



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: Integrated Ridge to Reef Management of the Mesoamerican Reef			
Country(ies):	Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico.	GEF Project ID: ¹	5765
GEF Agency(ies):	WWF US	GEF Agency Project ID:	G0003
Other Executing Partner(s):	Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD)	Submission Date:	06/29/2016 02/03/2017 03/23/2017
GEF Focal Area (s):	International Waters	Project Duration(Months)	60
Name of Parent Program:		Project Agency Fee (\$):	811,651

A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK²

Focal Area Objectives	Expected FA Outcomes	Expected FA Outputs	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Cofinancing (\$)
IW-1	Outcome 1.3: Innovative solutions implemented for reduced pollution, improved water use efficiency, sustainable fisheries with rights-based management, IWRM, water supply protection in SIDS, and aquifer and catchment protection	Output 1.3: Types of technologies and measures implemented in local demonstrations and investments	GEFTF	4,723,897	18,523,032
IW-2	Outcome 2.3: Innovative solutions implemented for reduced pollution, rebuilding or protecting fish stocks with rights based management, ICM, habitat (blue forest) restoration/conservation, and port management and produce measureable results.	Output 2.3: Types of technologies and measures implemented in local demonstrations and investments.	GEFTF	3,006,116	15,286,747
IW-3	Outcome 3.1: Political commitment, shared vision, and institutional capacity demonstrated for joint, ecosystem-based management of waterbodies and local ICM principles. Outcome 3.2: On-the ground modest actions implemented in water quality, quantity (including basins draining areas of melting ice), fisheries, and coastal habitat	Output 3.1: National inter-ministry committees established; Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses & Strategic Action Programmes; local IWRM or ICM plans. Output 3.2: Demo-scale local action	GEFTF	1,288,336	17,468,129

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.

	demonstrations for “blue forests” to protect carbon.	implemented, including in basins with melting ice and to restore/protect coastal “blue forests”.			
Total project costs				9,018,349	51,277,908

B. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective: Support regional collaboration for integrated ridge to reef management of the MAR ecoregion by demonstrating its advantages and improving regional, national, and local capacities for integrated management and governance of its freshwater, coastal, and marine resources.

Project Component	Grant Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Confirmed Cofinancing (\$)
Component 1: Strengthen resource governance and regional collaboration for integrated ridge to reef management in the MAR	TA	<p>1.1. The countries have the enabling conditions for MAR R2R management.</p> <p>1.2. MAR national R2R policy (IWRM and ICMM) frameworks are strengthened [linking Components 2 and 3].</p> <p>1.3. The MAR has a TDA and a SAP that will guide the ecoregional R2R management.</p>	<p>1.1.1. At least two regional protocols, standards and other instruments for ridge to reef (R2R) approach developed in the MAR (IWRM and ICMM) (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>1.1.2 At least one regional demonstration project for regional collaboration implemented in the MAR (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>1.2.1. At least two national policy instruments that support R2R in the MAR developed (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>1.3.1. One Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) developed for the MAR and approved by Ministers of Environment (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>1.3.2. One Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the MAR developed based on TDA and submitted for approval</p>	GEFTF	858,890	8,420,685

		<p>1.4. MAR strategic planning, policy making, management and monitoring supported with updated reliable information accessed via REO.</p>	<p>by Ministers of Environment (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>1.4.1. Four national processes for the collection, systematization, analysis and sharing of MAR information harmonized and improved (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>1.4.2. CCAD's REO is acting as the information hub with increased updated, accessible and user friendly MAR data (BZ GT HN MX).</p>			
<p>Component 2: Integrated ridge to reef management of watersheds and freshwater resources</p>	TA	<p>2.1. Integrated watershed management in priority watersheds increased.</p> <p>2.2. Public-private mechanisms for integrated watershed</p>	<p>2.1.1. At least five demonstration projects implemented to increase area of priority MAR watersheds under IWRM (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>2.1.2. At least two water reserves established within MAR watersheds offer regional experience in the use of this instrument for water conservation (GT HN) [Linked to Outputs 1.2.1 and 2.1.1].</p> <p>2.1.3. At least 350 stakeholders with increased capacities to implement IWRM management plans (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>2.2.1. One public-private mechanism (Water Fund) for</p>	GEFTF	4,294,452	24,176,566

		<p>management are strengthened and supported by stakeholders.</p> <p>2.3. Stakeholders engaged in IWRM in priority watersheds</p>	<p>integrated watershed management is strengthened (GT).</p> <p>2.2.2. Two new public-private mechanisms for integrated watershed management are designed and created (BZ HN).</p> <p>2.3.1. At least 14 cases of voluntary standards in commodity agriculture implemented as demonstration projects of private sector engagement on watershed management (BONSUCRO and RSPO) (GT HN).</p> <p>2.3.2. At least 32 tourism and tourism development sector actors adopting better management practices to protect aquifers and freshwater critical habitats (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>2.3.3. At least 20 local communities implementing IWRM activities (linked to Output 2.1.1) (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>2.3.4. At least 350 local stakeholders with increased capacities to implement BMPs and IWRM activities (BZ GT HN MX).</p>			
Component 3: Integrated ridge to reef management of	TA	3.1. ICMM strengthened through capacity building and strategic planning.	3.1.1. At least one policy instrument prepared to strengthen ICMM planning (HN	GEFTF	2,576,671	9,653,332

<p>coastal and marine resources</p>		<p>3.2. Stakeholders engaged in ICMM in coastal marine prioritized areas.</p>	<p>MX).</p> <p>3.1.2. The Coastal Zoning and Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI) in Belize is supported with capacity building and streamlined frameworks to implement the Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (BZ).</p> <p>3.1.3. Implementation of the Caribbean Coastal Marine Strategy in Guatemala supported (GT).</p> <p>3.1.4. At least 350 stakeholders with increased capacities representing national and local government agencies, municipalities and other stakeholders on ICMM (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>3.2.1 At least 13 cases of voluntary standards in fisheries and aquaculture implemented as demonstration projects of private sector engagement on coastal and marine management (MSC and ASC) (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>3.2.2. At least 32 tourism sector stakeholders implementing BMPs related to coastal and marine habitats (BZ GT HN MX) [linked</p>			
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			<p>to activities of Outcome 2.3.2].</p> <p>3.2.3. At least 24 local communities and stakeholders participating in the implementation of mangrove and coral restoration activities (BZ GT HN MX).</p> <p>3.2.4. At least 350 stakeholders with increased capacities on FIPs, ASC, coastal and marine habitat BMPs, and mangrove and coral restoration (BZ GT HN MX).</p>			
Component 4: Project monitoring and evaluation, and knowledge sharing	TA	<p>4.1. The project's monitoring and evaluation system employs participatory methods throughout project lifetime.</p> <p>4.2. Advantages of the ridge-to-reef approach shared with local and international audiences, including the GEF IW:LEARN community.</p>	<p>4.1.1. Project monitoring system provides systematic information on project progress to reach the specified outputs and outcomes.</p> <p>4.1.2. Mid-term and final evaluations developed and shared in a timely manner.</p> <p>4.1.3. GEF IW tracking tool completed reports on project progress.</p> <p>4.2.1. At least three project results from demonstration projects and other activities disseminated in neighboring countries for replication and upscaling.</p> <p>4.2.2. Participation in at least 36 national workshops and two international conferences, including</p>	GEFTF	858,890	7,537,325

			the International Waters Conference, to share approaches and lessons learned from MAR2R project.			
			4.2.3. At least 21 knowledge products (website, social media accounts, publications including IW:LEARN experience notes, videos/animations, etc.) on lessons learned and project best practices developed and disseminated nationally, regionally, and to international IW community.			
Subtotal					8,588,903	49,787,908
Project management Cost (PMC) ³				GEFTF	429,446	1,490,000
Total project costs					9,018,349	51,277,908

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

Please include letters confirming cofinancing for the project with this form

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier (source)	Type of Cofinancing	Cofinancing Amount (\$)
Others	CCAD	Cash	9,300,000
Others	CCAD	In-kind	1,365,000
National Government	Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development of Belize	In-kind	7,691,250
National Government	Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute of Belize (CZMAI)	In-kind	310,000
National Government	National Commission for Natural Protected Areas of Mexico (CONANP)	In-kind	3,734,685
National Government	Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala	Cash	2,054,155
National Government	Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala	In-kind	1,946,192

