



Moldova Agriculture Competitiveness Project GEF Additional Financing

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10191

Countries

Moldova

Project Name

Moldova Agriculture Competitiveness Project GEF Additional Financing

Agencies

World Bank

Date received by PM

12/1/2020

Review completed by PM

1/28/2021

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Land Degradation

Project Type

FSP

PIF

CEO Endorsement

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

Thank you

Project description summary

2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

Thank you

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

Co-financing

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Not fully.

- The co-financing letter from the recipient government (Ministry of Agriculture) does not specify the co-financing amounts/types from state actors; however, Table C indicates that \$1 million is Investment mobilized and \$1 million recurrent expenses. We cannot verify this allocation in Table C without the respective information provided in the letter. Please either specify the type of co-financing or amend Table C in line with the current co-financing letter.

- Co-financing from beneficiaries should be classified as "beneficiaries" as a source, rather than private sector co-financing.

01/28/21: Comments have only been partially addressed. Co-financing from the government has been entered as type "other" in the table C but the description says "Government contributions will come as public investments during the period of 2021-2024 through and from the state forestry enterprises involved in the implementation of the project's anti-erosion shelterbelt rehabilitation activities (as confirmed in the co-financing letter dated November 25, 2011)." The type should be confirmed in the co-financing letter or by a separate communication from the counterpart (email is sufficient). Please make sure that the information provided in the letter, table C and the description are aligned.

02/10/2021: Has been corrected.

Cleared

Agency Response

2/9/2021

Thank you for your comment. The type of cofinancing for above-mentioned contribution is changed from "other" to "public investments" to reflect the nature of this contribution.

The corresponding letter from the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (last paragraph) clarifies the nature of this contribution (from State Forestry Enterprises), thus the client assumes this is sufficient.

1/26/2021

Co-financing was brought in line with the Co-financing Letter from the Moldovan authorities. The datasheet (table and text) was adjusted in line with the co-financing letter. The prior description/co-financing classification was indeed somewhat erroneous and based on very early discussions.

1.

GEF Resource Availability

5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Clarification requested.

- Table D is correct, however, the breakdown in Table B lacks proportionality in the co-financing contribution to PMC ? it should be more or less commensurate with the GEF contribution in terms of percentage. However, the agency may wish to provide justification as to why this proportionality cannot be achieved or is not necessary. Most important criteria for considering the justification is that no GEF funding dedicated to the implementation of the project components is used to cover PMC (beyond the 5% PMC); all other PMC will need to be financed out of co-financing as per GEF policy guidelines.

01/28/2021: The lack of full proportionality has been justified and accepted by the PM. It is approved with the understanding that there is sufficient co-financing to cover all management costs.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2026

In regard to the request for clarification believe proportionality of PMC, the team considers that achieving full proportionality between the share of GEF-financed PMCs and non-GEF PMCs may not be necessary. Firstly, the co-financing part contains US\$8.0 million of beneficiary contributions from which PMCs cannot be extracted. Furthermore, the PMCs on the US\$2.0 are likely to be significant, but will be institutionally intrinsic to the state agencies/enterprises that will participate in the implementation of the shelterbelt rehabilitation works, and cannot be robustly quantified and emphasized a-priori. Finally, on the US\$14.7 of IDA financing, the indicated amount represents PMCs that can be directly attributed to the proposed SLM/LDN activities, while the overall PMCs under the IDA Loan are much higher. The latter were not indicated in the GEF Datasheet, not to cause confusion and double counting. In any case, the team is well aware of the 5% requirement and intends to strongly pursue this ceiling during implementation.

Project Preparation Grant

6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: No PPG funds were requested at PIF stage.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Core indicators

7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E?

