



REQUEST FOR CEO ENDORSEMENT

PROJECT TYPE: Full-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

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PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Strengthening of governance for the protection of biodiversity through the formulation and implementation of the National Strategy on Invasive Alien Species			
Country(ies):	Argentina	GEF Project ID: ¹	4768
GEF Agency(ies):	FAO (select) (select)	GEF Agency Project ID:	615690
Other Executing Partner(s):		Submission Date:	November 24, 2014
GEF Focal Area (s):	(Select)	Project Duration(Months)	48
Name of Parent Program (if applicable):		Project Agency Fee (\$):	387,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For SFM/REDD+ <input type="checkbox"/> ➤ For SGP <input type="checkbox"/> ➤ For PPP <input type="checkbox"/> 		

A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK²

Focal Area Objectives	Expected FA Outcomes	Expected FA Outputs	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Cofinancing (\$)
(select) BD-2	2.3: Improved management frameworks to prevent, control and manage invasive alien species. Indicator 2.3: IAS management framework operational score as recorded by the GEF tracking tool.	Output 2.1. Policies and regulatory frameworks (number).	GEF TF	3,870,000	18,247,901
Total project costs				3,870,000	18,247,901

B. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective: to strengthened the governance framework across the country to allow for an effective protection of biodiversity against the impacts of Invasive Alien Species (IAS).						
Project Component	Grant Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Confirmed Cofinancing (\$)
1. Strengthening institutional capacities at the national and provincial levels for managing IAS	TA	1.1: Increased effectiveness for protecting biodiversity, sensitive ecosystems, health and the economy at the national level by managing the IAS problem	Output 1.1.1: The national information system on IAS includes updated information Targets: a) 150 scientists, technicians and naturalists registered and active as information providers in seven COFEMA regions; b) 9300 occurrence sites registered; c) 240 registered specialists; d) 120	GEF TF	1,012,520	3,075,962

¹ Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC.

² Refer to the Focal Area Results Framework and LDCF/SCCF Framework when completing Table A.

		<p>Targets: a) coordinated risk analysis and border control mechanisms agreed upon and, after enactment of the pertinent regulations, 100% of requests for introducing IAS will have been duly analyzed by the system; b) early detection and immediate action systems implemented in at least 25% of the National Parks and in five provincial protected areas (PA) across the country, and at ports on the Atlantic coastline; c) IAS management strategies included in the annual operations plans (POAs) of at least 25% of the country's protected areas; and d) Score of 11/15 obtained in the GEF Tracking Tool (Part VI on IAS, questions 1,2, 4, 5)</p>	<p>registered projects; and e) no less than 1400 annual visits consulting the database at the end of the project.</p> <p>Output 1.1.2: Official list of IAS present in the country duly defined, and organized into categories. Target: One official IAS list</p> <p>Output 1.1.3: National IAS Strategy – guiding document to coordinate actions on communication and education, prevention, early detection and rapid response, priority setting, control and eradication. Target: National IAS Strategy signed by national and provincial authorities</p> <p>Output 1.1.3.a: Strategy for preventing the introduction of IAS in Argentina Targets: A strategy including: a) List classifying the main vectors for IAS introduction and dispersal pathways in the country; b) Risk analysis system and protocols adjusted to include alien Species of aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates and plants, and two SAyDS technicians trained in their use; c) 30 technicians trained in border control of IAS introduction; d) Adjustment of regulations on the introduction and use of alien species endorsed by CFEEI; and e) Two (2) voluntary codes of conduct (for Botanical Gardens and vets and pet shops).</p> <p>Output 1.1.3.b: Systems and protocols for early detection and rapid response developed and implemented for national and provincial Protected Areas (PAs). Targets: a) At least 15 PAs have early detection and rapid response systems and protocols in place and operational; and b) At least</p>			
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			<p>80 conservation agents, including park rangers, trained in early detection, rapid response, control and eradication techniques.</p> <p>Output 1.1.3.c: Prioritization, control and eradication systems for national and provincial Protected Areas (PAs), developed and implemented. Targets: a) At least 15 PAs have prioritization, control and eradication systems in place and operational; and b) At least 80 conservation agents, including park rangers, trained in prioritization, control and/or eradication techniques for IAS linked to ecosystem restoration, composition and resilience.</p> <p>Output 1.1.4: Knowledge and perception on IAS and the National IAS Strategy increased by the end of the project through the implementation of a communication strategy (particularly supporting the six pilot programmes, Outputs 3.2.1-6). Targets: Communication strategy implemented through communication measures</p>			
2. Strengthening regulatory frameworks and funding mechanisms in support of the implementation of the National IAS Strategy	TA	<p>2.1: Legal, regulatory and financial frameworks at the national and provincial levels harmonized and support an efficient implementation of the National IAS Strategy. Target: Score of 3/6 obtained in the GEF Tracking Tool (Part VI on IAS, question 3)</p>	<p>Output 2.1.1: IAS regulatory frameworks harmonized among jurisdictions and sectors (agriculture, forestry, fish farming, tourism, health, foreign trade, transport and environment) Targets: a) Harmonized regulatory frameworks in eight sectors; and b) 150 Judiciary and Public Ministry staff trained in IAS regulations.</p> <p>Output 2.1.2: Financing mechanisms for the National IAS Strategy developed Target: At least 1 (one) mechanism agreed upon and developed (PES Fund, environmental risk insurance or charge for IAS, inclusion of good</p>	GEF TF	163,013	386,067

			<p>prevention practices for IAS in FSC certifications, organic fish farming, environmentally-friendly tourism or CSR schemes).</p> <p>Output 2.1.3: Law on minimum IAS standards and budgets developed in a participatory manner, and proposed to Congress. Target: Law on minimum standards and budget proposed to Congress.</p> <p>Output 2.1.4: The Ministers' Agenda of MERCOSUR Sub-Working Group 6 on the Environment include the IAS topic. Target: IAS included in the agenda</p>			
3. Validation and implementation of protocols for controlling IAS, prioritized by taxonomic categories and ecosystems, included in the National IAS Strategy	Inv	<p>3.1: Coastal and marine ecosystems protected against invasive alien species through early detection and rapid response measures. Target: score of 3/5 obtained in the GEF Tracking Tool (Part VI, question 5)</p> <p>3.2: Recovery in progress of ecosystems and biodiversity highly or potentially affected by six IAS, and risks for health and the forestry and farming sectors mitigated, by applying containment and/or eradication</p>	<p>Output 3.1.1: Knowledge on IAS present at ports and the surrounding areas along the Atlantic Ocean coastline of Argentina, completed; and early detection, dispersal prevention and rapid action system for managing new invasions in implementation. Targets: a) Taxonomic lists updated and completed including IAS present in at least three ports along the Atlantic Ocean coast; and b) Early detection system and monitoring and rapid response protocol adopted by at least three ports.</p> <p>Output 3.2.1: Competent authorities and the population at large are informed through a communication strategy on the risks related to the spread of the red-bellied tree squirrel and other species used as pets (in coordination with ECCP , Output 1.1.4). Target : a) 70% of the competent authorities and the population of the selected location and rural area of influence, will be aware</p>	GEF TF	960,120	9,440,544

		<p>protocols. Targets: a) 3-6 containment, control or eradication protocols for IAS prove their effectiveness through ecosystem and biodiversity recovery indicators on xx hectares (baseline and goals established in year 1); b) Score of 24/48 obtained in GEF Tracking Tool (Part VI, question 6); and c) adjustment of the National IAS Strategy and its implementation based on six reports on lessons learnt from pilot IAS control programmes.</p>	<p>of the negative impact of squirrels and support their control; and b) 1 (one) SAYDS resolution and 3 (three) provincial</p> <p>Output 3.2.2: The invasion of the didymo alga detained in areas of high conservation value in the provinces of Rio Negro, Neuquen, and Chubut. Target: The risk of Didymo algae invasion in at least 10 areas of high conservation value is mitigated through measures for voluntary cleaning of fishing gear in 20 municipalities of the affected area and dissemination activities (coordinated with the ECCP, Output 1.1.4)</p> <p>Output 3.2.3: Control of the tamarisk species and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem services in two natural protected areas (Ramsar sites at the Guanacache, Desaguadero and Del Bebedero lakes and at Laguna de Llanquanelo lake) of high conservation value in the Cuyo region. Target: Control of tamarisks and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem services on 180 hectares (90 hectares in Laguna de Llanquanelo Lake and 90 hectares in the Guanacache, Desaguadero and Del Bebedero lakes)</p> <p>Output 3.2.4: Diversity of amphibians in Argentina's wetlands protected against the invasion of bullfrogs, by implementing a national strategy for managing bullfrogs. Target: National Strategy in implementation including: a) 100% of active and inactive farms and distribution of bullfrogs across the country surveyed; b) A proposal on supplementing the regulations governing bullfrog farms; c)</p>			
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			<p>control protocols validated; and d) a communication strategy coordinated with the ECCP, Output 1.1.4</p> <p>Output 3.1.5: Biodiversity in the Paranaense jungle protected vis-à-vis the invasion of the Giant African Snail, by applying control and eradication measures, together with public health measures related to this IAS. Target: Density and distribution of snails reduced by at least 25% compared to the baseline to be established at pilot programme start-up, applying control, eradication and communication measures (coordinated with the ECCP, Output 1.1.4)</p> <p>Output 3.1.6: Recovery of native forest vegetation species in Northwest Argentina (NOA) and of the livelihood of the Ocloya indigenous community, dependent on these native forests, by reducing the density and the area affected by the invasion of glossy privet Target: At least 20 hectares under glossy privet control, resulting in a reduction of at least 50% in the density of glossy privet and assisted restoration with at least 1500 native plants, planted with community and gender participation approach.</p>			
4. Development of the Pilot Programme for eradication of the American Beavers in Tierra del Fuego Province, based on governance of IAS	Inv	4.1: Native forest and peat bog ecosystems under effective control of the American beavers in Tierra del Fuego (TDF), and affected or endangered biodiversity in recovery. Targets: a) 121,280 hectares free from beavers; b) Benthic microhabitats in	Output 4.1.1: Governance and management structure for the beaver control and eradication Programme, developed and operational Targets: a) An Inter-Institutional Committee for the programme's Governance and Management in place, holding at least two meetings a year, and a Governance and Management System for the eradication pilot programme adopted by the Committee; b) Team for managing the programme	GEF TF	1,371,774	4,436,746

		<p>basin watercourses freed from beavers, recovered to similar conditions as those watercourses not affected by beavers; c) Less organic matter in the sediments of watercourse beds in the basins freed from beavers; d) Streams in the Mimica River area and its surroundings recover their structure to become salmon spawning beds again; and e) Assisted recovery of lenga trees (<i>Nothofagus pumilio</i>), cherry trees and Antarctic beeches (<i>Nothofagus Antarctica</i>) in progress in areas affected but not flooded by beavers (Annex 7.g)</p>	<p>established and operational; and c) social participation group in place and operating.</p> <p>Output 4.1.2: Operational Plans and Eradication Protocols (POE) for each of the Demonstration Units (DU), under different property regimes and invasion levels: 1) three DUs for eradication in private property lands; 2) three DUs for eradication in Protected Areas; and 3) one DU for eradication in mixed private-public property land.</p> <p>Targets: 7 POE for DUs including: a) inter-institutional agreements and agreements with other stakeholders for the implementation of the Plan; b) baseline on beaver population density in DUs and level of degradation of the ecosystem; c) biodiversity recovery indicators (forest, grassland, and physical structure of riverbeds) for monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of the Plans</p> <p>Output 4.1.3: Capacities strengthened for managing and eradicating beavers, including human resources and instruments for planning, implementation and monitoring.</p> <p>Targets: a) 150 officials from provincial institutions, the authorities and private land owners, forestry, oil and livestock sectors have the capacity to support POE implementation (trainees must obtain an average score of 75% in the final test); and b) Geographic Information System (GIS) and beaver population density maps for TDF developed, particularly for the DUs.</p> <p>Output 4.1.4: Trappers, hunters and supervisors have the appropriate capacities for the</p>			
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			<p>effective application of eradication protocols. Target: 150 – 300 trappers, hunters and supervisors trained in protocol application (trainees should obtain an average score of 75% in the final test)</p> <p>Output 4.1.5: POEs implemented in DUs. Target: 7 POEs implemented in seven DUs</p> <p>Output 4.1.6: Permanent systems for control, monitoring and prevention of re-invasion established including: bio-security plan; systematic monitoring of ecosystem recovery indicators (see Outcome 4.1); and sustainable funding. Targets: a) At least 160 persons trained in bio-security and monitoring of re-invasion; b) Database on actions of the Bio-security Plan for the whole Pilot Programme; and c) 121,280 hectares in 7 DUs under permanent control, monitoring and prevention of re-invasion, keeping beaver population at a level with no adverse impacts on the native forest and peat bog ecosystems.</p> <p>Output 4.1.7: Increased knowledge and understanding of the TDF population on beaver invasion and the control measures at the end of Project through the implementation of a communication strategy. Target: a) Brochures and webpage on the eradication pilot programme prepared; and b) Lessons learnt and outcomes of the Beaver Pilot Programme, systematized and published.</p> <p>Output 4.2.1: Chile and Argentina exchange experiences and coordinate the learning process on the Pilot Programmes on control</p>			
		4.2: Bi-national beaver eradication programme in implementation (at				

