

# Biodiversity Conservation, Restoration and Integrated Sustainable Development of Lower Mangoky and South-Mananara watersheds

**Review PIF and Make a recommendation**

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10371

**Countries**

Madagascar

**Project Name**

Biodiversity Conservation, Restoration and Integrated Sustainable Development of Lower Mangoky and South-Mananara watersheds

**Agencies**

FAO

**Date received by PM**

10/10/2019

**Review completed by PM**

4/14/2020

**Program Manager**

Jaime Cavelier

**Focal Area**

Multi Focal Area

**Project Type**

FSP

## **PIF**

### **Part I – Project Information**

#### **Focal area elements**

**1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?**

#### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

The alignment of the project with the Programming Directions is strong for LD-1-3 and very weak for BD1-1 and specially for BD-2.7. It is almost non-existent. The project needs to introduce significant changes if it were to use BD resources for this project.

3-22-20

1. The word "mainstreaming" is used (8 times) to justify the use of the BD resources, now \$1.9 Million. Nevertheless, it is not clear how this project is visualizing the implementation of mainstreaming measures as described in the GEF-7 Biodiversity Strategy. "*The process of embedding biodiversity considerations into policies, strategies and practices of key public and private actors that impact or rely on biodiversity, so that it is conserved and sustainably used both locally and globally*". Please elaborate on the statement **The project is therefore fully aligned with BD 1.1 with the programming directions for BD mainstreaming projects, which see a three-pronged approach (spatial and land-use planning, improving and changing production practices, and developing policy and regulatory frameworks and financial mechanisms)** and describe how the landscape will look like once "mainstreaming" has been implemented.

2. Please prepare a table with the proposed activities that will be carried out in the COFAV and one table for the Mangoky-Ihotry wetland complex to justify the improve management of a total of 6,000 ha. This table will help bringing together elements that may be scattered in the current proposal. If using the concept of "Restoration", please be specific about the most likely interventions.

4-4-20

No answer was provided regarding the proposed activities for mainstreaming BD measures in the corresponding sector (be specific) and how the landscape will look like once "mainstreaming" has been implemented.

## Agency Response

10-21-19

In order to address this concern, the OFP, upon proposal by the Agency, decided to apply the marginal adjustment (as originally planned) reallocating BD resources towards the LD focal area. The newly signed endorsement letter is available in the Portal. Tables A, D and E of the PIF were revised accordingly.

The alignment with the BD focal area objectives was reconsidered – the project now targets only BD 1.1. The project will support activities to facilitate the involvement of local communities in the sustainable management of forest and non-forest land at landscape level, raising awareness on the importance of ecosystem restoration for the conservation of biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem goods and services (including genetic diversity). By applying a landscape approach, the project will focus interventions in both protected areas and the surrounding production land – with the recognition that these are strongly connected and inter-dependent land uses. The emphasis of the project is indeed in restoring and sustainably utilizing the ecosystem services provided by the broader landscape, and this cannot be done working in protected areas only. Also the surrounding production land needs to be managed differently in order to protect the PA's from further degradation. The project is therefore fully aligned with BD 1.1 with the programming directions for BD mainstreaming projects, which see a three-pronged approach (spatial and land-use planning, improving and changing production practices, and developing policy and regulatory frameworks and financial mechanisms).

11-7-19

First - Yes. Both COFAV and Mangoky-Ihotry are category V. Info in the PIF was added/reviewed accordingly. The government decree defining the legal status of these PA's was uploaded in the Documents section of the Portal.

Second – Table 5 was introduced in the PIF outlining restoration options, benefits provided, and estimated costs per hectare. A table summarizing ecosystem services (and global environmental benefits) provided per restoration option was included in PIF section 1.a.5. Explanatory text on BD and LD benefits was also added under section 1.a.4.

11-20-19

The names of plant and tree species that could potentially benefit from this project are listed in PIF table 3. A full list of plant and trees species in COFAV is available in Annex 2.

3-22-20

1. Mainstreaming is only used 3 times to justify the use of BD resources (other times it is used in describing other ongoing projects or for other non-related reasons, i.e taxonomy, gender mainstreaming etc). As the two targeted PA's are category V, they aim at protecting and sustaining important landscapes and the associated nature conservation, as well as maintaining a balanced interaction between human culture and biodiversity. Within category V, PA core zones exist to protect important species and habitats, and as such the management practices outside the core zone need to encourage the conservation of agro-biodiversity, restore degraded land and forestry systems and ensure the continued provision of ecosystem services and products to the wider landscape. To ensure this equilibrium, a variety of interventions need to be implemented in parallel focusing on both biodiversity conservation and local well-being and livelihoods.

2. In addition to the restoration activities detailed in section 1.a.3, table 5, the following list of desirable activities will be promoted in both PA's - this list however, is not exhaustive nor prescriptive and will be fine-tuned during project formulation by engaging all stakeholders involved as appropriate :

- Develop/strengthen capacity of local partners and communities to develop sustainable (both financial as well as environmental) bankable proposals;
- Redynamise/set up local management and monitoring mechanisms (management transfers of natural resources or TGRN) ;
- Develop technical and organizational capacities of smallholder farmers to implement sustainable land and soil management practices to improve productivity and encourage agrobiodiversity;
- Develop in a participatory manner and enforce local by-laws for enhanced biodiversity conservation;
- Put in place a multi-stakeholder platform for improved coordination and M&E;
- Develop and implement an integrated land-use plan (inclusive fire management) with the local communities while identifying and prioritizing hotspots and options for restoration (assisted natural regeneration, reforestation, closure of vulnerable zones;
- Develop and roll out an awareness and environmental education program targetting local schools and user-groups;
- Set-up/strengthen local cooperatives to promote sustainable alternative livelihoods to reduce pressure on biodiversity (small livestock promotion to reduce hunting, improved charcoal production to reduce pressure for Mangoky-Ihotry, essential oils production for COFAV, ecotourism...)

•The text above has been added to the PIF under table 5, section 1.a.3.

