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

GEF ID:	**5528**		
Country/Region:	**Macedonia**		
Project Title:	**Achieving Biodiversity Conservation through Creation and Effective Management of Protected Areas and Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Land Use Planning**		
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; BD-2;**	
Anticipated Financing PPG:	**$0**	Project Grant:	**$3,360,731**
Co-financing:	**$21,926,500**	Total Project Cost:	**$25,287,231**
PIF Approval:	**February 05, 2014**	Council Approval/Expected:	**March 21, 2014**
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	**Ulrich Apel**	Agency Contact Person:	**Adamou Bouhari**

Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at PIF (PFD)/Work Program Inclusion [1]	Secretariat Comment At CEO Endorsement(FSP)/Approval (MSP)
Eligibility	1. Is the participating **country eligible**?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Yes.	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	2. Has the **operational focal point** endorsed the project?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Yes. 18 Sept 2013 YW Updated endorsement letter has been submitted that clarifies use of flexible modality for a BD project.	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
Resource Availability	3. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the **resources available** from (mark all that apply):		
	• the STAR allocation?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Is currently being checked.	22 February 2016 UA: No. The project lists a different amount

*Some questions here are to be answered only at PIF or CEO endorsement. No need to provide response in gray cells.

[1] Work Program Inclusion (WPI) applies to FSPs only . Submission of FSP PIFs will simultaneously be considered for WPI.

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		18 Sept 2013 YW The project amount is within the STAR allocation.	in table A as compared to Table D. Please check and bring in line with what was approved at PIF stage. The amount in Table A must be the same as the grant amount in Table D. 21 March 2016 UA: Has been corrected. Cleared
	• the focal area allocation?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Is currently being checked. 18 Sept 2013 YW The amount is within the FA allocations. However, Part 1, Section D of the PIF needs to be revised as requesting BD STAR only (and state that it would be using the flexible modality). As it stands, it would be considered as MFA including both BD and LD. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Addressed. Cleared	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	• the LDCF under the principle of equitable access	n/a	n/a
	• the SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?	n/a	n/a
	• the Nagoya Protocol Investment Fund	n/a	n/a
	• focal area set-aside?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Is currently being checked for SFM/REDD+ 18 Sept 2013 YW The PIF has been revised as BD project,	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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		using a flexibility modality.	
Strategic Alignment	4. Is the project aligned with the focal area/multifocal areas/ LDCF/SCCF/NPIF **results framework and strategic objectives**? *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).*	15 Aug 2013 UA: Not fully. The project is aligned strategically with BD, LD, and SFM/REDD+. BD alignment is strong and link the to the Aichi targets has been made explicit. However, the alignment with LD and SFM objectives is not very clear and comprehensive. 18 Sept 2013 YW The project is now revised as BD only, which is appropriate. The project is primary BD1, with some activities related to BD2 under a larger landscape approach. Please state this clearly in section B2 of the PIF. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Addressed. Cleared	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	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?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Please describe the consistency of the project with CBD and UNCCD convention related strategies and plans, in particular the NBSAP and NAP. The current text under B1 does not address this. 18 Sept 2013 YW Linkage with NBSAP has been clarified. However, the information related to UNCCD and UNFCCC remains substantially in the PIF. As it is rather confusing, please delete all information	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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		related to other conventions in the document, unless it is strongly related to BD. Moreover, there are substantial duplication of information under A1 and B1. Please consolidate the related information under B1. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Addressed. Cleared	
Project Design	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?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Not very clear - only for the Protected Area Network and the current Biodiversity Protection activities in Macedonia a baseline is described. Please describe the baseline projects or ongoing or planned actvities that can be considered the baseline on which GEF incremental support can be provided. 18 Sept 2013 YW Remains unclear. While number of related projects supported by external partners are listed, it does not provide overview of the national capacity and initiative related to PA management that are led by the government, both centrally and locally. Please provide a more comprehensive overview analysis/description on the below: 1) what is the current status on PA management in Macedonia (legislation,	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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		coverage, biome, institutional framework, staffing, financing, etc) 2) what is the gap (what has been done so far, and what is missing. Gaps in institutional and legislative elements, PA representativeness and coverage, etc) 3) where and what this project is going to focus on (approach, biomes, which PAs, etc). Sar Planina PA is mentioned in the last table but no information has been provided on this PA elsewhere in the PIF. It may help if a brief description is provided for each component. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Adequately Addressed. Cleared	
	7. Are the components, outcomes and outputs in the **project framework** (Table B) clear, sound and appropriately detailed?	15 Aug 2013 UA: No. What is lacking in Table B is an emerging picture of how the project would address the three different components and the different planned outputs in a comprehensive and synergistic way. The project also appears to be over-ambitious in its planned outputs. The project objective has not been defined. Component 1 is relatively clear. Component 2 is unclear. There is insufficient logical coherence between outputs, outcomes, the component title. Component 3 appears as an add-on with little relation to the other 2 components. Carbon benefits are not identified.	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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		18 Sept 2013 YW The current project framework is rather confusing, unclear and require further work. Outcomes and outputs under Component 3 may better be integrated in either component 1 and 2. The project objective does not really reflect the BD2 aspect of the project. The PM suggests to either focus only on PA management, or reflect the BD2 element in the objective. Most of the outputs are focused on development of plans and database, rather than implementation of them. The PM suggests to have separate components on: 1) PA system/institutional level planning; and 2) implementation/site level implementation. Please strengthen and further clarify the later component in the PIF. Outputs related to increased management effectiveness at both system and site levels are missing. If the project is going to focus its activities related on management effectivenss in Sar Planina and other areas, please clarify and provide necessary information. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Addressed.	

