



Tonga Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency ? strengthening national capacity for implementing the enhanced transparency framework in Tonga

Review CEO Approval and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11845

Countries

Tonga

Project Name

Tonga Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency ? strengthening national capacity for implementing the enhanced transparency framework in Tonga

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

1/7/2025

Review completed by PM

1/16/2025

Program Manager

William Holness Carrasco

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

MSP

CEO Approval Request

Part I - General Project Information

1. a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Yes, the Project Information Table is correctly filled, including the Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC) and the Global Green Growth Institute as Project Execution Entities. Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: the Rio Marker has been set as 2 ?Principal Objective? for CCM and ?Significant Objective? for CCA, which corresponds to the CBIT project structure. Comment cleared.

Agency Response

2. Project Summary.

a) 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?

b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project, is well written and is it within the max. of 250 words?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: The project summary makes general reference to the outcomes of the CBIT project for Tonga that serve as the basis of the scope of work for the country to meet the provisions of the ETF. The summary also includes references to Core Indicator 11, number of

people benefitting from GEF-financed investments, citing that 50 people will benefit from project intervention, from which 50% will be women. Comment cleared.

Agency Response

3. Project Description Overview

- 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?**
- c) **Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and appropriately funded?**
- d) **Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**
- e) **Is the PMC equal to or below 10%? If above 10%, is the justification acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025:

1. Comment cleared.
2. Comment cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: Please address the following comments:

1. The GEF Project Financing and Co-financing contributions to PMC are 9.08% and 10% respectively. Please adjust the figures so that they are exactly proportional and equal to or below 10%.
2. While some outputs make reference to gender mainstreaming within project components, kindly ensure that outstanding relevant Outputs (e.g., 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3), include gender dimensions explicitly in this section. In addition, Under M&E, ensure the new gender dimensions are reported and monitored on. Please amend accordingly.

Agency Response

1. Thanks for the comment. Our understanding is that PMC should be equal to or less than 10% from GEF budget and Co-finance for PMC should be either the same percentage as GEF budget share or more. Also since it is a small difference we have kept the GEF and Co-finance PMC at the same level.
2. Gender dimensions in output 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 and M&E are included and strengthened in the relevant project description. M&E narratives include "Gender considerations are a part of the M&E activities, for example, the PIR will also apply the UN Cooperation Framework markers, and review progress on gender-related results." A note to highlight the gender dimensions are reported and monitored on is included in the M&E plan table.

4. Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

- a) **Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental**

degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?

b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and/or adaptation benefits and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?

c) If this is an NGI project, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: The section includes a very detailed overview of how climate change is affecting Tonga and the progress made by the country in terms of meeting the provisions of the ETF, including its reporting progress on National Communications, plans on submitting its first BTR to follow, and NDC submission to the UNFCCC Secretariat. The roles of national stakeholders (both State and non-State actors) have been cited and the interactions between this CBIT project and other transparency-related initiatives (both GEF and non-GEF related) that will be executed in parallel in the country have been stated. In addition, a detailed set of barriers in four key areas of the ETF with distinctive sectorial granularity have been provided as a means to understand the current state of efforts made by the country. A problem tree has also been provided in the GEF Portal to illustrate the correlations between the root causes and their effects at the national climate change policy level and planning. Cleared.

Agency Response

5 B. Project Description

5.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (narrative and an optional schematic) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust solution and listing the key assumptions underlying these?

b) 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?

c) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described and proposed solutions and critical assumptions and risks are properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

d) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits and/or adaptation benefits identified?

e) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?

f) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?

g) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options (as applicable for this MSP)?

h) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, private sector, CSO, e.g.) and their roles adequately described within the components?

i) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component description/s?

j) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic

communication adequately described?

k) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes and how will that be addressed?

l) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025:

1. Comment cleared.
2. Comment cleared.
3. Comment cleared.
4. Comment cleared.
5. Comment cleared.
6. Comment cleared.
7. Comment cleared.
8. Comment cleared.
9. Comment cleared.
10. Comment cleared.
11. Comment cleared.
12. Comment cleared.
13. Comment cleared.
14. Comment cleared.
15. Comment cleared.
16. Comment cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: Please address the following comments:

