



COMPILATION OF COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY COUNCIL MEMBERS
ON THE JUNE 2023 LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FUND AND
SPECIAL CLIMATE CHANGE FUND WORK PROGRAM

NOTE: This document is a compilation of comments submitted to the Secretariat by Council members concerning the project proposals presented in the June 2023 LDCF/SCCF Work Program

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**JUNE 2023 LDCF/SCCF WORK PROGRAM (REFERENCE: GEF/LDCF.SCCF.34/03):
COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS**

STAND-ALONE FULL-SIZED PROJECTS

- 1. Bhutan: *Enhancing the Climate Resilience of Urban Landscapes and Communities in Thimphu-Paro region of Bhutan* (ECRUL) (GEF ID 11109). GEF Agency: UNDP. GEF project financing: \$ 18,048,624 (LDCF). Co-financing: \$ 51,375,000.**

✓ **Comment for all UNDP projects**

Following previous Council decisions related to 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. Project reviews will take into consideration the relevant findings of the external audit and management responses and note them in the endorsement review sheet that will be made available to the Council during the 4-week review period.

✓ **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 build urban resilience of communities to the impacts of climate change in the Thimphu-Paro region of Bhutan. Germany appreciates the comprehensiveness of the proposed interventions, and their cross-cutting gender focus, to enhance adaptive capacity of 46% of the total urban population through investments in institutional capacities (national and sub-national), nature-based solutions, flood management, private investments mobilisation, as well as enhanced participation of youth through vocational training and skilling. The project also aims to strengthen climate and geospatial information systems for risk-informed urban planning. This is crucial as the two cities in Bhutan, Thimphu and Paro are major urban centers acutely exposed to climate change, which is compounded by rapid urbanisation and tourist influx.

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

- Germany acknowledges the climate risks for the two major cities of Thimphu and Paro and the need for the project activities. Yet, a comprehensive climate risk and vulnerability assessment (CRVA) seems missing as part of Component 1 for the two cities to identify and assess present and future risks, and clearly identify the most relevant adaptation measures (structural, institutional, financial, and governance) that will support the execution of Component 2, for comprehensive urban resilience building.

- Germany appreciates the project’s gender-inclusive strategy across all project components, together with the inclusion of other vulnerable groups and youths. Yet, there seems to be a gap for a systematic plan to comprehensively involve all stakeholders and what approaches will be undertaken to build their resilience. A detailed participatory stakeholder consultation plan needs to be developed as part of Component 1 to understand the specific needs of the vulnerable groups.
- Germany additionally requests a coherent strategy for the project alignment with national priorities.
- Germany requests clarity around the complementarity of this project with multiple ongoing initiatives for urban resilience in Bhutan, including GEF’s “Advancing Climate Resilience of the Water sector in Bhutan (ACREWAS)”.
- Germany appreciates the high proposed co-financing but requests more clarity on the commitments from the co-financing agencies and the interventions that they would be supporting.
- Germany recommends ensuring that awareness of water governance is raised throughout the river basin, otherwise successes might quickly disappear.

2. Comoros: *Strengthening Climate Resilience on the Comoros Coastal Zone Through Ecosystem-based Adaptation* (GEF ID 11111); GEF Agency: UNEP. GEF project financing: \$8,925,000 (LDCF). Co-financing: \$22,851,691.

✓ **Canada Comments**

- Mission inclusion is currently implementing a project in Comoros that will likely align (potentially overlap) the following one Strengthening Climate Resilience on the Comoros Coastal Zone Through Ecosystem-based Adaptation. The Regenerative Seascapes project (\$31.5M – Canada’s contribution \$30M; \$5.2 M is budgeted for Comoros) is implemented in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, Comoros by Mission inclusion in partnership with the IUCN. The project was approved in 2022 and will end in March 2026.
- This project will support the establishment of a network of sustainable seascapes that contribute towards the enhanced climate and socioeconomic resilience of women, men and young people living in coastal communities in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Comoros and Madagascar. The project will take a rights-based approach for gender-responsive conservation. This initiative includes Mission inclusion, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and local partners. This project will directly support 160,000 women, 65,000 young women, 70,000 men and 42,500 young men.
- The project expects to achieve the following outcomes: (i) improved effectiveness, equitable and gender-responsive conservation of Western Indian Ocean marine protected areas and locally managed marine areas, including key coastal and marine ecosystems, for nature and people; (ii) enhanced adoption of gender-responsive nature-based solutions for effective management and sustainable use of coastal and marine

resources in the Western Indian Ocean region; and (iii) the increased economic empowerment of women, in all their diversity, in nature-based value chains for climate change adaptation in the Western Indian Ocean region.

