



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
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COMPILATION OF COMMENTS
SUBMITTED BY COUNCIL MEMBERS
ON THE
DECEMBER 2020
LDCF WORK PROGRAM

NOTE: This document is a compilation of comments submitted to the Secretariat by Council members concerning the project proposals presented in the December 2020 LDCF Work Program

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**DECEMBER 2020 LDCF WORK PROGRAM: COMMENTS FROM
COUNCIL MEMBERS (REFERENCE: GEF/LDCF.SCCF.29/03)**

STAND-ALONE FULL-SIZED PROJECTS

1. Afghanistan: Community-Based Climate-responsive Livelihoods and Forestry (CCLF) (GEF ID 10312); Agency: UNDP; GEF Project Financing \$8,982,420; Co-financing: \$20,000,000

In light of the recent audit report by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) of UNDP GEF Management, all projects included in the Work Program implemented by UNDP shall be circulated by email for Council review at least four weeks prior to CEO endorsement/approval. This shall take place as actions of the Management Action Plan that address the OAI recommendations are being implemented, as well as the independent, risk based third-party review of compliance by UNDP with the GEF Policy on Minimum Fiduciary Standards is being completed. Project reviews will take into consideration the relevant findings of the external audit and the management responses and note them in the endorsement review sheet that will be made available to Council during the 4-week review period.

✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany welcomes this project, which aims to enhance the resilience of local communities to climate change through improved alternative livelihood and land-use options and, hence, increase resilience by diversifying livelihoods and sources of income. Germany appreciates the application of gender-sensitive approaches and the objective to create gender-empowering alternative livelihoods. Synergies with and co-financing through several on-going projects have also been identified. Furthermore, Germany appreciates the consistency with national strategies such as the NAPA priorities and the contribution to the NAP process.

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

- COVID-19 strategy: Germany appreciates that COVID-19 is addressed in its risk section as well as project design. Still, Germany emphasizes the need for a strategy that is supposed to be prepared during the PPG phase, especially as it is expected that COVID 19 strongly worsens the food situation in poor and disaster-stricken countries such as Afghanistan. Long-term counter-measures might therefore need to be considered for output 2.3
- NAP-Process: Germany welcomes the project's contribution to the NAP process and encourages close alignment with the Open NAP initiative.
- Cooperation with other projects: Germany welcomes the strong links and co-financing with other UN projects. However, Germany recommends that greater consideration be given to similar projects in the area such as the German-funded "Forest Landscape Restoration Project" and the Swiss-funded "Sustainable Livelihood and Social Development (SLSD)", which both work in Paktia Province, among others. The results of the Worldbank Project "Afghanistan: Capacity Development for Natural Resource

Management, Managing Afghanistan's Rangelands and Forest Resources: An Assessment of Institutional and Technical Capacity Constraints" can be of importance for CCLF's component 1.

- Project strategy: Germany welcomes that CCLF wants to support the implementation of the National Natural Resource Management Strategy (2017–2021) of the The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) that calls for community-based management of the natural resources in Afghanistan through science-based interventions. However, few reference is made to this strategy and its related "Operational Manual (OM) for Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)". The strategy and the manual offer scientifically proven and feasible approaches for the outputs 2.1. and 3.3 of the CCLF project.
- Project Areas: Germany appreciates the selection of the project areas. However, the before-mentioned NRM-strategy calls for different provinces for the prioritization sequence for implementation of reforestation and agro-forestry projects (p. 55 of the strategy). Moreover, the selected provinces of the CCLF have very different stages of the degraded environment. The mountainous province of Kunar still has some of the few closed forest stands in the country, whereas flat and dry Samangan is heavily influenced by wind erosion and other disasters. These facts might call for different, locally adapted implementation approaches, especially for components 2 and 3.
- Forest restoration: The budget for forest management and reforestation is substantially lower than for restoration – this is in line with the overall rationale. However, reforestation is costly and does not really appear in the outcome/output description. Germany suggests to clarify the role reforestation will role. Furthermore, it appears that the indicators regarding restored or reforested areas do not contain values as of yet. Germany asks for those values to be added.