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

National Government	Secretary of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment and Mines of Honduras	Cash	3,200,000
National Government	Secretary of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment and Mines of Honduras	In-kind	5,900,000
CSO	Healthy Reefs Initiative	In-kind	740,000
CSO	MAR Fund	In-kind	1,764,292
CSO	Wetlands International	Cash	13,000
CSO	Wetlands International	In-kind	147,500
CSO	WWF MAR	Cash	1,750,000
CSO	WWF MAR	In-kind	250,000
GEF Agency	WWF US	Cash	1,137,540
CSO	Fundacion Defensores de la Naturaleza	Cash	1,375,000
CSO	Fundacion Defensores de la Naturaleza	In-kind	779,294
CSO	FUNDAECO	Cash	3,500,000
CSO	FUNDAECO	In-kind	2,170,000
Private Sector	The Coca-Cola Company	Cash	1,885,715
Private Sector	The Coca-Cola Company	In-kind	264,285
Total Co-financing			51,277,908

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
WWF US	GEF-TF	International Waters	Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico	9,018,349	811,651	9,830,000
Total Grant Resources				9,018,349	811,651	9,830,000

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 (\$)
Component 1	374,800	374,800	749,600
Component 4	214,800	214,800	429,600

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

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.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.: N/A

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

A.3 The GEF Agency's comparative advantage: N/A

A.4. The baseline project and the problem that it seeks to address: During the project preparation phase, a prioritization exercise identified six priority watersheds in which it will focus its on the ground project activities. These watersheds are: Belize, Hondo, Motagua, Chamelecon and Ulua rivers and the Yucatan basin in Mexico.

The acronym for Integrated Coastal Marine Management has been updated from ICM to ICMM to better reflect the inclusion of both the coastal and the marine ecosystem in the integrated approach.

Also, the names of some project components, outcomes and outputs have been slightly modified to better reflect the intended results and breadth of the intervention. For example: The name for Component 1 in the PIF was: Resource governance is strengthened and regional collaboration promoted for integrated transboundary ridge to reef management of the Mesoamerican Reef according to the Tulum+8 Action Plan. The name has been modified to: Strengthen resource governance and regional collaboration for integrated ridge to reef management in the MAR. Outcome 1.3 in the PIF is: Mesoamerican Reef ecoregional assessment is updated and revised to include socioeconomic and governance issues, vulnerability to climate change, and bioaccumulation variables, and now it reads: MAR has a TDA and a SAP that will guide the ecoregional R2R management. The output for outcome 1.3 in the PIF read 1.3.1 One Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis is developed (based on the Tulum+8 Regional Action Plan, PARCA, CLME and Gulf of Honduras TDAs, MAR ecoregional assessments of 2002 and 2008, WRI 2006 MAR watershed analysis), with specific focus on improved regional watershed planning, bioaccumulation, and climate variability (BZ GT HN MX). In the ProDoc, the outputs for Outcome 1.3 were updated to visibilize the SAP and now read: 1.3.1. One Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) developed for the MAR and approved by Ministers of Environment (BZ GT HN MX). and 1.3.2. One Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the MAR developed based on TDA and submitted for approval by the Ministers of Environment (BZ GT HN MX). Outcome 1.3.2 was added to reflect the development of the SAP.

The name of some outputs had slight changes to make them quantifiable, for example: 1.1.1 At least two regional protocols, standards and other instruments for ridge to reef (R2R) approach developed in the MAR (IWRM and ICM) (BZ GT HN MX). Furthermore, Components 2 and 3 now have outputs specific to increasing capacities of stakeholders: 2.1.3 At least 350 stakeholders with increased capacities of local stakeholders to implement IWRM management plans, 2.3.4 At least 350 stakeholders with increased capacities to implement MPs and IWRM activities and, 3.1.4 At least 350 stakeholders with increased capacities representing national and local government agencies, municipalities and other stakeholders on ICM, and 3.2.4 At least 350 stakeholders with increased capacities on FIPs, ASC, coastal and marine habitat BMPs, and mangrove and coral restoration. Other minor changes were made, such as switching from percentage to number of tourism actors implementing Better Management Practices in Outputs 2.3.2 and 3.2.2 to ensure that the project can monitor progress most effectively based on data available.

An additional change in the project is in regards to the total amount of co-financing. In the FSP, confirmed co-financing is USD 51,277,908. This represents a shortfall of USD 18,179,918 or attainment of 74% of the targeted USD 69,457,826 in the PIF. The ratio of GEF to co-financing funds is now 1:5.7 whereas in the PIF it was 1:7.7. This was due mainly to shortfall in commitment from governments, given changing circumstances in regards to the timelines and thus funds availability of national complementary projects, some funds from projects that were ongoing at the time of the PIF are now finished or in their final stages, furthermore government agency budgets also change and thus allocations to various units varies. It must be stressed however that all national (government) partners and the agency partners remain confident that this shortfall will not compromise project execution.

ASC certification in Belize and RSPO certification in Guatemala have been reached for 82% of producers. One Honduran mill has also reached BONSUCRO certification and four oil palm producers are now RSPO certified. The challenge now is to ensure that these newly certified producers are able to maintain it. Most first time certifications include a list of recommendations that must be addressed prior to the next verification audit. The project's technical assistance for these already certified producers will focus on ensuring they are able to meet the stated recommendations.

In February 2016, the Belize Deputy Prime Minister of Belize Gaspar Vega, who is also the country's Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment and Sustainable Development, announced the government's endorsement and commitment to implement the Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan. The plan now is only awaiting its legal enactment by the House of Representatives for the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI) to roll out the plan's execution. It is expected that the enactment will happen in the short term. This development ensures the project will be able to support CZMAI with the actual plan's execution, rather than stall project activities waiting for its enactment.

The PIF included a lionfish regional demonstration project, however in the ProDoc this element has been removed since GEF IW funds cannot be used for a biodiversity related activity.

The connections with the CLME+ project were highlighted in sections 1.7 and 2.4. The nature of the Water Fund and of public-private mechanisms was clarified in sections 1.4 and 2.4.

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: N/A

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: A pine bark beetle infestation in Honduras has resulted in a country wide state of emergency. Although the infestation has not spread to project areas, project activities will monitor the development of the infestation and take it into account when developing IWRM plans.

A.7. Coordination with other relevant GEF financed initiatives: Additionally, to the other GEF financed initiatives identified during the PIF, the project will coordinate with: GEF/WB Management and Protection of Key Biodiversity Areas project in Belize, GEF/UNDP Integrated Environmental Management of the Rio Motagua Watershed whose PIF has been approved, and the GIZ project "Enhancing the Adaptive Capacity of Rural Economies and Natural Resources to Climate Change" based at St. Lucia and with Belize specific activities.

Other initiatives beyond the MAR but relevant to the project and with which the project will seek to establish linkages include: Building a Sustainable National Marine Protected Area Network (GEF ID 3729, for the Bahamas). Furthermore, the projects: Ridge to Reef Program for the Pacific Islands (GEF ID 5395 Program and 14 child projects) and the GIZ-project "Climate protection through forest conservation" in the Pacific island states offer the initiative the opportunity for South to South collaboration beyond the region and global learning opportunities via establishing communication and exchange.

Coordination with the other GEF projects will be done via information sharing both ways: MAR2R PMU unit will gather information on the projects and their execution status, seeking to consult data and lessons learned already produced by these projects and will build a network of project stakeholders with which it will share MAR2R project results, information products, and lessons learned. When relevant, the PMU will seek to coordinate project activities, when project results can be supported by a joint action on behalf of two or more projects. For example, MAR2R Fisheries Improvement Projects (FIPs) for spiny lobster can support CLME+ Output 3.1. CLME+ Output

1.3 and its efforts towards “harmonization processes of associated national level legislation and plans” can support MAR2R efforts towards regional and national development of policy instruments.

B. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOT ADDRESSED AT PIF STAGE:

B.1 Describe how the stakeholders will be engaged in project implementation: The project's stakeholders include government officials both at Ministerial and field agency levels, civil society organizations, the private sector as well as local leaders, community members and their organizations. These stakeholders will be actively engaged in various project scales of the project's activities.

The Environmental Ministers of the four countries will be active members of the MAR Ministerial Committee (MMC) which will offer political oversight, coordination and support for the project. Their technical representatives will conform the MAR Technical Working Group (MTWG) which will collaborate with the Project Management Unit (PMU) for the institutional and operational project implementation. Both the MMC and the MTWG will support the project's interaction and collaboration with national government agencies and their staff, who will be actively engaged in several of the project's activities both as trainees and recipients of capacity building activities, as well as, supporting the implementation of field based activities.

