

Restoring and Enhancing the Value of Degraded Lands and Forest Ecosystems for Enhanced Climate Resilience in Benin (PIRVaTEFoD-Benin)

Basic Information

GEF ID

10688

Countries

Benin

Project Title

Restoring and Enhancing the Value of Degraded Lands and Forest Ecosystems for Enhanced Climate Resilience in Benin (PIRVaTEFoD-Benin)

GEF Agency(ies)

UNDP

Agency ID

UNDP: 6514

GEF Focal Area(s)

Multi Focal Area

Program Manager

Katya Kuang-Idba

PIF

Part I – Project Informatic

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

GEFTF

- The application of the LD2.5 Objective is disputable: This LD2.5 objective was proposed to mainly highlight the importance of reinforcing the enabling environment for LDN. Most of LD or MFA projects assign a few hundreds of thousands of dollars. Here the component 1 of the project may be assigned to the LD2.5 objective (\$360,250). Some capacity building activities from the components 2 and 3 may also be assimilated to LD2.5 for a total of around \$500,000-700,000. But most of the project is about land restoration and should be assigned to LD1.3 on land restoration. Please, correct.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

GEFTF Thank you. This has been addressed in Table A to reflect the focus of the project on both LD2.5 and LD1.3 with corresponding finance allocated as suggested.

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

GEFTF

- The formulation of outputs should be revised for the 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.4. Please provide as far as possible a concrete formulation reflecting the value for money of activities. Most of these outputs are expressed as outcomes, or consequences, and are not self-explanatory. Please, revise.- The formulation of outputs should be revised for the 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.4. Please provide as far as possible a concrete formulation reflecting the value for money of activities. Most of these outputs are expressed as outcomes, or consequences, and are not self-explanatory. Please, revise.
- We recommend including an output to empower the National Committee to combat desertification, in view of increasing the ownership from authorities, and installing a multi-stakeholder dialogue at national level on SLM and LDN.

LDCF

- Outputs under component 1 do not sound like adaptation activities. Please ensure that the components financed with LDCF are primarily concerned with adaptation and deliver LD as a co-benefit. Currently, it seems it is the other way around. Similarly for Component 2, activities should focus on delivering climate resilience to communities, individual, and natural and physical assets. The way that it is written currently, adaptation sounds merely as an afterthought.

GEFSEC, 10/20/2020 -

GEFTF

Output 1.4: what "Funds are capacitated and coordinated" means in terms of concrete result?

Output 2.1.3 & 2.1.4: With the current formulation, we are seeing a duplication between the outputs 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 (what "strengthened capacities" means? We prefer the formulation of 2.1.3 focusing on training, if possible add a quantity).

We do not understand the meaning of 2.1.5 "strengthened climate scenarios informed". Please, propose a specific, quantified and measurable formulation.

3.1.1: "Increased investments in diversified and climate resilient commodities and revenues for agricultural communities in target sites through an analysis of value chains that integrates climate risk and gender responsiveness to identify and select value chains that strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity of small-scale farmers and small-scale herder communities": too long and confusing; Is the expected result "increased investments"? or "an analysis of value chains"? Please, shorten and rephrase, focusing on tangible and specific results.

3.1.2: "Climate resilient and sustainable agricultural techniques and options are promoted and implementation supported, including adoption of climate smart agricultural practices, adoption of small scale rainwater harvesting and retention ponds, micro-irrigation and adoption of ground cover crops implemented in communities affected by climatic stressors, with triple-bottom-line benefits, including strengthened adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities, job and SMME creation": we do not know what "promoted" and "supported" means when applied to "climate resilient and sustainable agricultural techniques and options". Please shorten the formulation (the 2/3 of

the output with the examples and the benefits should be removed and transferred into the text).

3.1.4: what a “strengthened agriculture market forum” means? What is the expected result? What are the activities behind?

LDCF

Output 2.1.4 is still written as an outcome and difficult to ascertain what the deliverable is here. Output 2.1.5 sounds like a mitigation activity, and NDCs are a tool for prioritizing the delivery of mitigation actions. Output 2.1.6 does not sound at all related to adaptation. It is difficult to ascertain the adaptation angle of these activities. Please also see the item in Part II Item 3 on the alternative scenario.

