



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

GEF ID:	4468		
Country/Region:	Belarus		
Project Title:	Landscape Approach to Management of Peatlands Aiming at Multiple Ecological Benefits		
GEF Agency:	UNDP	GEF Agency Project ID:	4419 (UNDP)
Type of Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund	GEF Focal Area (s):	Multi Focal Area
GEF-5 Focal Area/ LDCF/SCCF Objective (s):	BD-1; CCM-5; LD-3; SFM/REDD+-1; Project Mana; SFM/REDD+-2; CCM-5;		
Anticipated Financing PPG:	\$0	Project Grant:	\$2,700,900
Co-financing:	\$10,484,400	Total Project Cost:	\$13,185,300
PIF Approval:	March 25, 2011	Council Approval/Expected:	May 01, 2011
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	Dirk Gaul	Agency Contact Person:	Maxim Vergeichik

Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at PIF (PFD)/Work Program Inclusion	Secretariat Comment At CEO Endorsement(FSP)/Approval (MSP)
Eligibility	1. Is the participating country eligible?	02/25/11 BD, LD Yes, Belarus is eligible for GEF funding CC/Feb 25 11: Yes, entered into force year 2000.	
	2. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is the GEF Agency capable of managing it?	02/25/11 BD, LD There is no non-grant instrument	
	3. Has the operational focal point endorsed the project?	02/25/11 BD, LD Yes, there is an endorsement letter signed by OFP Belarus dated 02/09/11.	
Agency's Comparative Advantage	4. Is the Agency's comparative advantage for this project clearly described and supported?	02/22/11 BD, LD Yes. UNDP has strong experience in the sustainable management of peatlands and creation of PAs both in Belarus itself and internationally. CC/Feb 25 11: The agency's comparative advantage is clearly described for peatlands work in general. But core	

peatlands work, especially in regards to MRV for reducing carbon emissions. The PIF even says UNDP has been doing "hands-on research" which I interpret to mean doing research but not following the scientific process. Going back to the outputs from the previous UNDP/GEF project mentioned in this PIF, one finds the basically scientific document on "Methodological recommendations for ecological rehabilitation of damaged mire and prevention of disturbances". except it does not appear to have been peer-reviewed to give it the stature that would have made it truly scientific, and global-GEF quality. As a program manager, such an approach ("hands-on research") wastes the opportunity and funding to not make the local-national project into a global effort (making this more scientific grade work would make it global); as a former research scientist this type of work (its research but doesn't follow the scientific process) seems tragic. The project must be better described "the area of peatlands management and GHG inventories still needs science quality outputs for methodologies; then reconsider what is written in the PIF for comparative advantage.

CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Thank you for the very detailed explanation, and for offering to provide a copy of the manuscript. I can access this journal and will wait for the manuscript to play through the scientific process. This is very useful information. Yes, clearly UNDP has been successful in the area.

5. Is the co-financing amount that the Agency is bringing to the project in line with its role?

02/25/11 BD, LD
 No. Cofinancing by the Agency is \$390,000, or approx 3% of total project cost. A priority project for UNPD may be reflected by a higher level of Agency co-financing. An increase in co-financing

		03/21/11 BD, LD no changes. Increased co-financing from UNDP at CEO Endorsement is welcome.	
	6. Does the project fit into the Agency's program and staff capacity in the country?	02/25/11 BD, LD Yes. The project fits within the UNDP Country Programme Document 2011-2016; specifically measures to mitigate and adapt to CC and promote sustainable use of NRs. The UNDAF for Belarus 2011-2015 includes CC and BD conservation as priorities. The Agency has two permanent staff managing BD, IW and CC projects.	
Resource Availability	7. Is the proposed GEF/LDCF/SCCF Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply):		
	• the STAR allocation?	02/25/11 BD, LD Yes. The total grant is within Belarus' STAR allocation of \$11,560,000.	
	• the focal area allocation?	02/25/11 BD, LD Yes. The FA allocations and proposed grants are: BD \$1,500,000 allocation - \$876,800 grant CC \$9,560,000 allocation- \$621,300 grant LD \$500,000 allocation - \$262,700 grant CC/Feb 25 11: There is another GEF5 3.85 million CC PIF pending for Belarus but collectively they are both within the focal area allocation.	
	• the LDCF under the principle of equitable access?	02/25/11 BD, LD NA	
	• the SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?	02/25/11 BD, LD NA	
	• focal area set-aside?	02/25/11 BD, LD Yes.	
Project Consistency	8. Is the project aligned with the focal area/multi-focal area/ LDCF/SCCF results framework?	02/22/11 BD, LD Most likely - but this is difficult to assess based on the current PIF. BD-1 The project will improve management of 93,588 ha of existing PA,	

