

Regional Initiative for Water and Environment in the transboundary basin of the Mono River (RIWE-Mono)

Basic Information

GEF ID

10799

Countries

Regional (Benin, Togo)

Project Title

Regional Initiative for Water and Environment in the transboundary basin of the Mono River (RIWE-Mono)

GEF Agency(ies)

IUCN

Agency ID

IUCN: Mono Basin Authority (MBA)

GEF Focal Area(s)

International Waters

Program Manager

Steffen Hansen

PIF

Part I – Project Informatic

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

SH (4.8.21): Yes, this project is well aligned with IW GEF-7 priorities and will, amongst other elements, produce a TDA/SAP specific to the Mono Basin and as part of a concerted long-term effort to improve capacity and coordination at the transboundary level towards securing sustainability of future basin developments. Please address the below comment:

1. Since the project will work on both data sharing and floods management, please refine PIF part 1 table A to include IW-3-5.

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared.

2. Further, IW-3-5 should then also be integrated into the table in PIF section 4 Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared.

3. PIF part 1 Other Executing Partners section: Please insert Mono Basin Authority

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN- 21 April 2021

IW-3-5 has been added to Table A and integrated into the table in section 4 with an updated listing of related project outputs.

MBA will be inserted in the 'other executing partners section' on the portal.

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

SH (4.8.21): Please address below comments:

1. The Alternative Scenario PIF section: The component 1 description briefly mentions the production of a TDA. Please take note of the below logic and make sure that it is reflected in a revised component 1 description:

The TDA-SAP process is a tool for ensuring science-based transboundary water body assessment and management and offers a sound methodology for linking science to policy. Within this context the TDA is a mechanism to help the participating countries 'agree on the facts'—establishing the scientific basis for which decisions and priorities are to be made. As such the TDAs is a technical level document and it is not a requirement for it to be signed by relevant ministers. A SAP on the other hand is a negotiated policy document that includes a strategic set of targeted and costed policy, legal and institutional changes that the basin countries agree to implement to jointly address the transboundary concerns identified by the TDA. A SAP must be signed by the relevant national level ministers.

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared, however, please note that by CEO Endorsement the PRO DOC should be revised to clearly state that the SAP will be signed at the level of relevant national ministers.

2. The Alternative Scenario PIF section: The component 2 description focuses on implementation of a flood management strategy and via a series of on the ground planned activities. Indeed, flood management constitute a low-hanging fruit/non-controversial and mutually beneficial investments and may be key to demonstrate benefits from cooperation and lock-in gains. Please include additional text in the component 2 description and which clearly describes this logic and while describing links to the TDA/SAP as key project outputs and which will help set the stage for the full sweep of policy legal and regulatory reforms needed across the basin.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

3. The Alternative Scenario PIF section: The component 3 description should include tentative plans to learn from relevant projects, programs, initiatives & evaluations. Please address.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

4. The Alternative Scenario PIF section contains the outlines of a theory of change, however, the figure needs to be further developed to consider the sequencing between main drivers of environmental degradation, project activities, project outputs and medium/long term outcomes, and finally the end goal. During PPG the ToC may be further developed to include causal linkages across outputs and outcomes. Please look at GEF ID 10717 and 10700 as two good examples of Theories of Change figures from the previous December GEF Work Program: https://www.thegef.org/wb_work_program/12/01/2020/59

SH (4.22.21): Not cleared. Thank you very much for producing a revised ToC, which has been annexed. Please integrate the revised ToC into the PIF portal submission.

SH (4.26.21): Thank you. Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN- 21 April 2021

1. The text description for component 1 and the subsequent output 1.1.1 has been adjusted to better reflect the TDA-SAP process – this has been updated in both Table B and the 'Alternative Scenario PIF section.

2. The text for component 2 description has been updated to respond to the comment – demonstrating that the TDA/SAP process builds the sound grounding for policy application in basin and that flood mgt provides a strong issue to address for cooperation as a win-win scenario for the two countries.

3. Addressed in text in component 3 – increased exchange and learning through IWLEARN.

4. ToC excel file has been updated to respond to comments – we have kept the structure of the version sent for the 23rd March deadline but built up the sequencing and linkages between the drivers of environmental degradation, project outputs, outcomes, and impact.

IUCN 23 April 2021

The TOC has been added to the PIF in the portal submission.