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•4-4-20

- The PIF was restructured to fit better the BD 1.1 window. Please see changes in table B (on component 1 and 2) as well as, in section 1.a.1 see Barriers # 1 and # 2, section 1.a.2 baseline scenario and section 1.a.3 on description on project components.

#### Indicative project/program description summary

2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

C10-21-19

##### COMPONENT 1

1. Not clear why it is necessary to invest in so many plans, committees, platforms and coordination mechanism and at so many levels (i.e. national, regional and communal level) when the project has a very clear geographic targets (i.e. Lower Mangoky and South-Mananara watersheds)? This include the Regional Territorial Management Plan (SRAT) and Communal Territorial Management Plans (SAC). This is over-complicated to achieve and objective that is pretty strait forward.
2. What does "Downscaled assessments of restoration opportunities (ROAM) actually mean? The acronym is used in Table B but never properly defined.
4. Please narrow down the scope of 1.2.3 and 1.2.4.
5. It is not clear that the project needs to invest nearly \$1 million on all these activities when there is such a clear and geographically bound objective: "Improve ecosystems services and productive capacities of the degraded forests, ecological corridors and landscapes in Southern Madagascar through wide-scale implementation of forest and landscape restoration". Please remove all non-essential outputs and concentrate on the investments that are central to achieve the objective.

##### COMPONENT 2

1. What does "*Gender responsive and biodiversity supportive participatory FLR action plans informed by the localized ROAM assessments are developed and implemented*" actually mean? Suggest weeding-out all the language that is obscuring the content of the project.
2. Is it realistic to say that the BD status of the PAs can be "enhance" through community-led restoration of hotspots? How can the Biodiversity status of the PAs of Mangoky-Ihotry and COFAV be enhanced through community-led restoration of hotspots

3. Is it realistic to suggest that "Deforestation and degradation can be halted through the promotion of alternative activities...."?

4. Clarification is required on "ROAM" in order to understand the meaning and need of "Resource-use plans in protected areas of Mangoky-Ihotry and COFAV informed by the localized ROAM".

### COMPONENT 3

1. What are the "innovative incentive mechanisms" that would encourage the adoption of Forest Landscape Restoration /Biodiversity Conservation practices in agricultural and forest landscapes? It is not possible to determine what these innovative mechanisms are with the reading of the associated outputs.

2. It is not clear how the proposed outcome "Diversified and increased finance for FLR and biodiversity conservation in Madagascar" will be achieved with the proposed outputs (i.e. enhanced the capacity to access innovative sources of climate and restoration finance'; Forest concession model scaled up in one (1) "périmètre de reboisement").

3. Please provide the background for the idea of establishing the "National Forest Fund". Establishing, funding and running a Fund of this nature is a daunting task and will require significant investments and time. Please reconsider.

4. What are the potential "international impact investment funds" that could be tapped for an strategic partnership for one bankable FLR project?

5. What are the potential private sector players available for a partnership for a Forest concession?

### COMPONENT 4

1. Narrow down the number of activities for the dissemination of best practices, project results and lessons learned, and reduce the budget accordingly.

### IN GENERAL

The GEF Secretariat would greatly appreciate if this PIF focuses on a limited number of activities that need to be carried out to get the project done. Please simplify the language used to describe the project. The use of so much jargon makes the understanding of the project very difficult. The basic idea of the project appears to be there but is behind many layers and buzz words, making the entire project fuzzy and difficult to visualize.

11-7-19

## COMPONENT 1

1. This continues to be a over-complicated, when the objective is clear and there are two finite and well defined geographic targets. Not clear if such a elaborate scaffolding at the National, Regional and Local levels is actually necessary and, most importantly, can be keep in place once the funds and time run out for this project. Underlines below are GEF's.

*Under Component 1, the project will support the implementation of sub-national assessments of land degradation and restoration opportunities both at district and communal levels in the two targeted watersheds through the ROAM methodology. It will also support the implementation of the National Strategy for Forest and Landscape Restoration and Green Infrastructure (NSFLR) approved in 2017 with, in particular, the preparation of sub-national strategies and action plans at regional, district and communal levels in the two targeted watersheds. The assessment of restoration opportunities conducted at landscape levels will be downscaled to the local level and will inform the development of sustainable landscape management and restoration plans at municipal level (outcome 2.1) aligned with local development plans.*

## COMPONENT 2.

1. What are the proposed interventions to state that 6,000 of Protected Areas will be under "improved management"? What values in the METT is the project expected to change with the interventions?



2. Research has indicated that a variety of financing mechanisms are needed to ensure scaling up of the required Forest and Landscape Restoration in line with commitments made. These include innovative approaches promoting Public-Private partnerships. In order for the private sector to invest, a solid land tenure system needs to be in place. Through the project a model on restoring degraded forest station with the support of Private Sector Company and involving surrounding local communities can be spearheaded based on experiences from other countries. Lessons learned from this experience can be brought up at scale across the country to restore other degraded forests with identical tenure arrangements..

3. Multiple examples exist in other countries (such as Costa Rica, Vietnam, Morocco and Rwanda) where National Forest Funds have been set up following different models to support payment for ecosystem services, reforestation/afforestation campaigns and restoration interventions. FAO has a wide experience in supporting countries setting up the necessary enabling environment for such a mechanism. In the case of Madagascar, several national texts and policies already form the legal basis to set up such a national forest fund. The national Forest Policy specifically mentions the importance of making such a financing mechanism operational both at the national and decentralized level. FAO is currently supporting the Government of Madagascar through a Technical Cooperation Project to reflect on the most pertinent model based on exchanges with other countries and national legal and institutional context. Synergies with the ongoing efforts to set up a national REDD+ fund are ensured as this would be complementary to a national forest fund. As such the proposed project will not start from zero, and will capitalize on what is

currently being done and contribute to operationalizing the National Forest Fund with seed capitalization. The same type of activity is currently implemented in the GEF6 The Restoration Initiative (TRI) national child project in Sao Tome e Principe

3-22-20

#### COMPONENT 1

1. The GEF strongly suggests to carry out the proposed activities under Component 1 focusing on the target geographies. The use of the suggested tools, including ROAM, Diversity4Restoration Tool, and the EX-ACT biodiversity module at the National Level is way beyond the means and time available for this project. What is the point of going national when there are no financial resources to move from theory to practice at such a grand scale? If the two target areas are going to use \$40+ million, how much will be needed to cover the country? Who has the fund readily available for implementation? Going National is a sure way to over-promise and under-deliver. If the implementation of the project in the two target areas by mid-term review is successful, consider adaptive managing and add other priority areas using the lessons learned from the two target geographies.