1. For activity 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, and considering limited funding, kindly indicate if the institutional arrangements document will be comprehensive as to include all sectors for GHG inventory preparation and NDC tracking (for activity 1.1.1) and vulnerability and long-term strategy for capacity building (for activity 1.1.2) for ETF reporting, or if a prioritization of sectors will take place, considering factors such as overall share of emissions / removal potential and national development priorities.
2. For activity 1.2.2, and considering limited funding, kindly cite indicative ETF areas (mitigation, adaptation, means of implementation) and relevant sectors for which the data sharing agreements will be developed, considering national priorities and the overall progress of previous and ongoing initiatives in the country. Kindly indicate accordingly.
3. For activity 1.2.4 and considering factors outside of CBIT project incidence such as political buy-in and policymakers' priorities and the capacities of CBIT project team members, kindly indicate if the deliverable will be the drafts of the agreements to be presented to relevant ministries (post consultation and validation), so that they follow their approval processes for formal adoption, or if a formal adoption is anticipated. Please clarify accordingly.
4. For activity 1.3.1, kindly provide a differentiation between the mapping of current Acts on regulatory mechanisms and gaps in the country towards ETF compliance with activity 1.1.1, which will build on the existing institutional framework of JNAP structure to guide ETF reporting and activity 1.1.2, which will map current data flows, custodians, and gaps. Please clarify their complementarity or consider consolidating their associated deliverables for a more streamlined support, while identifying potential specific sectorial scopes, considering limited funding.
5. Similarly, for activity 1.3.2, please provide a differentiation between its draft legislative texts to change relevant mandates and Acts with activity 1.2.2, which will support the country in drafting agreements for relevant ministries, as they both seem to relate to the timely provision of information for ETF reporting. Kindly consider streamlining related activities, if applicable, while identifying potential specific sectorial scopes, considering limited funding.
6. In addition, for activities 1.3.3 and 1.3.4, please advise how the assessment of corporate plans and budgets of government entities will complement the development of the financial strategy for ETF compliance of output 1.1.2. Kindly consider streamlining related activities, if applicable, while identifying potential specific sectorial scopes, considering limited funding.
7. For activities under output 2.1, considering the previous and ongoing work made in the country with additional support providers, for more clarity, kindly indicate in this section the sectors / databases within the GHG inventory and NDC tracking systems that will be interconnected through this integrative platform. In addition, please clarify if the training workshops of activity 2.1.7 will have sustainability provisions to address staff turnover after the two training sessions have been completed. Please complement accordingly.

8. For activity 2.2.1, kindly advise how its review paper on past and ongoing transparency initiatives will complement / be differentiated from the efforts of activity 1.2.1, whose report will build on previous and ongoing data transparency projects. Please clarify accordingly.
9. For activities 2.2.5 and 2.2.7, kindly advise if sustainability provisions are being considered to sustain capacity-building even after project intervention. Please clarify accordingly.
10. For activities under output 2.3, considering limited funding, kindly advise if the priority adaptation sectors have been identified at this point and which one are they, to assess complementarity with efforts by JNAP. Please clarify accordingly.
11. For activity 2.3.5, please advise if the training contains sustainability provisions to address staff turnover. Please clarify accordingly.
12. For activities 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, kindly advise what will be the relationship with the trainings of previous activities (i.e.: 2.1.7, 2.2.5, 2.2.7, 2.3.5, and 3.2.5) for which sustainability provisions have been asked for further assessment. Please indicate if the ad-hoc training could be considered as pilot projects for the long-term strategy for capacity development of the ETF of output 3.1.2. Please clarify accordingly.
13. For activity 3.1.4, as it relates to the development of the TORS to strengthen ETF-related roles and responsibilities of JNAP, kindly advise how it will be complementary to activity 1.1.1, which will build on the institutional framework of JNAP to establish clear roles and responsibilities for UNFCCC reporting. Please briefly describe accordingly.
14. For activities under output 3.2, kindly describe the interconnection with the long-term strategy for capacity development on the ETF to be developed by activity 3.1.2. Particularly, indicate if inputs from activity 3.1.2 will be considered when developing the TORs of activity 3.2.3. Please clarify accordingly.
15. For activity 3.2.5, considering limited funding and gaps to address the ETF, please advise on potential technical focus of the training to be provided. Please clarify accordingly.
16. For activities 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, please advise if the project team is considering liaising with the CBIT-GSP network for the Pacific region or similar efforts to synergize efforts on knowledge exchange on the ETF. Please clarify accordingly.