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		Cleared	
	8. (a) Are global environmental/ adaptation benefits identified? (b) Is the description of the incremental/additional reasoning sound and appropriate?	15 Aug 2013 UA: No. The respective section in the PIF lacks specific information on which GEBs the project will create. 18 Sept 2013 YW Additional information has been provided but this seems to be covering the entire BD in the country. Is it realistic to cover all? Target, focus, and be little more specific, based on the gaps that are identified. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Addressed. Cleared	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	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?		22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	10. Is the role of public participation, including CSOs, and indigenous peoples where relevant, identified and explicit means for their engagement explained?	15 Aug 2013 UA: CSO is mentioned, but what explicit means for their engagement are planned? 18 Sept 2013 YW The response to above is still unclear. Pleaes provide further information. 18 Nov 2013 UA:	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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		Addressed. Cleared	
	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)	15 Aug 2013 UA: Risks are addressed, but climate change risks are not mentioned. 18 Sept 2013 YW CC risks is now incorporated. Further risk analysis and measures to be identified are expected by the time of CEO endorsement.	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	12. Is the **project consistent and properly coordinated** with other related initiatives in the country or in the region?	15 Aug 2013 UA: This is not described in the PIF. How will all the co-financing institutions listed and their activities be coordinated? 18 Sept 2013 YW Further information has been provided on the relation to the cofinanced activities. Concrete mechanism for coordination needs to be identified by the time of CEO endorsement. While some information is provided on the former GEF project on PA system management that was managed by UNDP, it is not clear what the project acheived, remaining gaps, lessons learned, and how this project is going to build on it. Please provide a more comprehensive overview. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Overview has been provided. Cleared	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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	13. Comment on the project's **innovative aspects, sustainability, and potential for scaling up**. • 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.	15 Aug 2013 UA: The project has some innovative elements, the BD component has a high likelihood for being sustainable, and the scaling-up of some interventions has potential. All these points would need some more concise and concrete description in the PIF. 18 Sept 2013 The first sentence under the related section (on UNEP comparative advantage) should move to B3. Transboundary PA issue is raised here. There is no mention on the issue elsewhere in the PIF. Please clarify, and if relevant incorporate in the project framework and design. Sustainability description is also very weak. The linkage to EU accession is rather confusing. Please revise, and clarify how the project initiatives could be sustainable through building necessary national capacities. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Addressed. Cleared	22 February 2016 UA: Yes. Refer to comments at PIF stage.
	14. Is the project structure/design sufficiently close to what was presented at PIF, with clear justifications for changes?		22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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	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?		22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
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?	15 Aug 2013 UA: As mentioned above, the project appears over-ambitious and components might not be sufficiently funded, in particular component 1. 18 Sept 2013 YW Reviewing the baseline activities, most of them seem to be related to component 2 and it is unclear where the $5m cofinance for component 1 is coming from. Please clarify. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Has been clarified. Cleared	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	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?	15 Aug 2013 UA: While the amount is adequate, it is unclear through which means all these funding institutions would contribute and how they would engage in the project implementation. 18 Sept 2013 YW Further information provided.	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	18. Is the funding level for **project management cost** appropriate?	15 Aug 2013 UA: Yes.	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	19. <u>At PIF</u>, is PPG requested? If the requested amount deviates from the norm, has the Agency	15 Aug 2013 UA: Yes.	22 February 2016 UA: Yes.

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	provided adequate justification that the level requested is in line with project design needs? At CEO endorsement/ approval, if PPG is completed, did Agency report on the activities using the PPG fund?	PPG request is pending PIF clearance.	
	20. If there is **a non-grant instrument** in the project, is there a reasonable calendar of reflows included?	n/a	n/a
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	21. Have the appropriate **Tracking Tools** been included with information for all relevant indicators, as applicable?		22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	22. Does the proposal include a **budgeted M&E Plan** that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?		22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
Agency Responses	23. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments from:		
	• STAP?		22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	• Convention Secretariat?		none received
	• The Council?		22 February 2016 UA: Yes.
	• Other GEF Agencies?		none received
Secretariat Recommendation			
Recommendation at PIF Stage	**24. Is PIF clearance/approval being recommended?**	15 Aug 2013 UA: No. The project is not recommended for further development along the concept that is currently being presented. The MFA project design is very weak and does not make a case for a comprehensive and synergistic approach. It also does not justify SFM/REDD+	

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		funding for several reasons, one of which is that it is weakly aligned with the SFM/REDD+ results framework and does not create/identify carbon benefits. Since Macedonia is a flexible country, the project proponents might want to consider to focus available resources on the BD component and develop a project focused on Protected Area Network expansion in Macedonia through the establishment of the Sar Planina National Park. 18 Sept 2013 YW The project has now revised to focus only on BD, which is welcome. However, the project logic and framework continues to be weak. Based on the work undertaken by the former projects, including the GEF project on PA management, please provide a better analysis on the current status, gaps, and required interventions. 18 Nov 2013 UA: Comments by GEFSEC have been adequately addressed. The project is technically cleared and may be included into an upcoming work porgram.	
	25. Items to consider at CEO endorsement/approval.		
Recommendation at CEO Endorsement/ Approval	**26. Is CEO endorsement/approval being recommended?**		22 February 2016 UA: No. Please address comments in this review. 21 March 2016 UA: Yes. Program Manager recommends the project for CEO endorsement.

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	First review*	August 15, 2013	February 22, 2016
Review Date (s)	Additional review (as necessary)	September 18, 2013	March 21, 2016
	Additional review (as necessary)	November 18, 2013	

* **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.**