2) 1. Is it really necessary to use \$6.2 million (GEF \$700,000 + Co-financing \$5,511,402 – coming mostly from Investment mobilized) for a "Restoration Opportunities Assessment" + the development of the Biodiversity restoration tool + biodiversity impact dynamic analysis + Monitoring system for FLR and LDN indicators established and integrated in national land use monitoring systems + Capacity development program ? This is an enormous amount of money for desk top activities and the development of a capacity development program. The proposed activities at the national level are over-promising and will most likely under-deliver. Madagascar is a very large country with very low capacity. Nationwide activities should only be considered after initial implementation in the two target geographies. Please reconsider budget and geographic scope again.

#### COMPONENT 2

3) It is not clear how the proposed interventions under Outcome 2.2. will deliver Biodiversity Benefits of Global Importance. Furthermore, there is a disconnect between the suggested activities in this outcome and the conservation of the species included in Table 3.

#### COMPONENT 3.

4). If the "Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development has undertaken a study to explore possible scenarios to set up a National Forest Fund (NFF)" what are the scenarios that this project will pursue? In the response to the previous review it says" As such the proposed project will not start from zero, and will capitalize on what is currently being done and contribute to operationalizing the National Forest Fund with seed capitalization." Does this mean that the Fund is currently working and GEF funds will be used to capitalize it? Please clearly state the status of the NFF and what the GEF resources will be used for.

4-4-20

## COMPONENT 1

If this Component is carrying out the "Participatory Assessment for Restoration Options (ROAM), the application of the "Diversity4Restoration Tool", and the "EX-ACT biodiversity module" the results of these planning tools in the proposed landscapes should be listed as Targets for the Component, not only the number of people trained. The Outcome should also be changed to indicate the direction of this component.

From PIF:

*The participatory assessment for restoration options (ROAM), other tools combining geo-spatial information, with biophysical and climate data for ecological restoration – such as the Diversity4Restoration Tool [2]- will be applied*

*In addition to the Diversity4Restoration Tool, biodiversity data will be captured through the EX-ACT biodiversity module*

From Responses

The results of both (ROAM and EX-ACT BD) will be of great importance to plan, implement and monitor restoration interventions and can be shared and out-scaled to other landscapes.

## COMPONENT 2

Understanding that these areas are Category V, the disconnect between the proposed activities (reflected in the outputs) and the target species in Table 3 remains. What are the specific activities in support of the threaten species that in addition justify the BD resources?

Component 3

The Mangoky-Ihotry wetland complex is under the auspices of the *Foundation for Protected Areas and Biodiversity of Madagascar*. Shouldn't the project use the Foundation instead of getting started with NFF.?

The GEF strongly suggest to be cautious about the NFF and to engage in "testing it to set up and fund PES". This is not to be taken lightly since this will require significant funding and time as FAO has itself experienced in Mozambique.

## Agency Response

10-21-19

### Component 1

1. To accommodate the concerns raised, Component 1 was restructured and its budget reduced. However, it is recalled that the creation of an enabling environment for policy and behavioral change is a key element of sustainability – and strengthening coordination mechanisms at all concerned levels, as well as, carrying out assessments reinforcing decision-support tools (all of which are considered soft targets) are actually key for creating the enabling environment and building consensus.

On these lines, the project aims to promote cross-sectoral coordination to ensure planning and investment for forest and landscape restoration and biodiversity conservation is carried out in a coherent way - building on the needs and expectations of all sectors. In order for it to be effective, coordination needs to take place at all relevant scales. The support to the national platform on FLR is key to facilitate the exchange of best practices and knowledge, to promote a shared understanding of FLR opportunities, to better plan allocations of resources within restoration programmes, as well as, to enhance the political ownership for large-scale restoration under AFR100 and the Bonn Challenge and maintaining political momentum at country level.

The SRAT and SACs are existing nationally recognized territorial planning mechanisms to which the targeted watersheds or landscapes already belong. These need to be revised and updated based on assessments and project findings, as they will serve as tools to implement actions on the ground. During the consultations at PIF development, the inadequacy of inter-regional or inter-communal planning was highlighted, as such the project aims to address this gap, ensuring all stakeholders across the watersheds are brought together to discuss and coordinate interventions. As biodiversity concerns are cutting across different communes, these platforms ensure a common understanding amongst all stakeholders involved.

Text was added in the PIF to clarify the above.

2. The Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) is a flexible planning tool developed by IUCN and WRI to support countries to rapidly identify and analyze Forest and Landscape Restoration potential, as well as, the most suitable restoration options (biodiversity sensitive) through a participatory approach, based on the best available science and local knowledge. This methodology was applied by various countries in order to define their national commitment to the Bonn Challenge. In Madagascar, this assessment was carried out at national level to provide the Government with an overarching view on key areas for restoration main restoration options.

The project wishes to conduct ROAM at the sub national/landscape level and use it as a decision-support tool (component 1) to build and implement investment plans for multi-use forest based landscapes that can improve biodiversity conservation, ecological functioning and the livelihoods of local communities (component 2 and 3). Downscaling ROAM to the landscape level, implies conducting in-depth analysis, involving key stakeholders at the local level – who will help identify the drivers of land and biodiversity degradation, as well as, priority areas for restoration and a detailed shortlist of the most relevant and feasible restoration options based on local context and experience. Through this analysis the potential for re-establishing connections between different habitats, or the potential to extend critical habitat for biodiversity conservation and improve the habitat quality will be identified and local stakeholders' ownership will ensure long-term sustainability through this participatory approach.