✓ **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 increase the climate resilience of the Comoros Coastal Zone through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA). Germany appreciates the community-centric project scope which seeks to enhance resilience through several pathways including capacity building, knowledge transfer, participatory planning, and awareness raising. Enhancing ecosystems is a central tenant of improving the wellbeing of the people of Comoros; both through the preservation of resources essential for survival (e.g., fishing) and the safeguarding of land and resources (e.g., water) from climate impacts, and lastly to safeguard future potential income-generating opportunities (e.g., those associated with tourism).

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

- Germany appreciates the projects' focus on enhancing local capacity for EbA. Yet, further elaboration on the project's exit strategy is requested to demonstrate how project benefits are sustained following the project's completion. The mention of specific mechanisms and entities' roles in sustaining projects outputs and benefits would support this elaboration. It should be considered that Nature-based Solutions encompass a range of ecosystem-based approaches that aim to increase resilience to climate change.
- Germany acknowledges that gender considerations are included; however, we suggest more specificity regarding the practical inclusion and buy-in of vulnerable communities (including girls and women in all their diversity) into the project, who historically may not have been included in decision making processes. Furthermore, Indigenous Peoples should also be considered as they often carry important knowledge in the nexus of NbS and coastal protection. If indigenous knowledge is considered, a common language of communication and understanding should be ensured.
- Germany further suggests the inclusion of additional information on how the project intends to reconcile individual and immediate survival-based needs against collective and longer-term objectives of ecosystem resilience. For extremely poor and poor populations, immediate needs for food (e.g., fish) and materials (e.g., sand) may be perceived as antagonistic to the project's long-term objectives of enhancing ecosystem resilience.

MULTI-TRUST FUND PROJECTS

3. **Global: *Amplifying the impact of the "Challenge Programme for Adaptation Innovation" of the Global Environment Facility through learning and knowledge management (GEF ID 11303); GEF Agency: UNIDO; GEF project financing: \$1,776,484 (LDCF) and \$431,621(SCCF); Co-financing: \$3,300,000.***

✓ **Germany Comments**

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

Germany welcomes this proposal, which aims at centralizing lessons learnt and knowledge generated from GEF climate adaptation projects for a private sector (PS) audience, to ultimately foster PS investment in adaptation innovation in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). This is a crucial initiative as climate change adaptation is acutely needed in LDCs and remains overall significantly underfunded by the private sector.

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

- Germany suggests defining PS actors on the adaptation finance supply and demand side, together with clearly stating the project objectives regarding support provided for each to increase adaptation-related investment.
- While Germany acknowledges the importance of communications and knowledge products, it is essential that they are tailored and directed to the right audiences, to consider differences in focus and operating modalities between diverse PS actors.
- Germany highly encourages a collaborative approach of project lessons stock take between GEF and other multilateral funds such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Private Sector Facility (PSF).
- Germany appreciates the focus on investment funds but would like to mention that other types of finance providers such as banks and credit unions can play an important role in upscaling businesses' access to adaptation finance and could be considered in the project.
- Germany would find it beneficial to clearly articulate how the knowledge generated through this project is passed on to LDCs beyond the communities of practice it creates, for national PS actors to increase their supply or demand of adaptation finance, in line with national climate and development priorities.
- Germany recommends indicating what is expected from the PS in terms of climate adaptation finance access. If it includes access to multilateral funds, given their specific requirements, additional capacity-building on the latter for the PS is required to ensure their successful access to international climate finance.

4. **Zambia: *Climate-Resilient Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainable Land Management in the Central and Southern Provinces of Zambia* (GEF ID 11212).** GEF Agency: FAO. GEF project financing: \$8,265,283 (LDCF) and \$3,544,809 (GEF Trust Fund). Co-financing: \$63,826,244.

✓ **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 increase climate adaptation in local communities, reduce land degradation and enhance biodiversity conservation through an integrated climate-resilient landscape management approach in the Central and Southern Provinces of Zambia. Germany appreciates the youth-centric, gender-responsive and whole-of-society project approach which aims to enhance climate-resilient natural resources management practices through behavioral changes, capacity building, education, and resource-based livelihood opportunities. Conserving and restoring forests is integral to the long-term well-being and sustainable development of communities.

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

- Germany notes the project’s important objective of strengthening the enabling policy environment for forest restoration and conservation. Yet, the project identification form (PIF) notes that the central government has farm and agricultural policies in place that incentivise the clearing of standing forests on agriculturally productive lands. This is compounded by lack of clarity around land tenure and forest use rights in communal areas. While the PIF does a comprehensive job in addressing barriers, Germany requests further clarity on how this project intends to strengthen the enabling (pro-forest and biodiversity) policy environment while competing farm policies incentivise land clearing for agricultural productivity.
- We further recommend to closely engage with the Accelerate Water and Agricultural Resources Efficiency (AWARE) and Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Ecosystems (SAFE) projects. These projects overlap with the proposed project region. AWARE is implementing landscape restoration measures (with a focus on water resources protection) and is currently planning a second phase of the project (expected to start Oct/Nov 2023).
- Germany would further like to acknowledge the Water Resources Management Authority (WARMA) and Water User Associations as additional relevant partners that exist in the project region. The letter could closely work with Community Forest Management Groups.
- With view to the project “SAFE” (p. 45), Germany concurs that the project is of relevance for the proposal yet requests that it should not be considered a co-financing, given that Germany as a member of the GEF council cannot co-finance GEF projects.