		<p>least in the Argentine territory of Tierra del Fuego) Target: Bi-national beaver eradication programme in implementation within two to five years after completion of the pilot projects in each country.</p>	<p>and eradication, which processes will also inform the National IAS Strategy. Target: a) Three (3) bi-national workshops to exchange experiences and coordinate the pilot learning process; and b) One (1) national workshop for providing feedback to the National IAS Strategy.</p> <p>Output 4.2.2: Governance framework and Bi-national beaver eradication programme agreed upon. Target: At least two bi-national workshops will have led to an agreement on the Governance Framework and Bi-national Programme.</p>			
5.Project monitoring and evaluation and information dissemination	(select)	<p>5.1 The implementation of the project is based on results-based management and results and lessons learned are applied in future operations. Target: The outcomes of the project are achieved and sustained</p>	<p>Output 5.1.1: Project monitoring system operational, providing systematic information on progress in achieving Project outcomes and outputs. Target: Eight (8) semi-annual Project Progress Reports (PPR).</p> <p>Output 5.1.2: Mid-term and final evaluations Target: Two (2) evaluation reports</p> <p>Output 5.1.3: Good practices and lessons learnt from the Project disseminated Target: Good practices and lessons learnt from the Project disseminated</p>	GEF TF	134,266	158,582
Subtotal					3,641,693	17,497,901
Project management Cost (PMC) ³				GEF TF	228,307	750000
Total project costs					3,870,000	18,247,901

³ PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project grant amount in Table D below.

C. SOURCES OF CONFIRMED COFINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME (\$)

Please include letters confirming cofinancing for the project with this form

Co-financing Sources	Name of co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Amount (\$)
National Government	SAyDS	Grant	1,800,000
National Government	SAyDS	In kind	575,000
National Government	CONICET	Grant	196,082
National Government	CONICET	In kind	607,600
National Government	INTA	In kind	83,000
National Government	SENASA	In kind	176,900
National Government	CUDAP	Grant	8,417,774
National Government	APN	Grant	335,588
National Government	PNA	In kind	294,118
Provincial Government	Mendoza	In kind	901,961
Provincial Government	Buenos Aires	Grant	4,282
Provincial Government	Buenos Aires	In kind	74,118
Provincial Government	Chubut	Grant	1,948,490
Provincial Government	Chubut	In kind	20,588
Provincial Government	Jujuy	Grant	13,835
Provincial Government	Jujuy	In kind	155,882
Provincial Government	Misiones	Grant	12,098
Provincial Government	Misiones	In kind	172,588
Provincial Government	Río Negro	Grant	5,588
Provincial Government	Río Negro	In kind	20,000
Provincial Government	Tierra del Fuego	Grant	928,318
Provincial Government	Tierra del Fuego	In kind	1,254,091
Implementing Agency	FAO	Grant	50,000
Implementing Agency	FAO	In kind	200,000
Total Co-financing			18,247,901

D. TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA AND COUNTRY¹

GEF Agency	Type of Trust Fund	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	(in \$)		
				Grant Amount (a)	Agency Fee (b) ²	Total c=a+b
FAO	GEF TF	Biodiversity	Argentina	3,870,000	387,000	4,257,000
Total Grant Resources				3,870,000	387,000	4,257,000

¹ In case of a single focal area, single country, single GEF Agency project, and single trust fund project, no need to provide information for this table. PMC amount from Table B should be included proportionately to the focal area amount in this table.

² Indicate fees related to this project.

F. CONSULTANTS WORKING FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPONENTS:

Component	Grant Amount (\$)	Cofinancing (\$)	Project Total (\$)
International Consultants	19,200	0	19,200
National/Local Consultants	1,004,814	2,000,000	3,004,814

G. DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A “NON-GRANT” INSTRUMENT? NO

(If non-grant instruments are used, provide in Annex D an indicative calendar of expected reflows to your Agency and to the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Trust Fund).

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

A. DESCRIBE ANY CHANGES IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE PROJECT DESIGN OF THE ORIGINAL PIF⁴

A.1 National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NCSA, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, Biennial Update Reports, etc.

As in PIF see section 1.1.5.b in FAO Project document

A.2. GEF focal area and/or fund(s) strategies, eligibility criteria and priorities.

As in PIF see section 1.1.5.c in FAO Project document

A.3 The GEF Agency’s comparative advantage:

As in PIF see section 1.1.2 in FAO Project document

A.4. The baseline project and the problem that it seeks to address:

The baseline project and barriers that the project seeks to address have been further analyzed and detailed during the full project preparation. Please see the FAO-GEF Project Document section 1.1.1 a) *Baseline initiatives, programmes/projects and investments for the next 3-5 to address the threats and impacts of IAS on globally important biodiversity and ecosystems*

Remaining barriers to be addressed by the Project

Lack of analysis and information on the socio-economic costs and the impact on native biodiversity of IAS in the different sectors: tourism, trade, production and administration. This barrier leads to an absence of a strong incentive to move progress in the development and implementation of the National IAS Strategy, and also the generation of a harmonized regulatory framework that can prevent the entry of IAS, provide for early detection and rapid response, control and eradication, of priority IAS in accordance with the importance of their impact.

A wealth of information on IAS, however disperse and not easily accessible. A barrier to overcome for the integration of information into databases and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) at the provincial level, is the willingness to share information and generate shared analysis, since currently this information is spread among different institutions, depending on the provinces or administration sectors. The academic and technical sectors do not participate actively in providing information to the InBiAr, among other reasons, because they distrust that its origin will be duly accredited. Furthermore, InBiAr does not have a validation system for the information it includes. In this regard, there is

⁴ For questions A.1 –A.7 in Part II, if there are no changes since PIF and if not specifically requested in the review sheet at PIF stage, then no need to respond, please enter “NA” after the respective question.

a lack of coordination and linkage of the rich information existing in the network, and it is not easily available for decision-makers and those responsible for managing IAS.

The lack of a National IAS Strategy disables the management of the complex IAS issue given its cross-cutting nature across sectors and geographic borders. While progress has been made with regard to certain legal and regulatory instruments and valuable information databases, there is no coordination and harmonization of these instruments among sectors and between the national and provincial government levels. Furthermore, the lack of an official list of Invasive Alien Species already introduced in the country (classified by risk), and a consistent National IAS Strategy also leads to a lack of prioritization of resources and actions related to the control of IAS already established in the country.

Lack of knowledge on the IAS issue and capacity to apply instruments to prevent their introduction, including risk analysis, border control systems, and early detection and action, which should ideally be based on an official list classifying IAS according to their potential risk. The staff of maritime agencies, certain port administrations, and national and provincial parks have little or no knowledge on such instruments and their application, including measures for managing ballast water as an important IAS vector which must be systematically managed to avoid entry of IAS.

Lack of communication and awareness-raising on the problem of IAS resulting in low or no collaboration from several stakeholders that may cause unintended introduction of IAS or could play an important role in early detection and rapid response. The main barrier for containing the spread of some species is related to their charming (charismatic) appearance which leads to the ungrounded assumptions of a harmless animal whose release would entail no negative environmental risks, or need for control actions in once released. Other shortcomings in communication include: i) dissemination by experts, scientists and academia of their research findings through other means than the mass media, with a language that is not fully accessible for the public at large; ii) journalistic communication is sporadic, erratic and subject to mass media agendas; iii) communication by mass media does not use specific terminology consistently, which leads to confusion and can generate ungrounded social resistance; (there is no proper use of the terms, *pest species*, *invasive species*, and how these relate to *native* and *non-native species*). During the design stage, no study was identified on social perception and knowledge of IAS. Having real, direct information with regard to what society knows, understands and perceives as a problem is a very important input for designing a communication and awareness-raising strategy.

Disintegrated Regulatory framework, non-systematized and incomplete at the national and provincial levels leads to little efficiency and effectiveness at the aggregate level in the actions of stakeholders in relation to IAS issues. The current regulatory framework considers the topic in a fragmented manner and lacks a strategic approach. For instance, the many different institutions with jurisdiction in this matter granting authorization to introduce IAS or relocate them internally, have procedures in which there is no intervention of the competent environmental authorities and in which -historically speaking- production objectives have prevailed without considering potential environmental threats. The legal framework has no appropriate specific provisions for control, containment and eradication so as to guide decision making and the actions of competent authorities. Additionally, there are certain loopholes in the regulations on, for instance, flora -ornamental plants-, with regard to internal movements in the country of alien species already established in given areas which could be invasive in others, bearing in mind that the country hosts a considerable number of different eco-regions.

Lack of a National Law on Minimum Standards and budget for managing IAS is a very important barrier related to the autonomy of the provinces in natural resource management, and the low level of allocation of resources for managing IAS.

Lack of prioritization and control and eradication of IAS already introduced and established in the country. While there is good knowledge of IAS already introduced and established, there are only a few experiences, programmes and protocols for their management, control and ultimate eradication. Furthermore, since these actions can be costly, the lack of species prioritization (based on clear criteria as regards their impact and risk for society, ecosystems and native biodiversity) is an important barrier for action.

The beaver problem is well known and has been studied but there is still **a need for capacity-building and formulation of a realistic bi-national programme for eradication and restoration.** This programme must be outlined within a bi-national process in the framework of the Bi-national Agreement and PEB. It must also be based on specific experiences on eradication methodologies and cost-effectiveness in different ecosystems and land tenure regimes, with the involvement of different actors. Finally, the lack of a financing strategy and plan is preventing moving from control pilots to the full eradication process.

A. 5. Incremental /Additional cost reasoning: describe the incremental (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or additional (LDCF/SCCF) activities requested for GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF financing and the associated global environmental benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or associated adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF) to be delivered by the project:

Taking into account the above-mentioned barriers, continuity of the current situation will increase the risk and threats on biodiversity due to the introduction of IAS, as well as the impacts of their establishment and dispersal, increasing the vulnerability of ecosystems, including those areas with globally important biodiversity.

The co-financing and the incremental GEF financing will contribute to remove the above barriers and, likewise, move ahead with national and international commitments on IAS governance by developing and implementing a National IAS Strategy. This National Strategy will get feedback from and be supplemented by control and management pilot programmes on IAS prioritized due to their very harmful impacts, and by an eradication experience of the American Beaver in Tierra del Fuego. With the above, plus capacity-building and the reinforcement of the policy and regulatory framework, incremental benefits will be achieved to improve IAS governance and management, offering lessons learnt at the National, Regional and Global levels. With a view to achieving this incremental impact, the project is organized in four technical components under the following incremental reasoning:

Component 1: Strengthening institutional capacities at the national and provincial levels for IAS management. As an incremental contribution, the project will finance the uploading into InBiAr of updated information and knowledge generated by national universities and research institutes (CONICET), and by the authorities of the national and provincial parks on IAS spread, impact and management actions. Furthermore, it will support the creation of a national information network on IAS and appropriate mechanisms for effective access to and use of such information. Since InBiAr is interconnected with IABIN and follows standards compatible with GIDS, IUCN, GISIN and GIASIP, this incremental investment not only helps to solve specific IAS management problems in the country, but also offers information to reduce the impact of IAS on biodiversity at the regional and global levels. Better information will also lead to establishing a national IAS category-based list, according to the risk posed by each species. The categories and criteria for inclusion of IAS on the list in each category will be decided seeking consensus with all sectores influenced by the IAS problematic.

Besides the investment to be made by several central and provincial governments, under the leadership of SAyDS, GEF resources will be invested in workshops to formulate the National IAS Strategy, the core output of this project, through a process of participatory consensus, and based on the notions established in the National Biodiversity Strategy. The National IAS Strategy will consists of a guiding document and the project will support coordination of actions related to communication and education, prevention, early detection and rapid response, priority setting, control and eradication.

The National IAS Strategy will be prepared in agreement with and will be signed by the Government of Argentina (GoA), provincial governments (GoP) and key institutions across the country. Moreover, GEF resources will be used in support of training courses in the application of instruments to be developed as part of the National IAS Strategy, including instruments for prevention, early detection and rapid response, prioritization, control and eradication. Finally, support will be provided to a study on social perceptions so as to define communication strategies for raising awareness on IAS impacts and management instruments, and the production of documentary spots for radio and television. Having a National IAS Strategy, reinforced capacities and a communication strategy for its implementation is essential to move ahead in managing IAS in Argentina, in a coordinated and comprehensive manner, offering a better protection vis-à-vis IAS threats to native biodiversity and ecosystems of global importance.