The private sector will be actively engaged both through sector wide associations as well as individually as businesses interested in sustainability. The beverage sector, as well as commodity agriculture and aquaculture businesses are expected to be active project participants given the project's focus on responsible and integrated watershed management and voluntary standards that push for the adoption of better management practices. These actors will be engaged via WWF's established partnerships and relationships in these sectors in the four countries.

Civil society organizations are active participants in the ongoing conservation and sustainable development efforts in the MAR and are thus key actors with which the project will engage. Already established alliances have been defined with MAR Fund, Healthy Reefs Initiative, Fundacion Defensores de la Naturaleza and FUNDAECO. The project will engage these and other CSOs to ensure that project activities, especially in IWRM, ICMM and mangrove and coral restoration.

Local communities, their leaders and organizations, including women led organizations and groups, will also be actively engaged in project activities, ensuring local relevance and appropriation of the project's ridge to reef approach in both IWRM and ICMM as well as restoration activities for mangrove and corals. Demonstration projects in IWRM will rely on local groups and communities for their implementation. The local community leaders and their organizations will be engaged in project activities as key stakeholders that will actively participate not only in the implementation of field activities but in the validation of project IWRM management plans and in the preparation prior to field implementation.

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): The socioeconomic benefits that the project will deliver include improved livelihoods for communities living in the priority watersheds and coastal-marine systems of the MAR ecoregion. Livelihoods will improve via the promotion and implementation of IWRM and ICMM management approaches and actions, which strengthen the provision of environmental services and reduce risk to extreme weather events. Local community members, both men and women, will participate actively in the IWRM and ICMM activities including protection of forested areas or recharge zones, restoration of degraded areas via natural regeneration or reforestation activities, establishment of agroforestry systems under better agriculture practices, mangrove planting and protection, better management practices for fisheries, and restoration of coral reefs via coral gardens. These activities will have positive repercussions for livelihoods through environmental services and risk reduction, but in some cases will also allow for increased stability of income

generation through the better agriculture and fishing practices and more resilient coral reefs that can both sustain fisheries and tourism activities. Risk reduction through reduced soil erosion and stable forest and mangrove cover will support the response to extreme weather events such as landslides and floods.

National and regional level results will include strengthened policy framework-instruments, positive experiences in regional collaboration as well as experience in the use of national level instruments for IWRM and ICMM. All of these will support a better prepared institutional context to lead sustainable development efforts within a framework that supports the ecological integrity of watersheds, coasts and marine ecosystems and the environmental services they provide. Global benefits include added stability to forest and coral cover, including mangroves, with the ensuing benefits for habitats, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration.

B.3. Explain how cost-effectiveness is reflected in the project design: The project will employ transparent methods for procurements of goods and services (consultancies) through procedures that will evaluate competing proposals and select providers based on verifiable reliability and delivery and offer the most economical alternative within allocated budgets. The project management unit (PMU) administration procedures will be aligned with those of CCAD and WWF. Local service and procurement providers will be favored, reducing the need to include international travel and other associated costs. Both organizations have established transparent procedures that value both quality and cost-effectiveness.

Cost effectiveness is also achieved by adhering closely to the GEF's incremental cost reasoning. The project is designed to coordinate with other initiatives working towards shared objectives to complement and catalyze actions to reach the largest impact possible. The PMU will lead project implementation privileging proactive coordination with complementary government and CSO led initiatives, as well as, orient project actions in such a way that they provide the most leverage possible to the complementary efforts. The project evaluation process will also contribute to cost-effectiveness of the investment. Annual progress reviews will be analyzed to ensure that resources are utilized efficiently but also recommend corrective actions where challenges may arise as part of the project's adaptive management.

C. DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M & E PLAN: The M&E plan adheres to WWF project management standards and is consistent with GEF monitoring and evaluation policy. The plan is designed to support the effective planning, execution and reporting progress towards achieving project objectives and outcomes. The project has defined performance indicators and has established the periodicity with which these indicators will be assessed. The plan includes quarterly progress reviews, a Midterm Review and a formal Terminal Evaluation. Source documentation will be collected and systematized. The GEF International Waters Tracking Tool will be completed using the data and measurements collected each year and submitted at the project inception, midterm and end of project. The information will be compiled by the M&E Specialist and shared with the other members of the PMU periodically to help plan activities, assess progress, and define required adaptive adjustments. The project's approach to M&E includes a collaborative process of information sharing and coordination among partners, and project stakeholders, which includes in-person training modules and guidance documents on M&E best practice tools for capacity building among all project partners. The M&E budget amounts to more than 1% of total GEF investment.

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 [OFP endorsement letter](#)).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
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Wendel Parham	Chief Executive Officer	FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF BELIZE	03/06/2014
Martin Alegria	Chief Environmental Officer and GEF OFP	DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF BELIZE	03/05/2014
Michelle Melisa Martinez Kelly	Minister and GEF OFP	MINISTERIO DE AMBIENTE Y RECURSOS NATURALES GUATEMALA	03/06/2014
Graciela Arias Zelaya	Interim Director of External Cooperation	SECRETARIA DE ENERGIA, RECURSOS NATURALES, AMBIENTE, Y MINAS, HONDURAS	03/06/2014
Jorge Muhlia Almazan	Political and Operational Focal Point of the GEF	SECRETARIA DE HACIENDA Y CREDITO PUBLICO, MEXICO	03/07/2014

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
Herve Lefevre, WWF GEF Agency		03/23/2017	Andrew Hume	202-495-4161	Andrew.hume@wwfus.org Herve.lefeuvre@wwfus.org

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).

Description	Indicator	Definition	Disaggregation	Method & Source	Responsible	Baseline (Year 0)	Annual Target (cumulative)				
							Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Objective Level Indicators											
Project Objective: To support regional collaboration for the integrated ridge to reef management of the transboundary MAR ecoregion by demonstrating its advantages and improving regional, national and local capacities for the integrated management and governance of its freshwater, coastal and marine resources											
	Number of regional policy instruments that promote ridge to reef management of the MAR ecoregion approved due to project activities	Policy instrument = protocols, standards, agreements. Regional = 2 or more countries Approved = Approved at Minister level or other relevant body	N/A	Policy instrument documents	CCAD, PMU	50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2 approved
	Area (ha) of watersheds under IWRM project activities	IWRM project activities = management plans, water reserves, tree planting, soil conservation agroforestry systems, etc.	N/A	GIS analysis, grantee reports, Project records	IWRM Specialist	761,400 ⁶	1,069,358 ⁷	1,102,012 ⁹	1,699,512 ¹⁰	1,699,512	
	Area (ha) of coastal and marine ecosystems under ICMN project activities	ICMM project activities = Management plans, strategies, mangrove and coral protection and restoration.	N/A	GIS analysis, grantee reports, Project records	ICMM Specialist	0	N/A	115,800 ¹¹	115,800	115,800	157,800 ¹²
Outcome Level Indicators											

⁵ Tulum +8 is a regional ecoregional agreement, however it does not have a Ridge to Reef approach and therefore it is not taken into account as baseline.

⁶ Baseline hectares correspond to the portion of the Hondo River which already has an IWRM plan, according to Programa de Gestión de la Cuenca del Río Hondo, SEMARNAT 2009. The PMU will verify this figure.

⁷ Hectares correspond to the watersheds of Río Hondo (MX & BZ = 1,059,200) and Pasabien (10,158 GT). The PMU will verify.

⁸ Hectares correspond to the watersheds of Río Hondo (MX & BZ = 1,059,200), Pasabien (10,158 GT) and Teculután (20,033 GT). The PMU will verify.

⁹ Hectares correspond to the watersheds of Río Hondo, Pasabien, Teculután, and Manchagua (12,621 HN). The PMU will verify.

¹⁰ Hectares correspond to the watersheds of Río Hondo, Pasabien, Teculután, Manchagua and Belize River (597,500 BZ). The PMU will verify.

¹¹ Hectares correspond to Belize's coast (386 km * 3 km of ICZM Plan mandate).

¹² Hectares correspond to Belize's coast and the Guatemalan coast according to the area under jurisdiction of the Caribbean Coastal Marine Strategy management, which is to be defined through project activities. At the moment, the value was calculated by the length of the Caribbean Guatemalan coast (148 km * 3km), the PMU will confirm the figure.

