GEF-6 GEF SECRETARIAT REVIEW FOR FULL-SIZED/MEDIUM-SIZED PROJECTS
THE GEF/LDCF/SCCF TRUST FUND

GEF ID:	**9910**		
Country/Region:	**Regional (Burkina Faso, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Togo)**		
Project Title:	**Reversing Ecosystem and Water Degradation in the Volta River Basin (REWarD-Volta River Basin)**		
GEF Agency:	**UNEP and IUCN**	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Type of Trust Fund:	**GEF Trust Fund**	GEF Focal Area (s):	**International Waters**
GEF-6 Focal Area/ LDCF/SCCF Objective (s):		**IW-1 Program 1; IW-2 Program 3;**	
Anticipated Financing PPG:	**$200,000**	Project Grant:	**$7,122,566**
Co-financing:	**$21,800,000**	Total Project Cost:	**$28,922,566**
PIF Approval:		Council Approval/Expected:	
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	**Astrid Hillers**	Agency Contact Person:	**Yegor Volovik**

PIF Review

Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
Project Consistency	1. Is the project aligned with the relevant GEF strategic objectives and results framework?[1]	(9/10/2017) The project is aligned with the GEF IW objectives 1 and 2. COMMENTS: 1. Please note that in GEF 6 IW-3 objective program 3 including its targets on moving X% of catch into sustainable uses was targeted towards marine projects. Please redirect resources in table A into SAP implementation IW-2. Please drop the target in table F (the value of which	

[1] 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 the project's contribution toward achieving the Aichi Target(s)?

PIF Review			
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		(i.e. 20 % of world's catch) is likely a typo and way too high.). Further, could you please explain how the numbers of ha in table F are estimated? 2. Please also note that mitigation/efforts strategies do not fall under the IW focal area reach. 3. Please submit the missing LOE. (9/29/2017) The above comments have been addressed, incl. correction/edits on table F, allocation to the specific IW objectives, and submission of all LOEs. Cleared.	
	2. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?	(9/10/2017) The PIF outlines the alignment with regional strategies, including the Volta SAP. COMMENT: Please add a brief section for alignment with relevant national strategies and plans in the countries especially given the wide range of activities to be addressed by the project. (9/29/2017) Some additional information has been added to the alignment with regional and in general the national strategies. As the SAP has been signed by the Ministers in the basin alignment and	

PIF Review			
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		commitment by the countries has been assured. Cleared. BY ENDORSEMENT: Please provide details on alignment with specific country level policies and strategies and governance frameworks especially as relevant to on the ground investments, e.g. on groundwater and conjunctive management, efficient use of water and regulations on water abstractions, land and livestock management, freshwater fisheries and aquaculture, and invasive species.	
Project Design	3. Does the PIF sufficiently indicate the drivers[2] of global environmental degradation, issues of sustainability, market transformation, scaling, and innovation?	(9/10/2017) The PIF describes drivers of degradation on a regional level overall. Given the many issues the projects tries to tackle the project lacks specifics, e.g. what major pollution sources are (see comp. 1), extend of flood and drought impacts in the past (component 2), ...(see comments under question 5 below). The very wide spread of project interventions provides a challenge to project design and both sustainability and feasibility of the project. COMMENT 1:	

[2] Need not apply to LDCF/SCCF projects.

PIF Review			
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		Please enhance the baseline with an initial (i.e. PIF level) assessment of directly project relevant i.e. project related ongoing initiatives on national levels (GEF and non-GEF) that address similar issues. COMMENT 2: In addition, the sustainability of activities need to be assured by involving national agencies from the onset in the project design and implementation. As written this intent is not articulated in the PIF. Issues of community early warning systems, fisheries management etc. require commitments from a range of national and local institutions to be sustained. Please strengthen and in the PIF stage just indicate in the PIF the likely national agencies to be involved for the main/larger streams of work proposed . It is understood that detailed information will only be available during the PPG phase and only detailed by endorsement. COMMENT 3: Regarding project risks, the SAP mentions within action B3 (IAS), the use of living control agents and the risk of them spreading out of control. In view of past catastrophic experiences of IAS control agents going out of control,	