Component 2: Strengthening regulatory frameworks and funding mechanisms in support of the implementation of the National IAS Strategy. GEF incremental contributions will support the establishment of a participatory consultation mechanism to harmonize existing regulatory frameworks, generate instruments to fill loopholes, and provide technical assistance to include criteria for managing IAS in sector-based regulations. These criteria will be based on the precautionary principle supported by category-based list of IAS, according to their potential impact, risk analysis and early warning systems. The provincial and national governments will work jointly at legislative and judicial levels. Technical assistance will also be funded to formulate a bill for a law on Minimum Standards and budgets for IAS management, which will be the guiding rule for the whole country (beyond the provincial independence granted by the central government) opening the possibility of establishing financial mechanisms in support of the National IAS Strategy. Finally the project will also support the integration of the IAS problematic in the MERCOSUR agenda, particularly at the ordinary meetings of Sub-Working Group No. 6 on the Environment.

Component 3: Validation and implementation of protocols for controlling IAS, prioritized by taxonomy categories and ecosystems, included in the National IAS Strategy. To move ahead in controlling IAS already introduced and established in the country, and as part of the validation and adaptation of the National IAS Strategy, the project will support the implementation of protocols for managing six priority-IAS, due to their socio-economic impact and effect on native biodiversity of global importance: the red-bellied tree squirrel, didymo algae, tamarisks, bullfrogs, African snails and glossy privets. GEF incremental resources will be used to finance technical assistance, consultation, information sharing and training workshops for the local population, and small teams for control purposes. This will be provided apart from the above-described baseline financing already invested in the control of didymo algae and African snails, to increase the number of well-established IAS in Argentina under control and, if possible, to eradicate them, and thus have additional experiences and improve recovery of biodiversity and vulnerable ecosystems.

Component 4: Development of the Pilot Programme for eradication of the American Beavers in Tierra del Fuego Province based on the governance of Invasive Alien Species. As an incremental contribution to the bi-national baseline for beaver control and eradication, technical assistance will be financed for planning beaver eradication in demonstration units, representing different ecosystems and land tenure modalities. The project will also fund training workshops, participation and planning, local transport and clothing, tents and sleeping bags for the cold weather of Patagonia. The purpose is to identify cost-efficient methodologies for eradicating, monitoring and preventing re-invasion, and to identify effective practices in support of the restoration of ecosystems and riparian *Nothofagus* forests. This GEF contribution, together with a similar contribution on Chilean territory (Project GoC/FAO/GEF ID 5506), will be a catalyst in the bi-national process to formulate a bi-national programme for beaver eradication and restoration of the ecosystems based on the capacities built in the demonstration units.

A.6 Risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and measures that address these risks:

The risk analysis for the success of the project has been further developed during the full project preparation and mitigation measures have been incorporated in the project design as per the below table.

RISKS	(LOW MEDIUM HIGH)	MITIGATION MEASURES
Component No. 1 Strengthening institutional capacities at the national and provincial levels for managing IAS		
Sub-component 1.1.1 National information system on IAS		
Scarce participation of specialists in providing data for the information system	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commitment of scientific associations to foster the participation of their members through regular information bulletins. - Participation in scientific congresses to facilitate communication among specialists. - Explicit recognition of the source of data and research results in the information system (each datum linked to its provider)
Information system not maintained in the long term	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of maintenance costs, by hosting the system on the SAyDS website. - Management of the database within the <i>Universidad Nacional del Sur</i>, formalizing the institutional commitment through a letter of agreement.
Sub-component 1.1.2. Official IAS list		
Conflicts with productive sectors due to the inclusion of economically significant species on the official IAS list.	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of categories allowing the controlled use of species when the environmental and socio-economic impact can be reduced to acceptable levels.
Sub-component 1.1.3.a National IAS Strategy, chapter on Prevention of IAS introduction		
Difficulties to identify IAS at checkpoints/entrance points.	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a network of experts in taxonomy who can be consulted to confirm species identification (see Sub-component 1.1.3.b) - Training courses
Operational difficulties of control agencies to include IAS monitoring among their responsibilities.	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting of a protocol to allow the identification of the most risky vectors and organisms.
Sub-component 1.1.3.b National IAS Strategy, chapter on Systems and Protocols for early detection and rapid response		
Sub-component 1.1.3.c National IAS Strategy, chapter on prioritization, control and eradication systems for national and provincial Protected Areas		
Difficulties of staff to attend training sessions	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training course/s delivered in the different regions. - Adjustment of training material for distance learning and posting on the SAyDS website. - Generation and dissemination of a written protocol (handbook) for reaching out to staff that cannot participate in the courses
Sub-component 1.1.4. Communication strategy for the National IAS Strategy		
“Noises” in communication and problems in circulating information, and lack of communication among institutional actors	L/M	Federal information system linked to the Federal IAS Network and to the national working group.
Weakening in the long term of the	L/M	Ongoing work to install the topic within COFEMA

RISKS	(LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	MITIGATION MEASURES
provinces' commitment or agreements as regards communication		
Social resistance with respect to the implementation of containment and/or eradication pilot programmes (e.g. problems with "charismatic" species or management/hunting tools)	M (depending on each pilot programme)	Strategy including information and awareness raising on the IAS and its impacts – can reduce propagation of this resistance although it will be difficult to reverse the opinion of the sectors that ideologically do not accept something, for instance, the selected management tool.
Low level of participation of civil society agencies.	L	Reinforce actions foreseen for this group. Evaluate the possibility for providing incentives.
Under-estimation of the problem by teachers and, consequently, lack of understanding and work on the topic in classrooms.	L	Consider an incentives' programme through a national competition rewarding the best classwork on IAS and a study tour to pilot programme areas.
Component No. 2 Strengthening regulatory frameworks and financing mechanisms in support of the National IAS Strategy implementation		
Lack of coordination among relevant institutional actors, using different approaches and strategies; contradictory actions and resource overlapping.	M	Set up a federal network on IAS and a National Working Group as coordination mechanisms, and facilitate regional coordination bodies within COFEMA.
Lack of involvement of the private sector for funding the National IAS Strategy.	L	Joint work with the private sector and civil society, workshops, communication strategy, publications, design of financing mechanisms in regulatory instruments.
Lack of inclusion of the IAS topic on the public and legislative agenda, lack of consensus for a Law on Minimum Standards.	M	Regional and national workshops with relevant actors for consensus-building, workshops with legislators, communication strategy, publications
Lack of inclusion of the IAS topic on the MERCOSUR public agenda.	L	Argentina to promote a MERCOSUR workshop on IAS.
Component No. 3 Validation and implementation of protocols for controlling IAS, prioritized by taxonomic categories and ecosystems, included in the National IAS Strategy		
Sub-component 3.1.1 System for IAS early detection, dispersal prevention and rapid response at ports and surrounding areas		
Difficulties for detecting species in low-density areas	H	- Analyze bio-physical variables for detecting critical points at which chances of establishment of IAS are higher.

RISKS	(LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	MITIGATION MEASURES
Difficulties for identifying any detected marine species.	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up a network of taxonomy experts - Foster lines of research in the taxonomy of marine organisms. - Train provincial and third-sector organization technicians, farmer organizations, etc. - Dissemination campaigns on emblematic species.
Sub-component 3.2.1. Pilot on red-bellied tree squirrels and other potential IAS used as pets		
Resistance of pet shops to disseminate contents that could discourage purchase of wild animals.	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with trader chambers and vet associations, promote adoption of voluntary codes of conduct including information to customers on responsible possession of these species and the risk of releasing them, list of low-risk species, etc. - Awareness-raising and massive dissemination campaign.
Resistance of groups that defend animal rights to any information highlighting negative aspects of the species	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold meetings with group representatives and explain concern about the impact of the species on wild fauna. - Awareness-raising and massive dissemination campaign.
Sub-component 3.2.2 Pilot for Didymo Algae in Río Negro, Neuquén, and Chubut provinces		
Lack of implementation or failure in self-cleaning actions by sports fishermen.	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out intensive communication and oversight campaigns. - Strengthen local authorities in prevention matters.
Failure in detecting blooming algae as early as required to allow for control actions.	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generate a telephone or web reporting system, etc, on algae blooming, supported by outreach campaign. - Inform conservation agents about the characteristics of algae blooming.
Existence of other important spread vectors, besides fishing and navigation gear (water used to fight forest fires, fish farming, wild fauna, livestock)	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intensify research work aimed at identifying and managing these vectors.
Sub-component 3.2.3. Pilot on tamarisks (salt cedars) in the Cuyo region		
Invasion of cleaned areas and/or re-invasion from nearby outbreaks.	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement monitoring and repetitive control measures. - Detect and neutralize potential sources of reproduction outside the controlled area.
Resistance to tree felling by a given sector of society.	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out information actions on the reasons and scope of measures undertaken.
Sub-component 3.2.4 Pilot on bullfrogs at the national level		
Difficulty to detect new invasion outbreaks	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out intensive communication campaigns among experts, provincial authorities and key actors

RISKS	(LOW MEDIUM HIGH)	MITIGATION MEASURES
		(SENASA, INTA, Farmer Associations, etc.)
Sub-component 3.2.5. Pilot on the Giant African Snail in the Paranaense jungle		
Re-invasion of snails from Brazil / spread of snails outside the Puerto Iguazu area	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop intensive dissemination campaigns to promote the reporting of snails by the inhabitants. - Set up a telephone line or web reporting system on snail detection across Argentina, supported by the dissemination campaign. - Establish agreements with Brazil/Paraguay to establish a buffer control area along the border. - Train staff of border control agencies.
Sub-component 3.2.6. Pilot on Glossy Privets in the north of Argentina, with the Ocloya indigenous community.		
Re-invasion of glossy privet	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eradicate seed trees from the surroundings. - Develop schemes for monitoring, detection and felling of young trees.
Colonization of restored environments by opportunistic IAS	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring of vegetation recovery. - Supplementary control actions
Component No. 4 Development of the pilot programme for eradication of the American Beavers in Tierra del Fuego province, based on the governance of IAS		
Standards of humane trapping do not include snare traps	M	Only methods and equipment included in the humane trapping standards are used.
Problems regarding access to private land	L	Agreements signed with privates before starting operations, communication strategy and follow- up of the topic.
Undesired effects on native species more than expected (for instance on the Southern river otter)	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of environmental safeguards - Use of specific techniques
Bio-security problems in "clean" areas	M-H (depending on the selection of pilot sites).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operation Surveillance and Bio-security stages for each Pilot Project planned in great detail to make all necessary efforts for appropriate surveillance. - Contingency Plans (during and after implementation of GEF project) designed and funded.
Risks of sediment accumulation, flooding and erosion due to dam failure	L-H (depends on the selection of pilot sites).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breaking of dams in certain cases (see Operational Plans for Pilot Sites)
Risk due to the presence of carrion	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact will be restricted in time and space. Each colony lodges an average of six animals and is spread out across the territory, so no accumulation of animals will be found.
Variations in currency value	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify critical stages/activities that must have enough funding
Problems in having counterpart funds	M-H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foresee and define alternative options.

RISKS	(LOW MEDIUM HIGH)	MITIGATION MEASURES
available as per the budget		
Delay in eradication operations due to bad weather. E.g. loss of efficiency especially in the case of helicopter use, increasing costs.	M	- Foresee appropriate weather data and include this variable in a careful planning, “generously” considering time frames
Equipment failures	L-M	- Previous testing, spare parts stock
Lack of capacity or difficulties to hire and/or recruit staff.	M	- Search for and training of staff during the early stages of the Project.
Pressure groups such as animal welfare groups, tourism businesspersons, furriers, can affect the project and its scope, leading efforts not to be centered on essential tasks.	M-L	- Environmental safeguards included in a protocol and duly implemented. -Communication Strategy foreseen -Selection of tourist attraction pilot area -Planning specific activities with actors related to the furrier business
Loss of support by owner/staff of the farm on which the Pilot Project is being implemented.	L	- Very carefully select site with the support and agreement of the farm’s owner and the support of the staff -A communication plan
Risks due to changes in the Province’s political management	L	- Commitment towards the beaver problem is long-standing, and is supported by a bi-national agreement with Chile. - The agriculture and aquaculture sector claims a solution to the problem.

