



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

GEF ID:	5824		
Country/Region:	Global (China, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, Vietnam)		
Project Title:	Sharing Knowledge on the Use of Biochar for Sustainable Land Management		
GEF Agency:	UNEP	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Type of Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund	GEF Focal Area (s):	Land Degradation
GEF-5 Focal Area/ LDCF/SCCF Objective (s):	LD-1; LD-4;		
Anticipated Financing PPG:	\$0	Project Grant:	\$1,826,484
Co-financing:	\$1,257,800	Total Project Cost:	\$3,084,284
PIF Approval:		Council Approval/Expected:	
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	Mohamed Bakarr	Agency Contact Person:	Mohamed Sessay

Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at PIF (PFD)/Work Program Inclusion ¹	Secretariat Comment At CEO Endorsement(FSP)/Approval (MSP)
Eligibility	1. Is the participating country eligible ?		May 05, 2014 This is a global project that will involve activities in Ethiopia, Kenya, China, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Peru, all of which are eligible. Cleared
	2. Has the operational focal point endorsed the project?		May 05, 2014 OFP endorsement is not required since no STAR resources are requested. Cleared

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

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

FSP/MSP review template: updated January 2013

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Resource Availability	3. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply):		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the STAR allocation? 		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>No STAR resources area requested.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the focal area allocation? 		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>The full amount requested is from the LD focal area, but availability is pending CEO prioritization for disbursement of remaining GEF-5 funds.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>The amount requested is available.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the LDCF under the principle of equitable access 		n/a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)? 		n/a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Nagoya Protocol Investment Fund 		n/a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focal area set-aside? 		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>The full amount requested is pending CEO prioritization for disbursement of remaining set-aside funds for GEF-5.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>The amount requested is available.</p>

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			Cleared
Strategic Alignment	<p>4. Is the project aligned with the focal area/multifocal areas/ LDCE/SCCF/NPIF results framework and strategic objectives?</p> <p><i>For BD projects: Has the project explicitly articulated which Aichi Target(s) the project will help achieve and are SMART indicators identified, that will be used to track progress toward achieving the Aichi target(s).</i></p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>Yes, the project is fully aligned with the LD focal area results framework. However, contribution to three objectives is not realistic if it raises expectations for delivering on-the-ground results. Please revisit and consider specifying only knowledge related outcomes and outputs: LD1, Outcome 1.2 and Output 1.5; LD3 as stated; and LD4 as stated.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>The objectives, outcomes and outputs are now appropriate.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>5. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, including NPFE, NAPA, NCSA, NBSAP or NAP?</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>Yes, consistency with national strategies of targeted countries is adequately described, including with the UNCCD NAPs.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>6. Is (are) the baseline project(s), including problem(s) that the baseline project(s) seek/s to address, sufficiently described and based on sound data and assumptions?</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>Yes. The baseline relates to the current fragment nature of biochar application efforts for SLM, and lack of adequate understanding of the practice, associated environment benefits, and potential for its scaling-up. Based on existing work in</p>

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Project Design			<p>six countries in Africa, Asia, and LAC, there is considerable scope for consolidation to influence widespread application of the practice.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>7. Are the components, outcomes and outputs in the project framework (Table B) clear, sound and appropriately detailed?</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>The project framework is sound and very clear, with two components. The outcomes and outputs will be better aligned with FA objectives and outcomes in Table B, if adjusted as proposed in #4 above. Please ensure this is the case.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>Outcomes and outputs are now better aligned.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>8. (a) Are global environmental/adaptation benefits identified? (b) Is the description of the incremental/additional reasoning sound and appropriate?</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>This is a global project that will generate knowledge on biochar as a potentially important option for SLM. It will not generate GEBs per se, but provided guidelines and tools to promote application by land users where such benefits can be realized. Please revise section A.1.5 to focus specifically on this aspect and avoid raising expectations about delivering multiple environment and development benefits. For example, the project claims to improve food security, income, and diversify the nutrition of resource-poor</p>

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			<p>rural communities living in the already approved USAID supported CARE's GRAD in Ethiopia. How will this be possible from purely demonstration trials?</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>Contribution to GEBs is now clear, and the incremental reasoning also appropriate.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>9. Is there a clear description of: a) the socio-economic benefits, including gender dimensions, to be delivered by the project, and b) how will the delivery of such benefits support the achievement of incremental/ additional benefits?</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>The proposal highlights potential socio-economic benefits of biochar application in production systems. However, as a global project focused on generating knowledge, these benefits will not be delivered per se. Please remove the three bulleted points under A.3 to avoid confusion about this. Otherwise please clarify how exactly the project will deliver the benefits, including estimates of targeted beneficiaries.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>Contribution to socio-economic benefits is now clear, including how such benefits could be achieved.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>10. Is the role of public participation, including CSOs, and indigenous peoples where relevant, identified and explicit means for their</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>Yes. The project builds on a multi-scale framework for stakeholder engagement.</p>