2. Burundi: Landscape Restoration for Increased Resilience in Urban and Peri-Urban Areas of Bujumbura (GEF ID: 10099) Agency: UNDP; GEF Project Financing: \$8,932,420 Co-financing: \$16,024,270

In light of the recent audit report by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) of UNDP GEF Management, all projects included in the Work Program implemented by UNDP shall be circulated by email for Council review at least four weeks prior to CEO endorsement/approval. This shall take place as actions of the Management Action Plan that address the OAI recommendations are being implemented, as well as the independent, risk based third-party review of compliance by UNDP with the GEF Policy on Minimum Fiduciary Standards is being completed. Project reviews will take into consideration the relevant findings of the external audit and the management responses and note them in the endorsement review sheet that will be made available to Council during the 4-week review period.

✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany welcomes the proposed project which aims to increase the resilience of watershed communities in urban and peri-urban areas of Bujumbura in the face of climate change impacts. We appreciate the emphasis on actively engaging the communities in project activities, as well as

building on a previous LDCF intervention, the “Community based climate change related disaster risk management” project. Furthermore, the proposal takes a very holistic approach by implementing anti-erosion measures both upstream and downstream.

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

- Germany strongly recommends reviewing the theory of change at outcome and output level, and formulating also quantitative indicators that allow measuring project results. The proposal provides information on planned project outputs which are however not linked with the theory of change. For example, the proposal mentions that the project will restore 3,000 ha of degraded areas through tree planting, an additional 1,000 km of anti-erosion ditches and terraces and 1.5 km of flood control infrastructures (p.35). These figures are nevertheless not included in the theory of change.
- The description of Components 1 and 2 clearly outline the adaptation rationale in the project context. For the planned restoration and anti-erosion measures under Component 2, including tree and hedge planting, Germany however asks to ensure that native, climate-resilient species are favoured.
- Component 3 focuses on livelihoods options and green entrepreneurship, and introduces a wide range of activities reaching from market analysis to development of micro-finance products and facilitation of start-up creation. While Germany generally supports the innovative approach including the engagement of start-ups (Output 3.3), we ask to provide examples of possible products and to explain how exactly these will contribute to adaptation to climate change.
- While the logic of Component 1 is understandable, the functional efficiency of the community-based climate information system should be closely described. The project description would become clearer if the role of the IGEBU in developing an integrated watershed management plan were described in detail.
- The approaches to community-based anti-erosion measures described in Component 2 are pertinent upstream, the proposal would win if further measures already implemented in other regions (e.g. mulching, fixing of fascines, planting of contour trenches) were also considered. The excavation of contour trenches is an important erosion control measure; therefore, the proposal should also focus on the sustainable maintenance of these trenches.
- The support by the communes cited in Component 2 is the crucial point for a successful implementation of the anti-erosion measures, therefore it should be precisely examined and described to what extent they can be strengthened so that they can successfully cope with the tasks they are faced with.
- The MinEAgriE is able to implement the anti-erosion activities of component 2, i.e. to accompany their implementation. The measures to be implemented downstream include construction measures that are technically complex. The role of MinEAgriE should therefore be clarified in this context.
- The GIZ on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is currently implementing the project “Reducing the impact of climate change on

the availability of water and land resources in Burundi (ACCES)”. Germany recommends seeking an exchange on its approach and the lesson learnt with the project.

3. Haiti: Building Resilience in the Wake of Climate Disasters in Southern Haiti (GEF ID 10175); Agency: UNEP; GEF Project Financing: \$4,327,857; Co-financing: \$12,650,000

✓ Canada Comments

- This project shares similarities with “*Haiti, improving the flow of ecosystem services in biologically-rich watershed of the southern region of Haiti*” (5055479 USD). It would be important to avoid a duplication of work and seek synergies between the two where possible.

✓ Germany Comments

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

Germany welcomes the proposed project which aims to increase the adaptive capacity and resilience of communities in two areas in Southern Haiti, Macaya and Barraderes et Cayemites. Both project zones, recently declared as protected areas by the Government of Haiti, are highly vulnerable and exposed to frequent and severe climate events that threaten livelihoods and food security. Germany appreciates the emphasis on Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) applied throughout proposed activities, including (i) development of policy tools based on climate risk and vulnerability assessments, (ii) on-the-ground adaptation measures such as targeted reforestation with climate-resilient species, and (iii) activities aimed towards more climate-resilient livelihoods. The latter include innovative approaches e.g. by piloting sustainable woodlots to reduce the destruction of mangroves and native trees for charcoal production. Overall, Germany sees scale-up potential for this project in the Caribbean region.

