



**GEF SECRETARIAT REVIEW FOR FULL/MEDIUM-SIZED PROJECTS*
THE GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF TRUST FUNDS**

GEF ID:	5392		
Country/Region:	Iraq		
Project Title:	Initial Steps for the Establishment of the National Protected Areas Network		
GEF Agency:	UNEP	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Type of Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund	GEF Focal Area (s):	Biodiversity
GEF-5 Focal Area/ LDCF/SCCF Objective (s):	BD-1;		
Anticipated Financing PPG:	\$50,000	Project Grant:	\$1,230,365
Co-financing:	\$3,450,000	Total Project Cost:	\$4,730,365
PIF Approval:		Council Approval/Expected:	
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	Jaime Cavalier	Agency Contact Person:	Edoardo Zandri

Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at PIF (PFD)/Work Program Inclusion	Secretariat Comment At CEO Endorsement(FSP)/Approval (MSP)
Eligibility	1. Is the participating country eligible ?	5-17-13 Yes. Iraq is eligible for GEF funding. Cleared	
	2. Has the operational focal point endorsed the project?	5-17-13 Yes. There is a Letter of Endorsement from the Operational Focal Point for \$1.5M. The letter is dated 5-3-13. Cleared	
Resource Availability	3. 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? 	5-20-13 Iraq has an allocation of BD \$1.5K. Enough to cover the project. Cleared	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the focal area allocation? 	5-20-13	

		Enough to cover the project. Cleared	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the LDCF under the principle of equitable access 	NA	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)? 	NA	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Nagoya Protocol Investment Fund 	NA	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focal area set-aside? 	NA	
Strategic Alignment	<p>4. Is the project aligned with the focal area/multifocal areas/ LDCF/SCCF/NPIF results framework and strategic objectives?</p> <p><i>For BD projects: Has the project explicitly articulated which Aichi Target(s) the project will help achieve and are SMART indicators identified, that will be used to track progress toward achieving the Aichi target(s).</i></p>	<p>5-17-13 Yes. BD-1 and Aichi Targets 11 and 12. Cleared</p>	
	<p>5. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, including NPFE, NAPA, NCSA, NBSAP or NAP?</p>	<p>5-17-13 Yes. The project is consistent with first NBSAP Stocktaking and Assessment Report, with particular reference to national Priority 2, under Recommendation 4: "Establish pilot protected areas in line with PoWPA priorities, as a basis for the development of national PA management capacity through on-the-ground conservation action and associate training for building capacity for national staff". Cleared</p>	
	<p>6. 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>5-17-13 Iraq is carrying out the "Key Biodiversity Area Project" as the basis to design a national PA system (by Nature Iraq, due for release in the first half of 2013). Nature Iraq with support from</p>	

Project Design

		<p>initial review of the KBA data and developed a summary document entitled "Suitability Analysis for an Iraqi Protected Areas Network". Without the GEF project it is envisioned that further refinements of the KBAs using information of taxa different from birds, with support by national government and international donors e.g. Italy, US, Canada and Japan. The new Protected Area Law is also awaiting cabinet approval, and would provide the legal basis for the official creation of Iraq's first proposed Mesopotamian Marshlands National Park in the Central Marshes.</p> <p>Question: In addition to continue working on the characterization of KBAs, does the Government have actual plans for establishing the PA system and the two pilot areas? What are the Government's plans for the \$1.3M (cash) that is offering as co-financing?</p> <p>7-12-13 Questions properly addressed in Response to GEF comments. Cleared</p>	
	<p>7. Are the components, outcomes and outputs in the project framework (Table B) clear, sound and appropriately detailed?</p>	<p>5-17-13 Yes. The project has the following components:</p> <p>Design of Protected Areas System and institutional strengthening: A strategic action plan for the establishment of the PA system, site-base ecological information, regulatory reforms, institutional and human resources , Training Needs Assessment and capacity building program.</p>	

		<p>implementation: The essential infrastructure, staff, equipment and outline management plans for two priority PAs totaling 224,000 ha are established, serving as an initial model for other PAs in the country.</p> <p>Public Awareness: Improving the level of understanding, consensus and awareness within relevant government sectors, and other stakeholders on the social, economic, ecosystem services, and environmental conservation values provided by a viable PA network .</p> <p>Most of the funding for Component 2 (setting up the 2 PAs) should go to INV, not TA. Please change.</p> <p>7-12-13 Issue roperly addressed in Response to GEF comments. Cleared</p>	
	<p>8. (a) Are global environmental/adaptation benefits identified? (b) Is the description of the incremental/additional reasoning sound and appropriate?</p>	<p>5-17-13 Yes. There is detailed information on the two priority target areas (Dalmaj Wetlands with 100,000 ha. And Teeb with 100, 000) in Annex 1. Cleared</p>	
	<p>9. 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>10. Is the role of public participation, including CSOs, and indigenous peoples where relevant, identified and explicit means for their</p>	<p>5-17-13 There is a long list of stakeholders associated with this project (pages 7-8). What institutions in these pages have</p>	