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

SH (4.8.21):

Please address the below comments:

1. Cofinancing comment specific to PMC Proportionality: there is not proportionality in the co-financing contribution to PMC. If the GEF contribution is kept at 4.9%, for a co-financing of \$ 37,100,000 the expected contribution to PMC must be approx. \$1,8 million instead of \$1.4 M (which is 3.8%). As the costs associated with the project management have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to the PMC, the GEF contribution and the co-financing contribution must be proportional, which means that IUCN should look for ways of increasing the co-financing contribution to PMC to reach a similar level. A more definitive estimation of PMC should be presented and adjusted at CEO Endorsement stage.

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared.

2. Table C: please make explicit the government co-finance originating from the two recipient countries. Co-finance from both countries is necessary to demonstrate project buy-in.

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared

3. Table C: Please include a short description of each anticipated "investment mobilized" co-finance partner and their relevance to the project, including how the hydro-power sector is involved and specific to flooding and risks.

SH (4.22.21): Not cleared. Each source of co-finance listed as investment mobilized should be accompanied by a description comprising one or two sentences and which make clear its relevance to the project.

SH (4.26.21): Thank you. Cleared.

4. Table C: please consider if the "IUCN BRIDGE project "Building dialogue and governance around rivers" should be categories as investment mobilized?

SH (4.22.21): Refer to above comment.

SH (4.28.21): please find below three additional comments:

- Co-financing from Global Water Partnership Africa is in-kind but considered "investment mobilized". Please provide justification, where co-financing truly meets the definition of "in-kind", it should typically be classified as "recurrent expenditures" rather than "investment mobilized"

SH (4.29.2021): Cleared.

- Please use the name of the donor Agency providing the funding, and not a name of the project. For example, (i) WACA - Coastal Zone Resilience Investment Project in West Africa (donor World Bank), (ii) CLIMAFRI (donor Germany)

SH (4.29.2021): Cleared.

- Please use the correct name for "Climate Change Adaptation Fund" (correct "Adaptation Fund").

SH (4.29.2021): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN- 21 April 2021

The PMC co finance has been adjusted to fit the 4.9% and the rest of the co finance reallocated accordingly to response to the comment regarding proportional PMC co finance.

Table C has been further detailed out to include more information on the two country co finance plans as well as descriptions of the co finance mobilised by partner.

IUCN 23 April 2021

Each source of investment mobilized has been described in the relevant box in the portal.

IUCN 28 April 2021

- Addressed. All in-kind co-financing is qualified as recurrent expenditures
- Addressed

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

SH (4.8.21): Yes, however, please address review sheet comments specific to Part III - country endorsement.

Also, please note that the agency fee is within the allowed CAP, however, GEF agencies may charge a fee of up to 9.5% for GEF project/program financing up to and including USD 10 million.

SH (4.22.21): Agreed. Cleared

Agency Response

IUCN- 21 April 2021

Noted

As discussed, agency fees for agencies like IUCN is 9%.

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21): Yes, however, please address review sheet comments specific to Part III - country endorsement.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared

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

SH (4.8.21): Please note that PPG is within the allowable CAP. Please note that GEF agencies may charge a fee of up to 9.5% for GEF project/program financing up to and including USD 10 million.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared

Agency Response

Core indicators

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21): Please address the below comments:

- 1. In the PIF Core Indicator explanatory section titled “provide additional explanation of targets”: please be a bit more specific and make clear which parts of the text relate to which Core Indicator.

SH (4.22.21): Not cleared. Both the PIF Core Indicator explanatory section titled “provide additional explanation of targets” and the PIF section 6 (GEB section) states that the project will work on terrestrial protected areas management. However, no information has been entered in the PIF Core Indicator 1. Please address this issue and insure alignment across these three sections.

SH (4.26.21): Thank you. Cleared.

- 2. In the PIF Core Indicator explanatory section titled “provide additional explanation of targets”: specific to Indicator 4, please indicate the land area category that is in production and that will be more sustainably managed. Please also include details of the management practices and where possible include GIS files showing the extent to the land under sustainable land management.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared with the understanding that information will be included in the PRO DOC.

- 3. In the PIF Core Indicator explanatory section titled “provide additional explanation of targets”: specific to indicator 3 and 4, please provide either georeferenced codes or names specific to the areas being brought under improved practices and/or restored.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared with the understanding that information will be included in the PRO DOC.