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

- Core Indicators: The proposal refers to several project outputs that can be linked to GEF Core Indicators (e.g. Area of land/wetlands restored; Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender). These outputs are also included in the Theory of Change but not in the Table “Core Indicators” (p.12-15). To provide a structured overview, Germany suggests linking the outputs to the corresponding Core Indicators and updating the table.
- Executing Partner: The proposal lists the Ministry of Environment in Haiti as an Executing Partner for the LDCF project. In the PIF Review document, the GEF Secretariat encourages the agency to re-consider the proposed execution arrangement. We recommend clarifying the current situation on this proposed arrangement.

4. Nepal: Managing Watersheds for Enhanced Resilience of Communities to Climate Change in Nepal (MaWRiN) (GEF ID 10727); Agency: WWF-US; GEF Project Financing: \$4,436,250, Co-financing: \$25,852,350

✓ Canada Comments

- Mainstreaming Climate Change Risk Management into Development (MCCRMD) developed ‘vulnerability assessment tools’ on 6 six sectors of which ‘drinking water

and irrigation’ could be close to ‘watershed management’. Canada recommends the GEF consider using this as a reference when developing and implementing the proposed project.

✓ **Germany Comments**

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

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to enhance climate resilience of indigenous people and local communities in the Marin watershed through nature-based solutions and livelihood improvement. Germany recognizes the strong focus on community-based organizations (CBOs), as well as on gender aspects. This is crucial considering that most young men in the project area, according to the proposal, have migrated for employment leaving women in charge of managing natural resources and households, yet less than 1/3 of women have ownership of their fixed property.

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

- Germany appreciates the clear adaptation rationale of the proposed project. The components as outlined in the proposal appear logical and comprehensive. However, more detailed information on the implementation of the planned activities under Component 1 and 2 would be helpful. Output 2.1.1, for example, lists climate smart agriculture and local adaptation solutions (e.g. “Higher productivity/low impact small hand-tools and technologies that are GESI/labor and energy smart”) the project aims to support in order to increase the adaptive capacity of vulnerable households. Germany suggests clarifying whether this agricultural technology support will be provided by the Agency, or in cooperation with another organization/ private sector. Local service providers are mentioned in section 4 (Private sector engagement, p.37), yet it would be useful to elaborate this in more detail in the Component description.
- Germany agrees with the PIF review that “livelihood diversification” which is included in the project aim, should also be further elaborated in the final project document. At present it is somewhat unclear how the proposed project will address this issue.
- As stated in the proposal, the watershed will be under additional pressure since many migrant workers are returning home due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and that additional support will be provided to mitigate this pressure. Germany appreciates the consideration of potential impacts in this context. However, Germany suggests specifying what kind of additional support will be provided. In our view, livelihood diversification efforts could play a role in this regard.
- Germany appreciates the efforts undertaken to include gender-related approaches into the planning of this project. Still, the exposition of gender-related aspects remains on a surface level. It would be very helpful to gain additional insights into measures that seek to support women in the project area.
- As stated in the PIF, this project is one of many in Nepal seeking to enable higher resilience of local communities against environmental impacts. In addition, these projects are carried out by a variety of entities. Synergies and conflicts with these measures are

not presented in a detailed manner. Thus, it remains unclarified how the project at hand is embedded within this landscape of international aid. Further information would help getting a clear picture of the project's position.

- Finally, Germany suggests reviewing the theory of change and formulating quantifiable outputs. We consider this essential for an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system under Component 3, and for tracking project results in general.