A.7. Coordination with other relevant GEF financed initiatives

Among other initiatives, the project will develop special collaboration with the following projects:

The following are the Projects that can provide specific information on the impact of IAS on different ecosystems, to be taken into account in formulating the National IAS Strategy: i) *Sustainable Management of Water Resources in the River Plate Basin with regard to the Effects of Climate Change and Variability* (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) (GEF ID 2095); ii) *Environmental Protection of the River Plate and its Coastline* (FREPLATA), (Argentina and Uruguay) (GEF ID 613); iii) *Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of the Guaraní Aquifer*, (GEF ID 974); iv) *Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Bermejo River Bi-National Basin* (GEF ID 176 and 886); v) *Sub-regional Action Programme for the Sustainable Development of the “Gran Chaco Americano”* (Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay), reducing land degradation and thus the consequences of sedimentation in the upper basin (GEF ID 2505); vi) *Integrated Management and Master Plan for the Pilcomayo River*, funded by the European Union (Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay), focusing on outlining policies for water quality along the Pilcomayo river; vii) *Strengthening of fisheries governance for protecting freshwater and wetland biodiversity in Argentina* (GEF ID 3862); viii) *Rural Corridors and Biodiversity Conservation* (GEF ID 3830), the purpose of which is to provide continuity and connectivity to the country’s different ecosystems, as well as greater consistency in biodiversity protection.

Other initiatives that directly include IAS management and control experiences and practices to built on are: i) *Building Partnerships to Assist Developing Countries in Reducing the Transport of Harmful Aquatic Organisms in Ballast Water* (GloBallast) (GEF ID 2261), which implemented long-term coordinated measures to minimize the adverse impact of

invasive aquatic species carried in the ballast water of vessels into coastal and marine ecosystems; ii) *Sustainable Management of Arid and Semi-arid Ecosystems and Desertification Control in Patagonia* (GEF ID: 2379), which includes the impact of grass IAS on native grasslands, and explains how this invasion contributes to desertification; iii) the National Programme on Native Forests, and projects funded within the framework of the Native Forest Law, if pertinent; and iv) “*Establishment of incentives for the conservation of globally significant ecosystem services*” (GEF ID 3623), with the purpose of overcoming existing barriers in the country to implement the Payment for Environmental Services (PES) scheme, testing PES mechanisms and developing systems for their replication to ensure the protection of Argentina’s ecosystems and the services they provide. Good practices for the management of alien species and for IAS control can be included in these schemes.

Furthermore, there are projects in other countries that address the same topic so it will be important to exchange experiences and lessons learnt and promote the global integration of solutions to this issue. Among them, is Mexico’s GEF project (ID 4771) “*Enhancing the national capacities to manage invasive alien species (IAS) by implementing the National IAS Strategy*”⁵, particularly interesting because of the country’s prior activities in this field, in which it is worth mentioning the studies on “*Especies exóticas invasoras: impactos sobre las poblaciones de flora y fauna, los procesos ecológicos y la economía*”⁶, and those related to risk analysis of invasive alien species as part of a tri-national project including Mexico, Canada and the United States of America. The Guyra organization in Paraguay also have interesting experience on the study of IAS, setting up a database on IAS in Paraguay, and has established a South American Network on Invasive Alien Species in Forests⁷.

Finally, it is very important to coordinate with the project of the Chilean Ministry of the Environment /FAO/GEF (ID: 5506) *Strengthening and developing beaver (Castor Canadensis) management, prevention and control instruments for this invasive alien species in the Chilean Patagonia*. This project, just like the present project, is supported by FAO and will implement a beaver control and eradication pilot programme on the Chilean part of the TDF Island, and other Patagonia islands. EBECPA is the coordination framework between the two countries affected by the beaver IAS for their joint work in developing and implementing the bi-national objective of eradicating beavers. Both FAO/GEF-supported projects will hold bi-national workshops every six months with the purpose of coordinating Annual Operations Plans (POA) and activities, and sharing control and eradication experiences. During the last year of implementation of both projects, the two countries, with the participation of national as well as provincial/regional governments, will jointly formulate the PEBEC, moving into phase three of the bi-national process.

B. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOT ADDRESSED AT PIF STAGE:

B.1 Describe how the stakeholders will be engaged in project implementation.

It is complex to establish a control governance framework for IAS since it must include a wide range of sectors and stakeholders at all levels. During project preparation, two consultation workshops were organized at the national level and several provincial workshops were held to also ensure the participation of these actors in project design. The main actors and stakeholders are the national and provincial governments, through the environment agencies (SAyDS, APN (National Protected Areas) and their provincial peers, including provincial parks and natural reserve agencies), all of whom are politically and administratively responsible for IAS.

Additionally, it is important for the following agencies and their provincial peers (when applicable) to participate in the design, validation and implementation of the National IAS Strategy: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship – a strategic partner for the communication of the National IAS Strategy to neighboring and

⁵ Enhancing National Capacities to manage Invasive Alien Species (IAS) by implementing the National IAS Strategy (http://www.thegef.org/gef/project_detail?projID=4771)

⁶ “*Capital Natural de México*”. <http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/pais/capitalNatMex.html>

⁷ <http://www.guyra.org.py/EFI/>

MERCOSUR countries and to other regions; the Ministry of Health – relevant partner when an IAS directly or indirectly affects human health; SENASA - an important partner with experience, methodologies, instruments and trained staff to control the introduction of pest species across borders and points of entry to the country, and in inter-jurisdictional traffic, all this experience and capacity should be taken advantage of for the National IAS Strategy; the General Ports Administration (AGP) – an important partner for controlling the introduction of IAS through ballast water and other vectors entering the ports; the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, the Federal Fishing Council (CFP) and the Ministry of Tourism – relevant partners to include measures for prevention, early detection and prompt action, and control in sector-based rules and regulations; the National Road Directorate (DNV) – a relevant partner for controlling potential IAS dispersal in the country, and the National Ministry of Social Development – a relevant partner given its close relationship and communication channels with the Indigenous Peoples that can be affected by IAS and can also act as important partners for controlling IAS. Most of the provinces have administrative organizations (Indigenous Community Institutes; Indigenous Affairs Directorate; Indigenous Communities Advisory Council, etc.) that are in direct contact with the indigenous people and are key players for interacting with these people on IAS-related topics.

Coordination of provincial agencies is essential given the federal nature of the Argentine Republic, in which the provinces are in charge of managing natural resources. Furthermore, besides the environmental agencies, the provinces' productive and services sectors (tourism, agriculture, forestry and fisheries) – those potentially using IAS and/or impacted by IAS- will also participate directly in the formulation of the National IAS Strategy and in the implementation of the control pilot programmes. Other provincial agencies will also take part in the process such as the education ministries or secretariats, and the provincial police forces. Some provinces will play an additional role in the project due to their participation in the Pilot Programme on validating protocols to control priority IAS already established in the country (Component 3) and the Pilot Programme on beaver control and eradication (Component 4). This includes the provincial governments of Buenos Aires, Chubut, Jujuy, Mendoza, Misiones, Neuquen, Rio Negro and Tierra del Fuego.

Other important actors in the design, validation and implementation of the National IAS Strategy are science and research institutions, including national universities and CONICET research centres. These institutions will help to improve the IAS database and to establish an information network (Component 1) in cooperation with APN, several provincial agencies and the InBiAr which also handle relevant information for an informed preparation of the National IAS Strategy. The science and research institutions involved in the project are the following:

- CONICET is the main agency for promoting scientific research in Argentina, within the structure of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation. Among the research centres working more directly with the study of IAS, it is worth mentioning CADIC, CENPAT, IADIZA, IFEVA and IMBIV, thus providing good territorial coverage. CONICET is managed by a board that coordinates scientific policies at the national level. This centralized coordination simplifies interaction with the agency through cooperation agreements that will foster the participation of researchers in the National IAS Strategy. Especially CENPAT will collaborate in validating information on marine species (Components 1 and 3), and CADIC will support work with beavers (Component 4).
- INTA covers the whole of the national territory and includes a significant number of researchers who analyze productive processes and their impact on economic, social and environmental variables. As regards IAS, the Biological Resource Institute and the Natural Resource Research Centre (CIRN) seem to be particularly relevant. CIRN studies climate, water, soil and biological diversity (flora and fauna).
- The following are among the national universities that have research groups specifically working on IAS: *Universidad de Buenos Aires, Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Universidad Nacional de Luján, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto and Universidad Nacional del Sur*. These universities have cooperation agreements signed with SAYDS, which simplifies the participation of teachers and researchers in actions related to the National IAS Strategy. The *Universidad Nacional del Sur* will see to

the database management in cooperation with SAyDS (Component 1).

- Scientific associations such as the Argentine Botanical Society, the Argentine Ecology Association, the Argentine Herpetology Association, the Argentine Mammal Zoology Society, are important for Component 1 and, AHA in the case of Component 3. They are also very important for disseminating the scope of the database among their members.

The Armed Forces, including the Border Patrol, are key actors for preventing the introduction and controlling and eradicating IAS (Components 1 and 3), since they are deployed across the whole of the country, have jurisdiction over border crossings and are responsible for helping other agencies present at the border crossings such as the National Customs Administration (ANA) and SENASA. The National Coast Guard is also important in their role of security police for navigation, and also as a judicial and security force. They have jurisdiction over the maritime coast, lakes and rivers.

Other important actors that should participate in the formulation and implementation of the National IAS Strategy are private actors from the productive sectors. They become involved through first tier organizations such as the Argentine Industrial Union (UIA), the Argentine Forestry Association (AFOA), the Association of Farmers, Federation of Argentine Tourism Chambers (FEDECATUR), Argentine Tourism Chamber, etc. Likewise, it is good to attract organizations representing the private sector at the local level, particularly in those places in which a pilot programme is being implemented for validating protocols to control IAS already established in the country (Components 3 and 4).

To ensure a participatory and efficient formulation and implementation of the National IAS Strategy, it is essential to ensure the participation of NGOs. The Argentine Republic has a long-standing tradition of participation of third-sector organizations in biodiversity conservation. Several environmental NGOs work on projects related to IAS and their impact on biological diversity. At the national level, these include the *Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina*, *Fundación Patagonia Natural* and *Asociación Aves Argentinas* and, at the local or regional level, the *Fundación Conydes* (Río Cuarto, Córdoba) and the *Asociación Conservacionista del Sur* (Bahía Blanca, Buenos Aires). Several international NGOs also carry out activities related to IAS in Argentina, such as WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society – that will participate in the beaver pilot programme, component 4); CLT (Conservation Land Trust) and *Fundación Humedales / Wetlands International*. The indigenous peoples will also participate in the formulation of the National IAS Strategy (Component 1), and particularly the *Cocloya* peoples, in the pilot programme to control glossy privy (*Ligustrum lucidum*) (Component 3).

Finally, the Argentine Association of Scientific Journalists and the Argentine Association of Environmental Journalists (AAPA) are key organizations to contact specialized communicators in this field. Mass media, the printed press, radio, television and multimedia (the Internet) are core partners in the National IAS Strategy's Communication and Awareness-Raising Strategy (ECCP in the Spanish acronym), including "central media" reaching out at the national level as well as local media in each community. The Argentine Government, through its national press and dissemination area, is the main partner in ECCP, since it coordinates actions with most of the mass media. Furthermore, it can develop contents, promote interviews and adjust communication according to the needs concerning gender, indigenous peoples and sectors vulnerable to IAS.

Special coordination and participation mechanisms built into the project execution institutional arrangements include:

A **Project Steering Committee (CEP)** will be set up as a political-technical structure for planning and consensus-building in support of project execution and coordination. The CEP will be headed by the NPD, a high-level representative of SAyDS. The remaining committee members will be the following: CNP, the focal point of each of the Provinces in which the pilot programmes under components 3 and 4 are implemented (see

below); an APN representative; an I3N Argentina representative, and representative from the FAO Office in Argentina. The PSC will take decisions on the overall management of the project and will be responsible for maintaining the strategic approach of the project's specific operational tasks. Its functions include the following: (i) general supervision of the progress of the project and the achievement of expected results through the semiannual PPR; (ii) make decisions with regard to the organization, coordination and execution of the project; (iii) facilitate cooperation among SAYDS, GoPs, FAO and other institutions and organizations participating in the project; (iv) bring to the attention of SAYDS/CTNP other activities underway or planned to facilitate the collaboration between the project and other programs, projects and initiatives related to IAS management, particularly in the pilot intervention areas under components 3 and 4; (v) ensure co-financing is provided in a timely and efficient manner; and (vi) review semi-annual PPRs and financial reports and approve AWP/Bs. It will meet for the first time before the Inception Workshop to adopt a AWP/B and establish an activity schedule and meetings that will take place at least once a year.