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		this should clearly be identified in the risks table. (9/29/2017) The comments above have been sufficiently addressed at PIF level. Additional information should be provided during project design and included in the endorsement package. Cleared. AT ENDORSEMENT: - We appreciate that national agencies now have been indicated as being among executing agencies in some of the measures to be funded. During project design, please provide additional detail on how the project will involve the relevant national agencies as well as build on and strengthen local government and traditional mechanisms for resource management (incl. those involving pastoralist groups and interaction with sedentary framing communities). - As indicated in the PIF, it will be important during project design to take stock in more detail on related investments on national level (both GEF and non-GEF) on which the national and regional investments can	

PIF Review			
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		build on both in terms of lessons to take on during the design and coordination and/or cooperation in their implementation.	
	4. Is the project designed with sound incremental reasoning?	(9/10/2017) The incremental reasoning of the overall project is clear. (Just note that the incremental cost section further illustrates that the project is tackling very many substantial issues and requires further effort to increase focus and impact - see comment 5 below). Cleared.	
	5. Are the components in Table B sound and sufficiently clear and appropriate to achieve project objectives and the GEBs?	(9/11/2017) We are pleased that a PIF for the Volta Basin has been submitted in discussions with VBA and across the agencies involved. Please address the following comments below and please note that we would be happy to have a discussion with the UNEP and IUCN team on the comments provided to expedite revisions: 1. The project is complex. We would like to see more focus to assure impact and implementation success especially given the regional nature of	

PIF Review			
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		the project activities (6 countries - even if not involved in each and every activity this adds to the complexity and effort to implement on the ground measures). In addition there is the need to address a range of sectors which would require to involve even on national level key sectors which fund and operate water infrastructure in the Volta Basin (e.g. to address infrastructure optimization (component 1.1) or a Masterplan (component 2.1). To illustrate and summarize the PIF: As presented in the PIF, the regional project interventions will span: a planning model and infrastructure optimization, economic evaluation of (which?) ecosystems, an inventory of shallow and deep aquifers and assessment of water quality, a basin Master Plan and climate adaptation strategy, support for a real time hydrological model and for early warning systems (down to community level) for floods and for droughts, an invasive species abatement program, enhancement of various functions of the Observatory, support to a range of local nature based investments (with range of goals/impacts), support to local investments for domestic water use efficiency, support for	

PIF Review			
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		enhancement of water use for crops and livestock and demarcation of pastoralist stock routes, support to sustainable fisheries practices, and finance for communication and awareness campaigns on environmental themes across the six countries. Clearly this seems a tall order unless multiple of the GEF grant resources could have been mobilized in cash and even then the variety of agencies and stakeholders across countries and sectors that would need to be involved in such a range of issues within one project would be daunting. Component specific COMMENTS (based on present # of component interventions): Component 1 : Water Allocation: - The term "allocation" may need to be used more cautiously. Are water allocations within the mandate of VBA and to be negotiated across sectors and countries? Is this being built into the Water Charter including a mechanisms to allocate costs and benefits of such allocations? - The emphasis appears to be on	

PIF Review			
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		'simple' databases yet at the same time the model is to aid the optimization of infrastructure operational regimes to enhance e-flows. The latter would require more than a simple overview of sectoral water uses. Please clarify what kind and use of the model is intended and budget this component accordingly. - Please add(among outputs) the establishment of inter-sectoral/inter-ministerial committees and/or formal dialogue among project outputs. Clearly the optimization of infrastructure operation would involved a range of sectors and the operators of existing hydraulic infrastructure. - Economic Valuation of Natural Capital and Ecosystems services - this can inform policy and planning decisions on regional and national levels. If this sub-component remains part of the final PIF, then its value would be greatly enhanced if such ecosystems valuation would be built together with a process to be come part of national planning and budgeting processes and not just remain an information for VBA. This process and aim for national	

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		implementation would then be consistent with the statement that the project is intending to go beyond a proof of concept and address "concrete implementation modalities and schemes".(page 14) - Groundwater - Why is the focus on water quality only (mainly ?) and not quantity (which e.g. would support other subcomponents on water for crops and livestock). And what are the major pollutants identified as main concern in the basin countries ? (Please just note : fluoride is not a heavy metal - see page 14) - please take note and acknowledge some of the larger, related ongoing projects on country level. Please also note and coordinate during PPG with the World Bank PIF (under design) - PMIS 9886 - which will address groundwater sources in Mali, Niger and Chad. Component 2: - the component title elutes to governance dimensions, yet neither component 1 or 2 - as described - seem to address enhanced governance. Please address.	