5. Senegal: Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) for resilient natural resources and agro-pastoral communities in the Ferlo Biosphere Reserve and Plateau of Thies (GEF ID: 10691) Agency: UNDP and IUCN; GEF Project Financing: \$8,949,533, Co-financing: \$26,450,000

In light of the recent audit report by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) of UNDP GEF Management, all projects included in the Work Program implemented by UNDP shall be circulated by email for Council review at least four weeks prior to CEO endorsement/approval. This shall take place as actions of the Management Action Plan that address the OAI recommendations are being implemented, as well as the independent, risk based third-party review of compliance by UNDP with the GEF Policy on Minimum Fiduciary Standards is being completed. Project reviews will take into consideration the relevant findings of the external audit and the management responses and note them in the endorsement review sheet that will be made available to Council during the 4-week review period.

✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany welcomes the proposal which will promote ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) in both rural and urban context, in the Ferlo Biosphere Reserve as well as in the Plateau and city of Thies. The project aims to strengthen the resilience of agro-pastoral communities and ecosystem services to climate change impacts, in particular to increased droughts and floods.

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

- Germany recommends reviewing the outcome and output level in the theory of change and formulating quantifiable outputs that allow measuring results. For example, Output 1.1.5. “The EWS under the ANACIM is equipped to strengthen the observation and dissemination of climate data in the project areas” appears to be an outcome, not output, and should be reformulated. Further, as the proposal provides more detailed information on e.g. the number of direct beneficiaries and ha of land restored (p.30), this information should also be incorporated into the theory of change.
- Finally, Germany would like to suggest seeking synergies with the adaptation project “Science-based support for National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes in francophone Least Developed Countries (LDCs) of sub-Saharan Africa”, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and implemented by GIZ. The project has recently conducted vulnerability analyses e.g. in the areas of agriculture and water resources, as well as developed a series of adaptation webinars in French. Senegal is one of the countries of focus.

6. Sierra Leone: Promotion of Climate Adaptation Technology and Business Model Innovations and Entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone (GEF ID 10680); Agency: UNIDO; GEF Project Financing: \$8,932,420; Co-financing: \$21,880,000

✓ *Canada Comments*

- The project is proposing the creation of an on-line marketplace, and Canada would like to confirm that the project will be accessible to all MSMEs (i.e. how might this platform be more accessible to those without internet access – will it be available to access by mobile phone, other communication mechanisms, etc.)?
- It might be useful to provide a brief description on what types of livelihoods would be considered within agriculture-water-energy sectors, especially with respect to MSMEs.

✓ *Germany Comments*

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

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to promote Micro, Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (MSMEs) for technological and business model innovations that address the adaptation needs of vulnerable groups in Sierra Leone. Germany supports the integrated approach comprising the water, agriculture, and energy sectors, as well as the specific focus on women and youth.

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

- **Local Communities:** Germany recommends ensuring closer involvement of local communities, and a more detailed consideration of their vulnerabilities to climate change impacts as well as their adaptation needs. We agree with the GEF Secretariat that adaptation planning with communities and community groups should be added as a distinct project activity at the endorsement stage, as noted in the PIF review document (p.38).
- **Cooperation with other projects:** Germany encourages incorporating lessons learned from the “Employment Promotion Programme (EPP III)” in Sierra Leone, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by GIZ, which concluded earlier this year. The third phase of the Programme focused on improving the work and income situations for young people who are employed in agriculture or MSMEs.
- **Theory of change:** While Sierra Leone’s contribution to global climate change is indeed minuscule, there are unsustainable economic activities that endanger ecosystems and require transformation. The theory of change is linear in same way as it assumes adaptation measures alone will lead to a sustainable and resilient economy. Hence mitigation must always be considered and should be integrated in the theory of change
- **Barriers for transformation:** One of the root barriers for sustainable business operations is the cost-free utilization and degradation of the environment. In addition, there are

institutional and organizational barriers for the developing of MSME businesses. Germany suggest to address both types of barriers.

- Activities: Germany welcome the general direction for planned interventions. However, its specific areas of activities remain opaque. Generally, Germany suggests a dual approach of implementation at local level and coordinated monitoring through policy measures, should be a core element of this project. Germany suggests to consider:
 - Financial support for the implementation and dissemination of modern locally adapted and sustainable agriculture and forestry and as wells sustainable cooking methods
 - Information and advice for entrepreneurs on the introduction of new, proven and promising methods and technologies
 - Establishment of a platform for mutual exchange and learning processes
 - Advice to the government and the administration on any necessary changes in legislation and any measures to enable necessary adjustments.
 - Development of measures for the inclusion of medium and long-term costs of ecological damage and social harm in economic decisions and budgets.

