



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

GEF ID:	5668		
Country/Region:	Paraguay		
Project Title:	Innovative Use of a Voluntary Payment for Environmental Services Scheme to Avoid and Reduce GHG Emissions and Enhance Carbon Stocks in the Highly Threatened Dry Chaco Forest Complex in Western Paraguay		
GEF Agency:	CI	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Type of Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund	GEF Focal Area (s):	Climate Change
GEF-5 Focal Area/ LDCF/SCCF Objective (s):	CCM-5;		
Anticipated Financing PPG:	\$0	Project Grant:	\$2,201,615
Co-financing:	\$2,117,460	Total Project Cost:	\$4,319,075
PIF Approval:	February 05, 2014	Council Approval/Expected:	March 21, 2014
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	Milena Vasquez	Agency Contact Person:	Orissa Samaroo

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 ?	1/10/2014 CCM JS Yes.	MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.
	2. Has the operational focal point endorsed the project?	1/10/2014 CCM JS Yes. A letter signed by Ms Cristina Morales, GEF OFP for Paraguay, dated January 2, 2014 has been submitted.	MGV, October 7, 2015: Note: there is a new OFP for Paraguay, Ms. Karem Rocio A Elizeche Gomez. No action required.
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? 	1/10/2014 CCM JS No. Total resources available within the STAR allocation of Paraguay is \$2,490,000 (CCM). however, funds	MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.

*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.

FSP/MSP review template: updated January 2013

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		<p>requested amounts to \$2,584,714 including agency fees and ppg request.</p> <p>Please adjust the requested fund amount to match the available STAR allocation amount.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed. The total requested amount has been revised to \$2,490,000.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the focal area allocation? 	<p>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. Please see above.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed.</p>	MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the LDCF under the principle of equitable access 		MGV, October 5, 2015: NA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)? 		MGV, October 7, 2015: NA.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Nagoya Protocol Investment Fund 		MGV, October 5, 2015: NA.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focal area set-aside? 		MGV, October 7, 2015: 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>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. The project will contribute towards CCM-5 objective of promoting conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through sustainable management of LULUCF. However, choice of the project region has not been fully supported.</p> <p>Please describe distribution of forests in the country, along with deforestation rates in different regions to support the choice of the project region (from climate change mitigation perspective).</p>	MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.

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	<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>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed.</p> <p>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. PIF lists a number of national documents and strategies that are consistent with the project. However, description of how the project is consistent is missing.</p> <p>a) Please focus on climate change mitigation and low carbon development related plans and strategies. b) Please state what elements of these national documents and policies the project contributes to or aligns with and how. c) Please describe how the project is consistent with the country's national communications and please support the focus on landuse sector for climate change mitigation in the country.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed. Adequate information about the project consistency with National Communication and the country's mitigation strategy has been added.</p>	<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.</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>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. Baseline scenario related to rapid deforestation in the Paraguayan Dry Chaco Forest Complex (DCFC) is described adequately. Conversion to agriculture and pasture have been identified as major causes and foreign investment in cattle ranching has also been cited as a reason behind large-scale conversions.</p>	<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.</p>

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Project Design		<p>Baseline projects have not been presented. Please provide summaries of the baseline projects (listed in table C), on which the proposed project will directly build on. Please include their status and timeline.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS</p> <p>Addressed. All the baseline projects have been adequately described. It is assumed that the proposed project will leverage the experiences of the identified partners to replicate or modify methodologies and maps developed in the UN-REDD+ program to use/develop the same for DCFC. It is expected that the project will develop a PES scheme that is linked to a viable carbon market as demonstrated in the PFCP.</p>	
	7. Are the components, outcomes and outputs in the project framework (Table B) clear, sound and appropriately detailed?	<p>1/10/2014 CCM JS</p> <p>No. Baseline projects have not been appropriately presented, therefore it is not possible to determine the role and the overall soundness of the project components. Please clarify the following as well:</p> <p>a) Section 6.</p> <p>Component 1</p> <p>b) As a UN-REDD country, Paraguay is already setting up national REDD-plus strategy and frameworks for implementation. Please consider using the project as a baseline.</p>	<p>By CEO Endorsement Request:</p> <p>Component 1</p> <p>Please describe the steps to be undertaken by the project to make proposed PES scheme usable through the REDD+ program as well, highlighting the critical aspects of the PES and REDD+ requirements that are similar.</p> <p>With the acknowledgement of the influence of international investments in DCFC, the project is expected to define recommendations for legislations or for adherence to the existing ones through increased</p>