		<p>CCM-5 The project will result in the restoration of carbon stocks through the restoration of 5,000 ha of forest peatland. LD-3 Cross-sector policies within agriculture and environment will be developed for agricultural production, peatlands and forest management. SFM/REDD- 1 The project will help development of new financing streams for alternative landuses, although Component 2 SFM benefit 1 may be more aligned with SFM/REDD-2 and the agriculture element seems out of context. 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes, the project is now well aligned with all 4 results frameworks.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: Because the project is unclear, especially in regards to SFM incentive but also the other objectives , it is unclear if it is aligned appropriately to the results framework. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, the revisions make this clear for CC.</p>	
	<p>9. Are the relevant GEF 5 focal area/LDCF/SCCF objectives identified?</p>	<p>02/22/11 BD, LD See Q8 above 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: Because the project is unclear, it is unclear if the relevant GEF5 objectives are identified in regards to CC and SFM. SFM should be focused on forests and forests in the wider landscape, not straight agriculture. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, the revisions make this clear.</p>	
	<p>10. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, including NPFE, NAPA, and NCSA?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD The 2004 NCSA for Global Environmental Management in Belarus identifies degradation of peat soils being used in agriculture, degradation of drained peat soils affected by fires and degradation of forested lands through unwise forest management and forest fires as key land degradation issues.</p>	

		<p>CC/Feb 25 11: Because the project is unclear, it is unclear if the project is consistent with the recipient country's national strategies, etc. Among other items, this states, "the project implements priority actions listed under the national communications which underscores the need to calculate emissions from land-based sources". But how an MRV system fits in the project is particularly not clear. Also, this PIF section ends with a sentence about compliance measures. GEF funds do not pay for compliance for local laws unless there has been an agreement, so please be clear this is for being responsive to Convention guidance.</p> <p>CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, the revision makes it clear these are consistent.</p>	
	<p>11. Does the proposal clearly articulate how the capacities developed will contribute to the institutional sustainability of project outcomes?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD The project's main goals are to enhance the National Peatland Strategy and Action Plan and restoration of degraded lands in the Poozerie landscape but the PIF does not clearly explain how it will build capacities within the State organizations to receive and act on these elements. It is also not clear how capacity is to be built within non-State actors. Engagement with the public Councils is mentioned but it is not clear for example how local communities and the private sector will be helped to follow new management regimes or buffer zone restrictions. Further details should be given on how capacity development will be undertaken.</p> <p>3/21/11 BD, LD Yes, this is clear now.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: no the proposal is not clear. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: The revision is not explicitly articulate but it conveys the momentum of this topic.</p>	
	<p>12. Is (are) the baseline project(s) sufficiently described and based</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD No. This is the weakest point of the</p>	

Project Design

		<p>programmes are given as the baseline. The key programme seems to be the development of a strategy for peatlands management - the National Peatlands Strategy and Action Plan. The PIF provides useful background information on these initiatives but does not really explain the baseline project in sufficient detail. It is not clear, which components of these programs are considered for the baseline scenario. Please, describe more in detail in a re-submission. 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes. The inclusion of tables under B1 and B2 is very much appreciated.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: It is unclear where the MRV for agriculture and forests fits into project. Please provide a more detailed description of the baseline project. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, the revised PIF sufficiently describes the baseline project, and it appears based on sound data and assumptions.</p>	
	<p>13. Is (are) the problem(s) that the baseline project(s) seek/s to address sufficiently described and based on sound data and assumptions?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD No. The problems at the landscape level of Poozerie are provided although it is not clear what are the key drivers of the problems. At the strategy level the baseline scenarios provided in B2 do not appear to take into consideration the activities described earlier in B1 which are making improvements to peatlands management. The scenarios suggest there is actually no baseline to which GEF funding can be added. Forest fires are mentioned in the text as a problem but this is not reflected in an activity. 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes, see above.</p> <p>Please give a clearer identification of the problems the baseline project is addressing. CC/Feb 25 11: I agree the baseline project is not sufficiently described so it is</p>	