MULTI-TRUST FUND

- 7. 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: \$9,032,877 (\$4,466,210 LDCF, \$4,566,667 GEF Trust Fund, Land Degradation); Co-financing: \$17,805,200**

In light of the recent audit report by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) of UNDP GEF Management, all projects included in the Work Program implemented by UNDP shall be circulated by email for Council review at least four weeks prior to CEO endorsement/approval. This shall take place as actions of the Management Action Plan that address the OAI recommendations are being implemented, as well as the independent, risk based third-party review of compliance by UNDP with the GEF Policy on Minimum Fiduciary Standards is being completed. Project reviews will take into consideration the relevant findings of the external audit and the management responses and note them in the endorsement review sheet that will be made available to Council during the 4-week review period.

✓ **Canada Comments**

- It is important to take into account short-term issues (COVID-19) and long-term concerns (adaptation to climate change) and with a view to improving the economic and environmental resilience of the most vulnerable populations in these projects.
- If designed and executed effectively, Canada believes that this project will enable Benin, one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, to develop more climate-smart production systems and infrastructure as well as strengthen ecosystem and biodiversity protection. These outcomes will be important to help the country overcome projected climate impacts and threats related to drought, desertification, and floods, which are

significantly affecting the availability and productivity of agricultural lands. This is problematic as a significant proportion of Benin's population is dependent upon agriculture, most of which is rain fed and small scale. This project will therefore not only help to reverse land degradation and enhance Benin's climate resilience, but also improve livelihoods for communities in the target areas. Capacity building activities will also generate stakeholder awareness and support agricultural land managers in scaling up climate risk-informed land management approaches in the agricultural development areas.

- Canada notes that STAP has welcomed this proposal and highlights minor issues to be considered during the project design. Assuming the appropriate steps are taken to ameliorate the components of the project that are currently lacking, Canada supports this proposal and the recommendation of the Secretariat.

✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany acknowledges, that the proposal provides useful content to the land degradation neutrality (LDN) process, which Benin initiated. In this regard, the project may provide options to strengthen synergies between the sectors land and forestry and contributes to improved framework conditions for climate adaptation and sustainable land management.

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

- Germany requests a final theory of change and a final work plan with budget overview. In particular, Germany requests to develop a more detailed planning of activities to make use of synergies with other related projects identified. In this regard, the project may contribute to an upscaling of climate adaptation and sustainable land management activities of the GIZ Project "Soil protection and rehabilitation for food security, Benin"
- Germany recommends taking into account the security situation in project areas close to the northern and northeastern border, when it comes to estimate potential losses of impact on project areas due to the conflictual situation between agriculturalists and pastoralists. Regarding the calculations on carbon gains, Germany recommends including permanence and additionality perspectives. It would be beneficial to include the training concept in existing structures (e.g. to make use of synergies and multiplication options).

✓ **Japan Comments**

The below comments from Japan were provided prior to the Council meeting. An initial agency response was provided and can be found in the list of documents specific to the project in the GEF Portal.

- We welcome these important tropical-forest-related programs, especially as they relate to productive forest supply chains and landscape restoration, which are issues that require urgent global attention. We support a rigorous data-driven approach to this field, and wonder whether the focal agency on forest-related supply chain/ trade matters within the CPF and the main data provider for tropical forests to the FAO is involved i.e. the International Tropical Timber Organization (we only see the TFA mentioned). To better align with an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach, we request the involvement of specialist organizations/platforms as these with the relevant global data, expertise and

networks to ensure efficient and effective approaches to relevant stakeholders and to reduce duplication of effort in the global arena. The organization also has relevant indicators and guidelines on legal and sustainable supply chains and forest landscape restoration related to tropical forests, which can help assess and measure impact of relevant projects.