3. Outputs under outcome 1.2 were merged into one single output – see changes in PIF.

Still allow us to clarify, concerning the EXACT biodiversity tool, while capacity building will mainly target local stakeholders, the inclusion of national stakeholders will benefit the country as a whole, as the screening of projects in terms of biodiversity impacts is crucial across different sectors and landscapes. As for the Diversity for Restoration Tool, this needs to be kept at the level of the ecosystem, as it aims at providing guidance and answers in terms of appropriate species selection in the context of the agro-ecological context of the landscape and identifying best seed sources to carry out restoration of habitat quality, corridor establishment, and agroforestry promotion. This will also assist in more accurate planning in terms of biodiversity conservation and management across the landscape.

4. The budget for Component 1 was reduced. However, as mentioned above, all interventions foreseen under Outcome 1 are meant to create the enabling environment necessary to increase investments towards landscape restoration - without investing in improved coordination systems and technical capacities at both national and decentralized scale it is very difficult that component 2 and component 3 activities will be appropriately implemented. Investing into decision –support tools will result in the establishment of budgeted action plans that are grounded on scientific findings and consensus. These tools, are all participatory, and are meant to ensure sustainability. Conducting a localized ROAM assessment, for instance, requires a lot of engagements, meetings, data collection to ensure all stakeholders express their needs/gaps/experiences and as such also respective funding. The development of the restoration for diversity toolkit, in partnership with Bioversity International, is also a key output which takes considerable time and efforts to collect detailed data, but in the long term this will ensure efficient planning beyond the landscapes as this is typically done for an ecosystem type.

Having said this, the project design team will assure, as this is a guiding principle, the best and most cost-effective use of GEF grants is being made, limiting TA, and maximizing direct achievement of GEBs, through fieldwork in demonstration sites with the involvement of local stakeholders.

## **COMPONENT 2**

1. The output was reworded to facilitate understanding. Based on localized ROAM assessments key interventions related to forest and landscape restoration and biodiversity conservation are identified involving all local stakeholders with as a specific target group women – considering certain interventions will be related to overcome challenges and barriers they are facing. Based on this analysis, action plans will be developed with the local communities to implement planned interventions.

2. Forest and Landscape Restoration aims to transform degraded and deforested land into multifunctional assets that can safeguard biodiversity, sequester significant amounts of carbon, and enhance the provision of ecosystem services and contributing to the livelihoods/economies of local communities. Even though certain areas have Protected Area Status in Madagascar, degradation still takes place due to illegal activities, expansion of agriculture, firewood and charcoal collection, and as such

rich biodiverse habitats get fragmented, or the overall diversity and quality of the PA is diminished. Through the identification of such hotspots with the local communities and by involving them into restoration within the PA with suitable species, local ownership is ensured and in combination with the development of downstream value chains such as tourism, bee-keeping, fuel wood plantations the longer term protection and biodiversity status is enhanced. Restoration interventions cannot be seen just as planting trees, but fits within an overarching framework promoting nature-based value chain development.

3. The term halted has been replaced with reduced. One of the key drivers of deforestation and degradation is poverty and the expansion of agriculture using unsustainable practices. This is also linked to ineffective land tenure system and limited access to services (such as knowledge, financial services, and inputs) and market linkages. The importance of local buy-in and ownership is key in terms of selecting alternative sustainable livelihoods which should envision to have both short-term as well as long-term benefits. Through project interventions, it is anticipated that deforestation will be reduced, and forest degradation will be reverted through promotion of restoration.

4. Please see response above to Component 1, question 2.

### **COMPONENT 3**

1. Some experience exists already in Madagascar with eco-certification of certain products. The project intends to liaise with regional and national Agricultural Funding Mechanisms (Fonds de Developpement Agricole) active in Madagascar, to explore the opportunity to have a specific window on restoration/biodiversity conservation/SLM. Moreover, the project intends to coach promising micro-entrepreneurs to develop business plans for their nature-based products and link them to potential investors. This approach has been successfully implemented by WRI and Fledge in Kenya through their Land Accelerator Programme.

During the PPG, value chains will be identified with local stakeholders – this will help further map out key commercial actors and potential financial partners.

2. Research has indicated that a variety of financing mechanisms are needed to ensure scaling up of the required Forest and Landscape Restoration in line with commitments made. These include innovative approaches promoting Public-Private partnerships. In order for the private sector to invest, a solid land tenure system needs to be in place. Through the project a model on restoring degraded forest station with the support of Private Sector Company and involving surrounding local communities can be spearheaded based on experiences from other countries. Lessons learned from this experience can be brought up at scale across the country to restore other degraded forests with identical tenure arrangements.

3. Multiple examples exist in other countries (such as Costa Rica, Vietnam, Morocco and Rwanda) where National Forest Funds have been set up following different models to support payment for ecosystem services, reforestation/afforestation campaigns and restoration interventions. FAO has a wide experience in supporting countries setting up the necessary enabling environment for such a mechanism. In the case of Madagascar, several national texts and policies already form the legal basis to set up such a national forest fund. The national Forest Policy specifically mentions the importance of making such a financing mechanism operational both at the national and decentralized level. FAO is currently supporting the Government of Madagascar through a Technical Cooperation Project to reflect on the most pertinent model based on exchanges with other countries and national legal and institutional context. Synergies with the ongoing efforts to set up a national REDD+ fund are ensured as this would be complementary to a national forest fund. As such the proposed project will not start from zero, and will capitalize on what is currently being done and contribute to operationalizing the National Forest Fund with seed capitalization. The same type of activity is currently implemented in the GEF6 The Restoration Initiative (TRI) national child project in Sao Tome e Principe.

4. Good examples already exist in Madagascar linked to promotion of agro-forestry through Althelia and Moringa Partnership. The project will also explore the possible involvement of the new Land Degradation Neutrality Fund managed by MIROVA (Nexity Bank). During the PPG phase other possibilities will be mapped and consultations will be arranged to discuss potential collaborations.