		<p>addressing are sufficiently describe. Please clarify. At least one of the carbon benefit estimates seems inaccurate. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, the revision makes this clear.</p>	
	<p>14. Is the project framework sound and sufficiently clear?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD The project framework is not clear. Benefits, outcomes and outputs appear to be in the wrong section making it difficult to understand exactly what the project outputs would be. Ideally, some mainly quantifiable outputs should be listed in order to achieve one or very few outcomes per component. While the landscape level elements at Poozerie can be seen it is not clear what the project aims to achieve at the strategy or policy level. Please revise the project framework making it clear the activities financed by GEF funds. 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes, this is clear now.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: No, it is unclear. As the PIF documents available for download on the GEF website state, in Table B grant types cannot be mixed. (that is TA and INV are not to be mixed.) The SFM incentive is for forests although in a wider landscape. About 20% of the peatlands in Belarus are listed as forested. Peatlands managed for agriculture (non-forest) would not be eligible for the SFM incentive. In component #2, there is distinction between forested peats and not, although it is unclear if the SFM incentive will be focused on forests. The table lists the estimate of 2 million hectares of peatland in the country, yet Belarus is listed as having over ten times that many. Two million is probably the region being discussed. A Belarus carbon trading fund is mentioned as resulting from a parallel project, is that project listed under co-financing and if not</p>	

		<p>about it. An MRV system for ag and forested peats (buried in brackets in component 2] would be fantastic. Why is it bracketed? If done well, such a system would be truly a globally excellent GEF-quality project. Component #2 outcomes in the table sounds more like SFM 2.1 and output 2.2. And the CC-5 is both 5.1 and 5.2. My listing here is not the entire list. Please clarify. Please revise the project framework to allow the identification of clear outputs for both strategic and landscape-based actions. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, the revisions have made the framework clear.</p>	
	<p>15. Are the incremental (in the case of GEF TF) or additional (in the case of LDCF/SCCF) activities complementary and appropriate to further address the identified problem?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD See Q12, the lack of a clear description of the baseline project makes it difficult to comment on the incremental activities. Again while the landscape level activities are generally clear, the strategy-focused activities are not. 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes, the inclusion of the 2 tables made this much clearer.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: It is not totally clear what specific actions are being proposed. The one idea, that a previous UNDP/GEF project, focused on peatlands mining and this will focus on ag and forest peatlands degradation, is quite interesting and could be very worthwhile if implemented well. The previous project is said to have developed restoration methods and a carbon accounting and monitoring system, but I wasn't able to find any information on the accounting and monitoring system. Where is information about that specific carbon inventory system, and why does such a system need to be different to deal with ag and forest peatlands? Please make the other activities clear also. Under summary of global environmental benefits, the first sentence says the project will generate</p>	

		<p>climate benefits? CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Revised text makes this clear. Yes, incremental activities are complementary and appropriate.</p>	
	<p>16. Are the applied methodology and assumptions for the description of the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits sound and appropriate?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Yes. The BD, LD and SFM benefits are based on the assumption of successful location and management of the PA, buffer and restoration areas will accrue GEBs.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: In terms of carbon benefits, generally for planning purposes, what is provided in section A1, however, the reduction in carbon emissions may be reasonable but the sequestration seems excessive. More accurate estimates are expected during projects. What is the thinking about how carbon benefits will be estimated during the project implementation? More importantly, say more about the MRV system that was developed in the previous project which is mentioned for mined peat and why that system is not applicable/needs tweaking to develop a different system in degraded ag and forest peats. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: With the revised text, the CC and SFM-CC assumptions are sound and methodology is appropriate.</p>	
	<p>17. Has the cost-effectiveness sufficiently been demonstrated, including the cost-effectiveness of the project design approach as compared to alternative approaches to achieve similar benefits?</p>	<p>CC/Feb 25 11: What is the cost-effectiveness of the MRV approach? What was it in the previous UNDC/GEF project? CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: The response document makes this clear. The information would be more effective within the revised PIF, but it is sufficient.</p>	
	<p>18. Is there a clear description of the socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and of how they will support the achievement of environmental/adaptation benefits (for</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Socio-economic benefits are discussed in B3 suggesting that alternative livelihood incomes will increase by 10% in local households, although there is limited evidence provided to support this. Project</p>	

