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35<sup>th</sup> LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting  
February 08, 2024  
Washington D.C., USA

# **STATUS REPORT FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FUND**

**(Financial Report prepared by the Trustee)**



# Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)

Financial Report

Prepared by the Trustee

*As of December 31, 2023*



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## Introduction

The information contained in this report is prepared based on financial information of the Least Developed Countries Fund as of December 31, 2023.

The LDCF was established following the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (the “UNFCCC”) at its Seventh Session (“COP 7”) in November 2001 to invite the Global Environment Facility (“GEF”) to operate such a fund (Decision 7/CP.7 of the UNFCCC). At its May 15-17, 2002 biannual meeting, the GEF Council (the “Council”) approved the arrangements proposed for the establishment of such a fund and invited IBRD to act as its Trustee (GEF/C.19/6).

The report is produced by the Trustee in accordance with the Trustee’s role as set forth in the paper entitled Arrangements for the Establishment of the New Climate Change Funds (GEF/C.19/6) which states:

*“[...] the World Bank would be responsible for the financial management of each fund, including: [...] (iv) the preparation of financial reports regarding the investment and use of the funds’ resources; and (v) regular reporting to the Council on the status of the funds’ resources.”*

This report provides (i) a snapshot of the financial situation of the LDCF Trust Fund since its inception to December 31, 2023; (ii) the status of pledges and contributions, and (iii) the details of financial activities of the LDCF Trust Fund.



## LDCF Trust Fund Financial Summary as of December 31, 2023

### ***Pledges and Contributions:***

As of December 31, 2023, 28 donors pledged and signed Contribution Agreements amounting to USDeq. 2,215.64 million. The Trustee has received USDeq. 2,075.62 million in cash to date from these donors.

### ***Investment Income:***

As of December 31, 2023, the LDCF Trust Fund earned investment income of approximately USD 133.49 million on the undisbursed balance of the Trust Fund and USD 2.22 million as investment income from implementing agencies.

### ***Funding Approvals and Trustee Commitments:***

As of December 31, 2023, cumulative funding decisions by the Council and the CEO amounted to USD 1,826.65 million. Of the cumulative amount approved, USD 1,641.65 million was for projects and project preparation activities, USD 158.82 million was for fees, and USD 26.17 million was for administrative expenses and corporate activities of the LDCF.

Funding approved by the Council and the CEO is committed by the Trustee and transferred following established procedures for all financial transactions as agreed between the Trustee and the Agencies. The Trustee has committed a total amount of USD 1,634.32 million, of which USD 1,481.55 million relates to projects and project preparation activities, USD 127.10 million to fees, and USD 25.66 million to cover corporate activities and administrative expenses.

### ***Cash Transfers:***

Cash transfers were made to Agencies on an as-needed basis to meet their projected disbursement requirements. Out of the cumulative commitments of USD 1,634.32 million, upon request from Agencies, the Trustee transferred USD 1,163.93 million. The balance USD 470.39 million remains payable as of December 31, 2023.

### ***Funds Held in Trust and Funds Available for Council and CEO Funding Decisions:***

**Funds Held in Trust** reflect financial activities related to donor payments (cash and promissory notes), encashment of promissory notes, investment income, cash transfers, and the revaluation of the balance of promissory notes, if any, at month-end. Funds Held in Trust as of December 31, 2023, amounted to USD 1,047.41 million.

**Funds available to support Council or CEO decision amounted to USD 384.68 million as of December 31, 2023.** This represents an increase of USD 172.81 million compared to funds available as of March 31, 2023. Receipt of new funds from donors from April 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023 exceeded new funding approvals by the Council and CEO and fund transfers during the same period.



