriculture) whereas many others read more like outcomes (i.e. community forestry networks strengthened).

Revision of outcome and output language undertaken.

The baseline scenario discusses various initiatives and programs as well as recommendations from a recent study to address habitat fragmentation in the corridor areas. The project will establish a monitoring system for biodiversity and socio-economic indicators which is hopeful; however, baseline information is not provided for either in the PIF.

Baseline has been completed by the service provider

No theory of change is presented in this project. ?.. This project has numerous outputs which could be better linked to outcomes and the ultimate objective by working through a ToC which identifies project assumptions and multiple pathways. The ToC would also highlight underlying assumptions which are not entirely clear in this project

The ToC is provided and summarizes in Figure 1 and

Figure 2.

Highlighting key assumptions that underlie steps in the TOC enables them to be monitored and draws attention to the need to consider other alternatives if they do not prove true in practice.

Assumptions have been provided

Not clear if there is a sequence or if actions are taking place simultaneously.

Text has been added explaining the sequence of actions

there are several interesting activities; however, the overall logic and sequence requires considerable strengthening

Revised logic and sequence of activities

Some of the underlying assumptions can be found in the risk section and elsewhere, highlighting lack of coordination and lack of incentives to change existing behavior which threatens habitat ? These should be incorporated into a robust ToC to indicate which assumptions underlie achievement of which planned outputs and outcomes.

Assumptions have been provided

A system is proposed under Output 4.3 to monitor biodiversity and socio-economic indicators beyond the lifetime of the project. Toolkits (Open Foris) and systems (SLMS) are proposed but not specific indicators

Indicators are provided in the Results Framework

The project claims to be innovative through the integration of social and economic values of biodiversity into land-use planning and management, which the project states is a new concept in Thailand. However, there are several other GEF projects underway in Thailand related to BD mainstreaming (GEF ID 10409, 3940) and natural capital accounting (GEF ID 9542).

Innovation section revised

The use of Open Foris tools for environmental monitoring is innovative for a GEF project and specific information on which tools and how they will be applied for long-term monitoring would be helpful prior to CEO Endorsement.

Specific information about the tools and the application for long-term monitoring will be described in detail by the M&E Officer during the Inception period.

A map is provided in Section 1b, albeit very poor resolution. No geo-coordinates are given. See Earth Observation and the GEF ? Section A1.0 (p. 64) for recommendations on providing geo-referenced information.

A revised project map is included with the Project Document and geo-referenced coordinates provided

Stakeholders identified and roles explained. Most stakeholders are national government agencies. Local communities and CSOs are identified including academic institutions ?

though none specifically mentioned by name. Same for private sector entities apart from the PFPC.

Substantial changes have been made to stakeholder sections

Beyond identifying stakeholders, the project did not identify (or assess) any concerns around levels of conflict among stakeholders' values with respect to the intended interventions.

The ESA and GAP, the Project Document and the stakeholder plan identify concerns around conflict

? the section on Private Sector Engagement focusing on the support for SMEs to provide local employment opportunities is devoid of detail and merely states that the project will ??engage with private sector stakeholders from sectors that can contribute to the project outcomes?with a view to establishing public-private partnerships that demonstrate economically viable biodiversity-friendly and sustainable livelihood models.?

Details added on private sector and employment

Climate variability and climate change, ? will be addressed through a detailed climate risk screening during PPG phase with proposed mitigation measures to be built into the final project design.

The climate risk screening was updated during the PPG phase and risk mitigation measures included in the design

A general knowledge management strategy for the project will be developed during the PPG stage. Will use existing platforms to share information. Spatial analyses will provide baseline information that can be monitored over time.

A knowledge management strategy is included in the Project Document, see Outcome 4.

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request December 10, 2021 HF:

Yes.

Agency Response

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response
CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response
Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

March 4, 2022 HF:

Comment cleared.

See comments regarding Annex C above

Agency Response
Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

December 8, 2021 HF:

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

October 11, 2022 HF:

All comments cleared. Endorsement recommended.

October 2, 2022 HF:

No, please address remaining comments highlighted in yellow. New 2nd cancellation deadline for the project is December 2, 2022.

May 26, 2022 HF:

Please address comments on co-financing and budget and resubmit. Please note that the 2nd cancellation deadline for this project is June 3rd, 2022. To avoid project cancellation please submit extension request letter prior to the deadline.

May 20, 2022 HF:

Yes.

March 4, 2022 HF:

No, please address remaining comments on: GHG calculations; responses to Council Comments. Please remove all highlights, strikethroughs and track changes in (hopefully final) next submission of the CER and ProDoc.

December 10, 2021 HF:

No, please address comments in review sheet. Thank you.

Review Dates

**Secretariat Comment at
CEO Endorsement**

**Response to
Secretariat
comments**

First Review	12/10/2021
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/4/2022
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/20/2022
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/26/2022
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/2/2022

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations