Tracks Documentation

Contents

Home page: Welcome

WWF and GEF

The Global Environment Facility is a financial mechanism for the 5 major international environmental conventions: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

The GEF primarily provides financing to developing governments to assist countries meet their obligations under these conventions. Public funds committed by donor governments, and replenished every 4 years (e.g. GEF 6, GEF 7), is the basis for this financing. As a GEF Project Agency since 2013, the WWF GEF Agency both (1) supports and influences GEF policies, guidelines, and operations, and (2) helps governments access GEF funds for environmental projects.

As a network, WWF is able to support government in designing and executing GEF projects (see roles and responsibilities). It is an opportunity to achieve shared conservation goals on the ground.

The Project Cycle

Developing a GEF project is a rigorous process. There are 3 phases through which a WWF GEF project is defined and designed:

> **Concept**: A general concept is proposed. The concept must be aligned with government, GEF, and WWF priorities to move forward.

> **PIF**: The concept is fleshed out and the overarching project strategies are identified and developed. The general project framework is described in the Project Information Form (PIF) and, once approved by the GEF Council, GEF funds are earmarked for the project;

> **ProDoc**: Based on the project framework described in the PIF, detailed project design takes place amongst key partners and stakeholders. The overall project development process is iterative. The project design is documented in the ProDoc. The ProDoc is the "business plan" for execution, and should be detailed enough that anyone picking up the document can understand how to execute the project.

> **CEO Endorsement and Agency Approval**: Once the project is fully designed and articulated, the project documents must be endorsed by the GEF CEO and approved by the WWF GEF Agency (Agency approval). The project is then executed according to the plan outlined in the ProDoc.

> **Execution**: The project is executed according to the plan outlined in the ProDoc, and according to WWF GEF Agency guidelines and procedures.

Tracks: A how-to guide for developing a GEF Project

This Manual is a "how to" guide for developing a quality WWF GEF project that meets WWF GEF Agency policies and procedures. The processes described in this manual should be completed in partnership with national authorities and partners.

How to use this Manual:

The Manual is a step by step guide for developing a GEF project. For each step, the following information is provided when relevant:

1. **Prerequisites**: Prerequisites are previous deliverables that feed into a given step. For example, a "Desktop Gender Assessment" is a prerequisite for a "Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan."
2. **Deliverables**: Used to demonstrate progress throughout project development.
3. **Guidance Text**: Guidance text provides the "how to" for achieving specific deliverables.
4. **Policies:** Compulsory and must be applied (Social and Environmental safeguards, Gender, Stakeholder engagement).
5. **Templates:** WWF GEF Agency templates and official GEF templates are provided when applicable. These templates align with the guidance text and are kept up to date.
6. **Examples:** Examples showcasing successful past project templates/processes/etc., are provided.

Please email GEFAMU@wwfus.org or the WWF GEF Agency project manager for questions.

Global Environment Facility

With more than US$17 billion over 25 years, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the largest public financing institution for the environment. Established in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit, the main function of the GEF is to serve as a financial mechanism for key multilateral environmental agreements, namely the UNFCCC, UNCCD, and the CBD. As a financial mechanism, the role of the GEF is to provide funding that assists developing countries meet their obligations under the respective conventions, that in turn, enable the conventions to make progress on their global goals and targets (e.g., the CBD's Aichi Targets or Sustainable Development Goals) and overall mission. Please find more information at http://www.thegef.org/.

World Wildlife Fund

WWF and the GEF have a rich history of partnership and mutual support. A new milestone in this partnership was reached in November 2013, when the GEF Council welcomed WWF as a GEF Project Agency. This status gives WWF the ability to work directly with the GEF's member countries to design and implement GEF programs and projects on their behalf, with full accreditation based on our policies, rules, and procedures. WWF-US serves as the GEF agency within the international WWF Network. Please find more information at http://wwfgef.org/.

Key Concepts

Key Concept: STAR

The System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) is a system for allocating resources to countries in a transparent and consistent manner based on global environmental priorities and country capacity, policies and practices relevant to successful implementation of GEF projects. The main benefits of the STAR are the predictability of funding and the flexibility in programming, which contributes to country ownership of GEF projects and programs.

Under the STAR, each eligible country has an indicative allocation –the funding that a country can access for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and land degradation during the four-year cycle.[1]

STAR resources within a country are managed by the GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) – this is usually a person in the country's Ministry of Finance or Environment. The Operational Focal Point is responsible for determining how STAR resources are programmed. A full list of GEF Operational Focal Points can be found here: https://www.thegef.org/focal_points_list.

---

[1] https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF-A_to_Z_2015_CRA_bl2_0.pdf

Key Concept: Focal Areas

GEF Programing is organized around six Focal Areas, each of which are aligned to Conventions and Environmental agreements for which the GEF acts as a financial mechanism.

The focal area strategies guide the major approaches under which GEF resources are programmed. Each focal area strategy includes objectives and programs that prioritize the activities to receive support. Focal area strategies, objectives, and programs can be found here: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF-A_to_Z_2015_CRA_bl2_0.pdf.

BIODIVERSITY
The goal of the biodiversity focal area is the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystem goods and services.

CLIMATE CHANGE
Climate Change Mitigation: GEF's overall goal in climate change mitigation is to support developing countries and economies in transition toward a low-carbon development path.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS
The goal of the International Waters focal area is the promotion of collective management for transboundary water systems and subsequent implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services.

LAND DEGRADATION
The overall goal of the Land Degradation focal area strategy is to contribute in arresting and reversing current global trends in land degradation, specifically desertification and deforestation.

CHEMICALS & Waste
The goal of the Chemicals focal area is to promote the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the global environment. This Focal Area supports the Minamata and Stockholm Conventions.

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT (SFM) / REDUCING EMISSION FROM DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION (REDD+)
The goal for SFM is to achieve multiple environmental benefits from improved management of all types of forests.

Key Concept: Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs)

The GEF's mission is to deliver global environmental benefits, as they relate to international conventions and commitments. GEF projects must demonstrate that the project activities are delivering global environmental benefits.

For example:
- Focal Area: International Waters
  - Potential Global Environmental Benefits: preservation of freshwater resources in the Danube River Basin
- Focal Area: Biodiversity
  - Conservation of tigers, endangered flora, etc.

More information on GEF Global Environmental Benefits can be found here:
http://www.thegef.org/documents/global-environmental-benefits
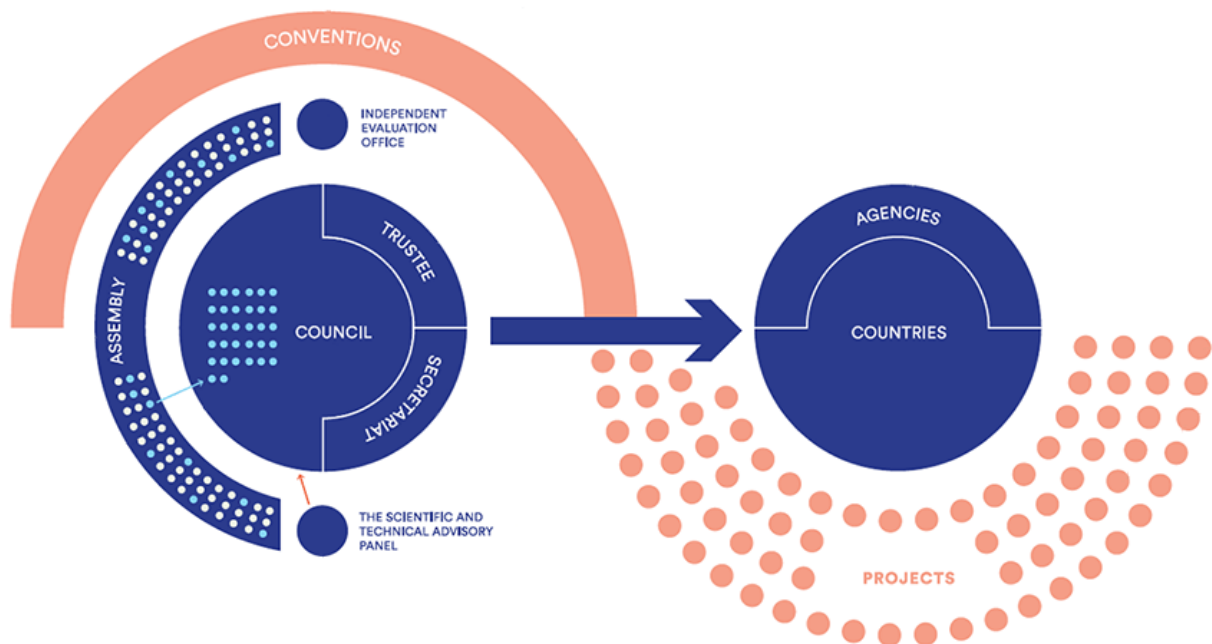
GEF Secretariat: At the heart of the GEF is the GEF Secretariat comprising of slightly over 100 full-time staff ensuring efficient operations. The GEF Secretariat's main function is to review projects for compliance with GEF's strategic objectives and policies. The GEF Secretariat office is based in Washington, D.C.

GEF Council: The governing body of the GEF is the GEF Council, which includes government representatives of all GEF donor countries as well as government officials representing groupings, known as constituencies, of GEF recipient countries. The main roles of the GEF Council is to approve projects as policies recommended to them by the GEF Secretariat as well as direct GEF strategy in the larger international environmental development context. The GEF Council meets face to face twice a year in Washington, DC.

GEF Agencies: GEF project supervision responsibilities are implemented by a group of organizations that have received GEF Council accreditation based on their compliance with minimum GEF policy standards for topics ranging from financial and administrative management, safeguards, and gender equality. Only these pre-approved organizations, commonly referred to as GEF Partner Agencies or GEF Implementing Agencies, are allowed to directly request funding from the GEF in support of governments wishing to access GEF resources. There are currently 18 GEF Partner Agencies.

Key Concept: Project and Programme Management Standards (PPMS)

The Project and Programme Management Standards (also known as the PPMS), represent the standards of practice for designing, implementing and monitoring conservation projects and programmes in the WWF Network. PPMS is derived from the Open Standards for Conservation, a set of standards agreed upon by major conservation organizations. As PPMS is a WWF Network Standard, all WWF GEF projects are encouraged to apply this methodology in order to meet the needs and requirements of the PIF and Prodoc design stages in an efficient and effective way.

Please see the following link for more details: http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/programme_standards/. There is plenty of assistance available both within and without the WWF Network – the WWF GEF agency can either provide this assistance or help you access a "conservation coach," a trained facilitator in the PPMS process who will support teams with their planning.

Definitions:

- Conceptual model – A diagram that illustrates the problem situation and shows the relationships between key factors that are believed to impact the species, ecosystems or conservation issue at hand. The purpose is to: 1. Provide an overview of the situation in the project site, 2. Provide a framework for strategic planning and 3. Provide a basis for monitoring and evaluation. Shows relationships between root causes, barriers, other contributing factors and direct threats.

- Conservation coach - A skilled and/or trained facilitator who leads project teams through project design using the *Open Standards (PPMS at WWF)* in order to develop effective conservation strategies and a logical theory of change.

- [Conservation targets](#) - Elements of biodiversity that a project is ultimately aimed to affect: individual species, natural communities, habitats, or ecosystems.

- [PPMS](#) – WWF Project and Program Management Standards are a set of best practices to help practitioners deliver conservation results from their projects. Developed in conjunction with major international environmental NGOs (where they are known as the Open Standards) and endorsed by the WWF Network, PPMS lend rigor and consistency to planning, implementing and monitoring effective conservation projects and programs worldwide. Two important outputs of this process are the conceptual model and results chains, however there are guidelines for all steps of the project cycle.

- [Results Chains](#) – This is a diagram of causal statements that shows a "theory of change."

Concept

Phase page: Introduction

Developing a WWF GEF concept into a project is a process that involves identification of a prospective project (or program) among government, WWF in country, the WWF Global Practice and the WWF GEF Agency. The idea can come from a government request to the WWF office or from the WWF office as long as government and WWF agree on the concept. Generally, the opportunity for WWF to develop a GEF project comes from deep relationships and a history of partnership between WWF and the government.

Who Drives a WWF GEF Concept?

Proponents within WWF of a WWF GEF concept are those teams who have been engaged in concept discussion and will be responsible for driving forward the process for the initiative with government and key partners. The proponent team, or working group, will be supported by one or two members from the WWF GEF Agency, and are responsible for guiding the GEF process.

The responsibilities of the proponent team, or working group includes:
- Define and coordinate support toward the initiative between Global Practice/WWF Offices in terms of resources/staff time
- Link, coordinate and communicate across network for partnerships, potential donors and coalition building around the initiative
- Organize and coordinate engagement with governments and partners
- Coordinate with WWF GEF Agency on process and planning
- Work against the indicators of GEF viability (described above) in an iterative manner and be accountable to the governance WWF GEF/GCF/LDNF Steering Committee

The Working Group must work to ensure the Concept is (1) aligned to the priorities of GEF, government, WWF Offices, and WWF Global Practice, (2) viable ('GEF-able' concept, Enabling Conditions and WWF Fit), and (3) it is financially feasible to move forward.

Government

GEF 7 Priorities

WWF GEF Project/ Program

WWF Offices
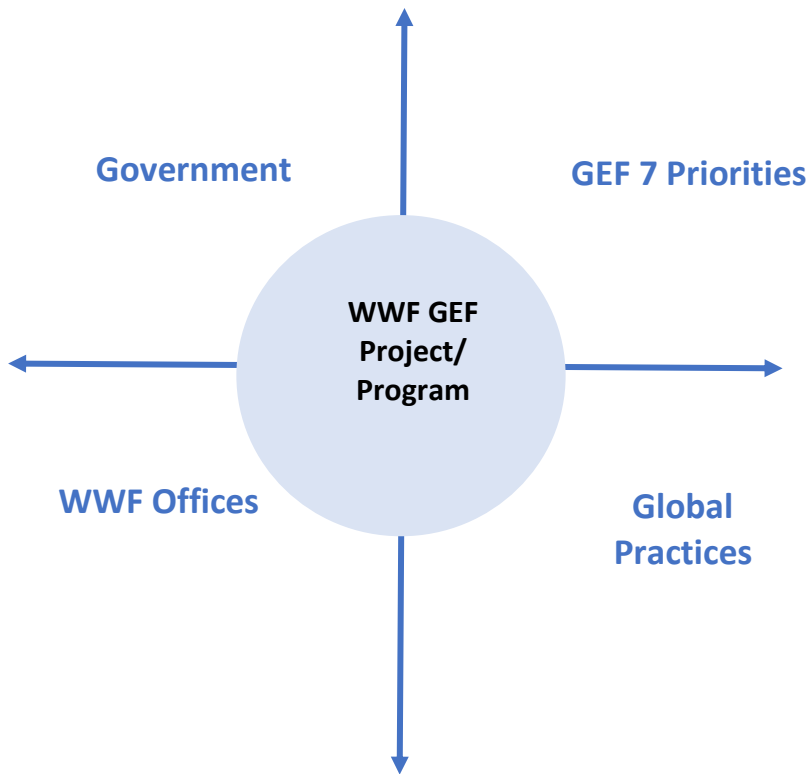
Global Practices

The center of the diagram shows the 'sweet spot' for a WWF GEF project, where four quadrants come together: government priorities are met, the project idea is aligned with WWF office priorities and strengths, priorities of Global Practices as per their strategies and HIIs and ACAIs are met, and the project is eligible under the GEF-7 Programming Directions which is responsible for defining priority areas of funding for the next replenishment cycle of the GEF.

Having an excellent concept that aligns with the GEF priorities is not enough. There are factors outside of the control of the WWF office team influencing whether a concept will move forward – such as the OFP's process for creating a portfolio under the GEF STAR (national GEF allocation). This process may be transparent and inclusive, or be based on existing strong relationships with other GEF agencies. Without OFP sign off on a prospective national GEF project, there is no project. WWF country teams should identify whether there is good likelihood for support on a concept from the OFP before moving too far into concept development. The WWF GEF Agency is ready to assist offices in determining the right time to discuss this with the technical line and the OFP.

Step 2: Viability Analysis

The table below shows the three categories of indicators of WWF GEF viability: **'GEF-able' concept**, **Enabling Conditions** and **WWF Fit**. These indicators of viability are preconditions for a successful GEF proposal. As WWF Offices discuss and develop an idea with government, these indicators must be met along the way before a proposal (PIF) can be submitted to the government's GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) for endorsement and the GEF Secretariat for approval.

'GEF-able' concept	Enabling Conditions	WWF Fit

- Robust storyline	- Government buy-in:
	   o Likelihood of Operational Focal Point endorsement
	   o Engagement from technical departments
		- Comparative advantage

- Alignment with national policies and strategies	- Partnerships – buy-in from relevant stakeholders	- Technical expertise
- Alignment with GEF priorities (see GEF-7 Programming Directions)	- STAR (country allocation) or set aside funds (for global or regional projects, or top-up) available	- Ability to contribute to the design of a project or program
	- Leveraging (co-finance) for a full project	- Strong working relationship with government
		- Contributes to/aligns with Global Practices and country priorities

GEF-able Concept

1. *Robust Storyline*: the concept has a clear storyline in terms of the overall objective and a well-defined baseline of work by WWF, government and others, and how the proposed project would leverage from that foundation to generate incremental outcomes and global environmental benefits.
2. *Alignment with national policies and strategies*: demonstration that the concept meets government priorities, through alignment with key national policies and strategies. For example, the WWF GEF Integrated Land Management project in Nepal is highly aligned with the government's Terai Arc Landscape strategy and with the government's landscape conservation approach.
3. *Alignment with GEF priorities*: the concept is eligible under the GEF programming directions and will directly contribute to the objectives of one or more focal areas.

Enabling Conditions

1. *Government buy-in*:
   a) Likelihood of Operational Focal Point endorsement once in PIF stage - the concept requires formal endorsement from the OFP. In the concept stage, the team should have early discussions with the OFP office to understand whether there is support to allocate STAR to the concept. Before the OFP signs the formal endorsement letter, they will likely discuss with the relevant

technical department/ministry as well as with the relevant national convention focal point to ensure they are supportive.

b) Engagement from technical departments - country ownership of a concept is a requirement for any GEF project. In addition to having endorsement from the OFP, staff from technical line departments should be engaged in the development of the concept as early as possible in order to ensure full government ownership. In many cases, one of these technical departments may be the executing agency for the project, therefore developing a strong working relationship with these staff early on in the process helps ensure successful project design.

3. *Partnerships*: The GEF likes to see partnerships in project proposals, to give assurance that there is collective buy-in from key relevant stakeholders. Partnerships could include private sector, government partners, NGOs, CSOs, donors.

4. *STAR (country allocation) or set aside funds (for global or regional projects, or top-up) available*: Availability of GEF funds, either through STAR [link] or through set aside funds [link], should be checked with the OFP and/or the GEF Secretariat.

5. *Leveraging (co-finance) for a full project*: In the initial discussions around a GEF concept, it is important to consider the potential for co-finance. The GEF does not fund the full cost of a project.

WWF Fit

1. *Comparative advantage*: Being an implementing agency of the GEF affords WWF the possibility to elevate its conservation priorities to influence the global environmental agenda through WWF GEF projects. At the concept stage, it is important to answer the question, why is WWF the best suited GEF Agency to bring forward this project? Is the environmental problem being addressed by the concept an area of work of WWF?

2. *Technical Expertise* – In line with the element above, two of WWF's strengths are its technical expertise and its global reach. WWF works in over 100 countries, and a lot of technical knowledge exists within the network. Relevant technical experts should be brought into the process early on to ensure feasibility of the project.

3. *Ability to contribute to the design of a project or program* – Staff time—within national offices, global practices, etc.—and financing is needed for project development and coordination. Consider: Who is needed to move the project forward, what percentage of their time should be allocated to the project, what are the costs of moving the project forward, and can these costs be covered?

4. *Strong working relationship with government* – in cases where governments do NOT have an informal policy/track history of exclusively working with one of the other GEF Agencies (eg. UNDP), a good working relationship between the local WWF office and government, especially the Operational Focal Point (OFP), can predicate successful design of a WWF GEF project, as governments are the beneficiaries of GEF funds and have to own the concept from an early stage.

5. *Contributes to/aligns with Global Practices and country priorities* – Much like the concept must align to government priorities, it should also align to WWF Global Practice priorities (Areas of Collective Action and Innovation or High Impact Initiatives) as well as the local WWF office priorities (for example, as outlined in their Strategic Plan). The intersection of these priorities – government, WWF Global Practices, WWF country office – is the 'sweet spot' for a WWF GEF project.

Step 2: Financial Feasibility of a GEF Project

Before putting time and effort into moving a Concept to PIF stage, it is important to assess the financial feasibility of the GEF project. Following are some questions that should be answered when considering moving forward on a GEF concept:

➢ What makes up the baseline? How is it funded and by whom (co-financing)?
➢ Is there confidence that anticipated co-financing meets the GEF requirements (1:6 ratio)?
➢ Are there other sources of funding that can support the cost project development?
➢ Have project partners been identified? Are there any initial concerns with partner capacity and their ability to secure co-financing (including operations and management)?

In addition, the Working Group should consider the cost of getting a GEF project from Concept to ProDoc Submission. While funding may be available to assist with these expenses (see PIF Development Grants (PDG) and Project Preparation Grants (PPG)), these are rarely enough to cover all costs associated with project development. Use the cost calculator to estimate the total cost of developing a GEF project from start to final submission (link to cost calculator). Additional sources of funding will need to be identified to ensure the development of your project can be sustained until final ProDoc submission.

Applying for PIF Development Grant (PDG): To assist with PIF Development, the Team can apply for funds from the WWF GEF agency budget through the *PDG Request form*

PIF

Phase page: Introduction

While Concept stage ensures a project idea is viable (e.g. supported by government, OFP, WWF offices, is GEF-able), at PIF stage the idea must be elaborated into a technically sound project framework. Ensuring quality project design at PIF stage is important, as it sets the stage for detailed design and articulation (see ProDoc stage).

The processes/steps to ensure quality project design at this PIF stage include:
- Finalize the project objective
- Develop project strategies (link: components, outcomes, outputs) to achieving that objective, including a theory of change
- Provide a high-level budget for the project, and identify indicative co-financing
- Identify key stakeholders, informing them of the project, and gathering early input to inform project design
- Conduct a Gender Assessment and integrate the results as much as possible into the project design

The Project Development Team should ensure frequent input from the relevant government technical departments. Once the processes to ensure a quality project framework have taken place, the project should be described in the PIF.

What is the PIF?

The Project Identification Form (PIF) Template is the first document submitted to the GEF. It provides initial information about the project, including: the amount of GEF funding for the project, confirmed by a the GEF OFP endorsement letter (link to Engage OFP Office), and; the project strategies (objective, components, outcomes, and outputs).

Depending on the type of modality selected (FSP, MSP, Programmatic), different templates must be completed describing the project proposal for its review and approval (templates can be found at: http://www.thegef.org/documents/templates).

Full Sized Project (FSP) v Medium Sized Project (MSP) v Programmatic Approach

- **Full sized projects** are categorized as projects that cost over US$2 million. FSPs must go through a two-step process to receive GEF funding:
  - o **Step 1:** A Project Identification Form (PIF) is completed and submitted for GEF technical clearance, and then for Council Approval.
  - o **Step 2:** After a PIF is approved by the Council, there is a maximum of 18 months for full project design and preparation of documentation, within which the ProDoc and CEO Endorsement must be submitted for GEF CEO Endorsement.

- **Medium sized projects** are less than US$2 million, and a ProDoc and CEO Endorsement Request can be submitted directly for endorsement/approval. Alternatively, in what is called the "two-step process" (see FSP steps above), a MSP PIF can be completed to earmark GEF funds, after which the

project team has 18 months for full project design and submission of documentation for CEO Endorsement. Discuss with the WWF GEF Project Manager which option is best for the project.

- The **Programmatic Approach** is a collection of projects with a common theme or geography occurring under a coordinated umbrella. A Program Framework Document (PFD) is submitted for Council Approval, and is accompanied by a child project annex (similar to a PIF) for each proposed sub-project.

  Child projects contribute to a program's overall objective, and can be thematic or geographic scope (for example, a *geographic approach* could be interventions within the Amazon, a *thematic approach* could be interventions around specific commodities). Advantages of a Programmatic approach includes: Increased integration and systemic level of interventions; a focus on measuring program results, beyond the outputs at the level of individual projects; enhanced scope for catalyzing action,
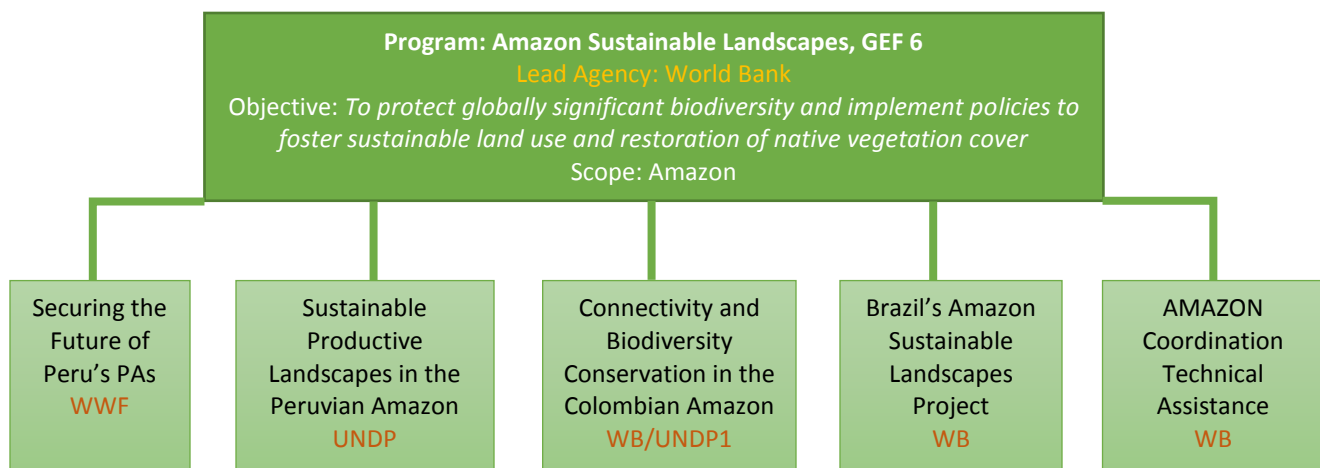
replication and innovation.

Overview of timeline

FSPs and **Programmatic Approaches**: Once a PIF/PFD is submitted it must be (a) technically cleared by the GEF Secretariat, and then (b) approved by the GEF Council through a Work Program (the work program consists of cleared and selected PIFs). GEF Council takes place biannually, although there are occasionally intersessionals that will take place to approve PIFs at a sooner interval. **Please note that PIFs are not always included in the next Work Program, depending on when the project was submitted and available funding.

MSP: If submitting a PIF for a MSP, the PIF may be submitted by the WWF GEF Agency at any time for technical clearance by the GEF Secretariat, and subsequent CEO Endorsement approval.

Responsibilities

Figure 1 Example of a Geographic Program under GEF 6

Roles and responsibilities for PIF/PFD development are identified and agreed upon at Concept Stage. It is recommended that teams use the PIF Development Grant (link to Concept: PDG grant) to recruit a GEF expert consultant to facilitate the proposal process and write the PIF/PFD. It is key that the relevant government ministries are involved in workshops, meetings, and PIF/PFD reviews.

Step 1: Identifying Executing Agency and Partners

The **Lead Executing Agency (EA)** is accountable for the project during execution, and is the grant recipient of GEF funds. Ideally, the proposed Executing Agency has the following:

➢ Is a relevant national authority (usually an environmental ministry or technical ministry) or an organization nominated by the national authority.
➢ Established practices related to large project management, planning, monitoring and knowledge management.
➢ Capacity to recruit, oversee and house a Project Management Unit (the PMU is responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of project activities during execution).
➢ Capacity to financially manage a GEF-funded project including appropriate systems, controls, policies and procedures (see F&A Capacity Assessment).
➢ Demonstrated standing with relevant stakeholders and potential executing partners.

Executing Partners support delivery of the project during execution (e.g. NGO's/CSO's, partner ministries and departments, etc). Executing partners are those that receive subgrants from the Executing Agency for the implementation of specific activities. Executing partners may change during ProDoc phase, based on what activities are selected and who is best suited to execute those activities, but the Lead Executing Agency should be determined early and must be involved throughout the full project cycle (see roles and responsibilities).

Example
In the project entitled "Expanding and consolidating Madagascar's marine protected areas network," the lead Executing Agency is the Ministry of Environment. Partners who will be implementing specific activities under this project may include Ministry of the Sea, WWF Madagascar, and WCS-Madagascar.

The Lead Executing Agency and partners should be identified early in the project cycle.

WWF view (added text):

WWF Offices are responsible for managing relationships with country authorities, and may provide technical assistance during project design (with support from the WWF GEF Agency).

At the request of government or the Executing Agency, WWF may be asked to fill or assist in several key roles during the execution of a GEF project, including:
• Provide technical expertise
• Execute specific activities as a grant recipient

Step 1: Engage Operational Focal Point's Office

The Operational Focal Point (OFP) is a government staff person, usually in the Ministry of Environment or Finance, who ensures that GEF proposals and activities in the country are consistent with country priorities and the country commitments under global environmental conventions. OFP support is officially documented in a Letter of Endorsement (LOE), which is required for PIF submission.

Ensure OFP Office support

As noted under Concept Stage, support from the GEF Operational Focal Point is required before PIF project development may begin (link to Concept: Enabling Conditions, Government Buy-in). The OFP and corresponding technical department should be engaged early and often to (1) understand the funding feasibility of a given project, (2) determine the standard practice of engagement in country (e.g., level of desired OFP involvement, process for obtaining LOE), and (3) ensure continued OFP support for the project.

At a minimum the GEF OFP must be actively involved during the PIF/PFD review—either during *PIF Review by Partners* [link] or once a final draft is complete, to ensure their feedback is incorporated.

Letter of Endorsement:

The GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) Letter of Endorsement (LOE) is the official record of government backing for a project at the PIF stage in the project cycle. The Letter of Endorsement specifies:
- **The project title**
- The amount of **STAR** being requested—The System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) represents the amount of funds a country can access within a given replenishment period (GEF-6, GEF-7). The OFP determines how STAR resources are distributed (link: key principle: STAR).
- **The amount of PPG being requested**—the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) is funding to support detailed project design and accompanied documentation. PPG resources are provided to the Project Development Team (for consultant fees, costs related to technical assistance and staff time, etc. *link: Drafting of PIF/PFD*).
- **The PPG Agency Fee**—Per GEF policies, the PPG Agency Fee is a 9%, which is used by the GEF Agency to oversee the project development process.
- **The participating county(ies)**
- **The Executing organization**

Request for the LOE should come after numerous conversations, meetings, and workshops with the OFP and corresponding technical department. Once the team is ready to formally request the LOE, a near-final or final PIF must be provided to the OFP. The provided PIF must have the final financial figures, country(ies), project title, and (ideally) the executing organization, as the OFP will state this information in the LOE.

The Letter of Endorsement must be submitted with the first formal submission of the PIF to the GEF Secretariat for review.
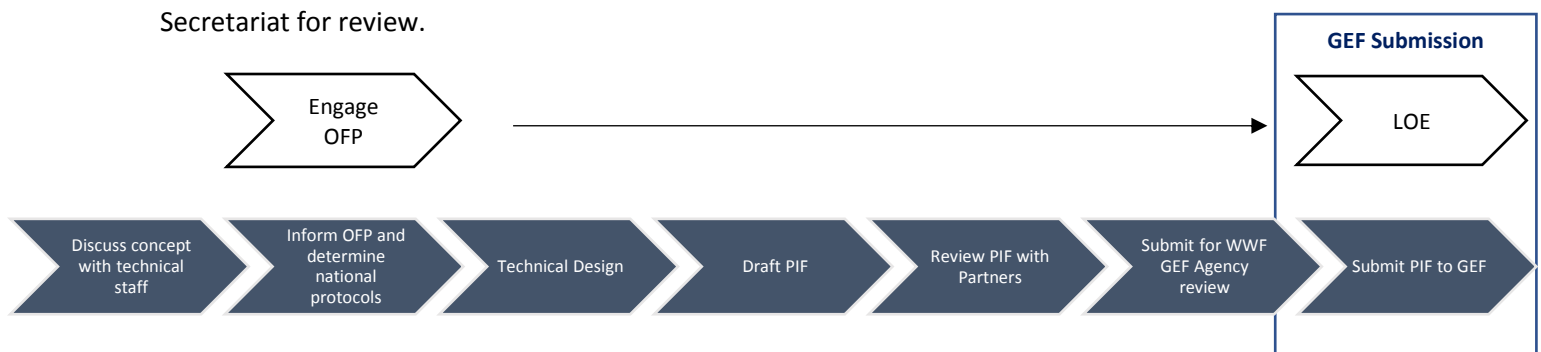
Step 2: Stakeholder Analysis

Effective stakeholder engagement is vital to ensuring a project's success: it can make a significant contribution to successful project design and execution; improve the environmental and social sustainability of projects; and enhance project buy-in and acceptance (see key principles: Stakeholder engagement).

Stakeholder engagement is most effective when initiated at an early stage. Early identification of, and consultation with, affected and interested parties allows stakeholders views, feedback, and concerns to be considered in the design of the project.

A **stakeholder analysis** is the foundation for planning stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle. A stakeholder analysis should identify the project's key stakeholders, their interest in the project, and assess the ways in which these stakeholders may influence the project's outcomes.

Identify Relevant Stakeholder Groups

The first step of a stakeholder analysis is to identify relevant stakeholder groups. As projects will typically involve a broad range of stakeholders, the stakeholder analysis needs to be initiated early to identify key stakeholder groups and individuals to be involved in the project planning process.

Since the full scope of project activities and potential stakeholders are not yet defined at this stage, an initial list of stakeholders should be generated. Special attention should be given to identifying disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. This could be based on a desk review and expert input from the country focal point as well as government representatives. It is recommended that at this stage the stakeholder identification exercise is an expansive one so that relevant groups are not inadvertently excluded.

The initial list of identified stakeholders should be verified, modified and enhanced through interviews with key informants (eg. government representatives, local CSO representatives, experts etc.), consultations with already identified stakeholders, and site visits. The list should be disseminated to stakeholders with an explanation on how other groups may be suggested or put themselves forward. It is important to not just rely on known entities, and to reach out to groups who typically may be excluded from decision making processes, in particular women and marginalized groups that can be affected by the project.

Additional due diligence may be required in identifying potential indigenous people stakeholders. Although IP groups may be clearly recognized by national governments, this is not always the case. (Refer to WWF's Policy on Indigenous People for the definition of Indigenous people).

The identification process must be updated and refined as the design of the project takes shape and the full scope of the project's activities – and range of potential stakeholders - are better understood. This should occur during the safeguards process whereby the project's environment, social and geographic scope will be identified and provide a more comprehensive view of who may be affected – either directly, indirectly or by cumulative impacts.