4. Core indicator 11: Please provide a tentative estimate of real, direct and quantifiable (countable and verifiable) numbers of beneficiaries. This means that direct beneficiaries should be defined narrowly as those that are directly (physically/income) impacted by the project – so this would usually be participants in pilots such as communities/families living in pilot (watershed mmgt etc.), people living in floodplains (for flood early warning systems), and so on.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared with the understanding that information will be further refined during PPG.

5. Please adjust the Rio Adaptation Marker to the value “1”. The value 1 should be selected for all IW projects that has the objective of increasing adaptive management and resilience of water bodies.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN- 21 April 2021

1. Some text has been added. It mainly relates to the areas under indicators 3 and 4.
2. At this stage, this data is not available. It will be provided during the PPG phase
3. At this stage, this data is not available. It will be provided during the PPG phase. The selection of areas will also have to be the result of thorough stakeholders consultations that will be undertaken under the preparation phase.
4. Same as above. Those estimates have been provided based on knowledge of the area and expertise from the Mono Basin Authority. Those estimates will be refined during the PPG phase.
5. adjusted in text with revised numbers

IUCN 23 April 2021

An indicator has been provided for core indicator 1. Sorry for the oversight on our end when entering the portal initially.

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

SH (4.8.21):

The taxonomy need to be expanded to include, amongst other relevant categories, Theory of Change, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Influencing models, Beneficiaries, Stakeholders, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Capacity Development, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan Preparation, Strategic Action Plan Implementation.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

Taxonomy updated to respond to comment

art 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

SH (4.8.21): Cleared. The root causes and barriers section is well described.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

Noted

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21): Comments specific to the PIF baseline scenario and any associated baselines projects section:

1. Please include some context specific to the setting up of the MBA and which shows how both Benin and Togo are committed to develop and implement RBMPs.

SH (4.22.21): cleared.

2. Please also include a few pullet points explaining the likely development trajectory in the basin without GEF support. E.g. in the absence of a new GEF Project the Mono River might continue to be impacted by e.g. uncoordinated and uneven development of water-dependent sectors; national water management authorities, associated agencies and stakeholders that may not develop the capacity needed to fully implement the agreed-on SAP; development planning and decisions not based on the needed information etc.

SH (4.22.21): cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

1. Text has been added to provide more information on the MBA
2. Text has been added to demonstrate the development trajectory without GEF funding.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21):

1. Table B outputs: please refine relevant outputs to clearly indicate if and what type pilots will be conducted (e.g. pilot activities focused on advancing flood management strategies, good water and land resource management practices etc.). Also, table B should show how the project intends to deliver on Core Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural land restored (5,000 HA) and Core Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (5,000 HA). This can be done by introducing outcome and output level indicators and targets (where relevant) into table B and specific to all 3 components.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared. Note that while the ongoing COVID pandemic presents challenges in defining robust baselines and targets at PIF submission stage, during Project preparation tangible indicators and targets specific to each output should be defined.

2. Table B, Output 1.1.1: The TDA is a technical document and a minister level signature is not required. Please refine the output and consider if the MBA is better positioned to endorse the TDA.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

3. The Alternative Scenario PIF section states the following: "In addition, the project will create conditions conducive to adaptive management of ecosystems through national inter-ministerial and regional expert committees and through the development of a data and information sharing system." Please in table B create separate Outputs specific to Interministerial Committees created and/or strengthened and data sharing protocols developed and presented for endorsed. These new Outputs should then be included under the PIF component descriptions.

SH (4.22.21):

By CEO Endorsement the PRO DOC should make clear the distinct difference between the work of interministerial committees (Output 2.2.3) and Output 2.2.1 specific to the setting up of management structures for each sub-basin.

Further, GEF notes that the anticipated Output 2.2.3 will facilitate the endorsement of basin data sharing protocols. This is a key output in enabling an improved flood management systems (output 2.2.2) and in framing the work of output 1.1.3 (tools and databases developed). During PPG, the complementarities, and interdependencies between these three outputs should be made more explicit, while the anticipated pilots should be refined to support needed capacity building at various levels. Further, MBA/IUCN should consider if outputs can be merged to simplify the execution of the project.

4. please consider if some outputs can be further refined: As an example, Output 2.2.1 could read: Management structures for each sub-basin of the Mono River basin established and strengthened; Output 3.1.2 could read. Communication strategy developed and implemented etc.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

1. updated text accordingly in the PIF to respond to comment

2. output 1.1.1 has been edited to reflect the comments

3. updated text accordingly in the PIF to respond to comment

4. updated text accordingly in the PIF to respond to comment

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21): Refer to comment in review sheet part 1 box 1.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

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

SH (4.8.21): Yes, cleared.