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 -

GEFTF - This is cleared for PIF level. The formulation of outputs will need to be revisited at CEO ER.

LDCF - This is cleared for this stage of project development.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

Thank you. The mentioned Outputs have been revised to be as concrete as possible. We have ensured that the Outcomes reflect the consequence (the change, the impact) that the project results (measurable outputs) will yield. An Output has been added (1.1.3) as follows: *The National Committee to Combat Desertification is strengthened for enhanced ownership by national authorities, and a multi-stakeholder dialogue at national level on SLM and LDN is established to ensure local diffusion of knowledge and knowhow about landscape restoration and especially natural regeneration under expected scenarios of climate change hazards and sensitivity.*

LDCF: We have revised the description of the components and outputs to much more clearly articulate the vision for an integrated project proposal focused on meeting adaptation needs while working to achieve land degradation neutrality in the zones of interventions. Actions to support achievement of Benin’s Land Degradation Neutrality targets will be climate risk informed and climate specific. This means that SLM and SFM practices will be selected based on both the potential for natural regeneration and assisted landscape restoration under specific climate projections for the respective agro-ecological zones, and selected with building with systems’ resilience to climate change as one of the criteria. Specifically, component 1 focuses on strengthening national policy, governance and financial frameworks and capacity to implement *climate risk* informed SLM and SFM (integrating climate change scenarios in the decision making on SLM and SFM implementation within planned intervention zones), and the integration of climate vulnerability and adaptation impacts’ indicators within the proposed national M&E system. For Component 2, climate scenarios will inform the site selection and type of SLM and SFM activities planned. For Component 3, specific support to enhance adaptive capacity of farmers and livestock herders in order to strengthen household and community resilient to climate change will be based on a value chain analysis for climate resilient crops and selection of strategies to improve the water efficiency as well as resilient practices in commonly grown cash and food crops, in addition to enhancing support for sustainable livelihoods that integrate a consideration of climate risk in assessing vulnerability of livelihoods and adaptation options.

28 October 2020 UNDP Agency Response (to GEF Sec comments on 10/20/2020)

GEF TF

Output 1.1.4 has been rephrased “The National Forestry Development Fund, National Environment and Climate Fund, and National Agricultural Development Fund have harmonized programs integrating CCA and LDN objectives, strengthened governance mechanisms and the capacity to mobilize resources”

Outputs 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 have been rephrased to provide a clearer separation between the training of government officials, parliamentarians and private sector leaders on the one hand (2.1.3) and the extension services provided to farmers and community leaders on the other (2.1.4). A quantitative target has been given for both groups. Output 2.1.3: Awareness raising and training of 1,000 national and local government and administration officials (including ATDAs and DGEFC), parliamentarians and representatives of private sector in climate resilient and degradation neutral planning and policies, with focus on agriculture, animal husbandry and forestry, targeting the mainstreaming of CCA and LDN in all policies and administrative decisions. Output 2.1.4: Extension services in climate resilient and degradation neutral agriculture, animal husbandry and agroforestry provided to 24,000 farmers and community leaders (50% women), including on climate resilient and degradation neutral cotton production

Output 2.1.5 has been rephrased: “Green Belt infrastructure against the advance of the desert in the north of Benin strengthened through development of manuals for climate change resilient restoration and forest regeneration, community managed nurseries for drought resilient tree species of local preference, communal fire control measures, protection of watercourses, integration of tree fodder production to accommodate seasonal passage of pastoralists, and locally managed monitoring for landscape and forest restoration”.

Outputs 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 have been rephrased. 3.1.1: Agricultural value chains are analysed with regard to their potential for climate resilience, zero degradation land management, sustainable income generation for rural communities with specific emphasis on women, and on this basis those value chains for strengthening through additional investment and extension support are prioritized. 3.1.2: Building on the value chain analysis of output 3.1.1, climate resilient and sustainable agricultural and agroforestry practices and market channels are strengthened through investments and extension support for climate smart agricultural practices, leading to triple-bottom-line benefits, strengthened adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities, job and SMME creation

Output 3.1.4 has been rephrased: Improved market access for farmers and communities practicing climate resilient, zero degradation agriculture and agroforestry, including NTFPs, through strengthened cooperatives and farmer organizations and negotiated partnerships with traders and processors