5. During the PPG this will be further explored, especially with those players who are already working in the targeted landscapes. We are also looking into international companies who could build on their years of experience with such partnership. In Fianarantsoa good experience exists on private sector restoration and sustainable management of plantation in consultation with local communities.

#### **COMPONENT 4**

1. To address this concern, the budget for Component 4 was reduced and redistributed between Component 2 and 3. Output 4.2.1 was eliminated. However, the original budget allocation for M&E and knowledge management/sharing followed the best practice of allocating at least 10% of the overall budget costs, to ensure best lessons are captured and disseminated.

The upcoming UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration provides also the unique opportunity to showcase Madagascar commitment and lessons learned with the global community.

Knowledge management and sharing of best practices on integrated landscape management is a crucial component for up scaling FLR interventions and lobbying for political buy-in. Strengthening M&E systems is also key to ensure ambitious and realistic targets are set and met under the Bonn Challenge. On-the-ground experience and relevant information can be shared both at national and international level to better inform decision-making and target setting, both for FLR and LDN.

11-7-19

1. Component 1 was completely restructured. The component budget was reduced to the extent possible. The narrative describing the component was reformulated/edited to read more smoothly. Please see changes in PIF both in the results matrix and in section 1.a.3.

2. Please see introductions in PIF section 1.a.3, including a definition of what is meant by forest and landscape restoration, a table with restoration options identified per target ecosystems and an indication of costs per hectare. Please see also the edited narrative for Component 2 under section 1.a.3 explaining foreseen investments on productive land surroundings PA's (outcome 2.1) and within PA's (outcome 2.2), including the revisiting of PA's management plans affecting about 6,000 ha of PA area.

3. Component 3 was restructured and simplified. Please see introductions in PIF, in particular the results matrix in table A and the description of Component 3 in section 1.a.3.

3-22-20

Component 1

The budget for Comp 1 was reduced as suggested (\$500,000 + Co-financing \$3,511,402). The identified activities under C1 are meant to be implemented at local level, and target stakeholders of both project landscapes. The Restoration Opportunities Assessment has already been carried out at the national level as explained in the PIF, and the project intends to use national level findings as baseline to undertake the assessments more locally and more inclusively in support of integrated land use management at the landscape level. Again, the assessment is a participatory and hands-on process with the local stakeholders in the driving seat, so this is not at all a desktop activity, and requires lots of consultations on the ground to ensure local knowledge and expertise is complementary to knowledge generated from more innovative tools such as maps and satellite data. The Biodiversity restoration tool will also be developed following a participatory consultation process combined with available spatial data. The results of both will be of great importance to plan, implement and monitor restoration interventions and can be shared and out-scaled to other landscapes. As such the national FLR working group would play an important role in terms of knowledge sharing. The EX-ACT biodiversity modules will also be piloted at the localized level, and not at the national level. Once mastered, the methodology can be applied in the context of other projects and initiatives, and can be used to inform teams on potential impacts on biodiversity of proposed interventions. Reference to national use has been eliminated from the outputs text in the results matrix, to avoid misunderstanding.

## Component 2

Two additional outputs have been included under outcome 2.2, aimed at reinforcing capacity of local communities to be included in both planning, management and controlling of locally-managed areas within the category V PAs. The PAs have three main zones: core zone, sustainable utilization of natural resources and controlled occupation. The technical capacity of local stakeholders to implement sustainable land management and agricultural practices in the last two zones will also assist in releasing the pressure on the core zones and important forested areas for provision of ecosystem services and products.

The two following outputs have been included:

2.2.2. Participatory natural resource governance mechanisms and local by-laws are put in place/reinforced to promote biodiversity conservation and provision of ecosystem services

2.2.3. Technical capacity of local communities strengthened to encourage agrobiodiversity and sustainable agricultural/pastoral practices

## Component 3

In 2019, FAO organized a series of missions to identify the relevant scenario to deploy the National Forest Fund (already established in legal texts but never properly operationalized). A team within the MEDD (in particular driven by the General Directorate for Forests and the Environment) is currently preparing the founding documentation to set up the Fund officially. In parallel the Government is looking at establishing a national REDD+ fund focusing strongly on the carbon benefits. The NFF would operate as a Payments for Forest Ecosystem Services mechanism proactively supporting forest ecosystem services beyond carbon (for water, soils, biodiversity, recreation, etc). Beyond financing FLR field operations, the NFF will also reinforce basic needs of the forest administration, including for adequate staffing, equipment, control and enforcement capacities (it is to be noted that major gaps remain in the staffing of the forest administration at the regional and communal levels, currently preventing sustainability of any projects interventions). In this context the NFF and the REDD+ fund would be complementary and co-financing between both funds could be envisioned at the landscape level. It is important to note that no merger between the NFF and the REDD+ fund is planned, notably given the uncertainties on the carbon market. The MEDD would ensure proper governance of both funds in the best sense of seizing synergies.

Within this context, the project intends to build on MEDD's ongoing efforts, and depending on the maturity of the NFF evaluated at PPG stage, the project could potentially support the operationalization of the NFF by testing it to set up and fund PES schemes. However, this is something that will be assessed during PPG, and as explained in the PIF, the project aims to look at a number of different existing national and regional funds (i.e the Agricultural Fund, the Biodiversity Fund) to identify and test specific windows for promoting restoration interventions.

Explanatory text has been added to the PIF in section 1.a.6 and 1.a.2.

4-4-20

Component 1 and Component 2 were restructured (including budget) - please see changes in table B and related text under section 1.a.1 Barriers and 1.a.3 project description.

On Component 3. This is well noted.

**Co-financing**

**3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

1. Reduce the GEF contribution to Component 4, and execute the suggested activities with mostly co-financing (\$2.9 million). Reallocate the GEF budget to Component 2 and 3.