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

SH (4.8.21):

1. PIF section 6 (GEBs): Please mention activities specific to flood management and as a means to demonstrate benefits from cooperation.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

2. PIF section 6 (GEBs): there is misalignment between the PIF Core Indicators, and the bullet points featured in PIF section 6 (GEBs). E.g. the project will address one shared water system (Mono) and not 5. Also, the PIF Core Indicators 3 and 4 add up to 10,000 HA while the GEB section mentions 45,000 HA. Please create alignment between these two sections.

SH (4.22.21):

Not cleared. The GEF Core Indicator 3.1 states 5000 hectares of degraded agricultural land restored while the PIF GEB section states 2,500 hectares of area of land restored. Also, the PIF GEB section states 2,500 hectares of terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use, but the GEF Core Indicator specific to PA created or under improved management states 0.

SH (4.26.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

PIF section 6 updated to include flood mgt

PIF section 6 updated to align indicators with Core Indicators section.

IUCN - 23 April 2021

Addressed. Core indicator 1 has been added. See above

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21): Yes, cleared. The TDA/SAP is a long term innovative process for the basin and sustainability will be strengthened via support targeted the Mono Basin Initiative and national stakeholders, while financial sustainability is enhanced via a planned resource mobilization strategy, including mobilizing for the Mono Basin Climate Investment Plan.

Agency Response

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

SH (4.8.21): Yes, cleared, however, please see comments specific to review sheet Core Indicators section.

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

SH (4.8.21):

In the PIF Stakeholders section, please provide information on which stakeholders took part in PIF development (e.g. government agencies, organizations (incl. MBC), NGOs etc.). Please also indicate how stakeholders will be engaged during project preparation and their expected roles. Finally, please make clear in the stakeholder's section that IUCN will handle all responsibilities specific to its role as implementing agency, while IUCN will not be executing any project activities.

SH (4.22.21): Not cleared. Please include information specific to which stakeholders were involved in PIF development and how they were involved. Please note that some of the text inserted under the "alignment with national priorities can be reused in the stakeholder section.

SH (4.26.21): Thank you. Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

Please find the text updated in the PIF to reflect the comment.

IUCN – 23 April 2021

This has been further elaborated in the portal.

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

SH (4.8.21): Please address the below points:

1. In the PIF gender section, please provide a minimal level of baseline information specific to the gender across key sectors targeted by the project.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

2. Please be clear in the text that a gender analysis will be completed prior to CEO endorsement. The GEF highly encourages that a draft gender action plan is developed by CEO End stage and which project stakeholders can then elaborate on further during project inception phase. Please include language to this effect.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

3. In the PIF gender section please indicate (yes/no) if the project will be 1) closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; 2) improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or generating socio-economic benefits or services for women 3) Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

SH (4.22.21): It seems the boxes were not answered. Please have a look again and indicate yes/no in the respective boxes.

SH (4.22.21): As an additional comments: under component 3 please include an output specific to the development of a gender action plan. Table B already includes outputs specific to development of a comm's and stakeholder strategy.

SH (4.26.21): Thank you. Cleared.

SH (4.28.21): please address the below additional comments:

It is well noted that the project describe plans to carry out gender analysis during the PPG phase to deepen the understanding of power dynamics in the basin and identify measures to empower/integrate women in water resources management and decision-making processes. It seems, however, that no gender dimensions related to the project context has been considered (e.g. demographics, differential impact of environmental degradation/climate change on women and men, and or related to the described barriers to be addressed by the project.) Please provide some indicative information on specific gender dimensions related to the project and complete the gender tags as appropriate.

SH (4.29.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

1. Text added to respond to comment

2. text added in PIF to respond to comment

IUCN - 28 April 2021

A paragraph has been added to the gender section of the PIF.

3. the boxes have been answered to respond to the comment

IUCN 24 April 2021

Addressed.

Addressed.