Description	Indicator	Definition	Disaggregation	Method & Source	Responsible	Baseline (Year 0)	Annual Target (cumulative)				
							Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Component 1: Strengthen resource governance and regional collaboration for integrated ridge to reef management in the MAR											
Outcome 1.1: The countries have the enabling conditions for MAR R2R management	Number of regional policy instruments developed	<u>Policy instrument</u> = protocols, standards, agreements. <u>Regional</u> = 2 or more MAR countries <u>Established</u> = Prepared by PMU and validated by focal points	N/A	Policy instrument documents	CCAD, PMU	0	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A
Outcome 1.2: MAR national R2R policy (IWRM and ICMM) frameworks are strengthened (linking Components 2 and 3).	Number of national policy instruments developed	<u>Policy instrument</u> = protocols, standards, other <u>Developed</u> = Prepared by PMU and validated by ISNC (Intersectoral National Committees)	Country	Policy instrument documents	PMU, ISNC, IWRM and ICMM Specialists	1 in GT (Coastal Marine Policy) 1 in BZ (ICZM Plan)	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A
Outcome 1.3 The MAR has a TDA and a SAP that will guide the ecoregional R2R management.	Number of countries in the MAR endorsing TDA and SAP	TDA = Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis SAP = Strategic Action Plan <u>Endorsed</u> = TDA approved by Ministers of Environment <u>Submission for approval</u> = Final version of SAP is presented by CCAD to the Ministers of Environment for approval	Country	Endorsement letters from Ministry of Environment approving TDA Letters of Submission for SAP approval to Ministry of Environment	PMU	0	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	N/A
Outcome 1.4: MAR strategic planning, policy making, management and monitoring supported with updated reliable	Number of unique visitors consulting REO (Regional Environmental Observatory) in one full year	<u>Unique users</u> = distinct individuals requesting pages from REO website regardless of how often they visit.	N/A	REO website reports	REO specialist	0	N/A	25	50	75	100

Description	Indicator	Definition	Disaggregation	Method & Source	Responsible	Baseline (Year 0)	Annual Target (cumulative)							
							Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5			
information accessed via REO.														
Component 2: Integrated ridge to reef management of watersheds and freshwater resources														
Outcome 2.1: IWRM in priority watersheds increased.	Number of stakeholders trained in IWRM through project activities	IWRM project activities = management plans, water reserves, tree planting, soil conservation agroforestry systems, etc. Stakeholders = community, local authority, government, NGOs, private sector and beneficiaries.	Trained in IWRM - men Trained in IWRM - women	Attendance lists to workshops (including at least name, gender, organization, title, email, country.)	IWRM Specialist IWRM Specialist	0 0	50 50	125 125	200 200	300 300	350 350			
Outcome 2.2. Public-private mechanisms for integrated watershed management are strengthened and supported by stakeholders.	Increase (USD) in funding available for public private mechanisms in BZ, GT and HN	Funding = Voluntary contributions paid or pledged to public private mechanisms (including Sierra de las Minas Water Fund) for IWRM.	N/A	Letters of pledged contributions or receipts for paid contributions	IWRM Specialist	50,000	50,000	100,000	125,000	150,000	175,000			
Outcome 2.3. Stakeholders engaged in IWRM in priority watersheds.	Per cent of sugar and oil palm producers in project area that are reaching and/or maintaining compliance with Voluntary Standards	Voluntary Standards = BONSUCRO for sugar and RSPO for oil palm Reaching compliance = Industries that have not previously reached certification meet certification criteria. The target is that they become certified. Maintaining compliance = Industries that have	Sugar producers Reach compliance for certification ¹³ Sugar producers Maintain certification Oil palm producers reach compliance for certification ¹⁴ Oil palm producers maintain certification	BONSUCRO certificates, BONSUCRO webpage listing certified producers RSPO certificates, RSPO webpage listing certified producers	Producers, IWRM Specialist Producers, IWRM Specialist	0 1	0 1	1 1	1 2	N/A 3	N/A 3			
						4	4	6	8	10	11			

¹³ Values for 'compliance' are NOT CUMULATIVE because once producers reach compliance they are accounted for in the 'maintain certification' category.

¹⁴ Values for 'compliance' are NOT CUMULATIVE because once producers reach compliance they are accounted for in the 'maintain certification' category.

Description	Indicator	Definition	Disaggregation	Method & Source	Responsible	Baseline (Year 0)	Annual Target (cumulative)								
							Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5				
		already been certified and remain certified after yearly audit.													
	Number of tourism and tourism development sector actors adopting better management practices (BMP) to protect aquifers and freshwater critical habitats under project activities	BMP = protection or restoration activities ¹⁵ to protect aquifers or critical habitats Tourism sector = hotel and other tourism related businesses and tour operators, Tourism development sector = construction businesses associated with tourism sector	N/A	Baseline developed by grantee or consultant prior to technical assistance, Grantees or consultant's progress reports after technical assistance	Grantees, IWRM Specialist	0	N/A	20	24	28	32				
Component 3: Integrated ridge to reef management of coastal and marine resources															
Outcome 3.1. ICMM strengthened through capacity building and strategic planning.	Number of stakeholders trained in ICMM through project activities	Stakeholder = Government, local authorities, NGOs, fishers, shrimp farmers, tourism sector, tourism development sector, private sector, civil society, communities ICMM project activities = Management plans, strategies, and ICMM BMPs ¹⁶	Trained in ICMM - men Trained in ICMM - women	Attendance lists to workshops (including at least name, gender, organization, title, email, country.)	ICMM Specialist ICMM Specialist	0 0	50 50	125 125	200 200	300 300	350 350				
Outcome 3.2. Stakeholders engaged in ICMM in coastal	Number of shrimp farms and fisheries in project area that are	Reaching compliance = Shrimp farms and fisheries that have	Shrimp farm ASC certified	Voluntary Standards certificates, Records of ASC webpage listing certified	Shrimp farms, fisheries, ICMM	9 ASC	9 ASC	10 ASC	11 ASC	11 ASC	11 ASC				

¹⁵ BMPs for aquifers and critical habitats may include protecting remnant vegetation (fire prevention, cattle exclusion etc.) or more active interventions to accelerate natural regeneration, as well as tree planting and/or sowing seeds (direct seeding) of species characteristic of the target ecosystem, according to project developed guidance.

¹⁶ BMPs for coastal and marine systems may include protecting ecosystem's (mangroves and corals) from further destruction or restoration (mangrove and coral planting), reduced impacts from productive activities via improved production and harvesting techniques; improved protocols for tourism activities when visiting coral reefs, according to project developed guide, and others including those promoted by FIP's (Fisheries Improvement Plans), AIPs (Aquaculture Improvement Plans), MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) and ASC (Aquaculture Stewardship Council).

Description	Indicator	Definition	Disaggregation	Method & Source	Responsible	Baseline (Year 0)	Annual Target (cumulative)				
							Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
marine prioritized areas.	reaching and/or maintaining compliance with Voluntary Standards (Marine Stewardship Council –MSC- and Aquaculture Stewardship Council -ASC)	not been previously certified that are implementing improvement projects (AIPs and FIPs) and meet the standard's certification criteria. The target is that they become certified. <u>Maintaining compliance</u> = Shrimp farms and fisheries that have already been certified (ASC and MSC) and remain certified after yearly audit.	Shrimp farm ASC AIPs ¹⁷	producers FIP Action Plan and Benchmarking and Tracking Tool	Specialist	2 AIPs	1 AIP	N/A	N/A	N/A	
			Fisheries MSC certified				1 MSC	1 MSC	1 MSC	1 MSC	2 MSC
			Fisheries MSC FIPs ¹⁸				1 FIP	2 FIPs	3 FIPs	3 FIPs	2 FIPs
Number of tourism and tourism development sector actors, and communities implementing better management practices (BMP) to protect coastal and marine habitats under project activities.		BMP = protection or restoration activities ¹⁹ to protect coastal and marine habitats. <u>Tourism sector</u> = hotel and other tourism related businesses and tour operators, <u>Tourism development sector</u> = construction businesses associated with tourism sector	Number of tourism sector actors	Baseline developed by grantee or consultant prior to technical assistance.	Grantees, consultants and ICMM Specialist	0	20	24	28	32	
			Number of communities	Grantees or consultant's progress reports after technical assistance		8	12	16	20	24	
Component 4: Project monitoring and evaluation and knowledge sharing											
Outcome 4.1. The project's monitoring and evaluation	Number of MAR2R progress reports completed (including mid		Progress reports	Report-evaluation documents	PMU M&E	0	4	6	8	10	
			Mid term evaluation			0	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	

¹⁷ Values for 'AIPs' are NOT CUMULATIVE because once producers reach compliance with ASC standard they are accounted for in the 'ASC certified' category.