LDCF

Output 2.1.4 has been rephrased: “Extension services in climate resilient and degradation neutral agriculture, animal husbandry and agroforestry provided to 24,000 farmers and community leaders (50% women), including on climate resilient and degradation neutral cotton production”

Output 2.1.5 has been rephrased (see above). This deliverable provides important adaptation benefits since it targets the climate resilience of the Green Belt, which indeed delivers mitigation co-benefit. This particular deliverable directly contributes to the climate resilience of the Green Belt by factoring climate change in landscape restoration efforts such as selection of climate resistant local varieties in choosing the composition of tree species as well as the application of reforestation methods, the measures for wildfire risk reduction, and protection and restoration of water sources.

Output 2.1.6 has been rephrased “Peer-to-peer exchanges are hosted between project sites and other countries participating in the Green Belt in order to generate and exchange learning on the most successful and resilient ways of landscape restoration and of improving the

local climate and water supply through forest restoration” to emphasize the importance of knowledge management, specifically on the

adaptation benefits of functional integrity of the landscapes and the ecosystem services that enable resilience of farming practices as well as communities exchange (also across national boundaries) on climate resilient landscape and forest conservation and the benefits that restored and greener landscapes can generate for climate resilient farming and communities more broadly

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

GEFSEC, 10/3/2020 -

GEFTF

- It is interesting to have considered cofinancing from all the main multilateral donors in Benin as the WB, AfDB, BOAD, the Green Fund (GCF?). We suggest extending consultation with other partners active on SLM, as BMZ/GIZ who supported an ambitious LD program in Benin in 2016 (file:///C:/Users/wb329964/Downloads/Benin_online_workshop_report__160921.pdf; file:///C:/Users/wb329964/Downloads/Benin_synthesisreport_Feb2017.pdf).

LDCF

- It is not immediately clear which of the baseline initiatives mentioned are providing co-financing to this project. There are 11 entries in Table C, but none of these projects are clearly described in the baseline section. There is a Table 1 in the text referring to baseline projects - are any of these providing co-financing? Please include some text for each of the 11 entries in Table C describing the project objective, components, and main expected outcomes.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 -

LDCF

Cleared.

Agency Response

GEFTF The comment is noted. UNDP Country Office will extend consultation with BMZ/GIZ to explore synergies with their [LD programme](#). We confirm that the BMZ/GIZ investment will be focused on interventions in PDAs 3 and 4. This GEF-LCDF project will be operational in PDAs 1, 2, and 5. There is no duplication or overlap.

LDCF Thank you for the suggestion and question. Table C has been revised and now lists the names and objectives of indicative projects contributing towards co-financing. Certain projects listed in Table 1 do contribute towards co-finance, and these are listed in the table.

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 GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Yes. Benin still has resources to program under the \$10 million cap for GEF-7.

Agency Response

16 October 2020

Thank you for confirmation

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

Agency Response

Impact Program Incentive?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion NA

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

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - More information requested. The Secretariat is not inclined to consider increased PPG due to COVID-19. Intuitively, it would seem as if project preparation costs would decrease in the face of travel restrictions and/or outright bans. Additionally, with ~2,500 cases and 41 deaths, Benin does not seem to face the same level of challenges to the pandemic, in comparison with other countries. Please provide further justification on exactly what the additional 50k will be used for and why.

GEFSEC, 10/20/2020 - Cleared. The agency has removed additional 50k from the PPG from Table E. While the text still remains, the Secretariat has clarified with the agency that that it will not approve any PPG amount exceeding the amount in the table, and in line with the GEF Guidelines on the Program and Project Cycle Policy.

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

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - More information requested.

GEFTF

- Carbon: Please note that the carbon calculations are expected on a 20-year period (not 6-year period)
- This \$9 million MTF project claims to 30,000 ha of lands restored or under SLM. It is acceptable, but should be confirmed at CEO endorsement. We wonder if the project should not help to catalyze more ambitious targets from cofinancing. To be explored.

LDCF

- The LDCF/SCCF has its own Core Indicators. Please submit the CCA Core Indicators and Metadata worksheet, which was distributed to agencies via email in April 2019. Please also ensure that LDCF indicators are not accounted for in the Core Indicators table on the portal entry of the PIF, to ensure there is no double counting.