Agency Response

1. The institutional arrangement (Deliverable 1.1.1) will be designed to include GHG inventory preparation covering all IPCC sectors, climate action tracking and climate support received. The ETF roadmap (Deliverable 1.1.2) will include the institutional arrangement to implement the ETF roadmap action plan, including the long-term strategy for capacity building, which will be aligned with the institutional mechanism established under Deliverable 1.1.1. The relevant sections (1.1.1, 1.1.2) have been revised accordingly.

2. This activity will include data sharing agreement for 1. activity data for GHG preparation covering all the IPCC sectors and 2. NDC implementation tracking and reporting. The activity description has been revised to improve clarity.

3. Thanks for this comment. This feedback was indeed brought up by the stakeholders during the project validation workshop. This has been revised to clarify that the process of formal adoption of the agreement will be initiated and supported through the CBIT project, highlighting that the formal adoption may happen beyond the project intervention period.

4. The key differences between the three outputs are:

1.1.1: This activity aims to build an institutional structure for ETF. It will do so by building on the existing institutional framework of JNAP.

1.1.2: This is focused on mapping of data required for GHG inventory preparation and NDC implementation tracking and reporting. It will compile info on data requirements, availability, gaps and sources. It will also build on findings relevant to data from the past and ongoing transparency projects.

1.3.1: This is more focused on acts and mandates of the ministries. The review will identify any gaps preventing the effective integration of ETF into national policy frameworks.

Activity description have been revised for clarity.

5. Activity 1.3.1 will assess regulatory mechanisms relevant for climate transparency/ETF and climate change planning and identify gaps and recommendations. Based on this deliverable, 1.3.2 will propose draft legislative text with an aim to mainstream and strengthen climate change/transparency matters into government regulatory framework. The main difference is that 1.2.2. has a more specific scope focusing on data sharing agreement for GHG inventory and NDC implementation tracking and reporting. Deliverable 1.3.2. will be developed in alignment with 1.2.2. The deliverable description has been modified for clarity.

6. The corporate plan and budget document of Tonga's government entities outlines the government's priorities, strategies, and resource allocation for a specific period, usually three years. By reviewing these documents, the report will assess (1.3.3) and propose (1.3.4) strategic direction/budget allocation of relevant ministries in transparency related activities, which will contribute to the development of financing strategy for the ETF roadmap. The activity description has been revised accordingly.

7. Revised accordingly. The following description have been added under Output 2.1.: a) One of the key activities under this output is migrating data and information from existing database management platform (i.e., Google Drive) into the new IT-based database system.b) In addition, training will be provided on the application/use of the system developed, which is envisioned to be sustained as outlined in the long-term capacity building strategy (Deliverable 3.1.2) to ensure regular training of the existing and new staff beyond the project period.

- The database management tool developed will cover all IPCC sectors, which has been now clarified in the description.

8. Activity 1.2.1 will focus on data mapping, whereas activity 2.2.1 will review past and ongoing projects to assess the tools and methodologies used, and identify areas where improvements are needed for GHG inventory preparation. The sentence in Activity 1.2.1 has been revised for clarity. "This detailed report will build on the findings from the previous and ongoing climate transparency projects regarding data flow, data availability, potential data sources and data gaps."

9. Yes, sustainability will be ensured through implementation of the ETF capacity building strategy, developed under Deliverable 3.1.2, which includes action plan and financing strategy to sustain capacity building programs beyond the project intervention. Revised under Output 2.2. accordingly.

10. The priority adaptation sectors will be identified by engaging stakeholders either before or during the inception workshop and will be finalized during the inception workshop.

11. Additional note to highlight the sustainability provision through the implementation of the capacity building strategy (Deliverable 3.1.2) has been added in the deliverable description.

12. This is a very good point. In addition to the assessment outcome of capacity needs/challenges (3.1.1), the project will ensure post-training feedback will be incorporated into the long-term strategy for capacity development on ETF (3.1.2). Revised accordingly.

13. These two activities are complementary but differ in scope. The key focus of the JNAP ToR revision is to strengthen JNAP's role in coordinating climate transparency and capacity-building initiatives, which is not included in the current JNAP, ensuring alignment and minimizing overlap. In contrast, Activity 1.1.1 on ETF institutional arrangements will specifically establish clear processes and define stakeholder roles for ETF implementation and climate reporting required by the Paris Agreement. While JNAP provides the overarching framework for Tonga's climate change and disaster risk management efforts, Activity 1.1.1 will feed into and support the work under Activity 3.1.4. This deliverable was strongly supported by stakeholders during the consultation and validation workshop.

