



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

GEF ID:	5462		
Country/Region:	Lao PDR		
Project Title:	Strengthening agro-climatic monitoring and information systems to improve adaptation to climate change and food security in Lao PDR		
GEF Agency:	FAO	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Type of Trust Fund:	Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)	GEF Focal Area (s):	Climate Change
GEF-5 Focal Area/ LDCF/SCCF Objective (s):	CCA-2; CCA-2;		
Anticipated Financing PPG:	\$150,000	Project Grant:	\$5,479,452
Co-financing:	\$16,755,500	Total Project Cost:	\$22,384,952
PIF Approval:		Council Approval/Expected:	
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	Fareeha Iqbal	Agency Contact Person:	Selvaraju Ramasamy

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 ?	Yes; Lao PDR is an LDC and has completed its NAPA preparation.	
	2. Has the operational focal point endorsed the project?	Yes; an OFP endorsement letter dated October 3, 2012 is attached with the submission.	
Resource Availability	3. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply):		
	• the STAR allocation?		
	• the focal area allocation?		
	• the LDCF under the principle of equitable access	Yes, the funding requested for this project is available for Lao PDR under the principle of equitable access.	

	Technology Transfer)?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Nagoya Protocol Investment Fund focal area set-aside? 		
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>The PIF states that the project is aligned with LDCF objectives CCA-1 and CCA-2. Most of the activities relate to assessments, improved data collection & processing, training and technology improvements. As such, the project is aligned with objective CCA-2 (increasing adaptive capacity), but not with CCA-1, as there are no investments directly targeting vulnerability reduction (though this is of course the eventual outcome of any LDCF project).</p> <p>However, there are technology-related sub-components that are aligned with objective CCA-3 (e.g., 1.1.1: "agro-met station networks will be improved/ rehabilitated with conventional and automatic weather stations", and 1.1.4: "a geospatial analysis facility including a remote sensing and GIS unit is established").</p> <p>Recommended action: The PIF seems to be aligned with LDCF objectives CCA-2 and CCA-3. Please adjust accordingly, or provide explanation why this is not the case.</p> <p>2013/09/23 – YES. The Focal Area Strategy Framework has been adjusted as recommended.</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, NADA, NCSA, NDSAP or NADP?</p>	<p>Yes. Agriculture was identified as a priority sector in Lao PDR's National Communications to the UNFCCC (2000) and as a highly vulnerable sector requiring priority adaptation measures in its NADA (2000). Lao PDR's National</p>	

		<p>limited analyses and assessments of climate change impacts in the country exist due to lack of long-term climatic data. The LDCF project will support technical and capacity investments to address this critical gap in the agricultural context, thereby taking important steps towards adaptation in the agriculture sector.</p>	
<p>Project Design</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>Yes. Lao PDR's agriculture sector, of immense significance to growth and poverty reduction in the country, faces several challenges - including from climatic variability. The baseline projects seek to address these in various ways.</p> <p>The LDCF project will support the following 5 baseline projects that focus on agricultural production improvements: (1) WB-funded 'Mekong Integrated Water Resources Management Project' (to support improvements in hydromet data collection, management and forecasting for floods, droughts and extreme weather); (2) ADB-supported 'Greater Mekong Sub-Region Flood and Drought Management and Mitigation Project - Lao PDR' (to reduce economic impact of losses from droughts and floods); (3) the ADB-supported 'Sustainable Natural Resources Management and Productivity Enhancement Project' (supports land mapping, classification, suitability and zoning); (4) the 'Pro-Poor Policy Approaches to Address Risk and Vulnerability at the Country Level project' (supports risk and vulnerability reduction measures for smallholder farmers and rural poor); and (5) the 'Development of Monitoring System of</p>	

		project' (supports improved food security, rural livelihoods and poverty reduction).	
	7. Are the components, outcomes and outputs in the project framework (Table B) clear, sound and appropriately detailed?	<p>Additional information is requested.</p> <p>Component 1: The 'additional' CC adaptation reasoning is not immediately obvious from Table B, though it has been brought out in Section 5 of the PIF. Further details are requested on the Farmer Field Schools (Sub-component 1.2.4).</p> <p>Component 2: The additional reasoning is clear, but further details are requested on the LRIMS and AEZ (Lao PDR version) portals.</p> <p>Recommended action:</p> <p>(1) Please make additional CC adaptation relevance of Component 1 activities more obvious in Table B. (2) How many farmers will the 34 Farmer Field Schools be expected to reach? How will the climate information products and training be provided? (2) Regarding LRIMS and Lao PDR AEZ, we caution against heavy emphasis on the results of downscaling exercises for adaptation-related policy purposes, as there are trade-offs between spatial resolution and information quality (esp. where GCM results are not consistent, e.g., projected rainfall in Lao PDR). It would be good if both are comprehensive information portals that include more than just presentation of high-res outputs of various modeling exercises.</p> <p>2013/09/23 – YES. Table B has been clarified as it relates to components 1 and 2.</p>	