GEFSEC, 10/20/2020 -

GEFTF

Cleared

LDCF

More information requested. In GEF-7, the LDCF is aiming to continue to serve the specific needs of LDCs, while also increasing ambition and impact. Taking this into consideration the above, 12,000 direct beneficiaries for a project requesting \$5 million does not seem to be particularly cost effective or achieve the a level of impact intended for a project of this size. Currently, the cost per beneficiary is more than \$400 per head. The Secretariat appreciates the large land impacts this initiative aims to achieve, but the primary goal of the LDCF is to increase the resilience and decrease the vulnerability of people and communities to the negative impacts of climate change. Therefore, the Secretariat is expecting a higher number of people, households, and communities to be directly benefitting from this project. Some rural areas are very sparsely population so this goal is not attainable; however more information on

the demographic trends, population and other characteristics of the target areas would be helpful in determining the specific circumstances of this intervention.

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 -

This is cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

GEFTR: Thank you. The carbon calculations (Winrock) are now adjusted for a 20-year period. Bringing 30,000 hectares into climate risk informed improved management and under restoration is a realistic proposition given the evidence base and challenges evident in the field. We note the need to reconfirm at CEO endorsement.

LDCF: The Core Indicators' Worksheet was inadvertently omitted and has been submitted with this PIF package.

28 October 2020 UNDP Agency Response (to GEF Sec comments on 10/20/2020)

LDCF

Thank you for reinforcing the need for cost efficiency in terms of cost per beneficiary. We have revised our ambitions in terms of beneficiaries reached in the target communities from 10% to 20% of the local farmer population resulting in a total number of target beneficiaries of 24,000 (as compared to 10% - 12,000 initially) which would result in cutting the project cost per beneficiary also by half. This increase in target population can be achieved by using innovative methods such as engaging low-cost community extensionists to complement the official extension services, working through local schools and other existing multiplication channels, and using local radio programs. While the numbers are ambitious, we are confident that it can be done.

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 GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Yes.

Agency Response

art 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

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - More information requested. What are the specific climate impacts and projections for the project's target areas.

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 - Cleared, thank you.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

Thank you. We have more clearly indicated climate change impacts and projects for Benin by the different agro-ecological zones found in the country and in the proposed project intervention areas. These have more clearly articulated for each of the three agricultural nodes where interventions are proposed.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 -

GEFTF

- Please be aware that the PAGEFCOM 2 project from AfDB includes a GEF component on the classified forests of Agoua, Monts Couffé and Wari-Marou. Check and include this information to avoid any duplication of activities with the current proposal.

LDCF

- Please refer to the comment on co-financing. The projects providing co-financing, as listed in Table C, are also baseline projects correct? Please clarify Table 1 in the text lists 8 projects and it is not clear whether if any are providing co-financing. Please include this information

Table 1 in the text lists 8 projects and it is not clear whether, if any, are providing co-financing. Please include this information either on this table or add all the projects which are providing co-financing to the table.

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 - This is cleared for this stage of project development. However, considering the timescales of the listed co-financing sources, this will need to be revisited at CEO ER.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

GEFTF Thank you for alerting us to the PAGEFCOM2 project. While the project is active in two zones also covered under this project (Zou and Borgou). In Zou, the PAGEFCOM2 project has some activities in two communes: Covè and Za-Kapota. Two project sites for this GEF-LDCF project are also located in these communes, but we confirm that towns and villages selected for interventions will not overlap and duplication of efforts will be avoided. In Borgou, the PAGEFCOM2 project focuses on Tchaorou, while the GEF project focuses on Kouandé, Gogounou and Ségbana, without any overlap.

LDCF Certain projects in Table 1 are included in Table C. Table 1 in the text has been revised to include a note if it is being counted towards co-financing. Additional baseline projects have been included in Table 1 in the text. These are projects that focus on agricultural support, recently completed or ending in early 2021. Baseline projects have produced the foundation upon which the proposed LDCF funded interventions can support enhanced climate resilience for small scale farmers and communities.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Not quite. The LD angle and components of this project are clear. The adaptation and LDCF-financed activities are not described and need more detail. Please revise.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - The adaptation rationale of component 2 is difficult to justify. This sounds like a mix of LD and and CCM activities. Please revisit the description of component 2 to ensure it is actually delivering adaptation activities and benefits, or remove the LDCF financing from this component.