2. Is the co-financing from IFAD and AfDB Investment Mobilized or Recurrent Expenditure?

3-23-20

Cleared

4-4-2

Information for IFAD and AfDB remains to be entered in the Portal.

| Sources of Co-financing | Name of Co-financier | Type of Co-financing | Investment Mobilized | Amount(\$) |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Donor Agency            | IFAD                 | Grant                |                      | 15,000,000 |
| Donor Agency            | AfDB                 | Grant                |                      | 10,860,000 |

### Agency Response

1. The budget for Component 4 was reduced to the extent possible. See response to Component 4 above.
2. Investment mobilized per GEF's definition of the term - this excludes recurrent expenditures.
3. This is confirmed. The IFAD and AfDB co-financing is new co-financing and not a recurrent expenditure.

11-7-19

Component 4 was restructured and its budget (and co-financing) reduced to the extent possible. Please see introductions in PIF, results matrix and section 1.a.3

4-4-20

The missing information for AfDB and IFAD was inserted.

### GEF Resource Availability

4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Yes. The Project and PPG and the associated figures for Agency fees are within the GEF policies (9.5%)

Cleared

**Agency Response**

The STAR allocation?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

The focal area allocation?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

Focal area set-aside?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

Impact Program Incentive?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

Project Preparation Grant

5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Yes. PPG is \$200K which is the cap for projects under \$10M.

Cleared

## **Agency Response**

### **Core indicators**

**6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Please clarify if the COFAV corridor and Mangoky-Ihotry wetland complex can be characterized as Protected Areas (with a category formally assigned in the gazetting) or if these are actually areas outside protected areas. Should these 6,000 ha be better under Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified).

3-23-20

Cleared

## **Agency Response**

The Fandrana Vondrozo and the Mangoky-Ihotry complex are both IUCN classified protected areas (V and VI respectively). Project interventions will be undertaken both within the margins of protected area (6,000ha SFM and restoration) as well as in the buffer zones outside the protected areas (6,000 ha of SLM, nature-based value chains).

11-7-19

Although both PA's are not located the WDPA, they are recognized through a national decree as Category V PA's. Relevant documentation has been uploaded in the Documents section of the PIF.

**Project/Program taxonomy**

**7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Please indicate where Table G is. Thanks.

11-20-19

Cleared

**Agency Response**

Table G is now uploaded in the "documents" section of the Portal

**Part II – Project Justification**

**1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Not clear what the root causes and barriers related to Biodiversity degradation are and how to address them. This reflects the emphasis on LD rather on BD conservation.

11-19-10

As the project indicates, *the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2025, identifies deforestation and forest degradation among the greatest threats to Madagascar terrestrial ecosystems*. The drivers for deforestation in Madagascar (as well as of over-exploitation of wildlife) are clearly stated in table 2.

2-23-20

Cleared

### **Agency Response**

The project addresses the main drivers of the biodiversity loss, which are habitat change (loss, degradation and fragmentation) and unsustainable use. Addressing these drivers requires revisiting the management plans and practices both within PA's as well as on the surrounding production land, equally contributing to the disturbance of these ecosystems. As recalled in the PIF, the targeted landscapes suffer from unsustainable farming practices, illegal logging, hunting and agricultural encroachment – all of which are contributing to deforestation, forest degradation and biodiversity loss. By taking a landscape approach, the project aims at restoring PA ecosystems alongside the sustainable management of other land-use types including agriculture, pasturelands, forestry, and the expansion and consolidation of protected areas, is a necessary part of a package of activities for biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming, enhanced ecosystem services and sustainable development.

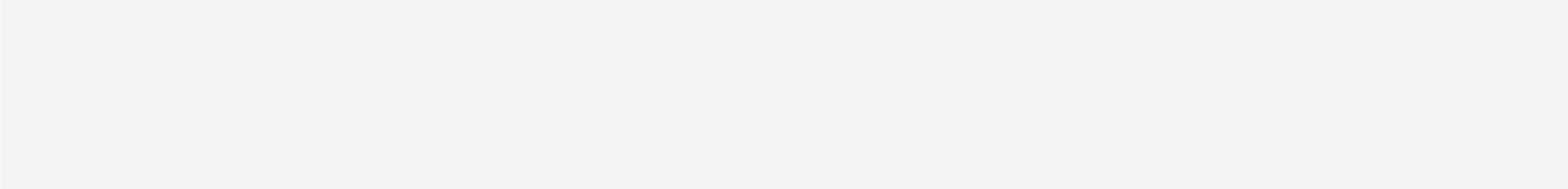
11-19-10

In terms of logging, this is still a threat in both of the targeted landscapes – In Mangoky- Ihotry, for instance some of the tree species threatened by logging (as per IUCN Red List) are: *Adansonia grandidieri* (EN), *Commiphora mafaïdoha* (CR), *Dalbergia trichocarpa* (CR) and *Dalbergia purpuras* (VU) – although the project recognizes that multiple actions including CITIES implementation are required to tackle the logging and trafficking issue, the angle that the project wishes to take is to establish woodlots for multipurpose trees, as part of its restoration interventions – thus raising awareness on the economic benefits (including improved livelihoods) that can arise from the conservation and sustainable use of these trees. Moreover, the activities under component 3 intend to provide alternative biodiversity and restoration friendly livelihoods at project sites to reduce pressures on the forest resources and involvement in illegal extraction of natural resources.

In addition the assessments carried out during the PPG phase, and more in depth during implementation (Component 1), will help identify tree species, degradation hotspots (and bright spots), as well as drivers and restoration options to help address more efficiently forest degradation and deforestation issues including illegal logging and hunting/poaching.

In terms of collaboration with other projects on this subject matter, the project will establish a partnership with CI's GCF-funded project – on provision of alternative fuel, the upscaling of improved energy efficiency practices including improved charcoal making and improved cook stoves in the COFAV landscape. During the PPG phase, the project will consult also with UNDP's project proposal under the Global Wildlife Program that amongst other species, targets the illegal trade of rosewood nationwide. Collaboration will be sought also with IUCN's SOS Lemurs initiative in the COFAV landscape aiming at conserving key lemur populations while empowering communities with skills and livelihood options to help them coexist with lemurs (including provision of alternative nutrition sources).