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		<p>c) As the proposed project is focused on carbon, it is unclear why the project is considering a PES scheme and not carbon crediting system that could be viable both nationally and internationally through the already existing voluntary carbon market.</p> <p>d) It is stated that Law 3001/06 "Valuation and Payment for Environmental Services" has been recently established. However, the project does not describe any currently active PES scheme into which carbon could be integrated into as one of the ecosystem services. While REDD-plus scheme is already underway in the country, it seems more viable and cost-effective that the project builds into this scheme. Please compare and explain.</p> <p>e) In expected output 1.3, it is insufficient that landholders in priority areas are just invited to participate in the incentive program. It is expected that the project secures participation of landholders in the important areas.</p> <p>f) Similarly, in expected output 1.4 the project needs to ensure adoption of sustainable land-use practices.</p> <p>g) Please explain how the project component addresses the demand for land due to foreign investments in cattle ranching.</p> <p>Component 2</p> <p>a) Under UNREDD Paraguay has initiated National Forest Monitoring System. Please utilize such already available systems or contribute towards it in order to determine high carbon priority areas in</p>	<p>awareness of the land owners.</p> <p>Component 2</p> <p>As the GEFSec perceives no added value from taxonomic assessments of soil organisms and other biota, it expects the paragraph A.1.4.17 and all the related activities to be removed from the project by the CEO Endorsement Request.</p> <p>Assessment of socio-economic variables is encouraged and deemed valuable for the project results. However, the value of cultural assessments is unclear. Please describe what the cultural assessments would entail. GEFSec is in support of such assessments only to an extent where it contributes or demonstrates sustainability of project outcomes, mainly carbon storage.</p> <p>Component 3</p> <p>It is suggested to utilize the PPG state to further define the participants, specific operations and knowledge products to be developed in this component. Please limit the capacity building activities to incentive schemes and land-use practices that demonstrate direct contribution to carbon benefits. Biodiversity conservation related capacity building is expected to be funded through different financial resource. Such benefits are expected to be monitored throughout the project</p>

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		<p>DCFC.</p> <p>b) In expected output 1.2, the need for biological and cultural assessment is unclear. Carbon richness itself could be a sound proxy for assessment of soil organisms proposed in the project. Please clarify the value of cultural assessment as it relates to carbon content and sustainability of project results.</p> <p>Component 3:</p> <p>a) Please make expected outputs quantitative and concrete (for example X number of stakeholders trained).</p> <p>b) Output 3.2 has too many activities and areas for which capacity is expected to be built. Please identify topics that are relevant to the project goals and prioritize them.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed and suggested changes have been made to the project outcomes.</p>	<p>life..</p> <p>MGV, October 7, 2015:</p> <p>From PIF Review to be addressed by CEO Endorsement: Component 1 Comment not cleared. Please further elaborate on the current status of the REDD+ program in Paraguay and how the PES scheme will work within the REDD+ framework.</p> <p>The project will assess the weaknesses and gaps of the current laws, in particular Law 3001/06, and make recommendations for improving their enforcement and compliance. Comment cleared.</p> <p>Component 2 Comments cleared.</p> <p>Component 3 Comments cleared.</p> <p>In addition please comment on the following: a) The STAP published an advisory paper on Payment for Ecosystems Services (Payments for Environmental Services and the Global Environment Facility, 2010). Please comment on how the PES scheme responds to this guidance from STAP.</p> <p>b) Please comment on how the PES scheme will avoid risks of leakage and</p>

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			<p>adverse self-selection.</p> <p>c) Please confirm that the PES system will be VCS, GOLD plus CCBA verification certified in order to access the international carbon market.</p> <p>MGV, December 17, 2015: all 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>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. Please focus on the GEB that is the primary goal of the project (ie carbon). The description of the amount of tCO₂e that will be avoided is available in different sections of the PIF. Please provide a clear summary in this section, along with the quantitative estimations of current and projected deforestation rates and the expected reduction in such threats due to the project activities. Please show (calculations) how the project will avoid 21 mtCO₂e. More detailed calculations in accordance with one of the standard methodologies will be expected at CEO Endorsement.</p> <p>At PIF stage it is unclear what substantial contribution the project would make in terms of technology transfer and market transformation. Please explain.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed. Preliminary estimations show that the project will reduce 163,442,951 tCO₂e land based emissions during the project life.</p>	<p>More detailed calculations in accordance with one of the standard methodologies (VCS) will be expected at CEO Endorsement.</p> <p>MGV, October 7, 2015: Comment not cleared. Please provide detailed calculations on expected GHG emissions benefits utilizing a standard methodology, such as FAO's EX-ACT tool.</p> <p>MGV, December 17, 2015: Detailed calculations have not been provided. Please provide methodology including calculations and assumptions for coming up with the 21 million tCO₂e estimate.</p> <p>MGV, March 23, 2016: The project has provided details on the carbon stock for the 300,000 targeted hectares, as well as a success rate for this type of project and provided a new estimate of avoided emissions of at least 5.25 million tCO₂e, with the aim to achieve all 100% participation rate. Further, the Agency will confirm estimates using X-ACT during implementation. Comment cleared.</p>