## 1. LDCF Trust Fund Summary – Inception through December 31, 2023

In USD millions

	Total	% of Total
<b><u>Donor Pledges and Contributions</u></b>		
Contributions	2,123.11	95.8%
Pledges	92.53	4.2%
<b>Total Pledges and Contributions</b>	<b>2,215.64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b><u>Cumulative Resources</u></b>		
<b><u>Resources received</u></b>		
Cash Receipts	2,075.62	88.3%
Investment Income earned	133.49	5.7%
Investment Income Received from implementing agencies	2.22	0.1%
<b>Total Resources Received</b>	<b>2,211.33</b>	<b>94.0%</b>
<b><u>Resources not yet received</u></b>		
Contributions not yet paid	47.48	2.0%
Pledges	92.53	3.9%
Total resources not yet received	140.01	6.0%
<b>Total Potential Resources (A)</b>	<b>2,351.35</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b><u>Cumulative Funding Decisions</u></b>		
Projects	1,641.65	89.9%
Fees	158.82	8.7%
Administrative Budgets	26.17	1.4%
<b>Total Funding Decisions Net of Cancellations (B)</b>	<b>1,826.65</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total Potential Resources Net of Funding Decisions (A) - (B)</b>	<b>524.70</b>	
<b><u>Funds Available</u></b>		
Funds Held in Trust	1,047.41	
Approved Amounts Pending Cash Transfers	662.73	
Funding Decisions Pending Council Approval	-	
<b>Total Funds Available to Support Council / CEO Decisions</b>	<b>384.68</b>	

Note: The totals in the table may not add up due to rounding.



## 2. Pledges and Contributions - Inception through December 31, 2023

In USD millions

1	Total Pledges Outstanding and Contributions Finalized			Pledges Outstanding		Contribution Agreements Finalized				
	2	3 = 5 + 7	4 = 6 + 9 + 11	5	6	7 = 8 + 10	Paid (Receipts)		Unpaid	
Contributing Participant	Currency	Amount	USDeq. a/	Amount	USDeq. b/	Total Contributions	Amount Paid in	USDeq. c/	Amount Due in	
									Currency	USDeq. b/
Australia	AUD	46.50	42.97	-	-	46.50	46.50	42.97	-	-
Austria	EUR	1.90	2.67	-	-	1.90	1.90	2.67	-	-
Belgium	d/ EUR	242.29	279.27	27.50	30.46	214.79	189.79	221.12	25.00	27.69
Canada	e/ CAD	111.00	90.14	-	-	111.00	111.00	90.14	-	-
Czech Republic	EUR	0.02	0.03	-	-	0.02	0.02	0.03	-	-
Denmark	DKK	1,136.40	173.53	-	-	1,136.40	1,136.40	173.53	-	-
Estonia	EUR	1.00	1.14	-	-	1.00	1.00	1.14	-	-
Finland	EUR	44.60	55.75	-	-	44.60	44.60	55.75	-	-
France	EUR	110.85	124.16	35.00	38.77	75.85	75.85	85.39	-	-
Germany	EUR	453.00	540.22	-	-	453.00	448.00	534.68	5.00	5.54
Hungary	EUR	1.00	1.34	-	-	1.00	1.00	1.34	-	-
Iceland	USD	1.18	1.18	-	-	1.18	1.18	1.18	-	-
Ireland	f/ EUR	21.23	24.58	-	-	21.23	21.23	24.58	-	-
	USD	8.00	8.00	-	-	8.00	8.00	8.00	-	-
Italy	USD	3.00	3.00	-	-	3.00	3.00	3.00	-	-
Japan	USD	1.08	1.08	-	-	1.08	1.08	1.08	-	-
Luxembourg	f/ EUR	1.00	1.58	-	-	1.00	1.00	1.58	-	-
	USD	4.12	4.12	-	-	4.12	4.12	4.12	-	-
Netherlands	f/ EUR	55.20	73.17	-	-	55.20	55.20	73.17	-	-
	USD	100.20	100.20	-	-	100.20	85.95	85.95	-	14.25
New Zealand	NZD	8.10	5.81	-	-	8.10	8.10	5.81	-	-
Norway	f/ NOK	280.00	39.94	-	-	280.00	280.00	39.94	-	-
	USD	2.00	2.00	-	-	2.00	2.00	2.00	-	-
Portugal	EUR	0.05	0.06	-	-	0.05	0.05	0.06	-	-
Qatar	USD	0.50	0.50	-	-	0.50	0.50	0.50	-	-
Romania	EUR	0.15	0.21	-	-	0.15	0.15	0.21	-	-
Slovenia	EUR	0.18	0.20	-	-	0.18	0.18	0.20	-	-
Spain	EUR	11.35	12.66	-	-	11.35	11.35	12.66	-	-
Sweden	SEK	1,767.00	209.01	-	-	1,767.00	1,767.00	209.01	-	-
Switzerland	CHF	43.73	47.07	11.13	13.30	32.61	32.61	33.77	-	-
United Kingdom	GBP	122.00	186.84	-	-	122.00	122.00	186.84	-	-
United States	USD	183.20	183.20	10.00	10.00	173.20	173.20	173.20	-	-
			<u>2,215.64</u>		<u>92.53</u>			<u>2,075.62</u>		<u>47.48</u>