		<p>outcome but provides limited information of how this will be achieved. There is limited information on any potential influence on livelihoods associated with restrictions within new PAs or buffer areas.</p> <p>Additional information will be requested at CEO endorsement.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: One objective listed in this PIF is to develop carbon projects that will be ready to go once the ecosystem carbon fund is established. Please be clear how the ecosystem carbon fund and any other ecosystem service payments would benefit the local rural population. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, the response in the response document is clear.</p>	
	<p>19. Is the role of civil society, including indigenous people and gender issues being taken into consideration and addressed appropriately?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Yes. The project mainly focuses on the State actors of MNREP, MAF-DLRWE and MoF. B5 notes that local communities will be engaged during Project preparation through involvement of Public Councils. CSOs are expected to take part in the development of the National Peat Strategy and Action Plan but gives limited details of how this will be carried out or public involvement in the other aspects of the project.</p> <p>Additional information will be requested at CEO endorsement (baseline, indicators, targets) including activities linked to involving women and youths.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: Given the "key role" that CSOs are said to have (see section B5), as well as the "key role" of women" one would expect to see more specifics mentioned here besides a few sentences. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Revised text is sufficient at the PIF stage. As indicated above, additional information is expected at CEO endorsement.</p>	

	<p>20. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change and provides sufficient risk mitigation measures? (i.e., climate resilience)</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Mainly. Major risks are mentioned in B4. Most pressing is the ability to develop a multi-stakeholder collaborative mechanism to implement Outcome 1 National Peatland Strategy and Action Plan. The text explains how the State actors are supportive but it does not elaborate on how other stakeholder groups are going to be encouraged and supported to collaborate effectively. Additionally there is limited information on risk associated with not realizing stakeholder involvement in Component 2 in the creation and management of PAs and rehabilitation works.</p> <p>Additional information will be requested at CEO endorsement.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: The risks are not worded as risks, and some of the responses are not worded as mitigation measures. A risk is that "Government will not support sound peatland management over the long term" or that "Climate change will render project activities ineffective". So, no the project does not take major potential risks into account. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, revised text is clear.</p>	
	<p>21. Is the provided documentation consistent?</p>	<p>CC/Feb 25 11: there are inconsistencies in the documentation . It is unclear if the project is consistent because it is unclear what is this project and what is not this project. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, revised PIF is consistent.</p>	
	<p>22. Are key stakeholders (government, local authorities, private sector, CSOs, communities) and their respective roles and involvement in the project identified?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Mainly. State actors are clearly identified. Less information is provided about non-state, private and CSO involvement in the implementation of the project in particular how existing land-users will be involved in the development and maintenance of the new PAs. buffer zones etc.</p>	

		<p>the private sector, CSOs and local communities in project implementation.</p> <p>3/21/11 BD, LD Yes, all key stakeholders seem to be identified.</p>	
	23. Is the project consistent and properly coordinated with other related initiatives in the country or in the region?	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Yes. UNDP has recently completed a GEF MSP on peatland conservation and sustainable management in the mining sector has just been completed and will widen the peatland management and restoration approach in agricultural and forestry lands. Another GEF-UNDP project in Belarus is working on PA expansion and a third is focusing on mainstreaming biodiversity management into territorial planning .</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: neighboring Ukraine is only mentioned once briefly and it has similar peatlands</p>	
	24. Is the project implementation/ execution arrangement adequate?	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Mainly. B5 outlines the respective roles. Again the involvement of local private sector and communities lacks detail.</p> <p>Additional information will be requested at CEO endorsement.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: It is not clear given that the project is not clearly explained. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, revised text is adequate at the PIF stage.</p>	
	25. Is the project structure sufficiently close to what was presented at PIF, with clear justifications for changes?		
	26. If there is a non-grant instrument in the project, is there a reasonable calendar of reflows included?		
	27. Is the GEF/LDCF/SCCF funding level for project management cost appropriate?	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD No. In Section D the total management cost is 10% however the form should be</p>	