A complete list of plants and trees for both target landscapes was added in PIF table 3 as well as text on proposed interventions to mitigate illegal logging, illegal hunting and poaching (as explained above).



**2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

**3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

4-4-20

Already discussed above

**Agency Response**

**4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

4-4-20

Already discussed above

### **Agency Response**

**5. Is the incremental / additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

4-4-20

Cleared

### **Agency Response**

**6. Are the project's/program's indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

The Biodiversity benefits are not clear and difficult to justify with an investment of \$6.3 million. A radical modification of the project is needed to justify the use of BD resources for what is basically an LD project. The proposed "restoration" activities are unlikely to render significant BD benefits. Furthermore, none of the proposed interventions are directed towards the conservation of the specie listed on Table 3, particularly Mammals, birds and amphibians.

11-7-19

The shift from a BD to an LD project mainly, is visible in the structure and content of the project. There are two issues lingering.. First, the project needs to provide an proportional definition of "Restoration" as it affects both the BD and the LD investments (see above). Second, the justification of the BD \$1.9 million is not there. There is continue reference to Restoration, and investments in the two target PAs that justify the funds.

11-20-19

Cleared

### **Agency Response**

Please see Response to Part I-1.

11-7-19

Additional text defining/clarifying how "restoration" affects both the BD and LD investments was introduced in the PIF - Please see Table 4 and Table 5 under section 1.a.3 as well as, the additional text provided in section 1.a.4 and in the summary table provided in section 1.a.5.

**7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

For Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up, please only provide the information that is at the core of the question.

11-20-19

Cleared

**Agency Response** Comment addressed.

**Project/Program Map and Coordinates**

**Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project's/program's intended location?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

None of the maps or figures are visible on this side of the portal. Please upload them differently.

11-20-19

Cleared

**Agency Response**

Comment addressed. Maps and figures are now uploaded correctly.

**Stakeholders**

**Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

For each of the stakeholders listed please indicate if a conversation about this project has taken place and whether or not the stakeholders are aware of their potential participation in the project.

11-20-19

Cleared

**Agency Response**

Please see additional text in PIF.

**Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

**Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Yes

Cleared

**Agency Response**

**Private Sector Engagement**

**Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**Agency Response**

**Risks**

**Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Yes

Cleared

**Agency Response**

**Coordination**

**Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined? Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Please clarify what this actually means "Technical support will be provided by FAO in coordination with government representatives participating in the Project Steering Committee" in terms of the roles of FAO as the GEF Agency.

As the agency knows, the implementation and execution roles on GEF projects are meant to be separate per policy and guideline. The GEFSEC will analyze any requests for dual role playing by an agency at the time of CEO endorsement and only approve those cases that it deems warranted on an “exceptional” basis. We strongly encourage the agency to look at third party options as a preferred way forward. We also strongly encourage the agency to discuss any and all options for execution that do not include the government with the GEFSEC early in the PPG phase.

11-20-19

Since the Promotor of Ambositra – Vondrozo Forest Corridor (COFAV) is Conservation International and the Promotor of Mangoky-Ihotry wetland complex is ASITY (a Malagasy Association in partnership with BirdLife International), the GEFSEC expects full coordination in the development of the CEO Endorsement regarding the interventions in these two target areas.

Please confirm

2-23-20

Cleared

**Agency Response**

The Agency is planning to work through third party options and envisages OPIM as the main execution modality, with Ministry of Environment and Decentralized entities being tentatively considered as main execution partners at PIF stage. During PPG those options will be further assessed and clarified. In addition, the Agency would also, as needed, work through other contractual arrangements (e.g. Letters of Agreement) with partners identified during PPG for their expertise and

complementary value-added in the execution of specific outputs. However, the Agency is also expecting to provide technical oversight, in its quality as GEF implementing agency.

To avoid confusion, the phrase "Technical support will be provided by FAO in coordination with government representatives participating in the Project Steering Committee" was eliminated from the text.

11-20-19

Confirmed. These have already been consulted during PIF formulation (during scoping mission).

**Consistency with National Priorities**

**Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

Please provide the portions of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2015-2025) than relate to the proposed activities.

11-20-19

Cleared

**Agency Response** Comment addressed. Please see added text in PIF section 7.

**Knowledge Management**

**Is the proposed "knowledge management (KM) approach" in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project's/program's overall impact and sustainability?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

The number of activities for KM need to be reduced. It is far too complicated for what is needed. Please simplify and reduce the GEF funding. Co-financing could cover most of the expenses related to this component.

11-20-19

Cleared

### **Agency Response**

Please see response to comments under Part I.2, Component 4, question 1.

### **Part III – Country Endorsements**

**Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

The LoE was not uploaded. A different World document was uploaded by mistake.

11-7-19

The LoE was attached with the following figures

2-23-20

Cleared

**Agency Response** The new LoE is now uploaded in the Portal.

**Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects**

Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

### **Agency Response**

### **GEFSEC DECISION**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

10-21-19

No. Please address outstanding issues. The project requires significant restructuring.

11-7-19

No. Please address the outstanding issues listed above. Although the general idea of the project appears to be simple, the project itself is rather complicated and vague at times.

11-20-19

No. Please address issues raised under item Part II- Project Justification and Coordination.

3-23-20

No. Please address outstanding issues in windows 1 &2.

4-4-20

No. Please address outstanding issues in windows 1,2&3

4-16-20

Please address the following issues and indicate that the changes have been made.

1- In section 6. Coordination in the Portal, it is mentioned the possibility for FAO to provide some execution functions as following:

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) will be the GEF Implementing Agency for the Project, providing project cycle management services as established in the GEF Policy. FAO, as GEF implementing Agency, holds overall accountability and responsibility to the GEF for delivery of the results.

During the PPG process, the operational capacity assessment will be conducted of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development with the intention of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development being the main executing partner for the project. Other likely national executing partners include: Decentralized regional Ministry institutions and Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development has also indicated that given the integrated, cross sectoral nature of the project's restoration work, it may want FAO to provide execution support of some targeted technical activities under the project.