A **Federal and Inter-Institutional Consultation Mechanism on IAS** will be established and institutionalized through CONADIBIO's STEEI, which provide for sustainability of the inter-institutional framework during and after project implementation. The objective of the mechanism is to generate a coordinated vision in the process of preparing and implementing the National IAS Strategy and its components, aimed at optimizing processes, building on existing capacities, and facilitating the construction of new notions based on prior inter-institutional consensus. Federal political participation is will be guaranteed through the annual presentation of the summarized AWP/B and PPRs to COFEMA. STEEI is made up of members of the scientific and technical sectors, government agencies from the sectors of production (agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry), education and the environment, plant and animal health (SENASA), security forces (particularly those related to border safety and security). It currently comprises SAYDS, SENASA, the National Seed Institute (INASE), INTA, the National Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAGyP), National Parks Administration (APN), General Environment Directorate – Ministry of Foreign Affairs- (DIGMA), and the NGOs *Aves Argentinas* and the Argentine Association of Landscape Ecology (ASADEP). Anyhow, other key stakeholders identified during the formulation stage can also be convened as from project start-up, particularly the National Inter-University Council (CIN); the Council of Presidents of Private Universities (CRUP); and CONICET. Moreover, the idea is to call upon Business Chambers and professional organizations in the field of work of the project, as well as representatives from indigenous peoples to participate.

The Provinces and CABA will appoint a **Provincial Focal Point (PFP)** and a **Focal Point (FP)**, respectively. They will act as a link with their respective jurisdictions, in the formulation and implementation of the National IAS Strategy. They will act as a liaison responsible for coordinating activities in their jurisdiction. Furthermore, they will be in charge of supervising component 3 and 4 validation Pilot Programme activities in the jurisdiction they represent.

For each pilot under Component 3, a **Pilot Coordination Committee (PCC)** will be set up and include, according to each case (please see section 2.4): the relevant PFP/FP; representatives from other provincial government institutions; the coordinator of the pilot financed by the project; research institutions; municipal governments; civil society organizations; PNA (Coast Guard); provincial parks and reserves; SAYDS; SENASA; and other government institutions. PCCs will provide guidelines to the pilot activities and plan and coordinate activities always seeking synergy with other relevant initiatives. They will supervise progress in achieving pilot programme objectives and will contribute to the learning and validation process, and feedback into the National IAS Strategy based on experiences and lessons learnt from the pilot.

Coordination and participation mechanisms for the Pilot programme on beaver control and eradication:

The territories involved and the implications of the subsequent integration of activities with the Republic of Chile (Region XII) will call for a special governance structure for this pilot programme.

An **Inter-Institutional Committee** will be established to plan and coordinate the Beaver Pilot Programme, and to ensure synergies with other relevant initiatives in TDF. The Committee will be set up within the framework of the *Focal Point's Advisory Committee within the Bi-national Agreement*, revitalized by the simultaneous implementation of projects in Argentina and Chile. Members of the Inter-Institutional Committee will represent the interests of institutions/agencies in charge of managing natural resources and of co-financers of the Beaver Pilot Programme, among others, SAyDS, SDSyA/TDF, and APN. It will be headed by a representative of TDF province and must remain in place after project completion so as to ensure bio-security in the areas from which beavers have been eradicated, and support the following phase of PEBEC implementation. Its specific functions will be the following: i) Provide a political-strategic guide for the Programme and support the Programme's General Manager (see below) in achieving the proposed objectives and goals, within the established terms; ii) Approve AWP/Bs and provide its no-objection to the semi-annual progress reports on the implementation of Component 4; iii) Monitor the Programme's development and the fulfillment of its goals, objectives and procedures, and make political-strategic decisions, if necessary, in agreement with the Bi-national Strategic Plan, with the National IAS Strategy, and considering potential expert recommendations and/or of the Group of "key" actors (see below); iv) Keep the different government agencies informed, as well as the Programme's financing agencies and the group of "key" social actors, and facilitate communication with partners and with the community; v) With the participation of FAO, select the Programme's General Manager and participate in the selection of those responsible for the different components of the governance and management structure; vi) Review and approve the different protocols to be used within the Programme and convene outsiders should technical advice or collaboration be required; vii) Inform leaders of the parallel Project in Chile and coordinate actions; and viii) Guarantee the bio-security of the pilot areas beyond the duration of the GEF/National IAS Strategy Pilot Programme. The Committee should meet periodically and have a formal procedure for its operations. With the purpose of reinforcing the province's environmental institutions, providing sustainability and granting a greater horizon to the PEBEC governance and management system, all efforts will be made for this "inter-institutional committee" to become a part of the Provincial Council on the Environment⁸, Provincial Law No. 55/92, under the format of a commission.

An **Advisory Group of "Key" Social Actors** will be set up, including representatives of farm owners, the forestry sector, sports fishing, tourism sector, environmental NGOs. The purpose of this committee is to ensure these actors partake in the pilot programme's implementation and inform the Inter-Institutional Committee on topics of interest. The Group's composition may change and become enriched as the programme develops and once the GEF project has ended, when a Bio-Security Plan will be kept in place and the PEBEC will be implemented.

B.2 Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the Project at the national and local levels, including consideration of gender dimensions, and how these will support the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF):

Overall, the Project's social sustainability is based on a participatory and consensus-building process as described above. As mentioned in Section A.4, one of the important barriers to promote the implementation of the National IAS Strategy and, above all, to have more funding for this purpose is the lack of analysis and information on the socio-

⁸ It is the body for coordinating actions of the different government agencies with jurisdiction over environment preservation, conservation, defense and improvement, and includes representatives of the provincial legislative branch, of each of the Province's municipalities, universities, research and development centres, non-governmental organizations working on the environment, and is consulted by the Provincial Executive Branch.

economic costs and the impacts of IAS on native biodiversity. Therefore, the project, through Sub-component 1.1.1 will reinforce information and analysis on the above costs and impacts and thus the link between benefits for biodiversity and the local socio-economic conditions, resulting in greater sustainability for the implementation of the National IAS Strategy. Nonetheless, there are currently the experiences of: local farming populations that suffer loss of their crops because of the African snail; impact on their livelihoods of the Ocloya indigenous communities in the North of Argentina who depend on native forest resources invaded by the glossy privet; and the impact on hydroelectricity caused by the Golden mussel. Within the pilot programmes on containment and cleaning of the African snail and the glossy privet, the project will make an effort to monitor the positive socio-economic impact to reinforce social sustainability.

On the other hand, in the case of IAS introduced for the purpose of production and economic benefits, such as bullfrogs, pets and ornamental animals, there can be a conflict between IAS control and management and the immediate socio-economic benefits. In these cases, the project will work with the affected private sectors and will seek voluntary codes of conduct (Sub-component 1.1.3.a), regulations on responsible use (Sub-component 2.1.1), and inclusion of good practices for controlling IAS within schemes of PES, CSR and environmental certifications (Sub-component 2.1.2).

With regard to a balanced gender participation and benefits, during project design, it was noted that the participation has been quite balanced in the project design consultation workshops (56% males, and 44% females), with a clear majority of women in sectors such as research (60%- 40%), and Education (56% - 44%). The main decision-making collegiate bodies for developing and implementing the National IAS Strategy have a high percentage of women. COFEMA is presided by the Sustainable Development Secretary of Rio Negro Province, who is a woman, and STEEI is mainly made up of women representing the main national agencies. Furthermore, in three of the seven provinces in which the containment and/or eradication pilot programmes will be implemented, the environmental authorities are women (a woman minister in Misiones Province, and two women Secretaries of State in Jujuy and Rio Negro Provinces). Moreover, in Argentina, civil society organizations (even those participating in the STEEI) are mainly made up of women. According to the information surveyed by the National Centre of Community Organizations (CENOC), 58% of the total staff declared by CSO are women.

During its implementation, the Project will, however, make the greatest efforts to guarantee gender equality and youth participation. Therefore, each component includes actions for promoting human development and gender equality throughout the project's implementation, above all in components 3 and 4 of the pilot programmes. All efforts will be made to guarantee the participation of women and youth when they are not members of participating organizations and institutions, through prior mappings to identify distortive deviations in the prior stages when calling for participation in the different activities. For this purpose, and before convening participants for the different actions, the mapping of key actors will be reviewed and an assessment will be carried out as regards appropriate gender balance and integration. Specific women and youth organizations will be included in the map of actors (for instance, woman peasant committees, youth groups, students' centres, etc.)

With regard to the indigenous peoples, Article 75, paragraph 17 of the 1994 National Constitution recognizes "the ethic and cultural pre-existence of the Argentine indigenous peoples", while guaranteeing respect for their identity and the right to a bilingual and inter-cultural education, the legal personality of their communities and the community ownership of land traditionally occupied by them; ensuring their participation in the management of natural resources and other interests affecting them. So as to ensure that the National IAS Strategy includes IAS issues particularly affecting the indigenous peoples, the Ocloya community initiative in Jujuy province was included in the project for implementing a glossy privet control pilot programme. This problem was raised by the communities themselves in consultations during project design. Besides validating a specific chapter of the National IAS Strategy, this pilot programme will provide lessons learnt related to the social and cultural approach, communication mechanisms and the valorization of community knowledge, which could be applied to other regions with IAS problems affecting indigenous communities.

B.3. Explain how cost-effectiveness is reflected in the project design:

The project's cost-efficiency and effectiveness will be achieved by systematically involving several actors related to IAS in the drafting and implementation of the National IAS Strategy, at the national, provincial and local levels. For instance, the involvement of SENASA will allow building on its existing experience, human resources and system for risk mitigation and control to avoid the introduction of IAS pests affecting agriculture and the forestry sector, and early action should the species manage to pass the checkpoints. The participation of the Border Patrol, Customs, PSA (Airport Police) and PNA (Coast Guard), through training, and of the population at large, through a communication strategy, will also ensure the efficient use of human resources, infrastructure and resources already available, and greater efficacy in avoiding the introduction and supporting early detection and action. For instance, training and awareness-raising among people with knowledge on natural history and presence in natural or semi-natural environments, such as birdwatchers, sports fishermen, park rangers, fauna caretakers, caretakers of the environment, as well as biological scientists and ecologists will enhance the group of observers in the prevention and early warning system in a cost-efficient manner.

In order to share resources and costs at the international level, the Argentine information system on IAS (InBiAr), interconnected with IABIN, follows standards that can be shared with GISD, IUCN, GISIN and GIASIP. This allows easy access to IAS information and risk analysis already carried out in other countries not to duplicate efforts. In the same manner, integration into an existing information network of research institutions, provincial and national governments and Protected Areas will ensure the use of existing information in a cost-efficient and effective manner for decision-making on IAS management.

On the one hand, the National IAS Strategy shall place great emphasis on avoiding the introduction of Alien Species that can become invasive and on the early detection and rapid response. This is a lot more cost-efficient than containment, management and, ultimately, eradication when species are already established in the country.

On the other hand, six (6) IAS have been selected among those well-established in the country and considered a priority because of their impact on globally significant native biodiversity and on socio-economic conditions, as well as because they represent different scenarios and situations in the management of biological invasions, to validate protocols and communication and awareness-raising strategies for the management, containment and/or eradication of these species. These interventions are being carried out to learn about the cost-efficiency management practices and techniques for the IA species that are still not too spread out so as to not allow their control, containment and/or eradication.

The Patagonian beaver is a special case. Although it has spread out quickly in the last seven decades since its introduction, and its eradication is costly, losses in economic terms, in ecosystem services and in biodiversity in the future will be a lot more costly if this IAS manages to establish itself on the South American mainland. Coordination with Chile and the bi-national phased process will ensure cost-efficiency and effectiveness of actions. During each phase, an extra step forward is given in mapping, monitoring and learning as regards cost-efficient and technically effective eradication methodologies. The phase, supported by this project, is that of learning from several pilot programmes how to manage and implement a systematic eradication and avoid re-invasion in a cost-effective manner in both countries before promoting a full eradication programme.

C. DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M & E PLAN:

The below is the summary of the budgeted M&E plan. For further details please see the FAO Project Document sections 4.5 and 4.6

M&E Activity	Persons Responsible	Deadline/ Interval	Estimated Cost
Inception Workshop	SAYDS/CTNP; FAO (GPO with the support of the LTO, PRB and FAO-GEF Coordination Unit)	Two months after project start-up.	USD 3 000
Project Inception Report	SAYDS/CTNP and FAO GPO, approved by the LTO, PRB and FAO-GEF Coordination Unit	Immediately after the inception workshop	USD 925 (one week of the project coordinator's time)
Impact monitoring "in the field"	SAYDS/CTNP; General Manager of Beaver Pilot Programme and other project participants	Continuously	USD 42 790 (5.5 months of the project coordinator's time , 1 month of the IAS expert's time, and travel costs)
Supervision and validation visits of project progress reported in PPRs and PIRs	SAYDS/CTNP; General Manager of the Beaver Pilot Programme; FAO (GPO, LTO, FAO-GEF Coordination Unit)	Annually or as required	Project Coordination visits will be paid from the project's travel budget plus two months of salary of the assistant for the organization of the missions for a total of USD 11 000. Cost of FAO visits will be paid from GEF agency fees
Project Progress Reports (PPR)	SAYDS/CTNP; with inputs from the General Manager of the Beaver Pilot Programme and other institutions participating in project implementation	Semi-annually	USD 10 900 (2 months of the project coordinator's time , 1 month of the IAS expert's time, and 1 month of the assistant's time)
Annual Project Implementation Review (PIR)	FAO (LTO and GPO) with the support of SAYDS/CTNP and the General Manager of the Beaver Pilot Programme. Approval and submission to GEF by FAO-GEF Coordination Unit.	Annually	Paid with funds from GEF agency fees
Technical Reports.	SAYDS/CTNP and the General Manager of the Beaver Pilot Programme; FAO (LTO, GPO)	As pertinent	-
Co-financing Reports	SAYDS/CTNP and the General Manger of the Beaver Pilot Programme, with inputs from other co-financers.	Annually	USD 4500 (3 months of the assistant's time)
Independent Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)	External consultant, the project's team, including the GEF Coordination Unit and other actors.	Half way through project implementation.	USD 40 000 for external consulting services. USD 1 750 for the evaluation workshop. Travel expenses and time of FAO staff will be paid with funds from GEF agency fees.
Independent Final Evaluation (IFE)	External consultant, FAO Independent Evaluation Unit, in consultation with the project's team, including the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit and other actors.	Upon completion of project implementation	USD 40 000 for external consulting services . USD 1 750 for the evaluation workshop. Travel expenses and time of FAO staff will be paid with funds from GEF agency fees.
Final Report	SAYDS/CTNP and General Manager of the Beaver Pilot Programme; FAO (GPO, LTO, FAO-GEF Coordination Unit, TSCR Report Unit)	Two months before end of Implementation Agreement.	USD 925 (one week of the project coordinator's time)
Total Budget			USD 154 040


PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) AND GEF AGENCY(IES)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):
 (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this form. For SGP, use this OPF endorsement letter).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
ING. Graciela B. Conesa	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	November, 29, 2011

B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF criteria for CEO endorsement/approval of project.

Agency Coordinator, Agency Name	Signature	Date (Month, day, year)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
Gustavo Merino, Director Investment Centre Division Technical Cooperation Department FAO Viale delle Terme di Caracalla (00153) Rome, Italy <u>TCI-</u> <u>Director@fao.org</u>		November 24, 2014	Rikke Olivera, FAO-GEF Programme Officer for LAC	+390657055701	<u>Rikke.Olivera@fao.org</u>

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

Please see FAO Project document Appendix 1

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

Response to STAP comments

1. With respect to baseline, the document does not clearly describe or quantify the current impact to biodiversity and ecosystem services from invasive species or expected benefits which would flow from the development of the IAS Strategy and management interventions with the exception of the example [beaver] noted above. This is also true for the assessment of global environmental benefits. The existence of IAS impact and/or risk assessment studies is noted. A list of invasive species with respect to this initiative is provided in Annex 1, which tends to be biased towards the eastern (wetter) areas of the country. However, no reference to species-specific or comprehensive impact studies apart from the *Castor canadensis* example are provided. Consideration of the scientific justification for the project is difficult without this analysis. In addition, a thorough examination of threats and impacts from invasive species to biodiversity and ecosystem services is an important prerequisite to the development and delivery any successful IAS strategy at national level.

Response: A detailed description of current and projected impacts of IAS on biodiversity, economy, human health and livelihoods, with concrete examples from the national IAS database and research studies, have been included in the section 1.1.a *Development context related to IAS in Argentina* and section 1.1.b *Current status and threats of IAS to globally important biodiversity and ecosystems, and main causes* of the FAO Project Document. This include several examples of impacts of invasive fungi, algae, plants, vertebrates and invertebrates as competitors, herbivores, predators, pathogens and/or drivers of critical habitat changes. The description includes examples of changes in fire frequency and intensity and alteration of hydrological processes caused by the establishment and expansion of species like African grasses and saltcedar (*Tamarix* spp.) in different regions of Argentina. Examples of IAS affecting human health, like nematodes transmitted by the Giant African Snail are also included. Even though there is not a complete assessment of the economic impact of IAS on the country's economy, information is provided about different cases including economic losses caused by reductions in agricultural outputs, reductions in hydroelectric power generation due to bio-incrustations by invasive bivalves/golden mussel (*Limnoperna fortunei*), and money invested in efforts to constrain the expansion of the algae didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) in Patagonia. A more detailed description of the impacts associated to IAS is provided for the seven pilots included in component 3 and the beaver pilot in component 4. Data are supported by scientific references, by official web-pages and/or by communications made by specialists. An important portion of this information was recorded during three national and five regional workshops hold between October 2012 and March 2013, including a list of 95 species of special concern.

2. A key component of the project's ability to deliver quantifiable global benefits is inter-agency coordination across sectors and from local to regional as outlined in the document an approach which draws on lessons in IAS management from other countries and regions where similar strategies have achieved some success. While STAP concurs with this approach, the PIF is unclear on how this coordination will be undertaken or achieved. Experience from other countries would suggest that successful inter-agency cooperation in IAS management is often dependant on a clear mandate from the most senior levels of government. STAP believes that the risk of failure in coordination of effort across government (and thereby to the delivery of global benefits) is under estimated in section B4 and requires greater clarification.

Response: In order to disseminate information about the strategy, and also to avoid inconsistencies in the policies of different agencies related to exotic species, the evolution of the processes of formulation and implementation of the strategy will be regularly presented at an special sub-committee of IAS in CONADIBIO (The National Commission on Biodiversity) (see section 4.1 *Institutional arrangements* and section 4.2 on *Implementation Arrangements* in the FAO Project Document). This sub-committee includes representatives of the provinces, health, industrial, and agricultural agencies, academic institutions, and NGOs, and works under the coordination of the national authority on the environment (SAyDS).

A communication strategy will also be developed (output 1.1.4) in association with the project that includes an internal component intended to strengthen knowledge and concern about the challenge posed by IAS in different agencies related to environment, agriculture, health, etc.

Component 2 addresses the issue of interagency coordination from the perspective of legal instruments, and includes the redaction of a bill in order to promote an inter-agencies and inter-jurisdictional integrated approach for the issue of IAS.

In order to share resources and exchange knowledge and information at the international level, the Argentine information system on IAS (InBiAr) (output 1.1.1), interconnected with IABIN, follows standards that can be shared with GISD, IUCN, GISIN and GIASIP. In addition, the project will in output 2.1.4 support the GoA in inserting the IAS problematic in the agenda of MERCOSUR Sub-Working Group 6 on the Environment.

3. With the exception of a notation in section B.4, STAP believes that the project does not sufficiently indicate or take into consideration the likely impacts of climate change to future IAS risks and impacts. Current best practice recommends that coordinated efforts at national level to address invasive species be fully integrated with national strategies for climate adaptation or assessing/mitigating climate risk (Pyke et al, 2008).

Response: The relationship between IAS and climate change has been included in section 1.1.b *Current status and threats of IAS to globally important biodiversity and ecosystems, and main causes* of the FAO Project Document including general effects of changes in invasive behavior, opening of invasion opportunities due to increments in the frequency and intensity of disturbances, and modifications of dispersal routes, and some more specific effects that could be expected for Argentina (like an intensification of invasion of arid environments by alien plants due to the increase in the concentration of CO₂). In order to mitigate these impacts climate change considerations have been mainstreamed in to the project strategy and the strategy for the development and implementation of the National IAS Strategy which will have an adaptation approach and will centre its actions on an ecosystem-based notion and mainstream climate change in its different components (see section 2.1 Project strategy of the FAO Project Document). Specific actions include the regular update of the national list of IAS (output 1.1.2), the periodical revision of the efficiency of risk analysis tools (especially considering the importance of climate matching for predicting invasion risk) (output 1.1.3.a), an emphasis in early detection of new focuses of invasion (output 1.1.3.b), and the restoration of ecosystem functioning and resilience as the final aim of control/eradication activities (component 3 and 4).

4. The project as described at present would appear to focus efforts in terrestrial ecosystems although it is noted that there is mention of freshwater ecosystems. Given the very different IAS detection and management challenges which exist across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine environments, STAP requests greater clarity whether marine ecosystems are facing threats from IAS and the extent to which such ecosystems in particular will be addressed in this project.

Response: The specific threat of invasive alien species to marine ecosystems and the threats of the Didymo Algae on freshwater ecosystems are described in Section 1.1.a and 1.1.b of the FAO Project Document. The project in its current version includes seven pilots intended to adaptively test the different components of the national strategy (Component 3). Pilots were selected considering a range of invasion situations (from recently established species to widespread ones, from cases in which contention seems to be the most appropriate alternative to others where eradication appears to be feasible), a variety of taxa (algae, marine invertebrates, terrestrial invertebrates, freshwater and terrestrial vertebrates and terrestrial plants), a diversity of ecosystems (from arid lands to wetlands, from marine coasts to lakes in the Patagonian steppe), and also covering all the main regions in Argentina. One of the pilots addresses the challenge of early detection, control and prevention of spread of invasive marine species and is focused in the three most important harbors in the country (outcome 3.1/output 3.1.1). Another one addresses the containment of the Didymo Algae invasion in freshwater ecosystem (output 3.2.2)

5. Given the focus on inter-agency cooperation, both within and exterior to Argentina, STAP believes that insufficient attention in the current outline has been given to IAS data collection and information management (component 5 of the project appears to address standard project M&E). Effective data collection, management, and sharing of these assets is essential to quantify the current impacts from invasive species and track changes over time, improve management efficiencies, and help raise awareness as well as in supporting effective risk

assessment and addressing potential IAS threats before they are established. This would be a potentially important contribution from the scientific community in Argentina.

Response: A special output 1.1.1 has been included in the project aimed at the creation of a national information system on IAS, including: data on the description of the species already present in Argentina, their impacts on biodiversity, ecosystem functioning, economy and health and known methods of containment, control and/or eradication; information on locations of occurrence, local impact, area covered and status of the invasion process; a mapping tool for displaying the locations recorded for each species; an associated database on experts, projects and references (including less accessible grey literature) will also be maintained. The information will be freely available in the internet, stored and organized in accordance to international standards (see response to comment 2 above) making it easy to share the information with other countries. Training workshops will be delivered to researchers, park rangers, nature resources professionals, bird watchers and others involved in field activities in order to contribute with information about new locations. Data providers will be able to add records directly on the internet and this information will be validated by experts before becoming accessible.

6. There is an unbalance between the component related to the North American beaver, which is in general well supported by antecedents, well designed, and with some interesting experimental and demonstration components, and the rest of the project which appears considerably more vague. This unbalance needs to be addressed. Why is so much attention is going to the North American beaver at this stage? How are other IAS going to be approached, especially those that are very different, in terms of biology, distribution, links to land use and social actors involved, and therefore for which the North American beaver case will have little demonstration value? Is this a project with two parallel approaches, one focused on intensive field action (North American beaver) and the other mostly a compilation exercise (other IAS). If that is the case, what is the justification and how will they be integrated?

Response: The component devoted to the America beaver is especially relevant. This component is a consequence of a binational agreement signed between Argentina and Chile in 2008. The strategic planning for the binational project included the answer of key questions by means of pilot projects oriented to scale up the large eradication project and to solve limitations. The GEF project fills the gap in terms of eradication demonstration units in parallel with similar piloting and demonstrations in Chile. The eradication was decided also as a way to stop definitively the risk of spread of the beaver to the south American continent. This component also provides a world unique opportunity to eradicate an invasive vertebrate in such a rough and under-populated terrain in an binational effort. Also this component will provide important feedback to the whole strategy in terms of capacity building in governance, organization and biosecurity. Nevertheless, the whole project of designing and implementing a national strategy on IAS greatly exceeds the case of the American beaver, as can be seen in components one, two and three, that address prevention, early detection and rapid response, prioritization, control and eradication, communication, inter-agencies coordination, and harmonization of legislation, etc. The seven pilots in Component 3 have now been developed in further details and are selected and designed to gain experience with IAS control in a rage of ecosystems and different invasion situations (see response to comment 4 on selection of pilots) in order to enrich the National IAS Strategy.

7. The strategy for engagement with key social actors is not clear beyond public awareness campaigns. How will be different sectors of society that play an important role in the spread and control of IAS be effectively engaged?

