



**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY**  
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

COMPILATION OF COMMENTS  
SUBMITTED BY COUNCIL MEMBERS  
ON THE  
JUNE 2021  
LDCF WORK PROGRAM

**NOTE: This document is a compilation of comments submitted to the Secretariat by Council members concerning the project proposals presented in the June 2021 LDCF Work Program**

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**JUNE 2021 LDCF WORK PROGRAM: COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL  
MEMBERS (REFERENCE: GEF/LDCF.SCCF.30/05)**

**STAND-ALONE FULL-SIZED PROJECTS**

**1. Central African Republic: Strengthening the Adaptive Capacity of Communities by Up-Scaling Integrated Landscape Management and Restoration in South-West Region (GEF ID 10771); GEF Agency: FAO; LDCF Project Financing: \$8,932,420; Co-financing: \$30,600,000.**

✓ **Canada Comments**

- In regards to needs, Canada believes that the Central African Republic meets the criteria for support through this project. However, it's important to keep in mind the increasingly volatile security context in the country. The upsurge in armed conflict and intercommunal violence since mid-December 2020 has had a multiplier effect on forced movements of communities. In total, 213,000 persons have been displaced as a result of the electoral and post-electoral crisis in CAR, and a total of 727,000 IDPs were recorded at the end of May. The ongoing violence also impacts humanitarian access and makes CAR one of the most dangerous countries for humanitarian workers. Therefore, it would be key to ensure that:
  - The project is rooted in a recent contextual and conflict analysis (i.e., post-December 2020) to ensure that the activities proposed are appropriate in the current context. (Note: there is no indication of an updated analysis in the document provided, which only refers to the impact of COVID-19.)
  - FAO has sustained access to the south-region of the country (despite the current prevailing insecurity) to ensure feasibility and impact of the project.
  - The project is anchored by a gender analysis, ensuring that the unique vulnerabilities and capacities of women are taken into consideration.

✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany approves the following PIFs in the work program but requests that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to enhance resilience of rural communities in the south-west region of CAR by up-scaling integrated landscape management and restoration through the valuation of productive and forest landscapes and inclusive governance mechanisms. Germany recognizes the strong focus on community based and intersectoral and multi-stakeholder organizations and platforms, ecosystem-based adaptation approaches, and creation of employment opportunities through climate-resilient agroforestry systems. This is critical considering the heavy dependence of a large section of the country's population on agriculture and forest ecosystems for food and nutrition and existing challenges such as low productivity of land and labor, unsustainable forest management practices, fragmentation of value chains due to the political and insecurity crisis and a low human development index.

Germany requests that the following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal:

- Germany appreciates the clear adaptation rationale of the proposed project and synergies with the local and national climate and development planning context. However, more detailed information on the implementation of the planned activities under Components 1, 2 and 3 will be helpful, for example, to understand if the sustainable management plans for the Series of Agriculture and Human Settlement as mentioned in output 2.1.1 will be prepared for project implementation or be embedded in the governance landscape. Outputs under outcomes 1 and 2 may also be rearranged (while Component 1 focuses on ‘Reducing vulnerability to climate change through inclusive integrated land-use planning’, the outputs solely focus on capacity building and establishing community-based structures and platforms). Output 1.1.2 on capacity building on tools/data for nature-based solutions align better with Component 2. For Components 1-3, it will be helpful for the outcome indicators to set a clearer scope and targets such as number of beneficiaries / engaged stakeholders (like in outcome 2.1).
- Germany recommends that the current security situation and questions of the rule of law be addressed more strongly.
- Germany agrees with the PIF review that more in-depth stakeholder engagement, especially with the private and microfinance sectors is required. While the project components focus on communities, the approach to inclusion of gender aspects and needs of marginalised communities are not explicitly indicated. While FAO’s response indicates that a gender expert will be involved during the PPG phase, these concerns need to be incorporated in outcomes and outputs of the project.
- Finally, Germany suggests reviewing the theory of change and formulating quantifiable outputs. We consider this essential for an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system under component 2, and for tracking project results in general.

**2. Lesotho: Building Climate Resilient Livelihoods and Food Systems (GEF ID 10793); Agency: FAO; LDCF Project Financing: \$8,932,420; Co-financing: \$40,000,000.**

✓ *Germany Comments*

Germany approves the following PIFs in the work program but requests that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to enhance climate resilience of landscapes and communities for food and nutrition security through sustainable water management in Lesotho. Germany recognizes the strong focus on empowerment of farmers, including women and youth and a set of diverse stakeholders such as agricultural value chain players, local institutions and private sector. Germany also recognizes the strong focus on enhancing climate resilience through a variety of technical, financial and capacity building approaches for improving livelihoods and ensuring sustainable water management systems. This is critical considering the country’s agricultural production, which forms a source of livelihoods for at 70 percent of the rural population, a large portion of which are small holder farmers and women. Various challenges such as frequent and severe droughts, land degradation and poor management of water resources

have caused crop failures and low and erratic yields, and led to chronic food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty in Lesotho.