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	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?		1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed. MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.
	10. Is the role of public participation, including CSOs, and indigenous peoples where relevant, identified and explicit means for their engagement explained?	1/10/2014 CCM JS Yes for PIF stage. Further details on involvement of local stakeholders, CSOs etc will be sought at the endorsement stage.	MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes, details on the role of project stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and CSOs were provided.
	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)	1/10/2014 CCM JS Yes for PIF stage.	MGV, October 7, 2015: No. Please include risks related to climate change. MGV, December 17, 2015: Comment cleared.
	12. Is the project consistent and properly coordinated with other related initiatives in the country or in the region?	1/10/2014 CCM JS No. Please provide details of the REDD initiative in the country as either one of the baseline projects or as a related initiative. 1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed. As suggested the REDD initiative has been added as a baseline project and description of other projects have been provided.	By CEO endorsement request specific details on which component outputs/outcomes will benefit from coordination and how such coordination will be undertaken is expected. MGV, October 7, 2015: Comment not cleared. Please comment on how the project will coordinate with current GEF initiatives in Paraguay, such as UNDP's Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Land Management project (GEF ID 4860), as well as the Taking Deforestation Out of Commodity Supply Chains Integrated Approach Pilot (GEF ID 9072), in which CI is participating. MGV, December 17, 2015: Comment

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			cleared.
	<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>1/10/2014 CCM JS This will be assessed after comments on the project have been addressed.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed. Appropriate reasoning has been provided.</p>	<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: Innovation: The project through its PES scheme will make it easier and less financially risky for landowners to comply with current legislation and will also build a sound crediting scheme through which ESCs could be reliably marketed. The project will also bring together economic sectors (cattle ranchers, private financial agencies, NGOs, local communities) and the Government of Paraguay (GoP) that have traditionally not worked together to provide both local and global benefits.</p> <p>Sustainability: The governmental commitment coupled with the interest of the local stakeholders will contribute towards the sustainability of the project results.</p> <p>Scale up: The national REDD+ program in the country has made progress in developing a methodology for forest inventory, which will form a basis for forest assessments in DCFC in the proposed project. The project will develop complementarity in the two carbon related payment schemes such that both can be viable and replicable in the long run.</p>
	<p>14. Is the project structure/design sufficiently close to what was presented at PIF, with clear justifications for changes?</p>		<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes, there are no major changes from PIF.</p> <p>MGV, December 17, 2015: The</p>

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			<p>reorganization of expected outcomes with respect to Components 1 and 2 from PIF have been justified. However, the change in amount between Component 3 from PIF is over 10% of the GEF grant. Please submit a letter to circulate to Council to communicate these changes and reasoning behind it or ensure changes do not pass the 10% limit.</p> <p>MGV, March 23, 2016: The project has been resubmitted to ensure that the changes to budget allocations of the project components do not exceed 10% of the total grant amount. Comment cleared.</p>
	<p>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?</p>		<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.</p>
<p>Project Financing</p>	<p>16. Is the GEF funding and co-financing as indicated in Table B appropriate and adequate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?</p>	<p>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. Unless the project is closely integrated into strong baseline projects, funding and co-financing may not be adequate. It will be revisited after other comments have been addressed.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed.</p>	<p>MGV, October 5, 2015: Yes.</p>
	<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</p>	<p>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. The total co-financing amount is \$7.015m and the grant to co-financing ratio is 1:3.1. About 60% of the co-</p>	<p>Please use the PPG period to identify and secure CI co-financing that is appropriate for the project.</p>