	<p>8. (a) Are global environmental/adaptation benefits identified? (b) Is the description of the incremental/additional reasoning sound and appropriate?</p>	<p>Yes. In Component 1, the baseline project's hydromet network focusing on the Mekong River will be expanded to include major agricultural plains, thereby addressing a critical adaptation need. The LDCF resources will upgrade or rehabilitate 12 stations covering 4 major agriculturally important plains; strengthen a laboratory for instrument calibration and agro-met analysis; and provide capacity support through trainings and improved data management.</p> <p>Component 2 focuses on addressing the information gaps that stand in the way of adaptation-friendly policy measures/ decision-making for the agriculture sector (e.g., assessment of climate change on water availability, crop yields and the agricultural economy).</p> <p>Component 3 pertains to knowledge management and dissemination where the LDCF will support the development of adaptation strategies and mainstreaming data into policies and strategies.</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 engagement explained?</p>	<p>No. The PIF notes that communities will directly benefit from the improved climate warnings that are expected to result from the project. However, this pertains to socio-economic benefits of the project (Item 9).</p>	

		<p>(1) Please discuss if and how CSOs and communities are involved in design of the project, will be actively engaged throughout the implementation period, and can provide feedback.</p> <p>2013/09/23 “ YES. Section A.2 of the revised PIF describes adequately how CSOs and local communities will participate in project design and implementation.</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>Not entirely. (a) There is the risk of technical constraints pertaining to the functioning of the LRIMS and Lao PDR AEZ information portals.</p> <p>We are pleased to see that maintenance of the weather station instruments/ equipment has been factored into sub-component 1.2.1; this tends to be overlooked and can constitute a major risk to sustainability.</p> <p>Recommended action: Please discuss how technical issues such as speed and ease of access (e.g., for downloading large datasets, maps, etc.) will be handled, to ensure the information portals are easy to access. Technical constraints can often prove limiting factors to the success of such endeavors. Will the data be in a format that can easily be used by other agencies? Will the portals be easy to link up with other (related) portals/websites? How widely accessible will they be?</p> <p>2013/09/23 “ YES. Section A.3 of the re-submission clarifies how the risks associated with the LRIMS and AEZ information portals would be mitigated.</p>	

	<p>12. Is the project consistent and properly coordinated with other related initiatives in the country or in the region?</p>	<p>Yes. There do not appear to be many adaptation projects being implemented in Lao PDR; however, the project is coordinated with ongoing and proposed programs by government departments in land survey and zoning, forestry and watershed management, remote sensing, and work being coordinated by the Dept. of National DRM as well as dept. of climate change (in MoNRE). It will also draw upon studies conducted by CIAT (on 'Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Land Use in the Lao PDR') and IFAD ('Climate Risk Management in Agriculture with Demonstration Sites in Laos, Indonesia and Bangladesh').</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>-- Innovativeness: While the concepts of improved weather stations, information portals and capacity building for agromet data & products are in themselves not innovative, significant gaps exist in Lao PDR in these areas. In a country context, therefore, the proposed measures are innovative.</p> <p>-- Sustainability: Not sure yet. More information has been requested regarding (a) identification and handling of potential technical constraints affecting performance of the LRIMS and AEZ (Lao PDR version); and (b) public participation.</p> <p>-- Scale up: Yes. This project involves investments and capacity building (weather station upgrades, technical trainings, establishment of Farmer Field Schools for local training, etc.) that can be scaled up to cover additional agricultural areas, personnel, and farming communities.</p>	

		2013/09/23 â€“ YES. Please refer to sections 10 and 11 above.	
	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?	Yes. LDCF and co-financing amounts appear adequate and appropriately distributed across the investment and TA components.	
	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?	Yes. The total amount and composition of co-financing (\$16.7 million) is adequate, and the amount the FAO is bringing to the project (\$1.9 million) is in line with its role.	
	18. Is the funding level for project management cost appropriate?	Yes; it comes to 4.7% of the total project LDCF amount requested.	
	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? <u>At CEO endorsement/ approval</u> , if PPG is completed, did Agency report on the activities using the PPG fund?	Yes, PPG has been requested and is within the norm.	

	20. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is there a reasonable calendar of reflows included?	N/A	
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?	Not yet. Please address Items 4, 7, 10, 11 and 13. 2013/09/23 “ YES. The project is technically cleared. However, the project will be processed for clearance/approval only once adequate, additional resources become available in the LDCF.	
	25. Items to consider at CEO endorsement/approval.	Please provide information on project execution arrangements. Gender-disaggregated indicators for beneficiaries would be very welcome.	
Recommendation at CEO Endorsement/Approval	26. Is CEO endorsement/approval being recommended?		
	First review*	July 01, 2013	
Review Date (s)	Additional review (as necessary)	September 23, 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.**