Germany requests that the following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal:

- Germany appreciates the clear adaptation rationale of the proposed project. The components, outcomes, targets and outputs as outlined in the proposal appear logical and comprehensive. However, more detailed information on the implementation of some of the planned activities under Component 1 and 2 would be helpful. Specifically, while output 1.1.1 indicates some of the financial instruments to be reviewed, it is unclear which policies for leveraging investments for climate change resilient water management in production landscape will be considered using which the selection criteria. A clearer demarcation may be made between output 1.1.2 on integration of agro-ecological zoning and climate resilience actions into local planning processes and output 1.1.3 on developing decision support systems to assist with formulation and evaluation of policies and measures for climate-resilient food systems transformations. Finally, output 2.1.4 on livelihood diversification strategies and plans can be further elaborated with specific examples.
- Germany proposes reviewing the information on co-financing. The PIF indicates USD 28 million from EU via the ICM program. As correctly stated later, this is an "associated baseline project", without co-financing being available.
- Integrated Catchment Management as a proposed technical principle should be defined and referenced through its application in Lesotho and its current institutionalisation with support from the EU. Reference should be made to the corresponding inter-ministerial process with catchment planning guidelines, a compendium of watershed rehabilitation measures and respective institutional arrangements at the national and sub-national level.
- Outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 2.1 should align policy and institutional capacity building to the ongoing institutionalisation of integrated catchment management through Catchment Management Joint Committees at the level of Catchment Management Areas (cf. 2014 Long-Term Water and Sanitation Strategy and 2007 Local Government Act) and community based Subcatchment Management Plans at the local level. These plans include water resource protection, climate change and eco-system based adaptation, flood and drought risk management in their key strategic areas among others.
- For output 1.1.1, Germany suggests to align review of financial instruments to ongoing work towards the establishment of local financing mechanisms undertaken jointly by EU-ICM, ROLL and UNCDF LoCAL.
- Germany suggests that the proposal provides additional alignment at the execution level coordination to the existing coordination structures for integrated catchment management, such as the National ICM Committee, the ICM Coordination Unit and the National Technical Secretariat.
- Germany agrees with the PIF review that there needs to be more clarity on how the project intends to ensure consideration of gender during project preparation. While the agency identifies the Department of Gender and the NGO, Gender Links, as key

stakeholders for consultation, the proposal currently lacks a clear approach and methodology to incorporate gender in project design.

- As stated in the proposal, the Covid-19 pandemic has led to sharp increases in unemployment, poverty and food insecurity. Germany appreciates the consideration of potential impacts in this context and identification of synergies. However, Germany suggests specifying what kind of additional support will be provided.

**3. Bhutan: Advancing Climate Resilience of Water Sector (ACREWAS) (GEF ID 10779); Agency: UNDP; GEF Project Financing: \$8,932,420; Co-financing: \$25,190,600.**

✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to enhance resilience and sustainable economic well-being of the people of Bhutan through climate adaptation of the water sector. Germany recognizes the strong focus on watershed management at the community level through nature-based solutions, climate proofing water sector infrastructure, institutional strengthening, especially at the river basin and local levels, and inclusion of the private sector. This is critical because Bhutan faces chronic water shortages, which considerably reduces drinking and irrigation water supply, impacting communities in the river basin, especially close to half of its population (67.7 percent women) which is engaged in agriculture. This situation is being further exacerbated by climate change induced hazards such as droughts, flash floods and landslides.

Germany provides the following suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:

- Germany appreciates the clear adaptation rationale of the proposed project. The components as outlined in the proposal appear logical, detailed and comprehensive, with specific targets and deliverables, and integration of gender aspects across outputs. Germany also appreciates the detailed monitoring and evaluation plan along with associated budgets.
- As stated in the proposal, COVID-19 has triggered reverse urban-rural migration, wherein urban dwellers have started to move to rural homesteads to pursue agriculture, resulting in further pressure on irrigation water needs in rural agriculture areas. This may provide an avenue to explore livelihood diversification opportunities in synergy with output 1.3 on strengthening community level capacity for climate-smart water and watershed management.