Identifying Stakeholder Interest in the Project

Once the relevant stakeholder groups have been identified, the next step is to discern their interests in the project, and how their interest may be affected. Identification of stakeholder interests can help illuminate the motivations of different actors and how they may influence the project, including potential project opponents.

Stakeholder Prioritization

It is not practical and usually not necessary to engage all stakeholder groups with the same level of intensity all the time. Being strategic and clear as to whom is being engaged with and why can save resources and time. The group of potential stakeholders and their interest will naturally be quite diverse. Prioritization will help identify appropriate forms of engagement for different stakeholder groups.

Refer to Past Stakeholder Information and Consultation

Referring to historical stakeholder information related to the project can save time, and reveal risks, liabilities or unresolved issues that can then be prioritized and managed in relation to the different strategic alternatives being considered.

Engage with Stakeholders in their own Communities

In general, Project Teams should choose a venue where stakeholders feel comfortable – most likely, a location within the community tends to facilitate more productive engagement processes.

Step 2: PIF Technical Design

While Concept stage ensures a project idea is viable (e.g. supported by government, OFP, WWF offices, is GEF-able), at PIF stage the idea must be elaborated into a technically sound project framework. For a GEF project, technical design rests on building out the following elements:

- The **environmental problem**
- The project **objective**
- The root causes to the environmental problem, and the key **barriers** that have prevented that problem from being solved
- The business-as-usual scenario (or what would happen without the GEF project funding). This provides the foundation of the project, and is known as the project **baseline**.
- **Gaps** in those baseline initiatives.
- The **project strategy** (or what would happen with the GEF project funding), which consists of:
    - The Indicative project description summary (**Table B)**: The components, outcomes, and outputs of the project.
    - And the **Theory of Change**, or *how* the project interventions will ultimately achieve the project objective and subsequent global environmental benefits.

At PIF stage, the Project Development Team must define a clear project objective; outline the environmental problem, barriers and baseline within the project scope; develop a broad set of strategies; and provide a high-level budget on these strategies. At ProDoc stage, this information will be validated and expanded upon (e.g., going to the activity level for achieving project strategies) in such detail that anyone picking up the document will understand how to execute the project. The matrix below captures how each piece of the project framework will work together to create a strategic project framework, and is used to justify GEF funding. It is recommended that teams fill this out, using the guidance provided below.

Environmental Problem:			
Objective:			
Barriers	Baseline	Project Interventions	Incremental Reasoning/Global Environmental benefits

Technical design workshop

The Project Development Team is encouraged to convene a technical design workshop early in the planning process to inform and design the project framework. The workshop should include the lead executing agency (if known), relevant technical ministries, and key partners so the project design is jointly developed and owned. For additional guidance on the planning workshop, see *templates*. Sample agendas are provided under *examples*, and may include the following agenda items:
- Introduction to WWF and GEF concepts
- The WWF GEF Agency encourages Teams to utilize the planning methodology associated with WWF's Project and Programme Management Standards (PPMS). One aspect of this planning

method is the Development of a Conceptual Model and Results Chains (Theory of Change diagram) with a PPMS knowledgeable facilitator (http://www.ccnetglobal.com/)
- Discussions/break-out groups/presentations to develop project design

Please note that the design process is iterative, and the project design will be constantly adjusted based on conversations with key stakeholders and partners.

Technical Design of a project versus a program

The information designed and presented depends on whether the team is developing a **stand-alone project (PIF)**, a **programmatic approach (PFD)**, or a **child project (Child Project Annex)**.

Stand-alone project
- Information designed and presented for the project

Programmatic development
- Information designed and presented at the programmatic level, development is led by the lead Agency but developed jointly with other involved agencies

Child Project development
- Information designed and presented at the child-project level, and should align with the corresponding program

The Environmental Problem is a brief description of two things:

- The specific environmental issue that the project aims to address
- The Global Environmental Benefits that will be impacted if the problem is not solved

One **Example** of a GEF environmental problem includes:

- Tropical forests and savannahs host the majority of terrestrial biodiversity, represent important carbon sinks, and provide numerous ecosystem services. However, these ecosystems are being increasingly deforested for commercial agriculture. Demand for a few key commodities is a root cause of this deforestation, with an estimated 70% of tropical deforestation alone coming from commercial agriculture for palm, soy, and beef (plus timber and pulp)

Barriers are the underlying causes that are contributing to the environmental problem. The project strategies should then work to remove or address these barriers to generate global environmental benefits.

It is important to identify the key barriers at PIF stage, and have a general understanding of how they map to the project strategy. Since it is not possible to address all barriers through the GEF project, the Project Development Team should focus on the barriers specific to, and are feasible to be addressed through, the project strategy.

In sum, the guiding questions for identifying barriers include:
- What barriers are contributing to the environmental problem?
- Why hasn't the environmental problem been solved already?
- Of the numerous barriers, which can be addressed through the GEF project (in the time period and with the resources being requested)?

Some common categories of barriers include:
- **Limited capacity**
  - Weak institutional capacity to prepare feasibility studies for water management
- **Limited knowledge, information, or awareness**
  - Limited supply chain transparency makes it difficult to track what products are linked to deforestation, this limits companies from making informed decisions
- **Lack of resources (financial or other)**
  - Lack of national funds to protected area management means only short-term management plans are developed
  - Standards for commodities such as beef have seen limited uptake, partly due to the costs of certification
- **Weak or conflicting policies/legislation/etc**
  - Lack of legislation for enforcing mangrove restoration measures
- **Lack of coordination or conflicting plans**
  - Water basin management strategy is not linked to other sectors, such as land-use and agriculture
  - Lack of cooperation and discussion on transboundary rivers at national and bilateral levels (e.g. no shared classification used)

How to determine barriers

1. **Conceptual Model**

The WWF methodology for project planning (called the Project and Programme Management Standards or PPMS) is a useful process for determining project barriers. During the planning workshop, the facilitator will help teams to develop a conceptual model, which is a diagram that illustrates the environmental problem the project wishes to address and shows the relationships among key factors that are related to the conservation issue at hand. Barriers and other contributing factors should be identified during the workshop, under the guidance of a PPMS facilitator and can be incorporated into the matrix below.

2. Matrix

The matrix below is a tool to map barriers and the corresponding project strategy. During the workshop, technical participants may break out into groups to develop key barriers based on this matrix.

Strategy	Barrier
1. Component	Provide a description of the barrier this strategy addresses.
2. Component	same as above

3. Additional/Supporting method

In some cases, assessments or reports that identify key barriers to the project may already exist. The information may provide an important reference point, but should be validated with workshop participants to ensure it is first (1) relevant to the project, (2) aligns with existing knowledge and then, (3) strategies are developed to address that barrier. At ProDoc stage, a deeper analysis of these barriers will need to be undertaken.

The baseline is a description of the ongoing and planned activities/initiatives taking place during the project period without GEF funding (e.g., the business-as-usual scenario). For GEF, a baseline demonstrates the foundation of work that the project plans to build upon or leverage. Through the GEF project, the baseline efforts are leveraged/transformed to yield global environmental benefits.

Global Environmental Benefits		Reduced threats to Priority species in the Protected Area	
⇧	⇧	⇧	⇧
Incremental Activities	**GEF GRANT** (Incremental cost)	GEF project tests and establishes new financial mechanisms to cover PA funding gap	**GEF GRANT** (incremental cost)
BASELINE ACTIVITIES	**Existing Funds**	Protected Areas have funds and staff in place, but funds are insufficient to address threats	Existing Funds

How to develop the baseline

WWF Project and Programme Management Standards (PPMS)
The WWF methodology for project planning is a useful process for understanding the baseline. During a planning workshop, the Conceptual Model and Results Chains (link) exercises determine baseline activities. While the Conceptual Model is being developed, consider what activities and initiatives are already being done, and how they feed into the current situation. With Results Chains, consider what baseline activities and initiatives are contributing to the GEF proposed strategies. How can these existing initiatives and activities be leveraged by the project to maximize impact and yield global environmental benefits?

Matrix
Another method is to use a matrix to organize input and ideas from partners. The matrix can filled out by participants on current and ongoing projects, gaps, and key strategies needed to fill those gaps. Emerging themes and priorities identified during this exercise can be used to inform the project components and outcomes, with the assistance of a facilitator and the project manager. This ensures buy-in from the start, and participants have the opportunity to see their baseline activities/initiatives reflected in the project design. See *examples*, below.

Inform project baseline			Inform project strategies		
What is your country presently doing in relation to [the project]	What are the key gaps?	Briefly describe your 3 most important on-going activities in relation to this theme	What should the priorities be to strengthen existing initiatives / address gaps?	Briefly describe the key strategies or activities to either substantially strengthen or scale these activities up	Briefly describe possible new ideas or innovations that would take the activity to a new level of effectiveness

Developing and articulating the **project objective** and **strategies** (components, outcomes, outputs) for achieving that objective is the key justification for GEF funds. It explains what the project is planning to achieve, and *how*. Below are definitions and examples of a project objective and components, outcomes, and outputs.

Defining the Project Objective

A project/program **objective** describes what the project/program aims to achieve, and should directly address the environmental problem	Examples include: ● Strengthened and sustainable management of Madagascar's marine biodiversity and productivity ● To promote integrated landscape management to conserve globally significant forests and wildlife ● To strengthen public and private sector commitment to reduced-deforestation commodities in priority markets

Defining Components, Outcomes, and Outputs

A **Component** is the high-level strategy under which outcomes and outputs are organized
  ● It is recommended that the Project Development Team identifies 2-3 components (plus a component on knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation)
  ● Components should be organized by scale (e.g. First component is regional, second is national, third is local, etc.) or by theme.
	Examples include:
	● National capacity and enabling environment for cross-sectoral coordination to promote forest and landscape conservation
	● Mainstreaming demand for reduced deforestation commodities with major buyers and traders
	● Knowledge management and M&E
	● Advancing supply chain transparency, traceability & decision support tools

An **Outcome** is the medium-term result achieved by an intervention's outputs ● It is recommended that the Project Development Team have 1-3 Outcomes per Component	● Capacity increased for multi-stakeholder and cross-sector landscape and forest planning and management ● Improved management of the human-wildlife interface ● Increased options for the sustainable financing of NPAs ● Increased consumer awareness to drive demand for reduced deforestation products in key demand markets ● Less use of unsustainable fishing techniques on coral reefs

An **Output** is the tangible deliverable produced from a suite of activities that leads to the outcome. ● Shows what the GEF is financing ● When appropriate, an output may also be an intermediate result supported by tangible deliverables ● Outputs do not need to be defined for programs (PFD) at this time.	Examples of tangible deliverables: ● Targeted donor communications and fundraising strategy ● Feasibility studies of shortlisted financial mechanisms ● Learning exchanges and workshops with key palm oil traders and buyers to drive reduced deforestation commitments ● Annual scorecard of investors to assess how well investors address deforestation risks through their ESG integration and policies ● Corridor management plans ● 12,000 constituents in project area reached by behavior change campaigns.

	Example of intermediate result, supported by tangible deliverables:
	• 1.1.1: Cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms established for:
	    • Sub-committees under National Biodiversity Conservation Committee
	    • Coordination with environment, infrastructure, and development Ministries
	    • Networking mechanism for District Forest Sector Coordination Committees (DFSCC) for 18 Districts

How to develop the project objective and strategies (components, outcomes, outputs)

WWF Project and Programme Management Standards (PPMS) (*link to Key Principle: PPMS)*
The WWF methodology for project planning is a useful process teams can undertake and use to develop the Table B. As described in the introduction, the Project Development Team is encouraged to organize a planning workshop with a trained PPMS facilitator early in the PIF phase. During this workshop, one key exercise is to develop Results Chains (http://cmp-openstandards.org/guidance/results-chain-guide-fos-2007/) to form the project theory of change. Once the Results Chains are complete, a good facilitator who has PPMS and GEF experience can work with the workshop participants to identify components, outcomes, and outputs—these components, outcomes, and outputs should be transferred to a Table B matrix format and validated. Additional information on this process can be found here (link Key Principles: PPMS).

Matrix
Another method is to use a matrix to organize input and ideas from partners. The matrix can filled out by participants on current and ongoing projects, gaps, and key strategies needed to fill those gaps. Emerging themes and priorities identified during this exercise can be used to inform the project components and outcomes, with the assistance of a facilitator and the project manager. This ensures buy-in from the start, and participants have the opportunity to see their priorities and proposed strategies reflected in the project design. See *examples*, below.

Inform project baseline			Inform project strategies		
What is your country presently doing in relation to [the project]	What are the key gaps?	Briefly describe your 3 most important on-going activities in relation to this theme	What should the priorities be to strengthen existing initiatives / address gaps?	Briefly describe the key strategies or activities to either substantially strengthen or scale these activities up	Briefly describe possible new ideas or innovations that would take the activity to a new level of effectiveness

Writing the PIF

For GEF Projects, the intervention strategy should be neatly organized into the *Indicative Project Description Summary* (Table B), a pre-fabricated table in the PIF/PFD/Child Project Annex. Table B describes the objective, components, outcomes, and outputs that the project or program aims to achieve.

It also lists the indicative GEF financing and co-financing associated with each component (link to evaluating costs, developing the PIF). Table B is the main information that WWF GEF Agency and the GEF Secretariat uses to understand and evaluate the project proposal, and is the most important information to be built upon in the ProDoc. As such, it is the critical element of a PIF, and requires time, focus, and usually many interactions.

*Please note Child Project Annexes do not go into the Output level at this stage.

Table B

Project Objective						
Project Components	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing	Co-Financing

The Theory of Change is a description and/or diagram that demonstrates how project strategies will address the environmental problem and barriers described above, to bring about the desired impact (e.g. project objective).

To determine the theory of change map out, either narratively or using a diagram, a series of if-then statements (e.g. **if** we do this intervention, **then** this will result) to show how key strategies will lead to the project objective. The theory of change should stay within the project scope.

A good Theory of Change meets several **key principles**:
- The Theory of Change should be results-oriented, rather than a sequence of activities (e.g., *how* will your project interventions work versus what activities are planned). As such, a GEFable Theory of Change is typically at the Outcome-level (see Table B). At a minimum, it should capture how all components are connected.
- While the Theory of Change for a GEF project should stay within the project scope (e.g. what GEF is funding), it is also important to recognize the long-term goals of the project.
- If the project is part of a larger program, (1) a broader, program-level Theory of Change should show how each Child Project contributes to the overall program objective, or (2) the project-level Theory of Change describes key links to the program, to demonstrate overall impact and cohesion.

How to develop a theory of change

Diagrams are a popular way to visually demonstrate a project's Theory of Change (see examples attached.). Diagrams, as well as narratives, should meet the principles described above.

PPMS/Diagrams
It is recommended that teams develop a diagram showing how project components and outcomes will work together to achieve the project objective.

PPMS (*link to key principle: PPMS*): A Results Chain diagram is recommended per Component to illustrate the logic behind how the project interventions will lead to the project desired results. Developing an overarching diagram (see example below) is recommended to help tie the component level diagrams together.

Narrative description
To develop a narrative Theory of Change, the Project Development Team may use the following steps:
1. Define the project/program objective.
2. Draft a series of if-then statements that demonstrate **how** project interventions will achieve the project/program objective, ensuring that all project components/strategies from the Table B are captured. It may be helpful to use the Results Chain diagrams to inform this statement.
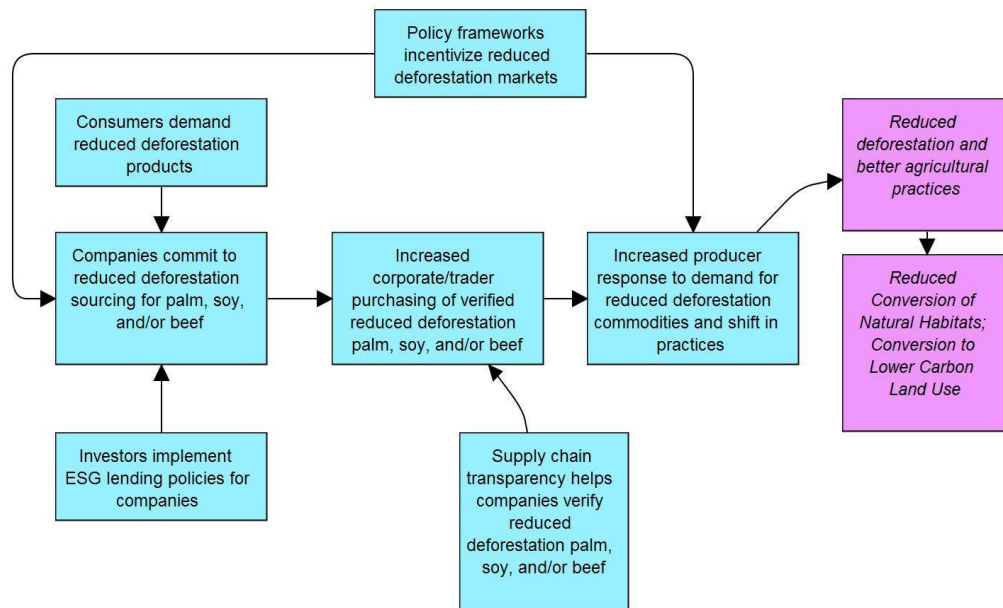
EXAMPLES

Narrative
If consumers demand sustainable products, and investors require companies in their portfolio to meet certain environmental requirements, then companies will respond to these external pressures and

commit to sustainable sourcing policies. If companies purchase sustainable commodities and will not purchase unsustainable commodities, then producers will shift their practices to respond to this.