a/ Represents (1) the actual US dollar value of paid-in cash contributions and (2) December 31, 2023 value of pledges outstanding, contribution amounts pending FX, and unpaid amounts.

b/ Valued at the exchange rates available on December 31, 2023.

c/ Represents the (1) actual US dollar value of paid-in cash contributions and (2) December 31, 2023 value of contribution amount pending FX.

d/ Includes paid in contribution of EUR 19.85 million from the Walloon Government of Belgium.

e/ Includes CAD 6 million received from the Government of Quebec.

f/ Contributions made in more than one currency.

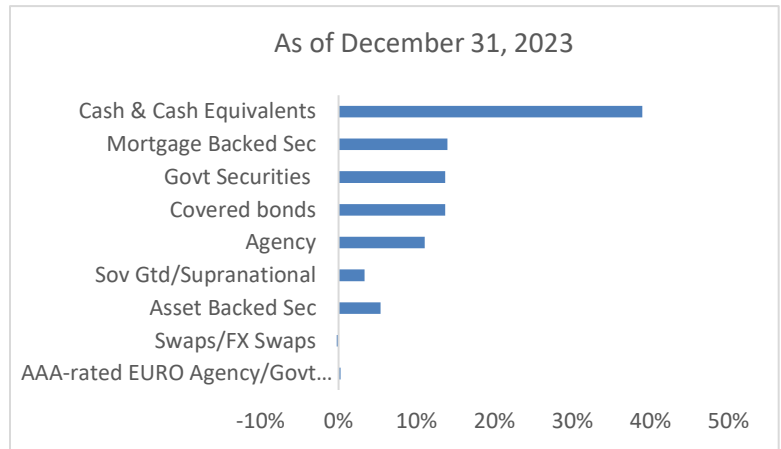
Note: The totals in the table may not add up due to rounding.



### 3. Investment Management - Asset Mix and Investment Income

#### ASSET MIX

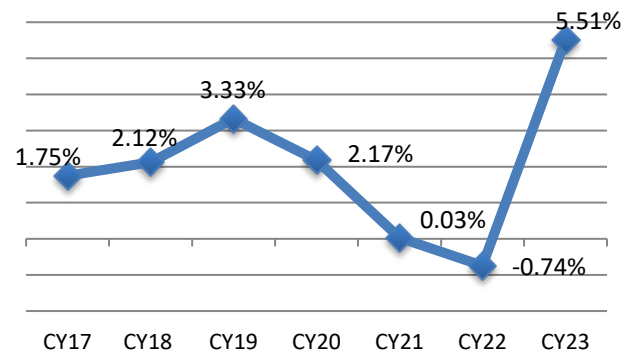
LDC Trust Fund assets are invested across three of the World Bank Trust Fund’s investment model portfolios that are predominantly fixed income: (“Model Portfolio 0” for short-term working capital needs, “Model Portfolio 1” with an investment horizon of one year, and “Model Portfolio 2” with a broader investment universe and an investment horizon of three years). The investment objectives for the LDC Trust Fund are to optimize investment returns subject to preserving capital and maintaining adequate liquidity to meet foreseeable cash flow needs, within a conservative risk management framework<sup>1</sup>. While future returns will depend on market conditions, the Trust Fund Investment Pool is actively monitored and adjusted to preserve donor funds over the investment horizons. Over shorter periods, however, market volatility may result in negative actual or ‘mark-to-market’<sup>2</sup> returns. Overall, the LDC Trust Fund cumulative returns have been driven by its investment in longer-term model portfolios, which may be exposed to higher volatility in returns over shorter periods but are expected to have higher returns over longer periods.