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		- The Green (?) Masterplan - as indicated addresses identification and planning of infrastructure projects and joint investments - among other (see page 15). As outlined in the PIF this would require technical work as well as substantive consultations across sectors and countries and eventual adoption by countries. It is not clear that UNEP and IUCN have the comparative advantage and prior engaged in infrastructure planning. It questions if this sub-component is well placed in this project given an already complex project design. As for a "GREEN" basin plan this may simply duplicate the SAP. - Invasive Alien Species (IAS) - Please provide more detail on the species and modes of addressing this. IAS programs are complex and not always successful. - Does the monitoring of invasive alien plants in the Volta Basin include all plants, as that may represent a large scope? - Flood and drought- early warning:	

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		Flood and drought early warning on basin, national and community level is not the same effort. The budget and description does not give a hint to the recognition that the data and model requirements, stakeholders and response measures for fast onset/flood and slow onset/drought events differ substantially. - There is no detail of the extend and severity or key areas affected by past extreme events (and hence would provide backdrop/motivation and guide priority localities for work with communities). - We would strongly suggest to narrow the project focus to either drought or flood early warning. Partnering or 'division of labor' with WMO may be possible as VBA (with WMO as agency) is currently also seeking finance for drought and flood early warning from the Adaptation Fund. - With regard to the Observatory - it is understood that detail will be added during project development. At this stage please just note for clarification that: i. the GEF IW focal area does not cover the "development of .... portfolio of adaptation measures to	

PIF Review			
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		optimize carbon management in the basins ...." and ii. GEF IW funds - which are regional - do not cover national hydromet stations. Component 3: - Nature based measures - as written here this seems to overlap with the ongoing WB GEF Volta Project. Please also note that the upcoming MTR of that project will address the substantial challenges to implement such a variety of measures across countries in a sustainable and effective manner. These lessons should be noted and more focus in the PIF is recommended (as stated earlier). - Domestic water use efficiency - this does not seem to be an area where huge saving can be made. Given a rather stretched project design, is this a sub-component that could be dropped ? - Sustainable use of water for crop and livestock - This is a valuable effort especially with regard to regulation of transhumance corridors and reducing local conflict potentials. Just one question: bullet one talks about a VBA framework on this issue. Does VBA have a mandate or	

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		intention to address transhumance? Also, please budget to allow consultations with respective herder and farmer representations and specifically pay attention to gender and ethnic group related differences. - A link with the drought early warning systems could be valuable (with regard to adjusting pastoralist movement in times of drought). - Sustainable fisheries management - appreciated effort on freshwater fisheries where little has been done. Please indicate the main type of fisheries to be addressed. Please also balance local and regional approaches and build on local efforts. - Does VBA also have a mandate to develop a regional approach to fisheries development and planning? - Please provide detail during PPG and due diligence with regard to risks of stocking/restocking efforts to not introduce locally foreign species with a associated risks. - Aquaculture - please indicate scope of work. - Are any supply chain efforts	

PIF Review			
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		intended to enhance the sustainability of fishing efforts ? Component 4: - Please - during PPG - provide detail on the national stakeholder groups and agencies to be involved in the communications and awareness strategies and campaigns including their role in framing the content. - Please indicate the dedication of 1% of the budget to IW:Learn related activities - Output 4.2.3 seems to relate to communication on the management of natural resources. If that is the case, the title of the output may be misleading. (9/29/2017) We appreciate the revisions made to the project design resulting in increased focus, aim for simplification of project design and increased efforts for coordination on regional level and use of country systems on national levels. This addresses the majority of the comments above in and by itself as	

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		several outputs have been revised and/or have been dropped. Please note comments below to be addressed by ENDORSEMENT (during project design). CLEARED. BY ENDORSEMENT: - Please define 'hotspots' (components 1 and 2) - Please take note of the WMO Volta Hycos among the regional initiatives. The cooperation noted with WMO is appreciated. - Groundwater: please take note of ongoing country level investments (e.g. such as the large IDA loan to Burkina Faso on groundwater; and a number of other) as well as regional investments (such as the WB Sahel Irrigation Initiative which is baseline for the WB water security and groundwater project (submitted for WP inclusion)). In terms of pollution, please note considerable existing knowledge of likely pollution (natural	