8. Benin: Strengthening Human and Natural Systems Resilience to Climate Change through Mangrove Ecosystems Conservation and Sustainable Use in Southern Benin (GEF ID 10166); Agency: FAO; GEF Project Financing: \$7,155,936 (\$4,466,210 LDCF; \$2,689,726 GEF Trust Fund, Biodiversity); Co-financing: \$25,750,000

✓ **Canada Comments**

- It is important to take into account short-term issues (COVID-19) and long-term concerns (adaptation to climate change) and with a view to improving the economic and environmental resilience of the most vulnerable populations in these projects.
- Canada believes that the joint attention of FAO Forests and FAO Food Security initiatives will be central to success of this approach.

✓ **France Comments**

Coordination with other projects, for instance financed by the FFEM:

- This project implemented by FAO should be coordinated with the WACA program, which is co-financed by the WB and, for its nature-based solutions component, by the FFEM. It should also be coordinated with the [mangrove project in Costa Rica and Benin](#) (methodology/governance) supported by the FFEM, knowing that the Ministry of the Environment of Benin is the common interlocutor and that the project areas must be identical or very close, given the small extent of mangroves in Benin.

✓ **Germany Comments**

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

Germany welcomes this project, which aims to resilience of mangrove ecosystems and their dependent agricultural, forestry and fishery communities in Southern Benin. The community-centric ecosystem conservation approach to increase the resilience of mangroves and livelihoods depending on them is promising. This project has the potential to ensure the resilience of the two target areas while also linking related and complementary approaches in other areas. Synergies with and co-financing through several on-going projects have also been identified. Furthermore, Germany appreciates the consistency with national strategies and clear linkages to NAPA, INDC and the Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Development Strategy.

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

- GCF co-financing: Germany welcomes the high volume of co-financing. Among others, the proposal refers co-financing from a GCF-financed initiative (\$30,000,000) Germany shares the view of the GEF Secretariat (PIF Review) on the importance of including more detailed explanations on what that project is financing exactly.

- COVID 19 strategy: Germany appreciates that COVID-19 addressed in its risk section as well as project design. Still, Germany shares the view of the GEF Secretariat (PIF Review) that a strategy or action framework for the pandemic should be added.
- Vulnerability assessments: Germany welcomes the preparation of in-depth vulnerability studies planned under component 1 of the project. However, Germany recommends highlighting how the results of these studies will be used in strengthening knowledge availability, awareness and decision-making support under component 3. In addition, the vulnerability studies should take into consideration the cross-border effects of measure in the coastal zone in the region.
- Key stakeholder: Germany welcomes the implication of the National Fund for the Environment and Climate (FNEC) in the Steering Committee of the project since FNEC plays an important role in mobilizing national and international funds (e.g. Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund). In this frame, FNEC is supporting local actors in mangrove related activities. It is recommended that the role of FNEC as a key stakeholder is strengthened in the frame of the project especially with regard to capacity development activities. A stronger implication of FNEC in the project allows furthermore for better identifying interlinkages with ongoing and planned small- and large-scale projects as well as with future call for proposals by FNEC in order to upscale project activities.
- Gender: Germany welcomes that the gender gap has clearly been identified with regards to social and economic disadvantages. However, no link has been shown between gender and adaptation to climate change. Germany recommends that the gender aspect is stronger included in the vulnerability studies and the identification of alternative nature-based livelihoods under component 2 in order to strengthen gender-empowering alternative livelihoods.
- Cooperation with other projects: Germany welcomes the consideration of the WACA project in the project proposal to take into consideration the cross-border nature of interventions in the project zone. However, Germany recommends that greater consideration be given to what mechanisms are available or needed to ensure transnational exchange and decision-making with implication of the relevant stakeholders on national and local level to increase the effectiveness of the activities proposed by the project.
- Conceptualisation of biodiversity: Germany appreciate the biodiversity approach to increasing resilience. However, in the proposal the term “biodiversity” is used in a general matter. It is not clearly defined which species are looked at specifically in the frame of the project. Therefore, Germany recommends listing the species that will be looked at by the project to evaluate its contribution to biodiversity conservation.
- Project Area: Germany appreciate the selection of the project areas. The proposal mentions the Mono Delta Biosphere that overlaps partly with the project area. Other than this, the biosphere reserve created in October 2020 in the Basse Vallée de l’Ouémé should be taken into account as well in the project design to analyse potential overlaps with project sites and to analyse endangered species in this site to be taken into account.