¹⁸ Values for 'FIPs' are CUMULATIVE because reaching compliance with MSC standard might take more than five years. The overall goal for fisheries is to have 3 FIPs from which at least will be able to achieve MSC certification. The goal at year 5 of the project is to have 2 MSC certified fisheries.

¹⁹ Same as BMPs defined in footnote 10.

Description	Indicator	Definition	Disaggregation	Method & Source	Responsible	Baseline (Year 0)	Annual Target (cumulative)				
							Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
system employs participatory methods throughout project lifetime.	term and final evaluations and GEF IW Tracking Tool)		Final evaluation			0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
			GEF IW Tracking tool			0	1	N/A	1	N/A	1
Outcome 4.2. Advantages of the ridge to reef approach shared with local and international audiences, including the GEF IW:LEARN community (funded by at least 1% of project budget).	Number of communication and knowledge management products disseminated	Communication and KM products include: WP = Webpage SM = Social media accounts Pubs = Publications V/A = Video/Animation WB = Webinars NW = National Workshops IW = IW Conference	WP	Webpage statistics	M&E	0	1	1	1	1	
			SM	Social media statistics		0	2	2	2	2	
			Pubs	Publications produced		0	1	3	6	10	
			V/A	Videos/animations produced		0	1	2	3	4	
			WB	Webinars hosted		0	1	2	3	4	
			NW	Attendance lists to workshops hosted		0	0	12	24	36	
			IW	Presentations made in IW conference		0	N/A	1	N/A	2	

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).

Secretariat Comment at PIF (PFD)/Work Program Inclusion, March 19, 2014 (IW X):	Response from Agency at CEO endorsement
<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>Project Baseline There are several projects noted, but not what was learned and how this project will build on those experiences. What, for example, has happened as a result of Tulum +8, particularly the action plan?</p> <p>What occurred in MBRS and how will this project build on those lessons?</p> <p>How does the PARCA III (the strategy for CCAD) tie to Tulum+8 plans?</p> <p>There is mention of ecological assessments most recently by TNC in 2008, what were the findings of that assessment and how do those tie to plans?</p> <p>Baseline experiences are not provided for all countries. For ICM there is discussion of Belize and Guatemala progress (page 8 and then again on page 10), but not Mexico and Honduras. IW plans for Guatemala and Mexico, including great detail for Guatemala (p 9), but not for Belize and Honduras.</p> <p>There is extensive background on WWF regional projects (p 9-10) suggesting a heavy WWF focus when emphasis needs to be on country interests and priorities. Suggest moving WWF experience to an annex.</p> <p>For fisheries (page 11) there is detail on lion fish as invasive</p>	<p>FSP project document reflects the connections between the project and how lessons learned from key previous experiences are taken into account by the project as well as current initiatives and how they will complement each other. Tulum+8 Action Plan was developed, ratified but did not have follow up, emphasizing the need for the project and its regional approach.</p> <p>MBRS lessons learned are highlighted in the project document. MBRS phase I concluded as planned followed by a request for a phase II. PIF for Phase II was approved but support from all four countries for it was not secured. One of the key lessons learned from this experience was the need to strengthen CCAD to be able to lead the region towards shared goals. The MAR2R project design clearly reflects this, by assigning CCAD regional leadership, rather than the national emphasis characteristic of MBRS.</p> <p>PARCA III has now been replaced by ERAM, and its relevance to the project is explained in the project document.</p> <p>TNC ecoregional assessment findings are outlined and linkages to this project highlighted.</p> <p>Baseline has been updated taking into account existing information provided by stakeholders and country focal points. Status of ICM (Integrated Coastal Marine Management) and IWRM initiatives and plans in the four countries is included in the baseline.</p> <p>WWF's projects are mentioned when relevant to project activities.</p> <p>Lionfish is relevant as an invasive species rather</p>

<p>species and lobster, but not other fisheries.</p> <p>Discussion needs to be provided for relevant GEF funded projects in the region related to watersheds and coastal/marine ecosystems (MBRS and others).</p>	<p>than a fisheries and is addressed in the project for the new threat it represents to coral reef ecosystems. During PIF development the countries confirmed the need for a regional harmonized strategy to address this new and alarming threat to reef integrity. Furthermore, the countries assessed their readiness to collaborate on this initiative as a regional demonstration project from which they can learn and strengthen their capacities for ecoregional collaboration and management.</p> <p>In regards to fisheries, the FSP includes lobster and the identification of other important commercial fisheries with potential for stable export markets where voluntary standards are best suited to promote sustainability. Project activities in the fisheries sector focus on the development of Fisheries Improvement Projects towards acquiring Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification, as a means to engage fisheries private sector in the sustainable management of marine resources.</p> <p>Other GEF funded projects in the region are identified and the linkages with this GEF investment outlined.</p>
<p>7. Are the components, outcomes and outputs in the project framework (Table B) clear, sound and appropriately detailed?</p> <p>Overall IW Focal Area 2 and 3 seem most appropriate. Please reconsider Focal Area 1. When originally discussed, this project was intended to have a strong watershed component.</p> <p>The project as written focuses on the coastal and marine environment. The watersheds are considered to the extent that the watershed-based activities threaten the reefs (e.g. pollution, sedimentation).</p>	<p>The ridge to reef approach relies on the inclusion of watersheds, coastal and marine ecosystems into a landscape continuum, central to the project. FSP language has been reviewed to highlight this. The MAR2R project emphasizes watershed actions both at policy as well as field implementation and these represent the bulk of the project's efforts. For clarity in the design watershed activities are concentrated in Component 2 while coastal and marine ones are included in Component 3. The project remains aligned with IW FA 1, 2 and 3.</p> <p>The project's conservation targets are watersheds, coastal and marine ecosystems and the project's results framework and logic is designed to address key issues impacting these systems and their suite of biodiversity and ecological attributes and functions. The MAR2R project focuses on watersheds and their management and conservation in their own right, recognizing that any environmental benefits are first for the watersheds' health and integrity, with added benefits to coastal and marine ecosystems.</p>

There is discussion of Tulum+8, which is focused on reef threats; a similar policy framework for watersheds is not identified. To truly be a R2R project, the watershed needs to be addressed in its own right (what are the issues (threats, ecosystem services, governance status, etc) specific to the watersheds. In short, you need to decide whether this is truly a ridge-to-reef project or is it focused on the watersheds or on the Mesoamerican reef.

Given the complexities and WWF strengths, it is recommended that you consider focusing on a select set of watersheds rather than addressing the watersheds and MesoAmerican Reef or even the MesoAmerican Reef.

The proposal lacks an overall plan for R2R in the region. While the Tulum+8 identifies activities, it is focused on reefs and the action plan lack specificity. There needs to be a watershed through to reef plan to provide the basis for pursuing sustainability of these ecosystems. Lacking such an overarching regional plan to address watershed to reef issues, it is unclear the basis for Component 2 and 3 watershed and reef activities.

A regional commitment is imperative to GEF support.

Lacking an overall plan, PIF notes sector specific activities without the larger context to clarify why these are specifically a priority. The activities need to address the breath of threats, not

A policy document that would encompass the entire MAR ecoregion, including watersheds, is non-existent and the project will seek to remedy this by developing a R2R Strategic Action Plan for the MAR.

The project recognizes the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR) as an ecoregion comprising the Caribbean basin watersheds, coasts, and marine ecosystems of the four countries. FSP development included a prioritization exercise to identify the watershed-coastal-marine systems in which to focus efforts. This exercise was carried out with government and civil society representatives from each country and defined eight watersheds categorized into three priority levels, included in the FSP document. Watersheds in priority 1 and 2 will be the ones where project actions will be concentrated.

The project is designed to strengthen the integrated and sustainable management of watershed, coastal and marine ecosystems. As mentioned above, the project is aware that Tulum +8 fails to integrate watersheds in their own right. Tulum +8 is an element in the foundation of the project design but it does not frame the project's logic and design entirely. The project will develop a TDA and SAP that will have a ridge to reef approach so that the ecoregion can have a policy framework to lead sustainability and conservation efforts.

The regional commitment from the four MAR countries is strong and was secured early on in the project identification phase. The project design reflects the countries' aim for a regional focus and leadership by assigning CCAD as the project executing agency, as well as strengthen its leadership capacities. Additionally, the project will rely on the MAR Ministerial Committee (MMC comprised by the MAR Environment Ministers) and the MAR Technical Working Group (MTWG high level technical officers assigned by each MAR Minister) to coordinate with CCAD but also, more importantly, maintain and actively engage the regional commitment to the integrated management of the MAR.