Diagram/Overarching Results Chain

```
                          ┌─────────────────────┐
                          │  Policy frameworks   │
               ┌──────────│ incentivize reduced  │──────────┐
               │          │ deforestation markets│          │
               │          └─────────────────────┘          │
               │                                            │
   ┌──────────────────┐                                     │
   │ Consumers demand │                                     │
   │reduced deforestation│                                  │
   │     products     │                                     │
   └──────────────────┘                                     │
               │                                             │
               ▼                                             ▼
   ┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐       ┌──────────────────┐
   │Companies commit to│   │    Increased     │   │Increased producer│       │Reduced           │
   │reduced deforestation│→│ corporate/trader │→ │response to demand for│ → │deforestation and │
   │sourcing for palm, soy,│ │purchasing of verified│ │reduced deforestation│   │better agricultural│
   │   and/or beef    │   │reduced deforestation│   │commodities and shift in│  │    practices     │
   └──────────────────┘   │palm, soy, and/or beef│  │    practices     │       └──────────────────┘
               ▲          └──────────────────┘   └──────────────────┘                  │
               │                    ▲                                                   ▼
   ┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐                           ┌──────────────────┐
   │Investors implement│   │   Supply chain   │                           │     Reduced      │
   │ESG lending policies for│ │transparency helps│                        │  Conversion of   │
   │    companies     │   │ companies verify │                            │ Natural Habitats;│
   └──────────────────┘   │     reduced      │                            │  Conversion to   │
                          │deforestation palm,│                           │  Lower Carbon    │
                          │  soy, and/or beef │                           │    Land Use      │
                          └──────────────────┘                           └──────────────────┘
```

The GEF was established with the intent that GEF funding would never be used to pay for the full cost of a project. Rather, the scope of GEF funding is to complement, or add on top of, existing funding that is already trying to address the same issue. In this way, the overall financial amount as well as scale of a GEF project is much more than just the stand-alone GEF funding.

In short, the Incremental Cost Reasoning is used to demonstrate: (1) the GEF project fits into an existing body of work (business-as-usual scenario; baseline), (2) that the GEF project builds on this body of work (additional funds to leverage the baseline; intervention strategies), and (3) the global environmental benefits that are a result (justification for GEF funds).

Global Environmental Benefits		Reduced threats to Priority species in the Protected Area	
Incremental Activities	GEF GRANT (Incremental cost)	GEF project tests and establishes new financial mechanisms to cover PA funding gap	GEF GRANT (incremental cost)
BASELINE ACTIVITIES	Existing Funds	Protected Areas have funds and staff in place, but funds are insufficient to address threats	Existing Funds

Some guiding questions to evaluate the Incremental Cost Reasoning of a project include:
1. What issue does the project aim to solve?
2. What is already being done to solve this issue?
3. What gaps/barriers have prevented past and current projects from being successful?
4. What new work is proposed that builds off previous work to address these gaps/barriers?
5. What will be the environmental benefits of this new work?

Step 3: Co-Financing (PIF Stage)

Co-financing is the financing associated with the baseline project and any non-GEF financing associated with the incremental project, committed as part of the initial financing package.[2]

In short, GEF wants to see that there is an existing foundation of work (baseline) on which the GEF project will build. Co-financing is the GEF's method for *quantifying* this foundation of work. For example:

Objective: Consolidate and strengthen protected area management			
Baseline	**$**	**Incremental**	**$**
Existing protected area staff time, vehicles, etc.	$40 million	Leverage baseline and build strategy for protected area management, provide trainings on strategy to all protected areas	$10 million
Donor initiatives to strengthen protected area management (e.g. infrastructure development, etc)	$20 million		
Total	**$60m**		**$10m**

The 'aspirational' co-financing ratio is 1:6[3], which means for every dollar the GEF contributes, the project should demonstrate $6 in co-financing. In general, Middle Incomes Countries are expected to generate higher co-financing numbers than Least Developed Countries.

Co-financing can take the form of either cash or in-kind contributions:

Cash Contributions:
    a. Cost share: Project Agency, Executing Agency(ies), and other agencies support in time, effort, travel, and other related expenditures not covered by GEF fees or GEF Project Grant.
    b. Leveraging: Counterpart resources in support of baseline and incremental project activities that are not covered by the GEF Project Grant.

Non-Cash Contributions:
    a. In-kind: Valued contributions of staff time, effort, expertise, carbon credits, equipment and other donations to the GEF project.

When estimating co-finance amounts, consider that co-financing can come from WWF, the Executing Agency, government, project partners, NGOs, bilaterals, multilaterals, the private sector, and others. Discussions with potential co-finance sources takes place to both (a) discuss whether the potential source is supporting the project baseline or the project increment *during*, and (b) agree to an amount that will be listed in the PIF. Note that co-financing only refers to the financing associated with the execution period, not for project preparation.

Co-financing listed at PIF stage is indicative. It does not need to be confirmed by a co-financing commitment letter, and the makeup of co-finance can change after the PIF is approved. However, the overall amount of co-financing must remain consistent (or increased) when the full project is re-submitted

---

[2]https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/C.41.Inf_.04_Guidelines_for_Project_Financing_4.pdf
[3] This ratio will likely increase to 1:7 for GEF-7

(see ProDoc stage). This means there is some flexibility when discussing with partners at PIF stage, as they are not making a written commitment at this time – only giving a realistic estimate of the funding amount.

**Co-financing represented in the PIF should be distributed across all project components, including Project Management Costs. The overall ratio of co-financing to GEF funding should be reflected with the Project Management Costs (i.e., If the overall ratio is 1:6 co-financing to GEF Funds, then the co-financing for project management should also be 1:6).

Step 4: Conduct Gender Assessment

Ensuring a gender-responsive approach throughout all projects is important, as empowering women and providing them with equal rights and fair treatment is not only beneficial to conservation and development work but is also a human rights issue. Ensuring a gender-responsive approach is a mandatory requirement throughout the project cycle.

What is meant by "gender" and "gender responsive"?

Gender refers to the roles, responsibilities, rights, relationships and identities associated with men and women in a given society and context.

A Gender-responsive approach responds to the needs, priorities, power structures, status and relationships between men and women in the design, implementation and evaluation of activities, so that both genders can benefit equally from an intervention.[4]

How to design a gender-responsive project from the PIF stage

To ensure gender dimensions are properly considered early in project design (PIF stage), the project development teams need to provide "indicative information on gender dimensions relevant to the proposed activity, and how these will be addressed."[5]

Gender dimensions can be understood through an initial gender assessment (desktop or otherwise). The assessment should identify and describe: gender differences, entry points and gaps relevant to the project, as well as associated risks. This information may be gathered through a review of country policies on gender (or policies with a gender component), and any studies/surveys done in the project scope (e.g., World Bank, UN organizations, Gender Parity Index, Demographic and Health Survey data).

The results of this assessment are used to:

1) Create a gender-responsive project design at PIF stage. Information gathered from the assessment is used to integrate gender into the project strategy at PIF stage (e.g., outputs, PPG budget, stakeholder consultation).
2) Serve as baseline data to inform a thorough gender analysis and action plan at ProDoc stage, to ensure gender-responsive activities throughout the project design.

The PIF

When writing the PIF, include:
- A summary of the relevant results obtained in the assessment describing the gender dimensions within the project context;
- The gaps identified in the assessment, that will be filled through a gender analysis at ProDoc stage;
- Potential entry points in the project for gender-responsive actions;
- A description of the various steps that will be taken at ProDoc stage to conduct the gender analysis and produce a gender action plan for the project.

---

[4] Definition adapted from "GEF Policy on Gender Equality"
http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/EN_GEF.C.53.04_Gender_Policy.pdf
[5] See "GEF Policy on Gender Equality"

Step 5: Draft the PIF/PFD

What is the PIF/PFD?

The GEF Project Identification Form (PIF) is the first formal document submitted to the GEF Secretariat for review and approval (Link*: Introduction for definitions of PIF, PFD, Child Project Annex*). The PIF is for a standalone project. For a program, a Project Framework Document (PFD) and Child Project Annex is needed. The PIF/PFD should be a narrative proposal of the project that incorporates the previous processes described (Link: *Stakeholder Analysis*; *PIF Design*; *Gender Assessment*). Detailed instructions for drafting the PIF/PFD are provided under *attachments* below (*Filling out the PIF: A Guidance Document*).

Who is responsible for drafting the PIF/PFD?

The PIF/PFD is generally drafted by the Project Development Team, and articulates a project design that has been developed by all participating partners—including, for example, the Lead Executing Agency, relevant government ministries, the OFP Technical department, identified executing partners, and others.

While drafting the PIF, keep in mind:
- While the PIF/PFD template shouldn't be modified, it is helpful to "unlock" the restricted template access in Microsoft Word. Annexes may be included. The average PIF length should be less than 25 pages.
- Once the PIF is approved, changes to the project framework should be minimal (especially around objective, focal areas, GEF funding amount, co-financing, and changes to project components). Changes from PIF to ProDoc will need to be noted and justified in the CEO Endorsement Template

Sub-heading/Box: Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Guidance
A Project Preparation Grant (PPG) is requested in Section E of the PIF document. A PPG is provided to contribute to the cost of developing the project and project documentation over 12 to 18 months. The maximum PPG that can be requested is determined by the size of the GEF Project as follows:

- $50k for projects up to and including $2 million
- $100k for projects up to and including $3 million
- $150k for projects up to and including $6 million
- $200k for projects up to and including $10 million
- $300k for projects above $10 million.