9. Mali: Climate Security and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Central Regions of Mali for Peacebuilding (GEF ID 10687); Agency: UNDP; GEF Project Financing: \$7,512,557 (\$4,872,831 LDCF, \$2,639,726 GEF Trust Fund, Land Degradation); Co-financing: \$16,667,379

In light of the recent audit report by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) of UNDP GEF Management, all projects included in the Work Program implemented by UNDP shall be circulated by email for Council review at least four weeks prior to CEO endorsement/approval. This shall take place as actions of the Management Action Plan that address the OAI recommendations are being implemented, as well as the independent, risk based third-party review of compliance by UNDP with the GEF Policy on Minimum Fiduciary Standards is being completed. Project reviews will take into consideration the relevant findings of the external audit and the management responses and note them in the endorsement review sheet that will be made available to Council during the 4-week review period.

✓ **Germany Comments**

Germany welcomes the proposed measures as they are highly relevant. Notably, in order to strengthen the private sector, electrification is fundamentally important, particularly mini-grids in remote areas. However, some of the approaches mentioned already exist, which calls for an extensive scoping mission to prevent overlaps.

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

- We request that security conditions should be referenced more strongly in the risk management section. There is a possibility that the current security condition might hinder project implementation, especially in the Mopti region. As such, questions on the sustainability and the possibility of field implementation arise. Risk mitigation measures should be detailed and planned before implementation starts.
- We suggest to consider whether the installation of solar-powered mini-grids could be included in project activities. It is not one of the measures listed, despite it having a great potential for mitigation, adaptation (reduction of firewood felling) and overall improvement of living conditions, including private sector development.
- We request to revise some issues in the presented analysis on climate and land degradation in the first part:
 - Rainfall has been increasing again since 1990 at the latest, but with great variations.
 - Land degradation does not seem to have played a major role for some time. Deforestation rate of 500,000 ha /year is being questioned.
 - The decrease in the flow of the Niger River is also controversial. We do not expect a further decrease and the only flow station that seems reliable is Koulikoro, all others have been changed / relocated over the years.

✓ Norway/Denmark Comments

- This project is highly relevant and important for Mali. The management of natural resources, including access, is an important aspect of peacebuilding between different ethnic groups and communities (nomads / cattle farming versus resident farmers) in Mali which is in conflict precisely due to competition for access to natural resources.
- The description of the context is assessed to be correct especially related to the climate related challenges which have led to conflicts between ethnic groups in local communities.
- The different barriers are well described, and the solutions suggested are assessed as adequate and realistic.
- The Danish embassy had the opportunity to exchange with UNDP about this project and very much supports it. Its analysis and frame of the complex interlinkages between issues is precise and much appreciated. They are furthermore support the approach, which is similar or complementary to what the Danish embassy is currently funding through WFP and will also be funding in a project through PATRIP Foundation among others.
 - Strengths:
 - Emphasis on partnering with state and local authorities. This is neglected and a prerequisite for durable advances.
 - The mix of access to resources, livelihoods and governance / cohesion is pertinent.
 - Praise to the inclusion of gender. Must be maintained as this is a relevant dimension for all aspects of the proposed interventions.
 - Risks:
 - Emphasis on partnering with state and local authorities. It is the central question as return of the state and local authorities is not something UNDP can do much about. Will require continuous dialogue with the governments (national and local) and probably collective push / alliance with other partners of Mali.
 - Risk of duplication and overlap. The targeted regions are currently the focus of interventions throughout to HDP-nexus in Mali – thus coordination and cooperation within and outside UN will be of outmost importance throughout the UNDP nexus.
 - Security. The regions suffer daily from security incidents and as an example humanitarian staff is regularly kidnapped for shorter or longer durations. This entails many risks incl. on implementation and monitoring.
 - There is currently an ongoing Danish and Norwegian financed project “Danish Regional Sahel Peace and Stabilisation Programme” that has similarities with the GEF proposed project and we would therefore encourage coordination and collaboration to ensure there is no over-lap and make the most of potential synergies.