By asset class, the largest allocations as of December 31, 2023, are to cash and cash equivalents.

#### INVESTMENT RETURNS

The LDCF Trust Fund liquid portfolio (which totaled approximately USD 1,047.41 million at end-December 2023) earned USD 133.49 million in investment income since inception. The portfolio returns for CY23 were 5.51%. Portfolio performance during the calendar year 2023 was driven by the interest rate path dictated by the US Federal Reserve Bank decisions that signaled that the monetary policy rates will remain “higher for longer” until inflation returns to target. At its December meeting, the Fed opened door for rate cuts in 2024 owing to continued moderation in inflation expectations and the more moderate outlook for economic activity that suggests a soft landing. As a result, fixed income yields declined by 40 bps across the yield curve into the year-end that was beneficial for fixed income securities. It is noteworthy that the markets have seemingly ignored rising geopolitical risks around the globe. The Portfolio positioning continues to be duration neutral.



<sup>1</sup> World Bank defines the market risk measures and tolerances for Model Portfolios of 1-year or less investment horizon as 99% CVaR be no worse than -0.25%; and for Model Portfolios of longer than 1-year but less or equal to 5-year investment horizon as 99% CVaR be no worse than -1%.

<sup>2</sup> Mark-to-market gains or losses represent unrealized gains or losses resulting from changes in the value of securities in the portfolio which have not yet been sold.