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21): In the PIF, please explain in further detail how the project plans to involve the hydropower operators specific to existing or planned damn structures? Please also be clear in the PIF that the involvement of the project with the hydropower sector is to be seen within the context of climate change, flood risk management, sust land practices, balanced sector dev, preservation of wetlands deltas etc. and not within a context of direct support to damn infrastructure projects.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

SH (4.8.21):

PIF risk section: Please include a section specific to COVID risks. In general, the PIF, in its relevant sections, need to add a minimum level of information pertaining to COVID risks and clarify if/how the projects soft/hard (pilots etc.) interventions will contribute to the short-long term “build back green” better agenda. Further, please consider including following considerations into the COVID risk analysis section:

- o Does the intervention have a plan in place to manage a possible re-instatement of COVID-19 containment measures?
- o Government capacity as human resources are mobilized elsewhere;
- o Change in capacity of other executing entities and the effectiveness of the overall project implementation arrangement;
- o Limited capacity and experience for remote work and online interactions as well as limited remote data and information access and processing capacities that projects will need to strengthen
- o Changes in project implementation timelines;
- o Changes in baseline (both ongoing and forthcoming projects);
- o Change in conditions of beneficiaries;

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

A COVID section was already included in the risk table under the risk section. This section however has been expanded upon based on the comments.

1&2. PIF coordination section – texted has been updated to respond to comment

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

SH (4.8.21): Please address the below comment:

1. The PIF Coordination section: Thank you for including a thorough and relevant description of projects and for which coordination is relevant when advancing the objective of this project. Please note that the PIF coordination section must also include an outline of the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Please include language to this effect and make sure that the boundaries between executing and implementing agencies is clearly described.

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared.

2. As part of the above exercise, please also briefly describe in the PIF Coordination section that a project steering committee will be set up and with participation from countries, MBA and other stakeholders, as relevant.

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

1. The institutional structure has been described in the revised PIF.
2. This has been also briefly described in the revised PIF

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

SH (4.8.21):

PIF section 7. Consistency with National Priorities: Thank you for detailing alignment with national priorities specific to GEF convention mandates. Please also include some indicative information specific to alignment with e.g. national flood management plans, the MBA mandate, and other relevant national strategies. This information can be expanded further at project preparation stage.

SH (4.22.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

PIF section 7 text has been edited/updated to respond to comment.

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

SH (4.8.21): Please address the below points:

1. PIF section 8 specific to KM: please be a bit more specific and hint towards outputs and synergies specific to and between the project KM and Com's strategies to be drafted during PPG and further discussed and refined as part of the project inception phase.
2. Please consider introducing text into the PIF KM section stating that the project will look for project twinning opportunities (via IW:LEARN). Twinning may be relevant specific to other West African river management institutions, but also within the context of North South learning, e.g. learning from the ICPDR in terms of hydro-power best practice guidelines and industry collaborative arrangements.
3. Specific to the anticipated work regulating the spread of aquatic plants, including water hyacinth, please ensure that relevant lessons learnt from past GEF Lake Victoria interventions is reflected upon.

SH (4.22.21): Thank you. All the above points are cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

PIF section 8 texted has been edited/updated to respond to comment

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 PIF/Work Program Inclusion

SH (4.8.21):

Preliminary ESMS Screening: in the ESMS PIF section and in the summary section of the ESMS screening itself it is stated that the

Preliminary ESMS Screening is rated as “low risk”. However, when reading through the actual ESMS Screening it is rated as “medium risk”. Please insure alignment between the ESMS screening, its summary section, and the PIF ESMS section. Further, please note that the ESMS

sub-section titled “Community health, safety and security risks” has not included any COVID-19 considerations. Please explain why COVID-19 has not been considered as part of the ESMS screening and consider amending it to include COVID-19 health risks, including within the context of the projects anticipated engagement of vulnerable communities.

SH (4.22.21): Not cleared. Thank you for the edits, however, while the PIF Risk Classification and the ESS document have been adjusted to Medium Risk, the PIF text still reads as stated below. Please adjust PIF text to read "medium Risk".

"Therefore, the project is preliminarily rated as low risk, but this will be revisited during the Full ESMS Screening."

SH (4.26.21): Cleared.

Agency Response

IUCN - 21 April 2021

The text has been updated and aligned correctly in the ESMS PIF document to respond to this comment. COVID-19 risks has been included and scored as part of the ESMS screening.

IUCN – 23 April 2021

Addressed

art 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

SH (4.8.21):

Cleared. Two LOEs have been submitted.

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

EFSEC 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

SH (4.8.21): Please address comments and resubmit.

SH (4.22.21): Please address comments and resubmit.

SH (4.28.21): Please address comments and resubmit.

SH (4.29.21): PM recommended for technical clearance.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

By CEO Endorsement the PRO DOC should make clear the distinct difference between the work of interministerial committees (Output 2.2.3) and Output 2.2.1 specific to the setting up of management structures for each sub-basin.