14. Yes, this output will be an integral part of the capacity development strategy (3.1.2), which will also inform the "knowledge and experts hub" ToR (3.2.3).

15. Potential technical focus of the trainings has been added.

16. Yes, the CBIT project will closely liaise with the CBIT-GSP network to ensure synergies and collaboration. The description has been revised accordingly.

5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?

b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?

c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed

projects/programs (such as government and/or other bilateral/multilateral supported initiatives in the project area, e.g.).

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

5.3 Core indicators

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 targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable? Are the GEF Climate Change adaptation indicators and sub-indicators for LDCF and SCCF properly documented?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025: Comment cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: The project team expects 50 people benefiting from this CBIT project (25 male and 25 female). Considering the inclusion of non-State actors and the subscription of long-term capacity building agreements to be established, kindly confirm if it will be possible to raise the total number of people benefitting from the project. Kindly amend accordingly, if deemed possible.

Agency Response The number of beneficiaries has been revised to 70 (35 male, 35 female) from 50 (25 male, 25 female), considering the increased scope of beneficiaries related to ETF awareness-raising activities and long-term capacity-building initiatives planned.

5.4 Risks

a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?

b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?

c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately screened and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025: Comment cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: The description provided under the Institutional and Policy risk category belongs better under the (Execution) Capacity risk category. Consider moving the content from this category to the Capacity category, removing the rating and adjusting the one under the Capacity category as appropriate.

Agency Response The adjustment is made as suggested.

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

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

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with Focal Area objectives, and/or LDCF/SCCF strategy?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025: Comment cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: Considering the scope of the project and particularly on its awareness on the ETF components, please fill out the role of civil society subsection within the Policy Requirement section. Please complete accordingly. In addition, please respond to the second question on the private sector subsection, as it has been described on the Project Description.

Agency Response This has been addressed in the portal.

7.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Yes, cleared. It has been submitted as Annex K of the Agency Project Document.

Agency Response

7.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Yes, cleared. It has been submitted as Annex L of the Agency Project Document.

Agency Response

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

**8.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: 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 comment at CEO Endorsement Request WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request
WHC 03-25-2025:

1. Comment cleared.
2. Considering the redistribution of budget within components and the clarifications on provisions for the sustainability of impacts after project intervention, the GEF Secretariat approves the maintenance of the current budget. Comment cleared.
3. Comment cleared.
4. Comment cleared.
5. Comment cleared.
6. Comment cleared.
7. Comment cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: Please address the following comments:

1. Travel budget for each of the three technical components and the PMC adds up to \$ 237,145, which accounts for 17.8% of the current GEF project grant. Considering the number of current beneficiaries and the possibility to make synergies among workshops based on thematic complementarity and the long-term agreement to be subscribed, kindly justify the need for such an amount and consider reducing it to the extent possible. Please amend accordingly, if deemed appropriate.

2. In addition, taking into account the continuous support provided by the CBIT and the project duration and the synergies between related activity described in the project description section review, kindly reconsider reducing the overall project budget by prioritizing activities that will logically will need to be done first, and postponing other activities for next stages of the CBIT project in the country. Kindly adjust the budget accordingly, if possible.

3. Moreover, the table presented in the CEO Endorsement Request PDF (which is the document that is circulated to Council and later web posted) is not well formatted as seen in the attached document page 76. We kindly suggest the agency to use the template provided in the GEF Guidelines on the Project Cycle and upload a new version that does not include the comments added in the word document.

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE
Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

ANNEX G: Budget Table

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USD Eq.)									Sub-Total	M&E	PMC			
		Component 1			Component 2			Component 3								
		Outcome 1.1	Outcome 1.2	Outcome 1.3	Outcome 2.1	Outcome 2.2	Outcome 2.3	Outcome 3.1	Outcome 3.2	Outcome 3.3						
Goods	IT-based MRM tool				15,000	-					15,000			15,000	GGG	
	Publication	5,000	-	5,000	-	5,000	5,000				20,000			20,000	GGG	
Sub-contract to executing partner entity	Partner institution to train/manage ETF knowledge and experts hub					-				40,000	40,000			40,000	GGG	
Contractual Services - Company	IT firm - development of IT-based GHG Database Management System and NDC tracking tool				200,000						200,000			200,000	GGG	
International Consultants	Climate transparency integration Specialist	-	-	18,500							18,500			18,500	GGG	
	GHG Inventory Specialist	-	10,000	-	-						10,000			10,000	GGG	
	Climate Adaptation Specialist				-	-	25,000				25,000			25,000	GGG	