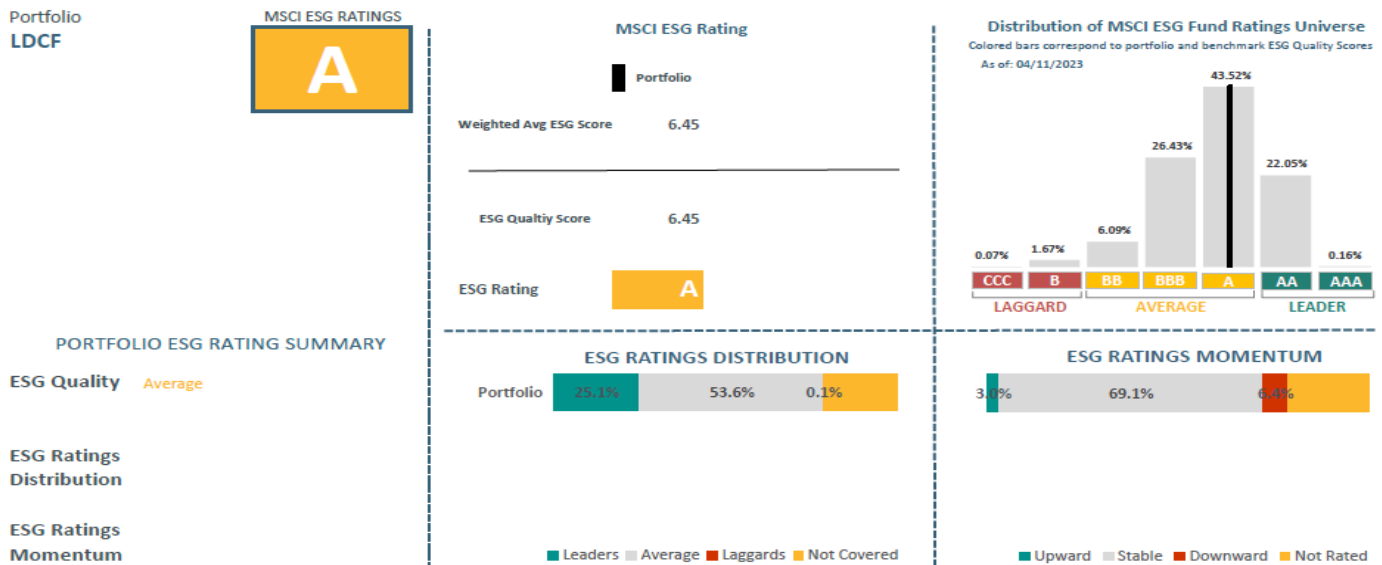




## ESG RATING OF THE LDCF TRUST FUND

Starting from July 2019, the Trustee has applied ESG Integration as the default Sustainable and Responsible Investment (SRI) approach for all portfolios managed by the World Bank, including for the LDCF Trust Fund assets. The implementation of ESG Integration falls within the purview of existing authorizations by the World Bank Board, and thus would not involve any changes in the current investment objectives or risk limits for the LDCF Trust Fund portfolio.

Considering and incorporating ESG factors into investment processes should, all things being equal, lead to portfolios that have stronger ESG profiles compared to portfolios that do not explicitly consider these ESG issues. ESG Integration has become part of the existing investment processes and is intended to help fulfil the existing investment objectives without changes to the current investment objectives or risk limits of the portfolios for which it is used. Therefore, applying ESG Integration as part of the investment process would not involve any changes in the current investment objectives or risk limits for the LDCF Trust Fund portfolio. The LDCF investment portfolio is primarily comprised of high-grade fixed-income securities (sovereign, supranational and agency securities, and bank deposits), and as of December 31, 2023, the portfolio has an ESG Quality Score<sup>3</sup> of 6.45 and an ESG Rating of A. Based on its ESG positioning in the MSCI ESG Fund Ratings Universe (upper right of below chart), which is deemed to be the more consistent reference indicator, LDCF's investment portfolio falls within the Average group of the ratings universe. This reflects average capability of LDCF portfolio's holdings in terms of managing key medium to long term risks and opportunities arising from Environmental, Social and Governance factors.



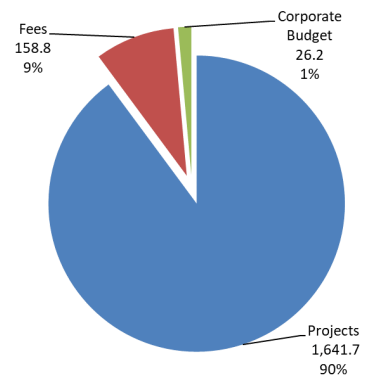
<sup>3</sup> ESG Quality Score is based on MSCI ESG Ratings and measured on a scale of 0 to 10 (worst to best) following a rule-based methodology. ESG Ratings Momentum represents the percentage of a portfolio's market value coming from holdings that have had an ESG Ratings upgrade, and those with a downgrade, since their previous ESG Rating assessment. The ESG Quality Score is calculated as a weighted average of ESG scores of individual holdings adjusted by ESG Ratings Momentum and ESG laggards (if any). The weight applied to the individual ESG scores is determined by the portfolio weight of individual holdings as of the reporting date. Based on the above, the ESG Quality Score, which is subject to potential skewing effect from any factor in the calculation, could slightly vary between different reporting dates along with changes in individual holdings and their portfolio weights as well as changes in ESG Ratings Momentum. Please see details on MSCI ESG Ratings Methodology from: <https://www.msci.com/documents/1296102/15388113/MSCI+ESG+Fund+Ratings+Exec+Summary+Methodology.pdf>.