Response: The FAO Project Document (section 1.1.3 and 4.2) summarized in this CEO endorsement document (section B.1) includes specific actions intended to stimulate the participation of those sectors specially related to the issue of IAS. An analysis of social and institutional risks has been included in the risk analysis and mitigation plan (see section A.6) and mitigation and participatory and outreach measures has been included in the design of all components and subcomponents including for each pilot in component 3 and 4. Among some specific approaches to engage these key actors are the design of voluntary codes of conduct for actors that are especially linked to the introduction and dispersal of IAS, like pet shops and botanic gardens (output 1.1.3.a).

8. It is mentioned that particular attention will be paid to gender equality and tending to provide capacity building activities on IAS specifically focused on women and youth. Considering that hunting and fur trade are traditionally male-dominated activities, it would be useful to provide more detail as to how women will be incorporated in the process.

Response: Records taken at the workshops hold during the phase of formulation of the project showed a well-balanced gender participation (ca. 45% females / 55% males), with a particularly high representation of women in the academic and administrative (oversight) sectors. Nevertheless, special attention will be given to diffusion activities in order to cover gender and also age variations (see section B.2 above). Pilots (component 3) include the development of specific communication and participation strategies regarding this issue. The pilot aimed at the restoration of native forests and natural resources used by indigenous people in Jujuy, in particular, will involve the participation of a sociologist in order to address eventual differences in gender and or age involvement in activities related to the dispersal and control of invasive privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*).

9. Concerning the risk assessment table, it is not clear in what cases it refers to the whole project or just the American beaver component. Also there is no scientific basis to rank the risk of the restoration of biodiversity not happening in a spontaneous way after eradication actions of IAS as low.

Response: The project now addresses the specific risks associated to each Component, Subcomponent and pilot, and the mitigation measures designed to reduce their impacts the risk rankings have been reevaluated after the more in debt risk analysis during project design (see section A.6 above).

10. Finally, STAP wishes to draw the attention to the GEF project "Enhancing National Capacities to Manage Invasive Alien Species" in Mexico (GEF ID 4771) also currently being considered in this work program. STAP believes this project outlines a comprehensive, innovative approach for addressing invasive species management challenges, which should make a significant contribution to biodiversity conservation in this country. As these projects are being developed and eventually implemented, STAP believes that it would be beneficial to share knowledge and experience from these initiatives, particularly regarding successful management approaches with high replication potential in the region.

Response: Many of the lessons learned in the cited project, together with others in different countries are now included in the Components of the project. See, for instance, the discussion about national databases considering the examples of Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay and Venezuela (output 1.1.1); the organization of national lists of IAS citing the current approach in South Africa (output 1.1.2); and the section "lessons learned" about early detection and rapid response citing the policies in the USA, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa (section 1.1.4 FAO Project Document).

Response to comments from Germany:

1. The document only provides a very generic description of the impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services from invasive species or expected benefits which would flow from the development of the IAS Strategy and its management interventions with the exception of the Canadian Castor. There is a need to deliver solid information regarding impacts of different species on ecosystem and ecosystem services, as well as a scientific justification for the project;

Response: A detailed description of current and projected impacts of IAS on biodiversity, economy, human health and livelihoods, with concrete examples from the national IAS database and research studies, have been included in the section 1.1.a *Development context related to IAS in Argentina* and section 1.1.b *Current status and threats of IAS to globally important biodiversity and ecosystems, and main causes* of the FAO Project Document. This include several examples of impacts of invasive fungi, algae, plants, vertebrates and invertebrates as competitors, herbivores, predators, pathogens and/or drivers of critical habitat changes. The description includes examples of changes in fire frequency and intensity and alteration of hydrological processes caused by the establishment and expansion of species like African grasses and saltcedar (*Tamarix* spp.) in different regions of Argentina. Examples of IAS affecting human health, like

nematodes transmitted by the Giant African Snail are also included. Even though there is not a complete assessment of the economic impact of IAS on the country's economy, information is provided about different cases including economic losses caused by reductions in agricultural outputs, reductions in hydroelectric power generation due to bio-incrustations by invasive bivalves/golden mussel (*Limnoperna fortunei*), and money invested in efforts to constrain the expansion of the algae didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) in Patagonia. A more detailed description of the impacts associated to IAS is provided for the seven pilots included in component 3 and the beaver pilot in component 4. Data are supported by scientific references, by official web-pages and/or by communications made by specialists. An important portion of this information was recorded during three national and five regional workshops hold between October 2012 and March 2013, including a list of 95 species of special concern.

2. More attention should be paid to the need to collect appropriate IAS data and information to be able to build an effective and meaningful strategy based on current conditions on the ground, to quantify the current impacts from invasive species, track changes over time, make a serious monitoring and suggest better management practices;

Response: A special output 1.1.1 has been included in the project aimed at strengthening the national information system on IAS, including: data on the description of the species already present in Argentina; their impacts on biodiversity, ecosystem functioning, economy and health; known methods of containment, control and/or eradication; information on locations of occurrence, local impact, area covered and status of the invasion process; a mapping tool for displaying the locations recorded for each species. An associated database on experts, projects and references (including less accessible grey literature) will be also be maintained. The information will be freely available in the internet, stored and organized in accordance to international standards. Training workshops will be delivered to researchers, park rangers, nature resources professionals, bird watchers and others involved in field activities in order to contribute with information about new locations. Data providers will be able to add records directly on the internet and this information will be validated by experts before becoming accessible.

Training workshops on best practices for the management of IAS (including prevention, prioritization, control and eradication and monitoring) will be delivered to park rangers and personnel working at customs, harbors and animal health agencies at national and provincial level (outputs 1.1.1.a, b and c).

3. Gender aspects should be clarified and better integrated in a more strategic form in the project, responding to the particular demands and needs of an effective IAS strategy. With that regard, more information and better gender-related know-how should be considered to improve the PIF, taking into account how gender particularities could contribute or should be changed to develop and implement an IAS strategy. The PIF in its current format simplifies gender issues by limiting the description to a general statement of the better integration of women and youth in the process;

Response: Records taken at the workshops hold during the phase of formulation of the project showed a well-balanced gender participation (ca. 45% females / 55% males), with a particularly high representation of women in the academic and administrative (oversight) sectors. Nevertheless, special attention will be given to diffusion activities in order to cover gender and also age variations (see section B.2 above). Pilots (component 3) include the development of specific communication and participation strategies regarding this issue. The pilot aimed at the restoration of native forests and natural resources used by indigenous people in Jujuy, in particular, will involve the participation of a sociologist in order to address eventual differences in gender and or age involvement in activities related to the dispersal and control of invasive privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*).

4. There should be a special focus on coordination efforts among Argentine and within Argentine and int. institutions, to improve information and knowledge regarding IAS;

Response: A communication strategy has been developed for the preparation and development of the national IAS Strategy (output 1.1.4) which includes an internal component intended to strengthen knowledge and concern about the challenge posed by IAS in different agencies related to environment, agriculture, health, etc. In order to disseminate information about the strategy, and also to avoid inconsistencies in the policies of different agencies related to exotic species, the evolution of the processes of formulation and implementation of the strategy will be regularly presented at

an special sub-committee of IAS in CONADIBIO (The National Commission on Biodiversity) (see section 4.1 *Institutional arrangements* and section 4.2 on *Implementation Arrangements* in the FAO Project Document). International and regional coordination will be by communicating the process of elaboration of the national strategy at the meeting of the Mercosur Committee on Environmental Issues, promoting information sharing, the adoption of a regional approach and coordinated action, as well as the adoption of common regulations (output 2.1.4). Also for information sharing part of the National IAS Strategy will be for the GoA to sign the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership (GIASIP) (see also response to STAP comment 2 above).

The legislative integration of national and subnational regulations, and the development of a National IAS Law will develop coordination means under specific protocols and responsibilities for implementation of the National IAS Strategy.

5. Information on climate change and its implications for IAS should be improved;

Response: The relationship between IAS and climate change has been included in section 1.1.b *Current status and threats of IAS to globally important biodiversity and ecosystems, and main causes* of the FAO Project Document including general effects of changes in invasive behavior, opening of invasion opportunities due to increments in the frequency and intensity of disturbances, and modifications of dispersal routes, and some more specific effects that could be expected for Argentina (like an intensification of invasion of arid environments by alien plants due to the increase in the concentration of CO₂). In order to mitigate these impacts climate change considerations have been mainstreamed in to the project strategy and the strategy for the development and implementation of the National IAS Strategy which will have an adaptation approach and will centre its actions on an ecosystem-based notion and mainstream climate change in its different components (see section 2.1 Project strategy of the FAO Project Document). Specific actions include the regular update of the national list of IAS (output 1.1.2), the periodical revision of the efficiency of risk analysis tools (especially considering the importance of climate matching for predicting invasion risk) (output 1.1.3.a), an emphasis in early detection of new focuses of invasion (output 1.1.3.b), and the restoration of ecosystem functioning and resilience as the final aim of control/eradication activities (component 3 and 4).

6. It should be considered if FAO in Argentine should further extend its cooperation network, to improve its capacity to run the project, this should consider not only CONICET but also regional and national Universities to strengthen capacity building and foster knowledge exchange in the country;

Response: Representatives of ten universities and eight scientific research centers have participated in the phase of elaboration of the project. At least nine universities will be also directly involved in the pilots (see section B.1 above).

7. The mitigation measure regarding the risk on the lack of commitment of key actors in different sectors (including local actors) should be completed and elaborated in its whole complexity. The measure should be addressed more to the incentives or disincentives of the actors to participate in the implementation of the strategy;

Response: The FAO Project Document (section 1.1.3 and 4.2) summarized in this CEO endorsement document (section B.1) includes specific actions intended to stimulate the participation of key stakeholders and sectors specially related to the issue of IAS. An analysis of social and institutional risks has been included in the risk analysis and mitigation plan (see section A.6) and mitigation and participatory and outreach measures has been included in the design of all components and subcomponents including for each pilot in component 3 and 4. Among some specific approaches to engage these key actors are the design of voluntary codes of conduct for actors that are especially linked to the introduction and dispersal of IAS, like pet shops and botanic gardens (output 1.1.3.a).

8. Component 4 which relates to the development of a pilot program for the eradication of the American Beaver should be revised. Firstly, it should be analyzed if this strategy is appropriate in its current forms, and secondly, its enforcement could be difficult to follow up and monitor, becoming very controversial to an important part of the public opinion in the country, that could be detrimental to the GEF image;

Response: The Component 4 is a follow up of a Binational Agreement signed between Argentina and Chile in 2008. Both countries decided that the eradication strategy is appropriate to stop the risk of spread of this invasive species to the South American continent and to restore the biodiversity of riparian environments. This agreement was signed after a reflexion on the lessons learned from past management actions in both countries and after a Feasibility Study funded by both countries and executed by international experts on invasive species, beaver control and large eradication projects on islands.

The public opinion of Tierra del Fuego, is in favor of restoring the riparian forests and the integrity of aquatic systems by the eradication of beavers. Also, several private sectors like ranching, forestry and tourism are in favor of reducing the impact of beavers on their economic activities. The tools to be used in the beaver extraction activities are congruent to international standards and agreements related to animal trapping (**only techniques that meet the humane trapping standards (AIHTS standards) will be used for beaver removal**).

The follow up of the large eradication project is guaranteed by a Binational Agreement and by national financial instruments available under the native forest conservation fund. Also, the involvement of the private sector will support the follow up with the larger eradication project. Outcome 4.2 on pushing the concretization and financing of the *Bi-national beaver eradication programme* forward and related outputs 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 have been built into the project design to insure the follow up in collaboration with the parallel project in Chile also supported by GEF and FAO (see further details in response to STAP comment 6 above).

ANNEX C: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION ACTIVITIES AND THE USE OF FUNDS⁹

A. PROVIDE DETAILED FUNDING AMOUNT OF THE PPG ACTIVITIES FINANCING STATUS IN THE TABLE BELOW:

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: USD 130,000			
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Amount (\$)</i>		
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent Todate</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>
5011 Salaries Professional (Parent)	7358	7349	0
5013 Consultants (Parent)	77342	53527	0
5021 Travel (Parent)	36300	29857	15000
5023 Training/workshops (Parent)	9000	8297	15928
5028 General Operating Expenses (Parent)	0	42	0
Total	130000	99072	30928

⁹ If at CEO Endorsement, the PPG activities have not been completed and there is a balance of unspent fund, Agencies can continue undertake the activities up to one year of project start. No later than one year from start of project implementation, Agencies should report this table to the GEF Secretariat on the completion of PPG activities and the amount spent for the activities.