5. Djibouti: Sustainable management of water and rangeland resources for enhanced climate resilience of rural communities in Djibouti (GEF ID 11284). GEF Agency: UNDP. GEF project financing: \$18,098,624 (LDCF), and \$2,927,523 (GEF Trust Fund). Co-financing: \$54,357,322.

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✓ **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 to enhance the climate resilience of rural communities in Djibouti by improving water access through sustainable water resource management and infrastructure, improving climate adaptation institutional capacities, and enhancing climate risk preparedness against droughts and floods. Improved water management is essential to support Djibouti's rural poor (45% of whom currently live in extreme poverty), as climate change will further exacerbate water scarcity and poverty across the country. Similarly, improved flood preparedness is crucial to protect rural communities with limited financial resources to adapt and rebuild as the frequency and intensity of floods increases. Germany also lauds the project's commitment to improving Djibouti's climate adaptation institutional and technical capacities at all governance levels to implement adaptation interventions related to water and land management.

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

- Germany appreciates the project's commitment to gender sensitivity, together with the detailed examples of gender-responsive activities under Components 3 and 4. However, despite several mentions of gender in Components 1 and 2, it is unclear how the activities will specifically be gender-responsive. Germany recommends elaborating examples of such activities.
- Germany appreciates the project's objective of enhancing water and land resource management for improving water security and climate resilience of rural communities in Djibouti. However, Germany inquires how the establishment of sustainable groundwater access points using solar-powered pumps (Output 3.1) could enhance the sustainability of vulnerable communities considering that the maintenance of such pumps requires the adoption of new skills, access to spare parts, and funds to pay technicians and materials. Considerations concerning this matter could be added to the description.

- We appreciate the project’s goal to restore degraded rangelands using ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches, acknowledging that installing fences around areas that grow indigenous fodder species will benefit pastoralist communities over the long-term. However, given high poverty rates, we wonder how immediate survival needs (i.e., in the event of a major drought or flood) will be balanced against longer-term rehabilitation objectives. It would be useful to describe (i) how to ensure community buy-in for closing off historical grazing areas for restoration, and (ii) potential actions to balance the long-term objectives of Outputs 4.1 and 4.2 with immediate survival needs, for both pastoralists and agriculturalists.

6. Cabo Verde: *Climate Change Adaptation of Cabo Verde’s Agri-Food Systems for Improved Food Security and Livelihoods* (GEF ID 11100). GEF Agency: FAO. GEF project financing: \$2,639,726 (SCCF). Co-financing: \$15,000,000.

✓ **Germany Comments**

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

Germany welcomes the proposal which aims to enhance Cabo Verde’s agriculture and food sector’s adaptive capacity, delivering food security and sustainable livelihoods. Germany appreciates the comprehensive approach to create strategic investments in agro-ecological adaptations and solutions as well as enhance governance and capital capacity. This is essential as climate change has already begun to impact Small Island Developing States (SIDS), destabilising food and water security, as well as the livelihoods of farmers (esp. women and youth in the country). Current climate projections of temperature increases and drought will also result in challenges in terms of water resource availability, food and energy security and desertification. Further, Germany commends the collaborative aspects of this project, specifically the synergies created with past and current initiatives in Cabo Verde.

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

- Germany appreciates the detailed information about impacts of climate change on agriculture in Cabo Verde, as well as the rationale for agro-forestry as an adaptation measure and planned stakeholder engagement process to develop capacity amongst farmers in Santiago for its take-up. However, more details on community-level engagement (who and how) on the selection of agro-forestry practices would be useful to ensure equitable involvement of all affected stakeholders.
- Germany praises the fact that the project’s successful implementation is considered for up-scaling across other islands. Germany requests further details surrounding the legacy of the project, including the islands where the project will be replicated, including selection criteria.
- Further, while Germany acknowledges the process to incentivise and engage youth to participate in the training, it would be useful to understand more specifically how this

project aims to do the same with girls and women in all their diversity since they often play a central role within the agricultural sector and more concrete in the sustainable management of food. More details related to the challenges faced by women in Cabo Verde's agricultural sector, compounded by climate change, and the way in which this project aims to address and mitigate those obstacles would also be welcome. Gender-specific activities are currently absent from the governance-focused component (component 1).