Do they remain realistic?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: No changes; Yes, targets have been discussed with proponents during QER and DM stage and remain realistic.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Part II ? Project Justification

1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. This was specifically discussed during QER and DM stage, at both stages PM participated in the meetings.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. This was specifically discussed during QER and DM stage, at both stages PM participated in the meetings.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

12/09/2020: Yes. This was specifically discussed during QER and DM stage, at both stages PM participated in the meetings.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. This was specifically discussed during QER and DM stage, at both stages PM participated in the meetings.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. This was specifically discussed during QER and DM stage, at both stages PM participated in the meetings.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. This was specifically discussed during QER and DM stage, at both stages PM participated in the meetings.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. This was specifically discussed during QER and DM stage, at both stages PM participated in the meetings.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Project Map and Coordinates

Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Child Project

If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

n/a

Agency Response

Stakeholders

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. It is also noted that this project is an additional financing of an already existing project under implementation, with ongoing involvement of all stakeholders.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Not fully.

- The agency has attached the gender analysis and action plan that describe that project gender-specific indicators has been developed. This is confirmed in the project results framework. The agency has however not ticked the box in the gender section that project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators. Please tick the box that the project includes gender-sensitive indicators.

01/28/2021: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

The gender comment was addressed and the box was ticked to indicate the existence of specific indicators

Private Sector Engagement

If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. It is also noted that this project is an additional financing of an already existing project under implementation, with ongoing involvement of the private sector as a stakeholder.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. Project also addressed COVID-19 risks and opportunities during QER and DM stage.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Coordination

Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. It is also noted that FAO is implementing a GEF LD project in parallel, which works on the enabling framework for UNCCD implementation.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed ?Knowledge Management Approach? for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

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

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Monitoring and Evaluation

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Benefits

Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Yes. GEFSEC comments made at QER and DM stage were taken into account. Responses to GEFSEC comments at that stage are also recorded in the minutes of the Decision Meeting on file.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: Have been adequately responded to and responses are recorded in the portal.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: No PPG funds were requested.

Cleared

Agency Response

1/26/2021

thank you

Calendar of expected reflows (if NGI is used)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request Have been provided.

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 CEO Endorsement Request

n/a

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO endorsement recommended? (applies only to projects and child projects)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

12/09/2020: No. Please address comments made in this review.

01/28/2021: No. One outstanding comment on co-financing to be addressed.

02/10/2021: Yes. Program Manager recommends CEO endorsement.

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	12/9/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)	1/28/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	2/10/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

The WB/GEF project (GEF ID 10191), "Moldova Agriculture Competitiveness Project GEF Additional Financing", will enhance the competitiveness of the country's agri-food sector by supporting the modernization of the food safety management system, facilitating market access for farmers, and mainstreaming agro-environmental and sustainable land management (SLM) practices. GEF financing will support scaling up of baseline SLM activities with the aim of combating land degradation and increasing land productivity. The project is fully aligned with the GEF-7 Land Degradation Strategy along the cross-cutting objective of harnessing private capital and expertise to finance SLM investments. It makes a further push on private sector engagement in switching towards SLM practices and technologies, solid co-financing investments, and actively participating in knowledge sharing and dissemination programs. The project will generate Global Environmental Benefits by bringing 100,000 hectares under SLM, restoring 2,000 hectares of degraded land, and thereby sequestering 390,000 tCO₂e.

The project is fully in line with the objectives under the Land Degradation Focal Area to support scaling up of activities aimed at strengthening the enabling environment, generating and sharing knowledge, and mainstreaming SLM practices, and the broader soil protection, conservation and ultimately implementing the UNCCD LDN agenda. The government takes strong ownership of this project and has highlighted the strong incremental value and importance of GEF resources in advancing the country's SLM and LDN agendas through approaches that stimulate innovation and knowledge sharing, while also creating synergies between public and private actors for garnering greater financing volumes and impact.

In order to mitigate risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to environmental and social safeguards activities, the ESMF contains specific World Bank mandated guidance on the implementation of all project activities. The agency has also established processes that will ensure taking account of all opportunities arising from government efforts to build back better.