		<p>With a budget of basically \$1.1M and a very long list of stakeholders, many will be disappointed when the time comes to participate in the implementation with very little funding. Should this list be reduced to those institutions that will actually work on the project?</p> <p>7-12-13 Issue properly addressed in Response to GEF comments. Cleared</p>	
	<p>11. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk mitigation measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)</p>	<p>5-17-13 Yes. Main risks include: the UN Security Phase status of Iraq results in limitation for travel to Iraq by international consultants very limited professional capacity, relevant stakeholders for the PAN development processes have very limited understanding and awareness of the environmental and BD conservations issues at stake (the concept of Protected Areas "Mahmiat" is often initially met with resistance and prejudice), political instability and frequent changes in government, lengthy processes of approval and activation of legislation and difficulties in implementing project recommendations and enforcing legislative provisions.. Mitigations measures addressed on pages 9-10.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <p>What are the risks of carrying out the field activities related to the PA implementation in the two target areas? What are the chances that these activities cannot be carried out due to outbursts of violence?</p>	

		<p>Issue properly addressed in Response to GEF comments. Cleared</p>	
	<p>12. Is the project consistent and properly coordinated with other related initiatives in the country or in the region?</p>	<p>5-17-13 There is a comprehensive list of initiatives. Please highlight those that are essential for the successful development and implementation of the project. With a budget for Project Management of \$119K and 4 years, there will be little chance of effectively coordinating with so many institutions and programs. Highlight the most important.</p> <p>7-12-13 Issue properly addressed in Response to GEF comments. Cleared</p>	
	<p>13. Comment on the project's innovative aspects, sustainability, and potential for scaling up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess whether the project is innovative and if so, how, and if not, why not. • Assess the project's strategy for sustainability, and the likelihood of achieving this based on GEF and Agency experience. • Assess the potential for scaling up the project's intervention. 	<p>5-17-13 As stated in the PIF, the project is very innovative for Iraq as it envisages a close collaboration between the MOE, national conservation NGOs and local community groups for the establishment of the first PAs in country. In addition, a significant element of capacity development and institutional strengthening is envisaged, hence laying the foundations for longer term sustainability of all project outcomes. The plans for a National PA network and the experience generated from the two pilot sites will also provide the basis for the subsequent up-scaling of project achievements at the national level, by the same group of stakeholders involved in this initial GEF project (which is the first ever proper GEF project in Iraq). Cleared</p>	

	14. Is the project structure/design sufficiently close to what was presented at PIF, with clear justifications for changes?		
	15. Has the cost-effectiveness of the project been sufficiently demonstrated, including the cost-effectiveness of the project design as compared to alternative approaches to achieve similar benefits?		
Project Financing	16. Is the GEF funding and co-financing as indicated in Table B appropriate and adequate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?	<p>5-17-13 Yes, but only if co-financing (both cash and in-kind) become effective during project implementation.</p> <p>Are the co-financiers listed in table C aware that their names are being cited in the PIF with associated co-financing?</p> <p>7-12-13 Issues properly addressed in Response to GEF comments. Cleared</p>	
	17. <u>At PIF</u> : Is the indicated amount and composition of co-financing as indicated in Table C adequate? Is the amount that the Agency bringing to the project in line with its role? <u>At CEO endorsement</u> : Has co-financing been confirmed?	<p>5-17-13 See above.</p> <p>7-12-13 Issue properly addressed in Response to GEF comments. Cleared</p>	
	18. Is the funding level for project management cost appropriate?	<p>5-17-13 It is 10% of project cost. Cleared</p>	
	19. <u>At PIF</u> , is PPG requested? If the requested amount deviates from the norm, has the Agency provided adequate justification that the level requested is in line with project design needs?	<p>5-17-13 Yes. \$50,000. Cleared</p>	

	if PPG is completed, did Agency report on the activities using the PPG fund?		
	20. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is there a reasonable calendar of reflows included?	5-17-13 No. Cleared	
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	21. Have the appropriate Tracking Tools been included with information for all relevant indicators, as applicable?		
	22. Does the proposal include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?		
Agency Responses	23. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments from:		
	• STAP?		
	• Convention Secretariat?		
	• The Council?		
	• Other GEF Agencies?		
Secretariat Recommendation			
Recommendation at PIF Stage	24. Is PIF clearance/approval being recommended?	5-17-13 No. Please address outstanding questions under items 6,7, 10,11,12 and 16. 7-12-13 Yes. This PIF is recommended.	
	25. Items to consider at CEO endorsement/approval.		
Recommendation at CEO Endorsement/ Approval	26. Is CEO endorsement/approval being recommended?		
	First review*	May 20, 2013	
Review Date (s)	Additional review (as necessary)	July 12, 2013	
	Additional review (as necessary)		

*** This is the first time the Program Manager provides full comments for the project. Subsequent follow-up reviews should be recorded. For specific comments for each section, please insert a date after comments. Greyed areas in each section do not need comments.**