

Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an effectively managed national protected area Estate (CATENATE)

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10542

Countries

Maldives

Project Name

Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an effectively managed national protected area Estate (CATENATE)

Agencies

IUCN

Date received by PM

3/23/2020

Review completed by PM

4/21/2020

Program Manager

Sarah Wyatt

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

FSP

PIF

Part I – Project Information

Focal area elements

1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/1/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Indicative project/program description summary

2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

No, please address the following:

Indicators: Please include some preliminary SMART indicators for the outcomes as is requested for BD projects.

METT: The GEF uses the METT as our measure of protected area management. While the Green List may provide helpful additional guidance, the METT should be used as the indicator of PA management improvements.

Component 1 –

1.2 – This seems put a lot of different activities together including capacity building for different audiences and financing planning. On the capacity building, it will be important to make sure that systems are set up to continue after the end of the project as new members of government and staff will come in. It would also be good to look to existing materials. Lastly, for capacity building we encourage considering how capacity building can be more substantial than one-off day(s) long workshops.

Component 2 – The outputs read as outcomes. It would be helpful to have more detail or indicators who better understand what is intended.

2.1.1 – Will the project only establish the framework, but not actually implement it? Too often we see that good plans are developed with donor resources but not implemented. It will be important to establish financing and other sustainability strategies.

2.1 – Trust fund – Does the Maldives already have a conservation trust fund? If so, why can't a special account be made there? If not, are there sufficient resources to capitalize a fund that will return a sufficient amount? Any trust fund will need to have a board where a majority of seats of not held by government. This is a major undertaking to just be part of a subcomponent. Is this reasonable to take on in this way?

2.2 – At PPG, we will need to see much more detailed ideas on what these activities will involve. We strongly recommend looking at the USAID documents on conservation enterprise for guidance on developing theories of change and value change support.

3.1.1 – How will this serve to improve management and/or other outcomes for PAs as part of this project?

Component 3 should have monitoring and evaluation activities included.

4/9/2020

Yes. Thank you for the helpful revisions.

Agency Response

04/09/2020 - IUCN

Inserted SMART indicators. Where relevant the METT score is used as an indicator to verify progress.

The project will validate METT scores through benchmarking to the IUCN Green List Standard and providing additional review, and complementary elements on good governance and securing conservation outcomes. This will ensure METT scores are not subjective, and can contribute to a more accurate portrayal of progress in participation, equity and management effectiveness.

1.2 reworded the entire output 1.2 description for clarity. This section also elaborates how sustainability of capacity building will be addressed.

2.1 The Project will demonstrate implementation at Project Site.

he Maldives currently does not have a national level conservation trust fund. The Government aims to do so in the near future. Other managed Protected Areas have individual atoll funds. Finance can be capitalized by entering into partnerships with the private sector and from receipts generated by the Protected Area. The project site is governed by an Island council that has the willingness, its own finance and capacity to mobilize additional finances demonstrated by a large surplus of saved funds generated from leasing of natural resources within its jurisdiction. The proposed composition of the Board including private sector, community based organization and technical experts has been included in the PIF's description.

2.2 We have included in PIF text to reflect additional details of activities to be developed during PPG stage.

3.1 Reworded the entire knowledge component including the outputs for better clarity.

M&E output added.

A PIF in track changes has been resubmitted in the portal to facilitate the review

Co-financing

3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/1/2020

Yes.

4/20/2020

Yes. However, please list USAID as the source of co-financing for the REGENERATE project.

Agency Response

4/20/2020 - IUCN

Adressed

GEF Resource Availability

4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

NA

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Project Preparation Grant

5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Core indicators

6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

No, the numbers in the Portal do not match the text of the PIF. The Portal numbers are rather low for a project specifically on protected areas.

4/9/2020

Yes. Thank you.

Agency Response

04/09/2020 - IUCN

All legally Protected Areas by the state have been listed in the Core Indicator Worksheet and portal. Portal numbers will equal PIF numbers.

Project/Program taxonomy

7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

No, please include the biomes that will be protected through this project. While we don't encourage ticking every vaguely related box, it's good include the significant ones.

Also, in order to claim adaptation benefits for the Rio marker, the activities of this project need to be directed by adaptation needs or specifically mentioned in national adaptation plans.

4/9/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

04/09/2020 - IUCN

Updated Taxonomy sheet, Annex C attached with biomes marked.

Rio Marker removed.

Part II – Project Justification

1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

No, please note that support for new or expanded PAs need to be KBAs or with the potential to qualify as such.

4/9/2020

Yes. Thank you for the added information.