ANNEX D: CALENDAR OF EXPECTED REFLOWS (if non-grant instrument is used)

Provide a calendar of expected reflows to the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Trust Fund or to your Agency (and/or revolving fund that will be set up)

N/A

FAO Response to GEFSEC Comments

Country/Region: Argentina

Project Title: Strengthening of Governance for the Protection of Biodiversity through the Formulation and Implementation of the National Strategy on Invasive Alien Species (NSIAS) (GCP/ARG/023/GFF)

GEFSEC Project ID: 4768

GEF-5 Strategic Program: BD

GEF Agencies: FAO

Questions	Secretariat Comment at CEO endorsement Received 22 October and 19 November, 2014	FAO Response to GEFSEC comments 31 October and 20 November, 2014
1. Is the participating country eligible?	Cleared	n.a
2. Has the operational focal point endorsed the project?	NA	n.a
3. Is the Agency's comparative advantage for this project clearly described and supported?	Cleared	n.a
4. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is the GEF Agency capable of managing it?	NA	n.a
5. Does the project fit into the Agency's program and staff capacity in the country?	Cleared	n.a
6. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the STAR allocation? • the focal area allocation? • the LDCF under the principle of equitable Access • the SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)? • Nagoya Protocol Investment Fund • focal area set-aside? 	Cleared	n.a
7. Is the project aligned with the focal /multifocal areas/ LDCF/SCCF/NPIF results framework?	Cleared	n.a
8. Are the relevant GEF 5 focal/multifocal areas/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF objectives identified?	Cleared	n.a
9. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, including	Cleared	n.a

<p>NPFE, NAPA, NCSA, or NAP?</p> <p>10. Does the proposal clearly articulate how the capacities developed, if any, will contribute to the sustainability of project outcomes?</p>	<p>22 October, 2014</p> <p>No. This project will support engagement with several different agencies to tackle IAS. However, there is not a description of how the database of IAS will be maintained and updated after the end of the project.</p>	<p>31 October, 2014</p> <p>The national IAS database has been active since 2002 operated by the Universidad Nacional del Sur and other associated research institutions (see section 1.1.1.a in the FAO Project Document on baseline situation). Initially the database received support from the IABIN (The Inter-American Biodiversity information Network), but has for the last years functioned independently based on the institutional commitment of the University, which is also securing its sustainability after the end of the project. The added value of the GEF resources is particularly important for improving the interface to the database to make it more user-friendly for decision makers (see FAO Project Document section 1.1.1.b on remaining barriers). The maintenance and continued actualization of the database will continue to be the responsibility of the research institutions in collaboration with SAyDS, who will house the database in its institutional webpage and server.</p> <p>A paragraph with this explanation has been added to section 5.4 of the FAO Project Document on sustainability of capacities developed.</p>
<p>11. Is (are) the baseline project(s), including problem (s) that the baseline project(s) seek/s to address, sufficiently described and based on sound data and assumptions?</p>	<p>22 October, 2014</p> <p>No. It was asked that a better justification for the selection of the target species was provided as part of this project at CEO endorsement. For the American bullfrog, the primary reason listed is to prevent the spread of chytridiomycosis. While the American bullfrog may be a carrier of the fungus, many other potential carriers and hosts have been identified (including geese, reptiles and crayfish). The rapid spread of chytrid likely has many causes and in many cases had not linked to the spread of American bullfrogs. Thus, please provide a stronger justification of the choice to target this species that does better at explaining why chytrid is a particular concern in this case or other reasons for addressing this species.</p>	<p>31 October, 2014</p> <p>The American bullfrog has been identified as an important threat to the biodiversity and not only as a threat for its role as vector for chytridiomycosis. The bullfrog has no predators in Argentinean ecosystems but is a predator feeding on native amphibian species in wetlands ecosystems. The bullfrog has unique biological characteristics: big sized adults, high reproductive potential, larvae producing toxic secretions and, therefore, they have no natural predators. In Argentina it has affected populations of 16 species of native amphibians distributed across seven of the twenty-three provinces. Several of the affected species have been classified as vulnerable (see section 1.1 b of the FAO Project Document on current status and threats of IAS to globally important biodiversity and ecosystems). In addition, it should also be mentioned that the bullfrog was selected to make sure a wide range of IAS situations are covered within the project's pilots to allow</p>

<p>for maximum experience gathering and learning in relation to the different components of the National IAS Strategy. The objective of this pilot is to work with an example of an IAS constituting a valued economic activity producing a human consumption product in farms and with populations widely established in the nature from escapes from the farms. The pilot will as such give the opportunity to learn about the best options for involvement of the academia (la Asociación Herpetológica Argentina (AHA)) in the survey and follow up activities directed towards the early detection and action.</p> <p>21 November, 2014 Text has been added to the FAO Project Document as requested. Please see track changes and yellow marks for easy reference in section 1.1.b; section 2.4 component 3 introduction; and section 2.4 output 3.2.4</p>	<p>19 November, 2014 Thank you for providing more information in the review sheet. However, the project document has not been revised to reflect these changes and the issues raised above remain in the document. Please revise accordingly.</p>	<p>12. Has the cost-effectiveness been sufficiently demonstrated, including the cost-effectiveness of the Project design approach as compared to alternative approaches to achieve similar benefits?</p> <p>13. Are the activities that will be financed using GEF/LDCF/SCCF funding based on incremental/additional reasoning?</p> <p>14. Is the project framework sound and sufficiently clear?</p> <p>15. Are the applied methodology and assumptions for the description of the incremental/additional benefits sound and appropriate?</p> <p>16. Is there a clear description of: a) the socio-economic benefits, including gender dimensions, to be delivered by the project, and b) how will the delivery of such benefits support the achievement of incremental/ additional benefits?</p> <p>17. Is public participation, including CSOs and indigenous people, taken into consideration, their role identified and addressed properly?</p> <p>18. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the</p>
<p>n.a.</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>12. Has the cost-effectiveness been sufficiently demonstrated, including the cost-effectiveness of the Project design approach as compared to alternative approaches to achieve similar benefits?</p>
<p>n.a.</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>13. Are the activities that will be financed using GEF/LDCF/SCCF funding based on incremental/additional reasoning?</p>
<p>n.a.</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>14. Is the project framework sound and sufficiently clear?</p>
<p>n.a.</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>15. Are the applied methodology and assumptions for the description of the incremental/additional benefits sound and appropriate?</p>
<p>n.a.</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>16. Is there a clear description of: a) the socio-economic benefits, including gender dimensions, to be delivered by the project, and b) how will the delivery of such benefits support the achievement of incremental/ additional benefits?</p>
<p>n.a.</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>17. Is public participation, including CSOs and indigenous people, taken into consideration, their role identified and addressed properly?</p>
<p>n.a.</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>18. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the</p>

<p>consequences of climate change and provides sufficient risk mitigation measures? (i.e., climate resilience)</p> <p>19. Is the project consistent and properly coordinated with other related initiatives in the country or in the region?</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>n.a.</p>
<p>20. Is the project implementation/ execution arrangement adequate?</p>	<p>22 October, 2014 No. Please clarify how resources from CUDAP will be involved in the project (i.e. will staff be seconded to this project?).</p>	<p>31 October, 2014 The co-financing from CUDAP will finance awareness rising campaigns including everything from consultancy services to TV and radio spots, campaign material and its distribution. These funds are allocated as a cash contribution from the CUDAP budget in particular to support all communication related to the formulation and implementation of the National IAS Strategy. Please see the co-financing letter and detailed description of CUDAP co-financing in section 1.1.1.a in the Project Document included here below for easy reference:</p> <p><u>Formulation and implementation of the National IAS Strategy, including prevention, early detection, control, and eradication, and of the related communication strategy.</u></p> <p>“CUDAP will make an important contribution of USD 2,000,000 towards the communication strategy of the National IAS Strategy, including a graphics and web designer; more presence on the international press; specialized staff in communication on IAS; implementation of the strategy through its agencies, including the production and dissemination of short films, advertisements, and news articles, brochures, leaflets, banners, interviews with newspapers, magazines and in specialized programmes; cartoons in children’s magazines, design of digital contents, audiovisuals and spots on the National IAS Strategy.”</p> <p><u>Implementation of IAS management and control protocols for species already introduced and established in the country</u></p> <p>“CUDAP will provide USD 5,000,774 for communication and awareness-raising campaigns related to each of the IAS addressed in the pilot</p>

		<p>programmes”</p> <p><u>Beaver Control</u></p> <p>“USD 1,417,000 provided by CUDAP for implementing the communication and awareness-raising strategy with regard to beavers as harmful IAS, and control and eradication measures”</p>
<p>21. Is the project structure sufficiently close to what was presented at PIF, with clear justifications for changes?</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>n.a.</p>
<p>22. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is there a reasonable</p>	<p>n.a.</p>	<p>n.a.</p>
<p>23. Is funding level for Project management cost appropriate?</p>	<p>22 October, 2014</p> <p>No. It exceeds 5%, please adjust the budget accordingly.</p>	<p>31 October, 2014</p> <p>According to GEF policy PMC can be higher if justified. The component costs estimates in the PIF, including project management costs, were only rough estimates. The detailed project activities were elaborated during project preparation, inputs identified and unit costs systematically collected for all project management activities. The budget estimates were made on the basis of this concrete information and detailed analysis. Project management costs reflect the needs of the project. Please be assured that every effort has been made to reduce PMC to a minimum, which is the current 6%. Please consider that this is a national project with activities spread over the entire territory of Argentina involving many stakeholders both at national, provincial and local level increasing coordination and management costs.</p>
<p>24. Is the funding and co-financing per objective appropriate and adequate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>n.a.</p>
<p>25. At PIF: comment on the indicated cofinancing; At CEO endorsement: indicate if confirmed co-financing is provided.</p>	<p>22 October, 2014</p> <p>Co-finance does not include any engagement with the private sector, which would have strengthened this project. As stated previously, it is unclear how CUDAP will provide support as the description makes it appear that CUDAP staff will support the project from their own unit and thus should be in-kind support.</p> <p>Please clarify the choice of exchange rate between Argentine pesos and American dollars. The exchange</p>	<p>31 October, 2014</p> <p>During the project preparation the private sector has been engage in selection of IAS pilots and the design of the component for the development of the national IAS Strategy, and they have confirmed their commitment to the project. However, because of the way of operating of the private sector it is more feasible to obtain co-financing agreements when the project initiates and concrete activities, with their involvement, actually start. This leveraged additional financing will be reported on in the Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs) at</p>

	<p>rate during most of project preparation, including when the co-financing letters were signed and currently is around 0.12:1. Please justify the use of a rate of approximately 0.19:1 or adjust the dollar values accordingly.</p> <p>19 November, 2014 It is still unclear that CUDAP's resources will in fact be grant rather than in-kind. For example, providing part of someone's time to work on the project would be considered 'in-kind'. As these funds are a significant portion of total cofinance, please give greatly clarity on this issue.</p>	<p>midterm and at project completion.</p> <p>The Exchange rate used was the rate at the time of the formulation of the project budget. The post movements in the exchange rate were accompanied by adjustments in the costs of the inputs and salaries to balance with what was foreseen in the budget.</p> <p>21 November, 2014 CUDAP has allocated 42.931 million Argentine Pesos (converted into USD 8.4 million using the exchange rate at the time of signature of the co-financing letter) 'fresh money' in its budget for a national public information and awareness raising campaign to accompany the formulation and implementation of the national IAS strategy (the main objective of the GEF and co-financed project) the next 4-5 years. This will include public communication targeting the entire country on the objectives, content and implementation of the National IAS Strategy including IAS risks, and prevention, early detection, reporting and action measures. The campaign will also have subcomponents to support each of the control and/or eradication pilots supported by the project components 3 and 4, to make sure the pilots gain the desired public awareness and participation in prevention control and eradication actions as appropriate. The fresh budget contribution from CUDAPE is therefore a very important co-financing for the GEF-project. In concrete this grant will finance consultancy services, TV and radio spots running over longer periods, small documentaries, and campaign material and its distribution. This explanation has been included in the FAO Project Document Section</p>
<p>26. Is the co-financing amount that the Agency is bringing to the project in line with its role?</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>n.a.</p>
<p>27. Have the appropriate Tracking Tools been included with information for all relevant indicators, as applicable?</p>	<p>22 October, 2014 No, Please attach the tracking tool</p>	<p>31 October, 2014 Please notice that the Tracking Tool was included in the FTP link sent to GEFSEC in the first submission. We have included it again in the resubmission for easy reference.</p>
<p>28. Does the proposal include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>n.a.</p>

<p>targets?</p> <p>29. Has the Agency responded adequately to comments from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STAP? • Convention Secretariat? • Council comments? • Other GEF agencies? 	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>n.a.</p>
<p>32. At endorsement/approval, did Agency include the progress of PPG with clear information of commitment status of the PPG?</p>	<p>Cleared</p>	<p>n.a.</p>