## 4. Cumulative Funding Decisions, Trustee Commitments and Cash Transfers

### FUNDING DECISIONS BY ACTIVITY

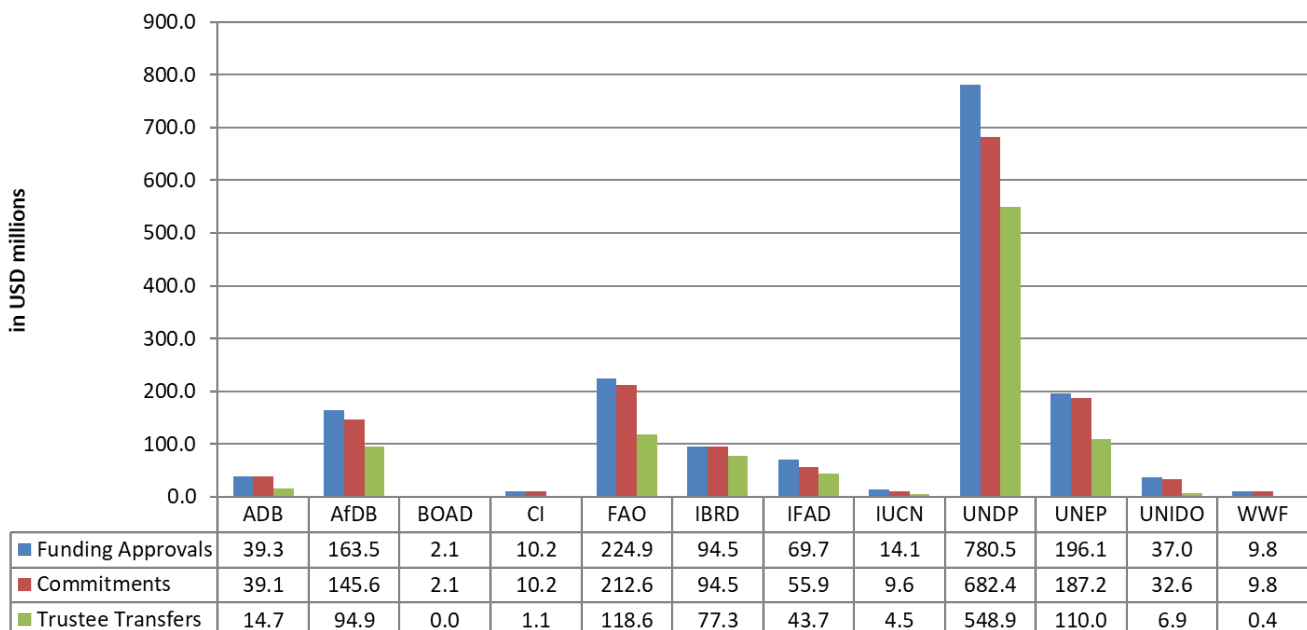
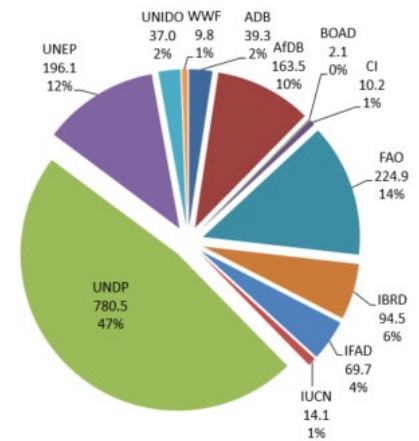
Since inception to December 31, 2023, funding approvals made by the LDCF/SCCF Council totaled USD 1,826.65 million. Projects represent about 90%, fees for Agencies 9%, and corporate budgets for the Secretariat, the Trustee, STAP and Independent Evaluation Office 1%.



### PROJECT FUNDING DECISIONS BY AGENCY

The pie chart shows project funding decisions by Agency. Of the total USD 1,641.65 million of approved projects to date, 47% has been allocated to UNDP, 14% to FAO and 12% to UNEP.

The bar chart below shows the projects funding decisions, commitments and transfers by Agency. Details of funding approvals, commitments and cash transfers can be found in Annex 1.