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	<p>bringing to the project in line with its role? <u>At CEO endorsement:</u> Has co-financing been confirmed?</p>	<p>financing is in-kind. Conservation International is not providing any direct investment in the project.</p> <p>a) To ensure commitment of partners in the project, it is suggested to obtain a higher proportion of investments or cash co-financing.</p> <p>b) As currently presented, sources of co-financing are unclear. Please clearly state which private sector, CSO and foundation are contributing to the project.</p> <p>c) As an implementing agency, Conservation International is expected to make a financial investment in the project.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Addressed. Identities of various co-financiers are clearer and the proportion of investments has been increased to 78%. CI is contributing only \$160,000 towards the project. GEFSec strongly recommends CI to increase its contribution towards the project.</p>	<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: No.</p> <p>a) From the co-financing letters, it is not clear that the \$280,000 in-kind from the World Land Trust (WLT) and Swire Pacific Offshore (SPO) are two separate amounts, but rather it appears that they are referring to the same figure. A letter signed by Capt. Simon Bennett of SPO confirms "that SPO has committed to contribute approximately USD 280,000 to carry out activities in the Chaco project area of the project," while a letter signed by John Burton of WLT confirms that, "SPO will, through World Land Trust, contribute approximately US\$ 70,000 per year to the Chaco component of the PFCP over the next four years..." Please clarify.</p> <p>b) In addition, the reasoning behind the estimate for revenues expected from the sale of Certificates of Environmental Services as provided in the co-financing letter from the Paraguayan Institute on Environmental Law and Economics is not clear. Please provide this co-financing value based on an appropriate estimate of the price per ton these Certificates will sell for and the expected avoided emissions from the hectares to be certified.</p> <p>MGV, December 17, 2015: a) Comment cleared. b) After discussions with the agency, it is recommended to remove this estimate as co-financing given that it cannot be</p>

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			<p>confirmed at this time. However, as a key component of the project's success is to develop and support this voluntary market, the agency is requested to analyze and communicate on the lessons learned from this experience and to develop a contingency plan for the project, if this market and expected financing do not materialize, to ensure the project is as successful as possible.</p> <p>MGV, March 23, 2016: b) The co-financing from the sale of Certificates of Environmental Services has been removed from the project. In addition, the Agency has submitted a plan to ensure the project is successful should the voluntary carbon market not materialized. Comment cleared.</p>
	18. Is the funding level for project management cost appropriate?	1/10/2014 CCM JS Yes. PMC is 5% of the total project grant request.	MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.
	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?	1/10/2014 CCM JS Yes. Total amount of \$103,554 is requested as a PPG.	MGV, October 7, 2015: Agency reported on completed use of PPG and on lessons learned during the PPG Phase.
	20. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is there a reasonable calendar of reflows included?	1/10/2014 CCM JS NA.	MGV, October 7, 2015: NA.
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	21. Have the appropriate Tracking Tools been included with		MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.

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	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?		MGV, October 7, 2015: Yes.
Agency Responses	23. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments from:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STAP? 		<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: No.</p> <p>Please elaborate on the second part of STAP's third question: "Please also consider how quantifiable evidence will be generated over the life of the project, which can tangibly link these schemes to generation of global environmental benefits."</p> <p>MGV, December 17, 2015: Comment cleared.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention Secretariat? • The Council? 		<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: NA.</p> <p>MGV, October 7, 2015: No. Please respond to Canada's Council Member's comments from the March 2014 Intersessional Work Program, included below:</p> <p>"We note that the project includes the option to transfer Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) credits from one part of the country to another, particularly from areas where landowners are not able to meet the 25% legal requirement for land conservation. We request that the proponents clarify how they will ensure that this offset system does not adversely affect certain local areas and certain ecosystems.</p>

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			<p>In addition, the project should provide more clarity on how its PES scheme will interact with Paraguay's eventual REDD+ system. Specifically, the proposal should clearly outline the project's value-added and how it will be incorporated into REDD+."</p> <p>MGV, December 17, 2015: The project is actively considering this issue. Agency response addressed how the PES scheme will interact with the REDD+ system. Comments cleared.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other GEF Agencies? 		MGV, October 7, 2015: NA.
Secretariat Recommendation			
Recommendation at PIF Stage	24. Is PIF clearance/approval being recommended?	<p>1/10/2014 CCM JS No. Please address comments provided in sections 3,4,5,6,7,8,12,16 and 17.</p> <p>1/28/2014 CCM JS Yes. All the pending issues have been addressed.</p>	
	25. Items to consider at CEO endorsement/approval.		
Recommendation at CEO Endorsement/ Approval	26. Is CEO endorsement/approval being recommended?		<p>MGV, October 7, 2015: No. Please address comments provided in boxes 7, 8, 11, 12, 17 and 23.</p> <p>MGV, December 17, 2015: Not at this time. Please address comments in boxes 8, 14 and 17.</p> <p>MGV, March 23, 2016: Yes, all comments have been cleared. P.M recommends for CEO Endorsement.</p>
	First review*	January 10, 2014	October 07, 2015

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Review Date (s)	Additional review (as necessary)	January 28, 2014	December 17, 2015
	Additional review (as necessary)	March 23, 2016	

* **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.**