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 - This is cleared for this stage of project development, but the adaptation rationale will need to be sharpened at CEO ER stage.

Agency Response

LDCF: Thank you. The adaptation and LDCF comments have now been fully described in detail throughout the PIF as requested

28 October 2020 UNDP Agency Response (to GEF Sec comments on 10/22/2020)

Component 2 has been revised to unpack adaptation benefits of the proposed outputs in response to your concerns. Indeed, component 2 has a stronger LD focus and component 3 has a stronger CCA focus (though both components are designed to integrate both LD and CCA). We have therefore changed the relative allocation of LD and CCA funding between the two components, with now a greater part of the CCA funding being allocated to component 3. We hope and trust that this addresses your concerns

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 -

GEFTF

- The application of the LD2.5 Objective is disputable: This LD2.5 objective was proposed to mainly highlight the importance of reinforcing the enabling environment for LDN. Most of LD or MFA projects assign a few hundreds of thousands of dollars. Here the component 1 of the project may be assigned to the LD2.5 objective (\$360,250). Some capacity building activities from the components 2 and 3 may also be assimilated to LD2.5 for a total of around \$500,000-700,000. But most of the project is about land restoration and should be assigned to LD1.3 on land restoration. Please, correct.

LDCF

- This project seems to be aligned with CCA-2 and 3 moreso than CCA-1, but at present, the specific adaptation activities are not clearly articulate so it is difficult to determine.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

GEFTR: Thank you. LD 1-3 has been added to LD2.5 with the appropriate financial splits.

LDCF: This is noted and has been revised to align with CCA – 2 and CCA 3. The specific adaptation activities are more clearly articulated and focus on strengthening adaptive capacity through climate resilient agriculture and livelihoods, enhanced ecosystem services from climate risk informed identification and selection of SLM, SFM, and restoration interventions (ecosystem services including both regulating

and provisioning, e.g., regulation of micro-climate, water quality and quantity improvements, reduced soil erosion), and value chain analyses that include climate risk in order to identify and select commodities that can support resilient livelihoods

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

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - More information requested. Additional elaboration on how the GEF financing is additional to the co-financing provided regarding adaptation activities, and incremental in relation to the GEFTF activities would be appreciated. In regard to those activities financed by the LDCF, how exactly are these activities adding value through increased resilience to people and communities additional to what would be experienced without the LDCF-funded activities?

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 -

GEFTF

The incremental reasoning is clear. Thanks. However, we suggest adding the ToC in this section and a short text to explain the assumptions and the pathways for change. The ToC is available in the KM section, at the end of the PIF, it does not help to understand the reasoning and the project strategy.

LDCF

In this section, while it is clear what the baseline scenario is, what is not as clear is the summary of the co-financing initiatives in relation to the adaptation activities and how the adaptation activities are additional to those which are already being financed under the co-financings for similar initiatives, such as APADT-WAP, PAGEFCOM, the FFEM communal forests project (particularly these bc the activities seem similar while there is also geographic overlap)? Is it possible to briefly describe the additionality of the LDCF investments in relation to these baseline initiatives in this section?

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 - This is cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

GEFTF and LDCF

Thank you for the question. The additional cost reasoning for adaptation has been more explicitly articulated. Increased resilience to people and communities from LDCF funded activities under this proposed project comes from the following:

1. Through ensuring that restoration interventions and sustainable land management actions integrate climate change projections and current/future impacts as important variables, restoration will be implemented to be resilient to current and projected climate impacts, and

selected for climate resilience as an objective, SLM over 15,000 hectares will be carried out to, i) adopt practices that increase resilience of land, ecosystems and services to climate change, and ii) are themselves likely to withstand current and future climate change.

2. Sustainable livelihood diversification through understanding which commodities and crops are more resilient to climate impacts, identifying value chains through a process that integrate current and projected climate risks in the different agro-ecological zones of the project, and select options that are more resilient to these risks. By integrating LDCF funding, the project's overall objective is that long term climate adaptation is integrated into planning, capacity building, processes and actions taken on the ground to achieve LDN by 2030, avoid maladaptation and identify value chains to diversify income streams that are climate resilient.