## 5. Funds Available

In USD millions

	As of December 31, 2023	As of March 31, 2023	Change
	(a)	(b)	(c) = (a) - (b)
<b>1. Funds held in Trust</b>	<b>1047.41</b>	<b>874.20</b>	<b>173.20</b>
a. Cash and investments	1047.41	874.20	173.20
b. Unencashed promissory notes	-	-	-
<b>2. Approved Amounts Pending Cash Transfers to Agencies</b>	<b>662.73</b>	<b>662.33</b>	<b>0.39</b>
a. Trustee committed	470.90	440.30	30.60
b. Approved by Council/CEO pending Endorsement	191.65	221.86	(30.21)
c. Umbrella set-aside	0.18	0.17	0.00
<b>3. Funding Decisions Pending Council Approval</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>4. Funds Available to Support Council or CEO Decisions ( 4 = 1 - 2 - 3 )</b>	<b><u>384.68</u></b>	<b><u>211.87</u></b>	<b><u>172.81</u></b>

Note: The totals in the table may not add up due to rounding.

### Highlights for the period April 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023:

- **Funds Held in Trust** represent cumulative receipts and investment income less cumulative cash transfers, and amount to USD 1,047.41 million as of December 31, 2023. Funds Held in Trust increased by USD 173.20 million primarily due to:
  - Contributions received from donors during the period April 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, valued at USDeq. 200.19 million, and
  - Net increase in investment income from funds held in trust and the investment income received from Agencies during the period April 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023 amounting to USD 36.61 million,
  - Offset by cash transfers to Agencies amounting to USD 63.60 million.
- **Funding Decisions Pending Cash Transfer to agencies** arising from the LDCF/SCCF Council approvals amounted to USD 662.73 million, representing a marginal net decrease of USD 0.39 million compared to March 31, 2023.



## Annex I - Cumulative Funding Decisions Details by Activity and Agency

In USD millions

Entity	Cumulative Net Amounts			
	Funding Approvals (1)	Commitments (2)	Cash Transfers (3)	Amount Due (4) = (2) - (3)
<u>Projects</u>				
ADB	39.27	39.12	14.72	24.41
AfDB	163.52	145.65	94.88	50.77
BOAD	2.05	2.05	0.00	2.05
CI	10.23	10.23	1.08	9.15
FAO	224.95	212.63	118.60	94.03
IBRD	94.51	94.51	77.31	17.20
IFAD	69.69	55.89	43.70	12.19
IUCN	14.11	9.62	4.50	5.12
UNDP	780.50	682.37	548.89	133.48
UNEP	196.09	187.16	110.00	77.16
UNIDO	36.97	32.55	6.92	25.64
WWF	9.77	9.77	0.39	9.38
<i>Sub-total</i>	1,641.65	1,481.55	1,020.99	460.57
<u>Fees</u>				
ADB	3.41	1.76	1.31	0.45
AfDB	15.41	12.32	5.35	6.97
BOAD	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.00
CI	0.92	0.17	0.17	0.00
FAO	21.55	14.51	14.51	0.00
IBRD	9.18	8.78	7.24	1.54
IFAD	7.27	5.08	5.08	0.00
IUCN	1.27	0.85	0.68	0.16
UNDP	75.89	65.60	64.64	0.96
UNEP	19.38	16.77	16.77	0.00
UNIDO	3.49	1.03	0.74	0.29
WWF	0.88	0.23	0.15	0.08
<i>Sub-total</i>	158.82	127.10	116.64	10.47
<u>Corporate Budget<sup>a/</sup></u>				
Secretariat	18.55	18.55	18.55	0.00
Evaluation	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.00
STAP <sup>b/</sup>	1.14	0.63	1.27	-0.64
Trustee	5.80	5.80	5.80	0.00
<i>Sub-total</i>	26.17	25.66	26.30	-0.64
<b>Total for LDCF</b>	<b>1,826.65</b>	<b>1,634.32</b>	<b>1,163.93</b>	<b>470.39</b>

a/ Includes amounts allocated to cover administrative expenses to manage the LDCF and Corporate Activities, including annual audit.

b/ STAP is in the process of returning unused funds to the Trustee.

Note: The totals in the table may not add up due to rounding.