Further, GEF notes that the anticipated Output 2.2.3 will facilitate the endorsement of basin data sharing protocols. This is a key output in enabling an improved flood management systems (output 2.2.2) and in framing the work of output 1.1.3 (tools and databases developed). During PPG, the complementarities, and interdependencies between these three outputs should be made more explicit, while the anticipated pilots should be refined to support needed capacity building at various levels. Further, MBA/IUCN should consider if outputs can be merged to simplify the execution of the project.

While the ongoing COVID pandemic presents challenges in defining robust baselines and targets at PIF submission stage, during Project preparation tangible indicators and targets specific to each output should be developed and integrated into the PRO DOC.

Please note that by CEO Endorsement the PRO DOC should be revised to clearly state that the SAP will be signed at the level of relevant national ministers.

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

Background: The Mono River Basin is one of twenty five (25) transboundary river basins in West Africa. It covers an area of approximately 24,300 km², including 21,300 km² in Togo and 3,000 km² in Benin, corresponding respectively to 38% and 2.14% of the territory of each of the two countries. This transboundary basin is full of a rich set of ecosystems that are largely influenced by climatic diversity and wetlands such as Lake Toho and Lake Djétoé. Terrestrial ecosystems of global significance in the region include forests and savannas. In addition, the region includes riparian forests, meadows, mangroves and forest plantations, as well as specific ecosystems in protected areas that have advocated for the establishment of the Mono Transboundary Biosphere Reserve and the National Park Fazao-Malfakassa in Togo. Freshwater aquatic ecosystems are fed by three major tributaries: Ogou, Anié, Amou. Vast marine and coastal ecosystems stretch from the Mono estuary to Grand-Popo in Benin. Three Ramsar sites have been recognized in the Mono basin including Lake Toho in Benin and the Togodo protected area complex and the coast in Togo.

Scope of project: Without the project, the two countries will continue to promote uncoordinated economic development within the shared Basin. The anticipated increase in basin hydropower and agricultural activities could create more pollution and ecosystem degradation with related consequences such as erosion, salinization or flooding, if improved shared management is not put in place in the basin. There are several agricultural, water supply and livelihood development projects that will be rolled out in the region and it is critical that these are coordinated at the transboundary level. Without improved coordination of the shared water resources in the Mono basin, water-dependent sectors will continue to develop separately in Benin and Togo, impacting the quantity and quality of water resources. With reduced capacity to fully tackle issues at the transboundary level and the absence of a strong governance framework with the associated policies, legal tools and regulatory mechanisms, current issues of pollution, flooding, ecosystem degradation and unsustainable practices will persist. Likewise,

in the absence of a sound and scientific assessment at the transboundary level of the water resources in the Mono basin, decision-making processes will continue in the absence of data/information on the state of the basin. The project contains the following components:

1. Mono River Basin development assessment and planning
2. Institutional and technical capacity strengthening
3. Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Communication

Innovation and sustainability: The project is designed for Securing the integrated and sustainable wise use of water and natural resources in the Mono Basin through enhanced transboundary cooperation and governance. It will prioritize enhancing the capacity of the Mono Basin Authority, which is operational but needs to be strengthened to fully play its role in the region. Given the inexistence of a functional management framework for the Mono basin, the project will initially support the the design and approval of TDA and a SAP. Also, in order to ensure there is sustainability in the generation of global environment benefits, the proejct will support the establishment of innovative financing mechanisms for the basin. This latter element related to financing will be critical to ensure sustainability and scaling-up of practices beyond the project lifetime. It will be innovative in the sense that it will provide support to entrepreneurial activities in sectors that are considered a threat to water resources and ecosystems services in the basin. Further, sustainability is secured via the expected signed SAP, which will further strengthen the alignment of government priorities and funding with that of the Mono Basin Authority.

The project and COVID-19 considerations: The Mono Basin Authority is developing a COVID management plan which will consider the potential risks to rolling out project activities, in particular the contamination issue of rural areas that are so far less affected that urban centres in both countries. This plan will also include accompanying considerations for budget allocation needs for COVID-19 testing and travel requirements. Due to limited access for online working in certain parts of the basin, alternative methods to conducting research is being considered and reviewed. Further development of this plan will be undertaken in the PPG phase, by which time the two countries will have further COVID-19 related information (i.e. more information on vaccine roll out and potential government spending changes) to better inform strategies to mitigate the related risks to project implementation.