The project has an overall plan and this plan is laid out in the FSP. The conservation targets include watersheds, coastal and marine ecosystems and

focus on specific ones unless there is a clear basis to do so. For example:

Component 1 includes an invasive species plan. Why was this prioritized, but not other threats? Especially when Tulum+8 does not highlight invasives as one of the key threats.

Component 2 focuses on certification of sugar and oil palm producers, tourism and development what about all the other stakeholders, particularly fisheries and aquaculture? Why are these the priority?

For a regional project, there needs to be national buy-in by all 4 countries, which is reflected by commitment to pursue strategies in all 4 countries.

Component 1 notes establishing 2 policy instruments for IW and ICM will be developed, but only in GT and HN. National plans need to be considered in all 4 nations. A regional plan needs to be agreed and national level plans need to be developed for all 4 countries.

project components and activities respond to an integrated approach to address prioritized threats. Sector specific activities are designed as demonstration projects on how voluntary standards and other better management practices can engage private sector in watershed, coastal and marine planning and management. The standards included all take into account critical habitats and other environmental indicators that are completely aligned with the integrated sustainable management of resources.

Lionfish first appeared in the MAR in 2009 and thus it was not relevant to Tulum+8, however lionfish is now a serious threat and one the countries prioritized recognizing that isolated efforts in each country will not yield significant results. Component 1 includes a regional approach to address the threat from lionfish given its potential to foster collaboration between the countries and offer a hands-on learning experience on the joint management of a common threat to their shared transboundary ecoregion.

For clarity, the project concentrates watershed activities into Component 2 and coastal and marine activities into Component 3. Fisheries and Aquaculture stakeholders are as important as those listed in Component 2 but are visible and active participants in Component 3.

Country buy-in from the four countries is secured and is reflected in project design both via strategies to be implemented in all four countries in the same way as well as with via strategies that take into account country specific institutional contexts and thus may vary per country. The project believes that project focus is equally distributed. The project is planning on strengthening/forming Intersectoral National Committees (ISNC) that will support the pursuit of nationally relevant strategies in the four countries as well as garner multi-sector buy-in for the project.

In regards to the regional plan the project will facilitate its regional development (SAP) and the project is designed to support the development of national instruments as needed by each country. Output 1.2.1 contemplates the development of at least two policy instruments, to be developed in the countries that given the project's institutional assessment of needed instruments, are found to be most needing or ready for such a development.

Component 2 activities are focused on GT and HN (2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.3.1). Where is the commitment from Mexico and Belize? Component 3 notes building ICZM capacity (3.1.2 & 3.1.3) for Belize and Guatemala. What about Mexico and Honduras?

Component 3 notes developing only one policy instrument for ICM in HN or MX. What about Belize and Guatemala's commitment? The focus on specific sectors and specific countries reflects the lack of a regionally agreed plan to address the breadth of issues in all 4 countries.

Given these concerns, consideration needs to be given to not only conducting the planned TDA (although see points below), but also feeding such a TDA into a regional plan/SAP for R2R (i.e. an expanded Tulum +8 that would incorporate watersheds).

There needs to be consideration of a governance structure for R2R in the region. Will CCAD be directly managing the regional activities or another body? In the case of MBRS, CCAD did not directly manage, but set-up a separate body in Belize to work with all 4 nations. What is the plan for this project and where will it be based?

Component 2 is built upon differentiated activities distributed as follows:
2.1.2 (establishment of Water Reserves) the project prioritized GT and HN because the baseline scenario indicates these two countries are ready to develop the instrument as part of IWRM activities. While, Mexico is at the forefront of Water Reserve efforts, having already established the institutional framework, as well as, reserves themselves, and will offer its experience and know-how. To continue on the example 2.2.1 should not be examined separately from 2.2.2. Both address public-private mechanisms for water conservation, 2.2.1 focuses on Guatemala's already established Water Fund, while 2.2.1 will develop similar mechanisms in Belize and Honduras. And finally 2.3.1 focuses in Honduras and Guatemala because these are the countries where previous work by project partners will allow for GEF incremental approach to be most effective, with commodity producers that are best suited to demonstrate the role of better management practices that increase sustainability and reduce the negative ecological impacts of large-scale commodity production promoted by RSPO and BONSUCRO. On the other hand, Mexico's small scale sugar producers are starting to prepare for BONSUCRO while in Belize small scale sugar producers are adhering to Fair Trade voluntary standard.

A similar scenario to the above explains the differentiated activities that the project will lead in regards to ICM in the four countries (3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3).

As mentioned above, the project is developing both a TDA and a SAP that will have an ecoregional ridge to reef focus, that the project envisions that it can be expanded into a Tulum+8 follow-up instrument, as the project will work on establishing the enabling conditions for the integrated MAR R2R management.

The governance structure and management for the MAR2R project will be led by CCAD, as requested by the governments of the four countries. This is a direct response to shortcomings of the MBRS project where regional governance was hindered by national interests and focus. The background and context for this is included in FSP. The CCAD will host the Project Management Unit

<p>The most appropriate IW focal area given the focus on developing plans seems to be IW-3.</p> <p>Note the text in the Components and Table B need to be consistent.</p> <p>Component 1: 1.1.1 is in line with the idea of developing a regional R2R plan/ SAP, but needs to be expanded to emphasize identifying goals and priorities, etc.</p> <p>1.1.2 In addition the above points about the invasive species program being included, an invasives species program would be funded under Biodiversity, not IW.</p> <p>1.3 While the TDA activity proposed is important, it needs to go beyond an ecological assessment and also consider the socioeconomic and governance aspects (please see TDA guidance). It also needs to be clear that it is conducted for the entire region, not one watershed. And in this regard, it needs to address not only reef threats and issues, but also watershed, which is beyond the previous ecological assessments that focused on reefs.</p> <p>1.4 These activities seem more in line with Component 4. Also 1.4.1 needs to include watershed information, not just coastal/marine.</p> <p>Component 2: 2.1 IWM plans need to be developed before being implemented.</p> <p>While protected areas are important, there needs to be consideration of strategies specific to pollution, sedimentation, habitat destruction and other threats to the watershed. "Better management practices" needs to be more specific. Strategies might include regulations, standards and incentives. Instead the</p>	<p>in its headquarters in El Salvador.</p> <p>As mentioned above the project is relevant to IW 1,2, and 3</p> <p>Agreed and revised accordingly.</p> <p>Agreed and revised accordingly.</p> <p>This is a demonstration project relevant to IW given the multi-state collaboration required for the development of a harmonized plan and its implementation to address a threat to a shared transboundary marine ecosystem in the four countries. The countries and their regional authority, CCAD, will have the opportunity to build capacity and experience by engaging together in the management of common enemy, the lionfish and its devastating impact on the MAR's coral reef ecosystem.</p> <p>The TDA will be developed for the entire ecoregion and will have a ridge to reef focus and approach to analyze water-related ecological as well as socioeconomic and governance issues relevant to the MAR.</p> <p>Having access to reliable, up to date information is fundamental to the strengthening of regional resource governance and collaboration for the integrated ridge to reef management of the MAR, which is why outcome 1.4 is key in Component 1. As mentioned above the project considers watersheds, coasts and marine ecosystems and thus all project efforts, including information gathering and systematization, will address the three conservation targets. Linkages to component 4 are highlighted.</p> <p>IWRM plans will be developed prior to implementation, as indicated in FSP.</p> <p>IWRM plans will take into account strategies specific to protected areas, pollution and sedimentation, habitat destruction and other threats to the watersheds including those prescribed by voluntary standards and better management</p>
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<p>focus seems to be on funds and stakeholder engagement, which are useful tools but the real action is with strategies.</p> <p>The development of a TDA and then SAP that consider the watershed is important in this regard. Relatedly, there need to be activities to either develop a national IW plan when one does not exist and update and/or implement existing IW plans.</p> <p>Component 4: As suggested above, 1.4 seems more appropriate under Component 4.</p> <p>4.1 is standard practice to projects and does not need to be included in the "Component", but rather in the rest of the text.</p> <p>4.2 Need to consider breadth of knowledge sharing within the project and therefore between the 4 countries (hosting regional meetings/workshops on topics, participating in regional meetings/conferences, exchange of stakeholders, website, blogs, list serves, etc.).</p>	<p>practices. The public-private mechanisms (funds) to be created and strengthened will support the implementation of the IWRM plans, as incentive and regulation instruments, in support of the plan's strategies to reduce pollution and sedimentation and prevent habitat destruction while promoting water stewardship.</p> <p>As stated previously both TDA and SAP will be developed for the entire ecoregion with a ridge to reef approach. SAP will address IW issues for the MAR ecoregion. Additionally, IWRM will be developed for the priority subwatersheds.</p> <p>As explained above, output 1.4 remains in Component 1, linkages to Component 4 are noted.</p> <p>4.1 takes into account this comment and remains in the project design and logframe for clarity and transparency as to what are the project's full range of responsibilities and given the complexity of a four country regional project.</p> <p>4.2 takes into account this comment and includes a series of knowledge sharing activities as mentioned in the comment.</p>
<p>10. Is the role of public participation, including CSOs, and indigenous peoples where relevant, identified and explicit means for their engagement explained? March 19, 2014 (IW X): Yes, except as noted in #7 regarding addressing the breadth of sectors</p>	<p>FSP reflects the breadth of sectors involved and how they will participate in the project's execution</p>
<p>24. Is PIF clearance/approval being recommended? March 19, 2014 (IW). No, please address comments above.</p>	<p>Comments have been addressed</p>
<p>STAP Review April 9 2014</p>	
<p>3. STAP advises that the ICR for the ID 837 project is carefully consulted during project preparation ensuring a robust project design, prioritizing activities and taking the nested governance systems into account. Critical to achieve longer term sustainability will be to support the building of a robust regional governance framework that synchronize national and regional concerns, incentives and benefits. The region is characterized by a diversity of regional governance institutions and the establishment of a regional governance baseline can be critical as a tool to monitor and evaluate progress towards effective governance. Work under the CLME project by Mahon et. al., Olsen on governance and STAP on regionalism can serve to strengthen these aspects during project preparation.</p>	<p>The ICR for ID 837 project was consulted and relevant lessons learned taken into account. For example, the higher administrative costs associated with a regional project with operations in four countries. The MAR2R has budgeted a senior level position for a Finance and Administrative Manager as well as Procurement and Accounting Officers and a Project Assistant to ensure the Project Management Unit has adequate administrative capacity to oversee regional and national actions in four countries.</p> <p>The project recognizes the value of a robust regional governance framework and is designed to support it. STAP's suggestion of establishing a regional governance baseline at project startup has been taken into account. As well as references to</p>