**4-17-20 The Agency took care of Point 1 in this list.**

2. On Core Indicators. Carbon sequestration is mentioned as one of the objectives under component 2, and the project is expected to have mitigation co-benefits. Please consider providing an indicative estimate for sub-indicator 6.1.

**4-17-20 The Agency took care of Point 2 in this list (Indicator 6.1)**

3. On Co-financing. For co-financing from the implementing Agency, please use "GEF Agency" rather than "Donor Agency". In the text field, please describe how Investment Mobilized was identified.

**4-17-20 The Agency took care of Point 3 in this list**

4. Co-financing of PMC. It is \$0 at the moment. With \$32 million in financing, there should be at least a 1:1 ratio (GEF : Co-financing).

|                                      |                        |           |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|
|                                      | Sub Total (\$)         | 6,984,996 | 32,804,300 |
| <b>Project Management Cost (PMC)</b> |                        |           |            |
|                                      | GET                    | 349,250   |            |
|                                      | Sub Total(\$)          | 349,250   | 0          |
|                                      | Total Project Cost(\$) | 7,334,246 | 32,804,300 |

**No changes to PMC. Will address in CEO Endorsement.**

**This PIF is recommended for technical clearance.**

1.

#### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.**

#### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

Since the Promotor of Ambositra – Vondrozo Forest Corridor (COFAV) is Conservation International and the Promotor of Mangoky-Ihotry wetland complex is ASITY (a Malagasy Association in partnership with BirdLife International), the GEFSEC expects full coordination in the development of the CEO Endorsement regarding the interventions in these two target areas.

#### **Review Dates**

**PIF Review**

**Agency Response**

|   | PIF Review | Agency Response |
|---|------------|-----------------|
| <b>First Review</b>                     |            |                 |
| <b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b> |            |                 |

**PIF Recommendation to CEO**

**Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval**

CONTEXT: As a result of commitments made by the Government of Madagascar (the “Durban Vision”), Protected Area coverage has quadrupled by 2016 to a total of 122 sites covering 7.1 million hectares. This was combined with a revision of the Protected Area Code in 2008 to allow actors other than Madagascar National Parks to manage these areas and the establishment of IUCN category III, V and VI protected areas – multiple-use sites in which extractive resource use is permitted. The management of these new PAs focuses on enhancing the productivity and sustainability of existing natural resource use through interventions based on agriculture and tourism for forest PAs. The effective management of these sites remains challenging given the general lack of capacity of local government in rural areas, the absence of adequate land tenure systems, corruption, the extreme isolation of certain sites and the impact of the 2009-2014 political crisis, amongst other factors. The project intends to address the main drivers of biodiversity loss, which are habitat change (loss, degradation and fragmentation) and unsustainable use. Addressing these drivers requires revisiting the management plans and practices both within Protected Areas as well as on the surrounding production land, which are contributing in equal proportion to the disturbance of these ecosystems. Habitat change and unsustainable use in the targeted landscapes are the result of unsustainable farming practices, illegal logging, hunting and agricultural encroachment. By taking a landscape approach, the project aims at restoring ecosystems within PAs, alongside the sustainable management of lands designated for agriculture, pasturelands, forestry.

PROJECT: The project has the following components and outputs. COMPONENT 1: Strengthened Enabling Environment for Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and biodiversity mainstreaming (Outputs: i) Guidelines developed for implementing GELOSE law (*Gestion Locale Securisee*) while also mainstreaming FLR priorities and BD conservation into existing local-management planning processes; ii) Training modules prepared for decentralized forestry and agricultural services to apply these guidelines). COMPONENT 2: Widescale implementation of forest and landscape restoration in targeted landscapes for improved biodiversity conservation, scaling up of SLM practices and sustainable livelihoods (Outputs: i) Municipality Development Plans and localized management contracts integrating BD, FLR and LD priorities are implemented; ii) Training modules prepared for Community Based Organizations and Regional Environmental Units to apply

innovative and practical tools and approaches for gender sensitive SLM/SFM practices in degraded forest and agricultural land, restoring land cover, the hydrological regime, conserving agro-biodiversity and increasing the productivity sustainably under the Municipality Development Plans (SACs) and TGRN (Transfer de Gestion des Ressources Naturelles). 3. Increased investment for improved SLM, BD and livelihoods diversification (Outputs: i) Cooperatives and entrepreneurs have enhanced capacity to develop and implement nature-based business plans for specific value chains and attract private investment; ii) Regional investment forum organized to attract private sector funding towards FLR/BD interventions in selected value chains; iii) Forest concession model scaled up in one selected project area for reforestation, through a new partnership with a locally operating private sector player. iv) Opportunities to integrate FLR into National and Regional Funds (incl Agricultural, Biodiversity and Forest Fund) are identified and implemented.

**RESULTS:** The project will result in the improved management of two protected areas; the Ambositra – Vondrozo Forest Corridor -COFAV (2,000 ha) and Mangoky-Ihotry wetland complex, 4,000 ha). The project will also result in the restoration of degraded agricultural lands (1,000 ha) and of Forest and Forest Land restored (500 ha). There are also Landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (2000 ha) and under sustainable land management in production systems (4000 ha). A total of 8000 people will be benefited with this project, with equal gender balance.

**INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, POTENTIAL FOR SCALE UP:** The project will support the establishment of local stakeholder platforms which will be capacitated to use innovative planning and M&E tools for integrated land use planning. Through adopting the local-centered governance approach through transfer of management contracts, local communities will be leading the planning and implementation of the project interventions and this will ensure, ownership and local buy in and therefore, sustainability in the long-term. While promoting Forest and Landscape Restoration, the project will catalyze innovative approaches and technologies that support sustainable production and intensification through restoration techniques/options, agroforestry/conservation agriculture and climate smart agriculture.

**COFINANCING:** In the amount of 32,804,300 (with \$32.3 million in Investment Mobilized and \$0.5 million in Recurrent Costs), is provided by three GEF Agencies (IFAD, AfDB and FAO), the Green Climate Funds, CSO and the Government of Madagascar.