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		and anthropogenic) that will aid to narrow down possible type and location of pollution/pollution hotspots. - Please eliminate the confusion in wording under component 2 with regard to drought early warning systems. Bullet 2 on page 21 appears to restrict access to early warning, while we clearly understand from discussion and the overall description that this to mean the projects effort to make special efforts to address/include specific vulnerable groups (but not to exclude others). - Within the work on drought resilience, drought early warning, groundwater access, and measures on sustainable crop and livestock management, please address the specific needs to mitigate potential use conflicts between pastoralist and farmers in certain parts of the basin. This is briefly mentioned in component 3.1.1, but in fact cuts across most components. - On fisheries, please outline the existence of existing stock assessments and sustainable catch limits in the needs assessment of the project during project design. Please	

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		consider also any needs for improved supply chain interventions to e.g. reduce post harvest losses (e.g. via promoting drying or cooling techniques and/or improved processing) and actions to improve overall sustainability alongside to access to markets. Please also provide details on measures to assure sustainability of aquaculture operations (incl. to minimize environmental impacts) IF the project may engage in aquaculture efforts on local levels. - During project design, please explore how to link the communication efforts more closely to project interventions to be effective (e.g. to increase awareness on groundwater and conjunctive management; support to address drought early warning; and/or ameliorate resource conflicts across transhumance corridors especially in times of drought). - Please note the regional IW resources are note designed to fund regular national hydro-met networks (except limited stations of innovative nature), which should be funded from co-finance/counterpart contributions.	
	6. Are socio-economic aspects,	(9/11/2017) The PIF indication of	

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	including relevant gender elements, indigenous people, and CSOs considered?	gender dimensions is sufficiently detailed. There is little detail on the types of stakeholder groups due to the diversity of activities supported by the project which makes it difficult to provide specific considerations. At resubmission please mention the type of civil society groups to be consulted during project design. Could you please clarify if the project geography and interventions includes indigenous people and if so how they will be involved during PPG and during project implementation? (9/29/2017) Comment addressed. Cleared.	
Availability of Resources	7. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply):		
	• The STAR allocation?	N/A	
	• The focal area allocation?	(9/11/2017) The requested amount is within the available IW resources at present. COMMENT: 1. Please submit IUCN certification to document that : first, the GEF grants is not greater than the largest project the agency had implemented (or executed) to date. Second, at any given time, total GEF	

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		grants under implementation cannot make up more than 20% of the total projects that the accredited agency has under implementation. If either one of the ceilings are transgressed GEF cannot provide funding. 2. Please adjust the IUCN agency fee to 9 %. (9/29/2017) Comments addressed. Cleared.	
	• The LDCF under the principle of equitable access	N/A	
	• The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?	N/A	
	• Focal area set-aside?	N/A	
Recommendations	8. Is the PIF being recommended for clearance and PPG (if additional amount beyond the norm) justified?	(9/11/2017) Not recommended yet. Please address comments above including submission of the missing LOE for Cote D'Ivoire and submission of the IUCN certification of the grant ceiling. (9/29/2017) The review comments have been addressed in the revised PIF and the agency responses. The PIF is recommended for technical clearance and inclusion in a future work program.	

PIF Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
Review Date	Review	September 11, 2017	
	Additional Review (as necessary)	September 29, 2017	
	Additional Review (as necessary)		

CEO endorsement Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
Project Design and Financing	1. If there are any changes from that presented in the PIF, have justifications been provided?		
	2. Is the project structure/ design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?		
	3. Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?		
	4. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)		

CEO endorsement Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
	5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?		
	6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?		
	7. *Only for Non-Grant Instrument:* Has a reflow calendar been presented?		
	8. Is the project coordinated with other related initiatives and national/regional plans in the country or in the region?		
	9. Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?		
	10. Does the project have descriptions of a knowledge management plan?		
Agency Responses	11. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments at the PIF[3] stage from:		
	• GEFSEC		
	• STAP		
	• GEF Council		
	• Convention Secretariat		
Recommendation	12. Is CEO endorsement recommended?		
Review Date	Review		
	Additional Review (as necessary)		

[3] If it is a child project under a program, assess if the components of the child project align with the program criteria set for selection of child projects.

CEO endorsement Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
	Additional Review (as necessary)		