	Mahon et al, and Olsen et al.
4. STAP observes that an important key to long term sustainable use of the MAR is the fostering of a partnership between private developers and governments set within a clear development framework at regional scale. This goal requires incentives as well as regulations supported by public stakeholders and civil society. The outputs suggested in the project framework are relatively specific regarding the proposed water funds and measures that use incentives, including certification. However, it is less clear what strategies will be used to effect change in the tourism and development sector actors. Section A.2 on Stakeholders goes some way to identify linkages but less so regarding leverage.	In the past, several initiatives have focused on improving environmental performance of the operations of the tourism sector, within the four walls of the facility. The project will rely on this foundational progress to guide the focus and effort towards the impact and connections of tourism operations on the ecosystems. This will be a foundation for future possible regulations or standards that can be developed.
5. A second and major tool for MAR sustainable management would be adherence to and enforcement of policies for reduction of environmental degradation to complement incentive-based approaches. STAP notes that the design of the withdrawn World Bank project included support for legal policy and institutional strengthening; however, the present project only weakly supports this sector, therefore STAP regards this as a risk to be mitigated.	The project supports legal policy and institutional strengthening albeit for ICMM and IWRM specifically. Furthermore, the project allocates a significant portion of its efforts and funds to capacity building strategies at several levels from national to local governments, to communities, private sector, civil society and other stakeholders (Outputs 2.1.3, 2.3.4, 3.1.4, 3.2.4). The project acknowledges the risk of overall weak government agencies and inter-agency coordination and is mitigating the risk via having Intersectoral National Committees in each country and the MAR Ministerial Council and Technical Working Group regionally. These coordination bodies are to support the successful implementation of project activities by fostering coordination within the government agencies and with other stakeholders both regionally and nationally.
6. The PIF mentions invasive alien species, including the impacts of lionfish. STAP recommends that early liaison and collaboration is established between two GEF projects which are implementing lionfish control measures and cooperating at a regional scale. These projects are Building a Sustainable National Marine Protected Area Network (GEF ID 3729, for the Bahamas) and Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean (GEFID 3183, for Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago). In addition, an advisory note on lionfish control was provided to both projects and remains valid for consideration by the present MAR project. A regional approach to invasive alien species (including lionfish) is recommended to ensure that a regional reporting system is active that can address the most vulnerable sites and restrict the potential for spread.	Agreed and revised accordingly.
7. Regarding the welcome coordination with other relevant GEF projects in the region, in addition to the list provided under section A.4, the proponents are advised that UNDP, with UNEP and FAO, has recently initiated a Ridge to Reef Program for the Pacific Islands (GEF ID 5395 Program and 14 child projects) which offer the opportunity to study land and water management approaches across a very wide variety of socio-economic and environmental contexts, albeit in a different region.	Agreed and revised accordingly.

<p>8. Noting that the PIF notes a low risk for regional government capacity, the project places a great deal of responsibility upon the CCAD to coordinate and effect change. However, will the CCAD really be able to convene and obtain support from other sectors over which it has little control, such as mining, oil and gas development, land use and transport? Commitment by the four participating countries to an inter-ministerial committee beyond the four environment ministries concerned as necessary to troubleshoot for CCAD may be one way to mitigate the risk. These issues can further be developed in the proposed governance baseline assessment during project preparation taking multi-purpose organizations into account beyond more single purpose organizations.</p>	<p>The project considers that the Intersectoral National Committees will be instrumental to reduce the risk of ensuring engagement across sectors.</p>
<p>9. In order to deliver and sustain an effective set of regional scale ridge to reef policies employing state of the art marine spatial planning and to consolidate this with land use planning, it would appear that CCAD will need significant capacity building, which is not identified within the project framework.</p>	<p>Comment has been taken into account. Capacity building for CCAD and national level government agencies leading Integrated Coastal Marine Management is considered by the project. PMU includes an ICMM specialist whose mandate will be to coordinate and support R2R policies on ICMM.</p>
<p>10. As mentioned above, the project appears to lack sufficient support for policy development related legal services and outreach.</p>	<p>The project's Component 1 focuses entirely on the enabling conditions for integrated R2R management of the MAR ecoregion which include policy development and outreach and the hiring of legal consultants.</p>
<p>Compilation of comments submitted by GEF Council member on the May 2014 Work Program</p>	
<p>Germany's Comments Germany approves the following PIFs in the work program, but asks that the following comments are taken into account: Suggestions for improvement to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal: Germany welcomes the proposal. In particular strengthening the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), as a regional host for the management of the Meso-American Reef system (MAR), is seen as crucial for the project's success. The demonstration of the value of the ridge-to-reef approach through engagement of a broad range of stakeholders is a sound and proven one. The STAP-comments are seen as valid and a higher prioritization should be given to marine spatial and land use planning capacity building at CCAD.</p> <p>Germany would like to add the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project should actively seek for more synergies gained from aligning the activities with other international projects in the region, e.g. the GIZ-project "Enhancing the Adaptive Capacity of Rural Economies and Natural Resources to Climate Change" based at St. Lucia and the GIZ-project "Climate protection through forest conservation". 	<p>Agreed and revised accordingly.</p>
<p>USA's Comments The United States recommends that the WWF-US consider the following in the final project proposal prior to GEF CEO Endorsement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the full project proposal, the United States would like to 	<p>The project recognizes that given its size and</p>

see greater detail for how sufficient coordination will take place with various agencies and ongoing projects in the region as well as with NGOs.

- The project is very broad and covers a range of topics and activities, but the focus area of the project is a critical bridge between the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. Further, the PIF draws upon previous work on the Caribbean coasts of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras and recognizes the importance of the area's transboundary ecosystem to the wider region. The size of the project calls for extensive engagement with other agencies and ongoing projects in the region in order to meet success, including the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
- Notably, the appropriate agencies are mentioned, but how coordination will be achieved is not. SICA, the coordination system of Central American countries, has various sub-groups dealing with a range of issues. CCAD is the sub-organization that deals with the environment; OSPESCA deals with fisheries. The two organizations collaborate on a number of issues in which two disciplines overlap. Although OSPESCA is mentioned in the list of stakeholders, how CCAD will accomplish the required cooperation with its sister agency is not addressed.
- Coordination with NGOs representing the Mosquito indigenous people, who are the main fishers in Honduras, is not mentioned in the proposal. These fishers harvest lobster, conch, and other coral reef species using poorly maintained SCUBA equipment at unsafe depths and dive times. One of the main problems in fisheries in Honduras is the rate of injuries and deaths in these SCUBA fisheries.