✓ **Comment for all UNDP projects**

*In light of the recent audit report by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) of UNDP GEF Management, all projects included in the Work Program implemented by UNDP shall be circulated by email for Council review at least four weeks prior to CEO endorsement/approval. This shall take place as actions of the Management Action Plan that address the OAI recommendations are being implemented, as well as the independent, risk based third-party review of compliance by UNDP with the GEF Policy on Minimum Fiduciary Standards is being completed. Project reviews will take into consideration the relevant findings of the external audit*

*and the management responses and note them in the endorsement review sheet that will be made available to Council during the 4-week review period.*

## MULTI-TRUST FUND

- 4. Somalia: Adaptive Agriculture and Rangeland Rehabilitation Project (A2Rs) (GEF ID 10792); Agency: IFAD; GEF Project Financing: \$17,039,450 (\$8,995,905 LDCF, \$8,043,545 GEF Trust Fund); Co-financing: \$15,098,778.**

✓ *Canada Comments*

- Canada would like to note that there are minor issues to be considered with respect to project design, and project sites are still to be identified. It is important that baselines for land restoration, biodiversity, and climate be quantified, monitored, and assessed in order to ensure the project's benefits can be realized. It will also be valuable to explain the methods that will be used to improve climate adaptation capacity, and identify opportunities to adapt, or transform, as the project is implemented.

✓ *Germany Comments*

Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but requests that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims at enhancing the climate resilience of rural poor households through improved water supply, rangeland and forest restoration as well as improved governance.

Germany requests that the following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal:

- Rangeland and forest restoration requires to control grazing and maintenance of saplings and vegetation during its establishment. The proposal should further elaborate how to manage resistance against restrictions of grazing due to grazing pressure on rangeland and forests that are to be restored.
- Since the approach of forest restoration relies on the establishment of nurseries, thereby aiming to provide jobs in the project area, more clarification is needed as to who will be the customer of those nurseries to make them economically viable, considering that at some point the project will pull out of the project areas.
- The political will of the national and local governments to act in line with the proposed activities of this proposal might be an issue for the success of this envisioned project. This issue needs to be elaborated further, possibly through scenarios how to cope with a lack of political will.
- This issue of governance relates to issues of poverty, as poor parts of the population lack access to resources. Further explanations on how to improve access to resources for poor people are needed.

**5. Eritrea: Building Community Based Integrated and Climate Resilient Natural Resources Management and Enhancing Sustainable Livelihood in the South-Eastern Escarpments and Adjacent Coastal Areas (GEF ID: 10789); GEF Agency: FAO; GEF project financing: \$15,680,308 (\$9,002,082 LDCF, \$6,678,226 GEF Trust Fund); Co-financing: \$10,200,000.**

✓ *Canada Comments*

- Canada believes that caution is needed to demonstrate that this will promote native species, be sustainable and also yield positive biodiversity outcomes. Additionally, the project could include a focus on “nature-based solutions” along with ecosystem-based and market-driven approaches.

✓ *Germany Comments*

Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes this proposal, specifically, in the context of a German BMZ contribution to the IFAD “Fisheries Resource Management Project (2017-2023)” in Eritrea, that is also mentioned in the PIF document, as a relevant baseline project.

Suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final project proposal:

- Germany welcomes the integration of seascapes, fishing communities and fishery value chains in the proposal. Although mostly land(degradation)-centred, it is positive to include these ecosystems and value chains into the project design. In particular it is helpful to anticipate possible movements of individuals who use fisheries as the “last resort” because of pressure from climate change or other factors on the agricultural sector.
- The ambition regarding the gender equity dimension within the project is not specifically high. We consider it extremely important to reach the project’s goals in the long run. On page 64 of the PIF document the question for a gender-sensitive indicator is answered with “TBD”. This might be adequate for this stage of the process but should be followed up.
- The cultural differences between the agricultural and fisheries sector/communities are expected to be huge. Therefore, analyses should take a differentiated approach to cover specific situations on the ground.

**6. Kiribati: Securing Kiribati's Natural Heritage: Protected Areas for Community, Atoll, and Island Climate Resilience (GEF ID: 10775); GEF Agency: IUCN; GEF project financing: \$10,016,195 (\$4,497,354 LDCF, \$5,518,841 GEF Trust Fund); Co-financing: \$10,000,000.**

✓ *Canada Comments*

- Canada believes this is a highly relevant project. The focus on climate-smart agriculture and aquaculture is very timely considering Kiribati’s high vulnerability to climate change as well as the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on the Kiribati population.



✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but requests that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to improve ecosystem and community resilience to the impacts of climate change by leveraging nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation that supports biodiversity and sustainability livelihoods in Kiribati. Nature-based solutions offer the potential to address complex multi-faceted issues to support Kiribati in enhancing community and climate resilience.

Germany requests that the following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal:

- Germany requests that the enhanced implementation of improved policy frameworks for environment, oceans and natural resource management with integrated EBA approaches to climate change (Outcome 1.1) should be pursued in cooperation with Kiribati's Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy as well as the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. Policy frameworks should also be aligned with other agencies so as not to create adverse consequences.
- Further, it should be taken into account that the resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems can be improved by addressing infrastructure practices on land. For example, by reducing sedimentation into oceans from construction, and developing waste management and treatment facilities. This could be potentially done through natural treatment methods such as constructed wetlands.
- Germany requests that the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, along with other relevant agencies, are included on the stakeholder engagement list as their participation is integral for leveraging nature-based solutions. Agency collaboration should extend beyond the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Fisheries.
- Germany appreciates the emphasis on providing awareness raising, education and outreach capacity to villages, islands and on a national level regarding climate change adaptation and sustainable island and ocean management. Germany requests that the education and outreach component address harmful practices at the local scale (littering, over-fishing or harvesting practices, public defecation). These harmful practises impact the efficacy of nature-based solutions to provide climate resilience services. The curriculum should also focus on the efficacy and win-win benefits of Nature-based Solutions and ecosystems to address multiple socio-economic challenges.
- Finally, Germany requests more clarification regarding the types of activities envisioned under practicing climate-smart agriculture and aquaculture and any limitations that could be encountered in their implementation (e.g. water access, land constraints, among other factors).

✓ **United States Comments**

- We note that parts of the proposal seem out of date (e.g. Component 1 & 2 activities have target year, 2017, 2018 and 2020). In our understanding, many of the activities identified

in the NBSAP were not conducted. The proposal should indicate/change the new timeline for achieving activities under these two outputs.

- We believe there might be opportunities for additional engagement and collaboration with the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

**7. Timor-Leste: Adapting to Climate Change and Enabling Sustainable Land Management through Productive Rural Communities (GEF ID 10713); Agency: UNEP; GEF Project Financing: \$9,845,662 (\$6,267,126 LDCF, \$3,578,536 GEF Trust Fund); Co-financing: \$18,440,000.**

✓ Germany Comments

Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but requests that the following comments are taken into account:

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to increase climate resilience and reduce land degradation in priority watersheds of Timor Leste's rural communities, through sustainable land management (SLM) and ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA). Germany appreciates the dual approach embedding national policy-level work and local engagement with two watersheds. In addition, Germany acknowledges the necessity to engage the private sector in supporting climate-resilient agricultural practices while contributing to countries' sustainable growth.

Germany requests that the following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal:

- While Germany supports the project's aim to link climate change, land degradation, water insecurity and food insecurity in an all-encompassing way, it would like to stress the complexity of such an aim. Thus, we request that this should be factored into the capacity-building elements of the project. This is all the more essential as poor rural community stakeholders will be involved (e.g. in implementation of climate-resilient integrated watershed development plans - CRIWDPs), and that their education and literacy rates may hamper their understanding of why they should adopt climate-resilient practices. This is especially important for gender aspects, as only 52% of women over the age of 15 are literate as per the proposal.
- Germany furthermore suggests addressing the land rights issue in more depth. Competing land titles pose major challenges on any land-use endeavour. Vanilla, for example, requires long land use periods - conflict-free land sections are crucial for this purpose.
- Under the governance elements, it could be useful to leverage the presence of women representatives within *suco*<sup>1</sup> councils, to further enhance the project's gender objectives.
- Germany sees the potential of cocoa and vanilla crops for Timor-Leste. However, the two intervention watersheds most commonly grow different crops. As the project requires substantial changes in practices from rural communities, it is important to ensure local populations' buy-in for the latter. Therefore, the reluctance to change should be factored in.

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<sup>1</sup> Group of villages

- Germany strongly supports the involvement of the private sector in this project. However, it is stated that “all loan or investment risks will be borne by the private sector”. Given that local institutions will be involved, it should be clarified how the private sector’s risk-averse investment mindset and lack of resources will be addressed.

✓ *United States Comments*

- A successful project in this area will have long-term implementation and maintenance needs. It is unclear from the attachments if such long-term support has been adequately considered, which has implications for results sustainability.
- The drivers behind forest and land degradation could be more fully addressed in the final project document. Assuming that forest degradation in Timor-Leste is driven by logging for both timber and fuelwood, it is somewhat unclear how this project will address this driver.