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	engagement explained?		<p>The framework in each of the countries involves participation of grassroots communities, civil society groups, and academic institutions. The institutions will then be linked into a global framework through collaboration on various aspects of biochar application.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	11. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk mitigation measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>Some risks have been identified and described reasonably. However, please consider the following risks that will have implications for implementation:</p> <p>a) Availability of raw materials for biochar production and the equipment; this could have major implications for tradeoffs in SLM by rural land users adopting the practice.</p> <p>b) Transaction costs of managing project activities across six countries in multiple regions; this has implications for how the project is co-financed</p> <p>Please address these accordingly.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>The risks associated with tradeoff and transaction costs have been addressed.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	12. Is the project consistent and properly coordinated with other related initiatives in the country or in the region?		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>No. Please provide some indicative list of other relevant GEF financed initiatives in the targeted countries. China, Ethiopia, and Kenya all have</p>

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			<p>GEF projects in production systems that area relevant for coordination. Please address.</p> <p>This also raises concern about the proposed institutional framework for implementation. Given STAP role in reviewing projects submitted by countries, it will be best not to mention the Panel member as directly involved in this project (remove all names in Section 1.7).</p> <p>It would also be helpful to clarify s bit more how exactly Starfish Initiatives will in-country partners, especially given the fact that it has no experience in most of them.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>Other project's for coordination is now included, and role of the lead executing partner clarified.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>13. Comment on the project's innovative aspects, sustainability, and potential for scaling up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess whether the project is innovative and if so, how, and if not, why not. Assess the project's strategy for sustainability, and the likelihood of achieving this based on GEF and Agency 		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>The project is innovative in the sense that it represents the first time GEF will invest in this potential important SLM practice. The approach to working with institutions in six countries will enrich the knowledge generation process, and therefore establish the foundation for scaling-up of biochar.</p> <p>Cleared</p>

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	experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the potential for scaling up the project's intervention. 		
	14. Is the project structure/design sufficiently close to what was presented at PIF, with clear justifications for changes?		May 05, 2014 This is a single-step MSP and did not have a PIF stage. Cleared
	15. Has the cost-effectiveness of the project been sufficiently demonstrated, including the cost-effectiveness of the project design as compared to alternative approaches to achieve similar benefits?		May 05, 2014 Yes. The project is cost-effective because it builds on ongoing efforts, and will create opportunity for building a community of practices to support future GEF SLM investments. Cleared
Project Financing	16. Is the GEF funding and co-financing as indicated in Table B appropriate and adequate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?		May 05, 2014 No. A total GEF grant of \$1.8 million is requested, with a co-financing of \$0.8 million. The low co-financing does not reflect the strong baseline context for the project, including ongoing projects in six target countries. Please address this concern so that the co-financing shows ratio of at least 1:2. In addition, please justify: a) why the collation of demonstration results require \$919, 500; and b) how the production of guidelines and unidentified number of smallholder trainings will amount to \$816,484 May 22, 2014

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			<p>The co-financing has been increased and a case made to increase the amount during project implementation. In addition, the breakdown between components is now justified.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>17. <u>At PIF</u>: Is the indicated amount and composition of co-financing as indicated in Table C adequate? Is the amount that the Agency bringing to the project in line with its role? <u>At CEO endorsement</u>: Has co-financing been confirmed?</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>Co-financing amounts are confirmed with letters. The total co-financing is \$827,800 of which only \$100 000 is in cash. This does not reflect a significant commitment from the partners, including the GEF Agency which did not provide any co-financing. Please address.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>Co-financing has been increased modestly and now includes contribution from the GEF Agency. Additional co-financing will be mobilized during implementation.</p> <p>Cleared</p>
	<p>18. Is the funding level for project management cost appropriate?</p>		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>The PMC is 5.21%. But the potentially high transaction costs means that it should be co-financed at an appropriate level. Please address this concern.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>PMC has been adjusted and is now</p>

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			appropriate. Cleared
	19. <u>At PIF</u> , is PPG requested? If the requested amount deviates from the norm, has the Agency provided adequate justification that the level requested is in line with project design needs? <u>At CEO endorsement/ approval</u> , if PPG is completed, did Agency report on the activities using the PPG fund?		May 05, 2014 No, PPG is not requested Cleared
	20. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is there a reasonable calendar of reflows included?		n/a
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	21. Have the appropriate Tracking Tools been included with information for all relevant indicators, as applicable?		May 05, 2014 No. Please ensure that the completed tracking tool accompanies the re-submission. May 22, 2014 TT is now included in the submission. Cleared
	22. Does the proposal include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?		May 05, 2014 Yes. Cleared
Agency Responses	23. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments from:		
	• STAP?		
	• Convention Secretariat?		
	• The Council?		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other GEF Agencies? 		
Secretariat Recommendation			
Recommendation at PIF Stage	24. Is PIF clearance/approval being recommended?		
	25. Items to consider at CEO endorsement/approval.		
Recommendation at CEO Endorsement/ Approval	26. Is CEO endorsement/approval being recommended?		<p>May 05, 2014</p> <p>No. CEO approval cannot be recommended at this stage. Please address concerns expressed in this review.</p> <p>May 22, 2014</p> <p>Yes, CEO endorsement is now recommended.</p>
	First review*	May 05, 2014	
Review Date (s)	Additional review (as necessary)	May 22, 2014	
	Additional review (as necessary)		

* **This is the first time the Program Manager provides full comments for the project. Subsequent follow-up reviews should be recorded. For specific comments for each section, please insert a date after comments. Greyed areas in each section do not need comments.**