The United States requests that the WWF-US consider other technical comments.

- From the governance perspective, this project proposal describes the diversity of landscapes, range of governmental jurisdictions, and gaps and poor coordination among programs within and between countries. However, it plans to draw up on a number of successful local and regional programs to enhance regional collaboration. We suggest building upon the successful MPA and species management programs in the region.
- On the environmental side, this region is prone to environmental damage from hurricanes and other weather-related events that are likely to increase in a changing climate. Particularly, floods and landslides are exacerbated by poor land use decisions such as deforestation. To strengthen the proposed project, we request these risks be addressed in the full project proposal.

breadth it is important to have solid linkages and coordination with multiple agencies at regional and national levels, as well as with multiple projects. The FSP document highlights the linkages and coordination that the project will establish with the various agencies and ongoing projects. The project will establish linkages and coordination at multiple levels, regionally, nationally and locally. The MAR Ministerial Council and Technical Working Group will be key players in facilitating coordination at regional and national scales, the Intersectoral National Committees will do so at national and local scales.

In regards to coordination with SICA and OSPESCA, the CCAD Executive Secretary will lead coordination with its sister agency and CCAD will ensure all project actions are aligned with SICA mandates and frameworks.

The project is not going to work with the SCUBA diving sector, but with the lobster industrial trap sector. Consequently, project activities will not work with diving fishers, although representatives from this sector and NGOs collaborating with them will participate in FIP (Fisheries Improvement Projects) activities.

The project's focus is not specific to MPAs but on the ground actions may be implemented within MPAs as relevant. The project recognizes the relevance of the legacy of MPA efforts in the region and this is reflected in the project's partners and cofinancers, including the MARFund. Furthermore, project activities will be aligned with relevant legislation in each country which includes MPA legislation and institutions.

Risk related to extreme weather events is taken into account by the project, including the development of vulnerability assessments as part of the development of both policy instruments (IWRM and ICMM plans) and on the ground activities and demonstration projects on integrated watershed management and integrated coastal marine management.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PIF recognizes the socio-economic barriers to maintaining the environmental health of the region and the actions needed to improve it. As the project moves forward, the project's success may be dependent on the strength of environmental policy enforcement in participating countries. As the full proposal is designed, please note that Mexico and Belize have relatively sound policy frameworks for environmental policy and enforcement compared to Guatemala and Honduras. • The amount of GEF funding to be provided does not appear to be sufficient to achieve the objectives of the project. Based on our knowledge of the region, the amount of co-financing from the participating countries, particularly cash, does not seem achievable. 	<p>FSP considers differentiated activities per country based on their institutional and policy contexts.</p> <p>Although the funds may appear to not be sufficient, the project's expected outcomes are achievable given that they are establishing enabling conditions and building upon existing initiatives, lessons learned and experiences exchange. As noted in section A.4, co-financing has in fact been reduced from 1:7.7 to 1:5.7</p>
<p>UNDP comments made during the PIF development</p>	
<p>1. Overall, UNDP believes that it can indeed be expected that a project that is further developed around this proposal has the potential to deliver, in a cost-effective way, substantial and critically needed contributions towards effective protection and sustainable use of the MAR, with the aim of achieving both global environmental benefits as well as enhanced socio-economic well-being. In the current context, particularly interesting conditions exist to fully exploit this potential by linking this initiative with, and by embedding it within a context of, several other regional and national-level initiatives, both GEF and non-GEF, UNDP and non-UNDP. As an over-arching initiative in this context, UNDP refers to the CLME+ SAP.</p>	<p>FSP development explored and established CLME+ linkages.</p>
<p>2. With regard to the CLME+ SAP, it was made clear at the time of CLME+ SAP development and endorsement, that due to its broad nature, the SAP could not be implemented through a single initiative. Instead, the SAP can only become fully implemented by coordinating the efforts among all relevant regional initiatives. The new CLME+ Project in this context will help catalyzing the implementation of the SAP.</p>	<p>The MAR2R project is envisioning coordination with CLME+ and is aware of the value coordination and synergies can have for both initiatives and the development of the TDA and SAP.</p>
<p>3. Several of the aims and proposed actions under this PIF can clearly be linked to a series of Actions under several of the CLME+ SAP Strategies. With the purpose of illustrating this, we limit ourselves here to providing just some examples from SAP Strategy 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1: Enhance the regional governance arrangements for the protection of the marine environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action 1.2 Establish and strengthen regional institutional coordination and cooperation arrangements - Action 1.5. Establish/Enhance the capacity of governance arrangements for the involvement of civil society in the implementation of EAF/EBM (NGOs, 	<p>As mentioned above coordination with CLME+ is planned for several initiatives spearheaded by CLME+ including those mentioned for Strategy 1. The projects will be complementary as the MAR is an ecoregion within the CLME+ scope.</p>

<p>Private Sector)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Action 1.8. Establish and increase the capacity (...) for integrating the management of terrestrial drainage basins with the management of the marine recipient basins and coastal development</u> - Action 1.9 Establish and/or enhance the capacity (...) for the monitoring, assessment and reporting on the state of the marine environment 	
<p>4. Major efforts should thus be undertaken to make sure that this project is not further developed and configured as a stand-alone initiative, and that the efforts, both with regard to the further development of the project proposal as well as its implementation, are undertaken in sound coordination with, and with adequate participation from, other key stakeholders in the Caribbean/CLME+ region. From a governance perspective, many of these key stakeholders, both at sub-regional and regional levels, have been identified under the CLME Project (governance analyses & corresponding reports, CERMES).</p>	<p>The FSP document reflects the vision of the project as an initiative integrated into a context of multiple parallel and synergistic initiatives with which it will complement or coordinate actions or seek not to duplicate efforts.</p>
<p>5. Notwithstanding the fact that this PIF makes reference to the (need for) coordination of efforts with both the CLME+ SAP and organizations such as OSPESCA, both the CLME PCU and key CLME partners with a stake in this PIF such as e.g. OSPESCA had not been formally contacted or informed in this context by either WWF or the CCAD, nor have they been involved at any stage in the development of this PIF.</p>	<p>Project development team established linkages and with both OSPESCA and CLME+.</p>
<p>6. CCAD (the environmental arm of the Central American Integration System) has been invited to participate in both CLME+ ProDoc Core Development Team Meetings. CCAD did not participate in the first meeting, and has so far not confirmed its participation in this second meeting. If coordination of this new initiative with the CLME+ initiative is to be taken seriously, then we believe it would be of strategic importance that the CCAD indeed participates in the second CLME+ ProDoc CDT meeting.</p>	<p>At the moment of the CLME+ ProDoc development meetings, CCAD did not have an Executive Secretary that could participate. Once, the Secretary was appointed, both CCAD and WWF participated in other CLME+ related meetings.</p>
<p>7. It is thus clear that important complementarity and synergies could be achieved between both initiatives, leading to the short-term implementation of a substantial part of this regionally endorsed SAP. For this to happen, it will be important however that key representatives from both initiatives participate in the respective ProDoc development processes of both initiatives.</p>	<p>CCAD and WWF had access to CLME+'s logic framework during ProDoc development and discussions were carried out to identify where complementarity and synergies could be achieved between both initiatives. The identified synergies include FIPs, Intersectoral National Committees and regional interinstitutional collaboration.</p>

ANNEX C: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION ACTIVITIES AND THE USE OF FUNDS²⁰

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

PPG Grant Approved at PIF:			
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Amount (\$)</i>		
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent to date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>
Project document development workshop (kick off, coordination, progress, etc.)	155,963	24,548.65	
Technical assistance in the selection of activities for the ecoregion and for each of the MAR countries		100,331.68	
Technical assistance to develop updated baseline at regional and country level, and safeguards			
Country missions (including workshops and consultations) with partners and stakeholders in the four MAR countries and regional validation exercise		23,484.75	
2-Day CCAD Minister Council Meeting - Presentation of the MAR R2R to the full council (February 2017)		7,597.92	
Total	155,963	155,963	

²⁰ 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