28 October 2020 UNDP Agency Response (to GEF Sec comments on 10/22/2020)

GEF TF

Thank you for your comments. The ToC has been moved into the section on incremental reasoning for easier reference and its assumptions and pathways of change have been summarized as requested. A more elaborate ToC will be developed during the PPG.

LDCF

Thank you for your comment. We have summarized the co-finance projects' main objectives and added further details on the additionality of the LDCF investments in relation to the baseline initiatives listed in this section, particularly ADAPT-WAP, PAGEFCOM II and FFEM. Attention was paid during consultations with the Ministry of Living Environment and Sustainable Development to avoid duplication of activities and zones of interventions with the projects that are contributing to co-finance. For example, with APADT-WAP, the zones of intervention are focused around the protected areas, involving wildlife management associations and communes surrounding the park, and do not overlap with the arrondissement and villages proposed by this project. For FFEM and PAGEFCOM-II there are similarly no geographic overlaps at the village or arrondissement levels. Notwithstanding these geographic distinctions, it is anticipated that the project's proposed outcomes with LDCF funds will provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, aggregating relevant information on indicators of relevance to vulnerability and climate resilience and insights relevant to climate adaptation across the country and regionally.

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

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 -

GEFTF

- To well characterize the vulnerability of local people, we suggest considering the use of tools tested under the GEF6 IAP-Food Security. For instance, please, check the opportunities provided by the SHARP and RIMA tools (<http://www.resilientfoodsystems.co/>).

LDCF

- The adaptation benefits are not well articulated here. How and in what ways will the LDCF-financed activities result in increased resilience of the target people and communities specifically to the negative impacts of climate change?

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 -

GEFTF

The information is partially available in the previous section of the PIF on the incremental reasoning, but please understand that in this section 6, we need an explanation to explain and justify the quantified indicators used as proxy for Global Environment Benefits. We need a text to explain/justify the number of ha of forests that will be restored, the number of ha under SLM, and the carbon values (sources of gain, assumptions under EXACT...). The text under this section is very generic and does not respond the question. Also explain the calculation mode for the number of beneficiaries.

Vis-à-vis your response in the review, Please, note that the SHARP tool has been used within the Food Security IAP, but not developed under the IAP (it was developed by FAO in collaboration with external partners).

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020

LDCF: Thank you for the suggested application of SHARP and RIMA tools produced under the Resilient Food Systems' program. We have included a reference to the SHARP tool in the PIF (page 20 and 22) and will conduct a full evaluation during PPG of these and other tools' application in the zones of intervention.

This section has been revised to better explain adaptation benefits. As described further in the question above, the LDCF financed activities are specifically aimed at ensuring that, i) LDN action integrates an analysis of climate risks to ensure interventions selected are both able to withstand projected climate change and current vulnerability, but also that these options enhance the adaptive capacity of the ecosystems and people living in the project areas through appropriate climate risk informed analysis; and ii) sustainable and climate resilient agriculture and income diversification includes a process wherein appropriate value chains are identified and selected whilst also integrating climate risks and sensitivity of crops, NTFPs and commodities under consideration, support for on-farm water saving and micro-irrigation, climate smart agricultural practices and resilience options for small scale livestock herders are included in component 3.

28 October 2020 UNDP Agency Response (to GEF Sec comments on 10/22/2020)

GEF TF

Thank you for the comment. We have added more specific information about the way how each indicator of global environmental benefits has been determined at the end of this section.

Thank you for the clarification about the SHARP tool.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 -

GEFTF

- We are seeing a unique opportunity with this project to emphasize on peer-to-peer exchanges as a key aspect of sustainability and replication of landscape restoration techniques. We suggest including in the component 2 an output related to local multi-stakeholder platforms to diffuse knowledge and know-how about landscape restoration and especially natural regeneration.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

GEFTF and LDCF: Thank you. This is noted and a specific Output has been added to Component 2 (2.1.6) in this regard and explained in the Project Strategy in the narrative outlining Component 2.

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

GEFSEC, 10/2/2020 - Yes. This is cleared.

Agency Response

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

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - During the PPG, we strongly recommend a deep analysis of local stakeholders in the targeted landscapes to well include the right partners, including traditional authorities.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

Thank you and noted. This analysis will be undertaken.