Agency Response

04/09/2020 - IUCN

The focal area description has been elaborated in the text.

We are not creating a new protected area with GEF7 support. The project will set up the management of an existing protected area which is an entire island with several different biomes represented within the relatively small footprint. Having said that the Boduthiladhunmathi atoll ecosystem and Shaviyani Farukolhu (project site) has the potential to qualify as a KBA as it is home to recently discovered CR mangrove species as well several Redlist marine species, refer to background on Farukolhu

5. Is the incremental / additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes, please discuss any KBAs that will benefit.

Agency Response

7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

No, it would be good to talk more about the sustainability of the activities of this project and innovation.

4/9/2020

Yes. Maldives isn't always well-connected into SIDS networks, so during PPG it would be good to think about how to learn from existing experiences and share these results.

Agency Response

04/09/2020 - IUCN

Maldives has severe shortage of technical capacity for management of Protected Areas which the Project will address. This is seen as a priority. The innovation opportunities exist in the enabling environment to address improvement in governance of protected areas as well as overall financial sustainability of the PA system.

Text revised to elaborate this.

04/14/2020

OK. Noted

Project/Program Map and Coordinates

Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Stakeholders

Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

4/20/2020

Yes, we think there may have been a mistake in marking that the project will not include gender responsive measures.

Agency Response

4/20/2020 - IUCN

Adressed

Private Sector Engagement

Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes, this is adequate for now. However, there are likely opportunities to engage with private sector of a variety of types (from resorts to fishers). During PPG we would like to see this expanded. There could be an interesting opportunity to talk with Seychelles on the PIF they've submitted for GEF-7.

Agency Response OK. noted

Risks

Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

iucn - 04/15/2020

The ESS preliminary screening tool has been attached to this submission as an appendix.

Coordination

Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined? Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

4/20/2020

Yes. As the agency knows, the implementation and execution roles on GEF projects are meant to be separate per policy and guideline. The GEFSEC will analyze any requests for dual role playing by an agency at the time of CEO endorsement and only approve those cases that it deems warranted on an “exceptional” basis. We strongly encourage the agency to look at third party options as a preferred way forward. We also strongly encourage the agency to discuss any and all options for execution that do not include the government with the GEFSEC early in the PPG phase. The technical clearance of this PIF in no way endorses any alternative execution arrangement.

Agency Response

04/21/2020

The section on coordination has been revised. IUCN will not play an executing role in the project. The project will be executed by Government and other relevant partners as described in the PIF. Apologies the language was misleading.

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country’s national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed “knowledge management (KM) approach” in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project’s/program’s overall impact and sustainability?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes. We recognize that KM is an integral part of all the components. During PPG, it would be good include KM with other SIDS.

Agency Response

Part III – Country Endorsements

Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Yes.

Agency Response

Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects

Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

NA

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/4/2020

Not at this time. Please revise and resubmit.

4/9/2020

No, while the project is technically strong please address the issues on co-financing and gender. Also please remove the blank line in Table D.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval

The Maldives is a country of 400,000 people spread across 187 inhabited islands among 1195 islands total. The reef ecosystem of the Maldives is the 7th largest in the world and the 5th most biodiverse, spreading over an area of 8920 sq.km and represents 3% of global coral reef cover. The biodiversity of atoll ecosystems underpins at least 71% of national employment, 89% of GDP and 98% of exports. At the same time, the Maldives is a low-lying country vulnerable to sea level rise and the impacts of climate change on coral reefs. Tourism, while providing important revenue, is also a threat to the reefs.

This project will safeguard nationally and globally significant coral reef biodiversity and associated ecosystems through a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed protected and conserved areas in the Maldives. The project will develop improved protected area network governance mechanisms, including piloting and codifying for formal recognition diverse classifications of protected areas and supporting local governance of those areas. The project will then pilot more community-based approaches to PA management at Shaviyani Farukolhu, which is one of 15 protected areas in the largest coral atoll in the world and an important site for threatened species. At the same time, the project will support various conservation-friendly livelihood initiatives related to tourism, agriculture, and fisheries to help diversify economic opportunities in the area while supporting sustainability.

By developing and supporting community-based protected area approaches along with livelihood opportunities, the project is promoting an innovative approach for the Maldives that is based in building a long-term and sustainable approach to protected area management in remote island contexts. By selecting an important site that is part of a larger network the project is envisioning scaling-up of these approaches across the atoll.

The project will improve the management of 15 protected areas (442 hectares of terrestrial area and 8,867 ha of marine area) and mainstream biodiversity in the management of 3,522 ha of marine area.