Commented [MW1]: To be updated with the GEF budget template

Commented [MH2R1]: Pls upload both the latest GEF and UNEP budget on ASAP basis (This shall take in to account the queries raised on the various positions)

Commented [MW3R1]: Both templates added

4. It seems that the Chief Technical Expert and the Project Manager roles will be executed by the same individual, as observed in the TORs (attached word document page 119). Please request the agency to separate these two roles.

for experts based in the Pacific. For experts located outside the Pacific region or in remote Pacific region, travel costs are expected to be higher.

2. The activities and corresponding budget was led by the country team leading the reporting to UNFCCC. These were the activities identified as most necessary first step in strengthening the ETF in the country. A review was again undertaken with country team and they are of the view that all the activities included are critical for building the foundation.

3. Oversight is regretted, a new budget table as per GEF Template is attached.

4. TOR for the two positions have been separated.

5. The TORs are amended to align the title with Budget.

6. The oversight is regretted and this has been corrected now.

8.2 Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

a) Is PPG reimbursement requested and if so, is it within the eligible cap of USD 50,000?

b) Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025: Comment cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: The Agency is requesting \$40,000 for PPG. In Annex D, it is specified that \$37,259 have been spent to date and the remaining \$3,404 is committed. Kindly review these numbers so that the amount spent to date and the amount committed add up the total PPG amount. Please amend accordingly.

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GET/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Expert cost (technical, gender and environment & safeguards) to lead preparatory work and review including compilation of baseline / situational analysis to formulate the CEO Endorsement request, Pro Doc and mandatory specific annexes including leading validation workshop to discuss the project design	31,873.00	32,536.00	
Travel for consultation and discussion with stakeholders for the project formulation and validation	6,000.00	4,034.00	1,966.00
Workshop and meetings cost (including validation cost)	2,127.00	689.00	1,438.00
Total	40,000.00	37,259.00	3,404.00

Agency Response The error has been corrected with updated expenditure reports received.

8.3 Source of Funds

Does the sources of funds table match with the OFP's LOE? Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

8.4 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type: Are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines? e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025: Cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: Even though co-finance by MEIDECC has been described in the GEF Portal and on Annex H of the Agency Project Document, the co-finance letter proper has not been attached to the GEF Portal as a standalone document. Kindly submit the co-finance letter by CCCI in the GEF Portal for further assessment.

Agency Response The CO-financing letter has been uploaded on the portal.

Annex B: Endorsements

8.5 a) Has the project been endorsed by the GEF OFP/s of all GEF eligible participating countries and has the OFP name and position been checked against the GEF database at the time of submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared. The LoE has been signed by Mr. Sione Akauola, GEF Operational Focal Point for Tonga at the time of this review.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

8.6 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project before the PIF submission?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

Annex C: Project Results Framework

8.7 a) Have the GEF core indicators been included?

b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; do the targets correspond/are appropriate in view of the budget (too high? Too low?)

c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?

d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025: Cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: Whenever possible, please include a disaggregation by gender of Core Indicator 11, people benefitting from GEF-financed investments throughout Project Results Framework. Please ensure regular reporting of gender results and the gender action plan.

Agency Response The PRF is updated to address the comment.

Annex E: Project map and coordinates

8.8 Are geo-referenced information and maps provided indicating where the project interventions will take place ?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.9 Have safeguard screening document and/or other ESS document(s) attached and been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: Cleared.

Agency Response

Annex G: GEF Budget template

8.10 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?

b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?

c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025: Cleared.

WHC 01-14-2025: Please address the comments on section 8 Financing Tables and revise the budget for further assessment.

Agency Response The comments have addressed as explained above.

Annex H: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.11 a) 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.

b) Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating

reflows? If not, please provide comments.

c) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 01-14-2025: N/A

Agency Response

Additional Annexes

9. GEFSEC DECISION

9.1. GEFSEC Recommendation Is the project recommended for approval

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

WHC 03-25-2025 Upon revision of the CEO Endorsement Document the PMs recommend this regional CBIT1 for Tonga for further processing.

WHC 01-14-2025: Please address the comments above and highlight them in **green** for ease of reference. Also, please ensure changes are visible in the CEO Approval form (?portal form?).

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9.3 Review Dates

	1SMSP CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	1/14/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)	3/25/2025	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		