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

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - We take note that a gender specialist is proposed in the PPG team. However, we would like to see some information to characterize inequalities between males and females in the agriculture sector and how the project will include mitigation measures. Here again, some resources exist (https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25453;file:///C:/Users/wb329964/Downloads/GENDER-BASED_ANALYSIS_OF_INCOME_DIVERSIFICATION_AS.pdf; <https://ccafs.cgiar.org/gender-and-inclusion-toolbox#.X30lqGhKhPZ>; Some tools under the IAP-Food Security may also be further considered (<http://www.resilientfoodsystems.co/>).

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

We appreciate very much this request to make the focus on female households and gender mainstreaming more explicit, as well as the

we appreciate very much this request to make the focus on female households and gender mainstreaming more explicit, as well as the pointer to these highly relevant references. A section was inserted in the description of Component 4 outlining more explicitly the gender focus and the activities that will be developed with and for the benefit for women and female headed households. During the PPG phase, particular emphasis will be put on elaborating on those lines and develop strong activities focusing on rural women and women groups to strengthen their role and contribution in sustainable rural development and value chains.

Private Sector Engagement

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Yes, more specificity will be provided at PPG.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

Noted

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

GEFSEC, 10/2/2020 - The risk table seems appropriate for this stage of project development, however, the current context within the COVID-19 pandemic requires pandemic risk to integrated in a more pronounced way throughout the project's design, as well as considerations of

this risk throughout implementation. Please see the last item on this review sheet for more information.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

Thank you. A table summarizing the risks, mitigation measures, and opportunities resulting from the COVID crisis has been added at the end of the risk section. So far, the direct impact of COVID in rural areas of Benin has been very limited, therefore the mitigation measures are mostly related to managing travel and meeting restrictions and ensuring that locally adapted government and UNDP guidelines and standards are met at all phases of the PPG and incorporated into the final project design. Opportunities from the crisis for increased emphasis on sustainable development options with increased emphasis on the sustainable management and conservation of natural ecosystems while reducing the threat of future zoonoses are integral aspects of the project.

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

GEFSEC< 10/4/2020 - More information requested. There are currently two LDCF projects under preparation and two under implementation, as well as one under consideration for approval on mangrove ecosystem management, which is also an MTF with BD/LDCF resources. Please indicate whether and how the project team is in communication/coordination with these projects to ensure maximum learning and synergistic approach. Additionally, the GCF has several initiatives under development in Benin on both mitigation and adaptation. Is the project team in coordination with the proponents of those projects both to ensure synergies, but also to prevent any duplication of efforts?

GEFSEC< 10/20/2020 - This is cleared for this stage of project development, with the understanding that additional details of specific coordination efforts are made available at PPG.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

This project focuses on three Agricultural zones (PDAs 1, 2 and 5) in the very north and centre of Benin. The LDCF FAO project focuses in PDA 7 in the very south of the country in the coastal areas. Thus, we do not see an overlap with the MTF under development, which focuses on mangrove ecosystem management. However, there are likely to be insightful lessons and knowledge exchange possibilities which would be beneficial to explore in order to assess overall impact of BD/LDCF projects in different biome and agro-ecological zones. The other LDCF project in Benin is through UNDP as the implementation agency. We are taking progress made under the ongoing LDCF project specifically on integration of adaptation into planning documents into account during the design of this project. In terms of zones of intervention there is no geographic overlap with the current, ongoing project on sustainable livelihoods. The project team is aware of ongoing GCF SAP project and detailed consultations will be held during PPG to take advantage of synergies. From the proposed sites of interventions for the GCF funded project proposal on EbA, there are no overlapping zones of interventions identified.

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

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 -

GEFTF

- In the section 7, there is not much interest to mention the overarching 2030 UNCCD strategic framework. Please, provide a short analysis of the revised National Action Program 2018-2027 adopted in February 2019 by the Council of Ministers and the LDN targets approved in 2017. The LDN targets were visibly used to develop this concept as all the proposed landscapes are rightly included in priority hotspots. https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/ldn_targets/Benin%20LDN%20TSP%20Country%20Report.pdf; https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/ldn_targets/Benin%20LDN%20Country%20Commitments.pdf

LDCF

- There is no mention of any climate policy, or priorities as laid out in UNFCCC-related communications (NAPAs, NC, NDC, etc), or the SDGs. Please indicate how the target areas and activities are aligned with Benin's national climate policies, sustainable development policy/strategy, and other relevant plans and policies on the country's approach to climate change, and namely, how this project will coordinate with and inform the NAP process in-country.