<p>Project Financing</p>		<p>fee is allocated equally between the CC, BD, LD and SFM areas rather than all allocated to BD. 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: it seems inappropriate. All the GEF project mgmt costs are included from the BD focal area, and since GEF funds only actual PM costs , one would think there should be project mgmt costs associated with each focal area as appropriate. Although actual costs are to be charged, these may not total more than 10% of project costs. Although not required at the PIF stage, a plan (and budget) for M&E for the GEF project will be expected before CEO endorsement. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Yes, corrections have been made.</p>	
	<p>28. Is the GEF/LDCF/SCCF funding per objective appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs according to the incremental/additional cost reasoning principle?</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD See comments relating to 12, 15 and 16 above. 3/21/11 BD, LD Yes.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: It is not clear if it is appropriate given that the project is unclear. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: This is now clear, so yes.</p>	
	<p>29. Comment on indicated cofinancing at PIF. At CEO endorsement, indicate if cofinancing is confirmed.</p>	<p>02/25/11 BD, LD Cofinancing is: Government Grant \$5,577,000 Government Inkind \$2,935,000 Agency Grant \$390,000 Others Inkind \$682,400 TOTAL \$9,584,400 The overall GEF:Cofinance ratio (1:3.5) seems appropriate.</p> <p>CC/Feb 25 11: Given the agricultural and operational forestry aspect, why is there not more company involvement in the co-financing? One would think company involvement is needed for the</p>	

		German financed effort for a carbon payment? I would think it would be important to develop an MRV system with precision acceptable for carbon markets. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Thank you very much for the thoughtful, useful reply to this comment in the response document. Yes, co-financing seems appropriate.	
	30. Is the budget (GEF/LDCF/SCCF funding and co-financing) per objective adequate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?	CC/Feb 25 11: Given the objective of an MRV system for agricultural and forested peatlands, the amount of funding associated with cofinancing for climate seems too low. IPCC Good Practice Guidance says emissions factors are needed for organic soils. Measurements at least at the current state of the science for peatland climate benefits would likely entail sensors on towers, including for methane. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Thank you for the additional, very clear, necessary information in the revised PIF. Yes, the budget is adequate for CC outcomes and outputs.	
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	31. Has the Tracking Tool been included with information for all relevant indicators, as applicable?	CC/Feb 25 11: Tracking tool for CC has not been included. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: To be included at the time of CEO endorsement.	
	32. Does the proposal include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?		
Agency Responses	33. Has the Agency responded adequately to comments from:		
	• STAP?		
	• Convention Secretariat?		
	• Council comments?		
	• Other GEF Agencies?		
Secretariat Recommendation			
Recommendation at PIF Stage	34. Is PIF clearance/approval being recommended?	02/25/11 BD, LD No. Please respond to the issues identified above. 3/21/11 BD, LD	

		adequately taken into consideration the most important comments (particularly on the baseline project) made on the initial submission. CC/Feb 25 11: The concept is very interesting in general in terms of climate (carbon) benefits. But approval is not recommended at this time. CC/LSH/Mar 17 11: Approval is recommended.	
	35. Items to consider at CEO endorsement/approval.	1. Please, include tracking tools for CC, BD, LD and SFM/REDD+. 2. Please, make sure to include figures (20,000 ha) for "establishment of new protected areas" under output 1.2.1. of the Project Framework	
Recommendation at CEO Endorsement/ Approval	36. At endorsement/approval, did Agency include the progress of PPG with clear information of commitment status of the PPG?		
	37. Is CEO endorsement/approval being recommended?		
Review Date (s)	First review*	February 28, 2011	
	Additional review (as necessary)	March 21, 2011	
	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.

REQUEST FOR PPG APPROVAL

Review Criteria	Decision Points	Program Manager Comments
PPG Budget	1. Are the proposed activities for project preparation appropriate?	
Secretariat Recommendation	2. Is itemized budget justified? 3. Is PPG approval being recommended?	
Review Date (s)	4. Other comments	
	First review*	
	Additional review (as necessary)	

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