GEFSEC, 10/22/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

GEFTF Thank you for these comments. In addition to reference to the National LDN Targets, text has been added to confirm that the project is fully aligned with Benin's National Development Plan 2017-2025 (the Benin Vision), the National Action Program 2018-2027 and the National Drought Plan 2019-2024. The same section refers to the SDGs and confirms that the project is in line with the overarching UNCCD 2030 strategic framework. Please see pp9-10.

LDCF Thank you for this comment. Additional and detailed references to alignment of the project with Benin's NDC, climate change relevant national plans and policies, and contribution to achieving specific SDGs have now been included in the PIF, in addition to the previous references. Please see page 10-11. The NAP process has been ongoing in Benin since August 2013, with a NAP document expected in 2021. This project will contribute to implementing priorities listed in the NDC, the NAPA, and the national development plan (PAG).

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

GEFSEC, 10/4/2020 - Yes, there is a KM approach outlined in the submission. However, more detail and specificity would be appreciated at PPG/CEO Endorsement.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

Thank you and noted

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - Yes. A preliminary ESS is included.

Agency Response

art 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

GEFSEC, 10/1/2020 - The LOE seems to be for the wrong amount, but more importantly, the title of the project is not the same. Please advise/revise.

GEFSEC, 10/20/2020 -

The letter of endorsement has been adjusted, but wrong information is included:

- The GEF resources are from the Land Degradation (LD) Focal area, and not Biodiversity;
- The LDCF resources are for adaptation and have nothing to do with the LD focal area.

Please, revise.

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 - Cleared.

Agency Response

16 October 2020:

Thank you. The project title is now in line with the LOE and the amounts detailed in the LOE are now correct. The revised LOE has been submitted with the revised PIF package.

28 October 2020 UNDP Agency Response (to GEF Sec comments on 10/20/2020)

We apologize for this oversight. A corrected Letter of Endorsement has been attached.

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

NA

Agency Response

EFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

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

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 10/29/2020 - Several items may need to be more fully elaborated and revisited at CEO ER stage, including:

- 1) Co-financing
- 2) Alternative Scenario (LDCF)
- 3) Table B

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	10/4/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)	10/22/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval

Benin. Restoring and Enhancing the Value of Degraded Lands and Forest Ecosystems for Enhanced Climate Resilience in Benin (PIRVaTEFoD-Benin) (GEF ID 10688); Agency: UNDP; GEF Project Financing: \$10,110,000 – \$4,890,500 LDCF, \$5,000,500 LD; Co-financing: \$37,292,500. This project aims to support the achievement of Benin's LDN targets through sustainable land and forest management practices, while also strengthening the climate resilience of vulnerable populations in the Niger Valley, Alibori Sud-Borgou, Nord-2KP, and Zou-Couffo Agricultural Development Areas. The project will achieve its objective through activities financed under four components: (i) Political, financial, institutional, and regulatory frameworks to achieve climate risk informed LDN and advance integration of vulnerability assessment and adaptation options within land use decisions; (ii) Restoration of land and forest ecosystems for improved agricultural productivity, prevention of deforestation, and enhanced climate resilience of vulnerable communities; (iii) Building diversified income-generating activities and value chains to strengthen community resilience; (iv) Gender empowerment, KM, and M&E. The project will directly benefit 36,000 people and restore 15,000 hectares of degraded land, while also placing this land under more sustainable management. The project will integrate adaptation considering while working to achieve land degradation neutrality in the intervention zones, through the adoption of a multi-pronged approach integrating climate-smart agriculture, SLM,SFM, with alternative livelihoods and other income-generating climate adaptation measures. This project is innovative in addressing agricultural input supply, while establishment innovative partnerships at the district level, with the aim of deploying a toolkit of various management tools to implement an integrated land use planning framework. Benin is not formally part of the Great Green Wall Initiative, this project will contribute significantly to the objective of the partnership to restore 100 million hectares of currently degraded land, sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon and create 10 million jobs in rural areas by 2030.