The GEF agency is responsible for delivering the PPG allocation. It is unlikely that the PPG will cover all costs associated with project Development. The Project Cycle Budget Tool (link to tool) should be used to determine the total cost and to evaluate the total project development co-financing required to fund all project development expenses from PIF to CEO endorsement. Examples of the total cost of previous ProDocs (link to examples).

Most of the PPG will likely go towards a consultant (or team of consultants), who will work with the proposed Executing Agency, WWF Office, and other partners to design the project and develop the ProDoc and associated documents. PPG may also cover other costs, such as a consultant for Safeguards

(the consultant will be proposed and contracted by the EA), staff time and travel costs for stakeholder consultations, etc.

The following categories are eligible for funding under the overall project development budget, to which the PPG will contribute: consultants/staff time, project design workshops, stakeholder consultation, safeguards processes, baseline assessments, and travel and meetings costs.

Step 6: PIF Review by Partners

As many people contributed to the design of the project proposal—including the Lead Executing Agency, relevant government ministries, the OFP Technical department, identified executing partners, and others—it is important that they check the PIF before submission.

Once a draft of the PIF is completed, the Project Development Team circulates the PIF draft to key partners and project proponents, including:
- Convention Focal Point
- Listed co-finance partners
- Government ministries
- Others (e.g., WWF proponent office, WWF Practices, OFP technical department)

Incorporate feedback as relevant, ensuring that all feedback is considered and documented.

Step 7: Submit the PIF/PFD Package

The WWF GEF Agency will perform two reviews of the PIF/PFD package:

Upstream Review: Ensures a) alignment with GEF objectives and policies; b) compliance with WWF GEF policies and procedures, and; c) quality and GEF ability of the document (see attachment: WWF GEF Agency PIF Review Questions). The upstream review will provide comments for detailed revisions of the PIF/PFD.

Formal Review: The formal review takes place once all revisions are incorporated into the PIF/PFD, and the full PIF package is ready for submission. The formal review will typically consist of minimal changes, and ensures that all previous comments have been addressed. Formal Review is the final step before PIF/PFD submission.

GEF Secretariat and STAP Review: Once both the PIF/PFD and Letter of Endorsement by the OFP are completed, the documents are formally submitted to the GEF Secretariat and STAP through the GEF Agency.

- The GEF Secretariat is responsible for reviewing the PIF, and decides that (a) the proposal is technically sound and ready for inclusion in the work program, or (b) the proposal requires further clarification or additional information. The PIF is reviewed based on a set of preformulated questions/categories (see GEF Review Sheet). There may be multiple reviews from the GEF Secretariat. Each comment must be addressed in the PIF/PFD in blue text, with a short description acknowledging the comment and the corresponding page numbers where adjustments were made.
- The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) is an advisory body to the GEF, with the mandate to provide objective, strategic scientific and technical advice on policies, operational strategies, projects and programs. The STAP will review projects and provide recommendations to the GEF Secretariat. Depending on the level of comments, a report will need to be developed on how the project has responded to STAP concerns.[6]

Questions asked during the review by both the WWF GEF Agency and GEF Secretariat include (for a full list of review questions, see attachments below):
- Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?
- Are the components in Table B sound and sufficiently clear and appropriate to achieve project objectives and the GEBs?
- Is the project designed with sound incremental reasoning?
- Are socio-economic aspects, including relevant gender elements, indigenous people, and CSOs considered?

Once cleared by GEF Secretariat, **final approval** takes place.
- For a Full sized project, the project documents will be entered into the GEF Council Work Program for final approval (see timeline in *PIF Introduction*).
- For a Medium sized project, the project documents will go directly to the CEO for approval.

---

[6] Taken from: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF-A_to_Z_2015_CRA_bl2_0.pdf

Once the PIF/PFD is approved, detailed project design can take place (ProDoc stage). All submitted GEF project documents are public.

ProDoc Phase 1: Plan

Phase page: Introduction

After a Project Identification Form (PIF) is approved by the GEF Council, the Project Development Team will have 18 months to design the project and associated documentation. For programs, the Project Development Team must submit all documentation by the Program Commitment deadline.

Documentation submitted to the GEF includes:
- **Project Document (ProDoc)**— the ProDoc is a WWF GEF Agency template. It is the "business plan" of the GEF project, and details the project strategy and information needed for successful project delivery.
- **CEO Endorsement Request Document**—a GEF template that presents the project at a high level (e.g., summarizes specific information presented in the ProDoc).
- **Tracking Tools (GEF 6)/Core Indicators (GEF 7)**—The GEF Tracking Tool is a set of standard indicators for each GEF focal area that helps the GEF Secretariat track and report progress at the GEF portfolio level. A Tracking Tool must be submitted per project focal area (e.g., if a project is funded under the biodiversity and climate change focal areas, a tracking tool for biodiversity and climate change must be submitted). An explanation for Core indicators will be provided once GEF 7 begins.
- **Co-financing Commitment Letters**—Each co-financing source must sign a letter (template provided) that states the amount of funding that will be provided, and the component(s) that the funding corresponds to. During execution, co-financing sources will need to report on their commitments each year.

The processes presented in Tracks for ProDoc stage are used to ensure quality project design and compliance with WWF and GEF standards. These processes will provide inputs into the Project Document (ProDoc).

All WWF GEF Projects must comply with certain WWF network standards that comply with GEF minimum standards, including WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP) (link to Key Principles).

Step 1: Planning

The Work Schedule (see *templates* below) lays out the tasks that must be completed prior to document submission, and is sequenced based on the layout of this Operations Manual. The Project Development Team is responsible for identifying who is responsible for a given task, and the date by which that task must be completed.

The Work Schedule has three purposes:
1. To ensure early planning, so that the ProDoc process runs smoothly
2. To prompt discussion around roles and responsibilities
3. Consensus and accountability to a timeline

The Work Schedule can also help to inform the project development budget (add link to cost calculator)—that is, what activities/processes need to take place during ProDoc development, and what is the associated cost. The Project Preparation Grant (PPF) (more information on the PPG at: *link to PIF: Draft the PIF/PFD*) WILL NOT cover the cost of all activities in the work schedule. It is important to identify all sources of funding to cover these costs early in the process. Otherwise, there is a risk that funding will run out before the ProDoc has been submitted.

Step 2: Project Kickoff Training and Workshop

The Project Kickoff Training and Workshop is led by the WWF GEF Agency in country. Participants should include the key parties responsible for project development (e.g., staff from government line agency, WWF proponent office, NGOs).

The Kickoff Training and Workshop is an opportunity to agree on a work plan and begin detailed design of the project. Objectives include:

Reiterate key concepts introduced at PIF workshop
1. An introduction to GEF and WWF GEF
2. The building blocks of project development (e.g., Safeguards, PPMS, budget)

Planning for detailed project development
3. Introduction to the project development process
4. Roles and responsibilities for project development and execution
5. Agree to a budget and work plan

Technical design
Technical and detailed project design is an iterative process, and there may be multiple workshops for building out the project design. The kickoff workshop is an opportunity to begin building out the project design. This may include validating and detailing project barriers and baseline identified at PIF stage, and begin brainstorming project activities (sample agendas and PowerPoints are included below under resources). For guidance on developing technical design elements, see *Technical Design* below.

The WWF GEF Agency encourages planning teams to utilize the planning methodology associated with WWF's Project and Programme Management Standards (PPMS) [link] to deliver key aspects of the project. Goals include:

- Building on the PPMS workshop conducted during PIF stage, validation of conceptual model and validation/building on Results Chains (Theory of Change diagram) with a PPMS knowledgeable facilitator (http://www.ccnetglobal.com/).
- Additional breakouts/discussions to validate or develop key requirements for the project.

Please find additional PPMS resources under *PPMS Resources* below.

Technical design outputs from this (and potentially subsequent) workshops should include:

- Further understanding of the environmental problem
- Theory of Change
- Risks and risk mitigation plans
- Detailed baseline
- Project Activities
- Site selection criteria

ProDoc Phase 2: Detailed Design

Phase page: Introduction

Detailed Design builds on the foundational work done during PIF stage. Detailed design includes:
- Building out **technical design elements**, including barriers, baseline, strategies/activities, and the project theory of change. The project design should **incorporate lessons and best practice** from past projects and evaluations.
- Developing a **Stakeholder Engagement Plan**—Based on the stakeholder analysis developed at PIF stage, the project development team should build out a stakeholder engagement plan to ensure all relevant stakeholders are engaged in project design.
- **Determine or shortlist project sites**—it is recommended that sites are identified early on in project design. Projects sites help determine the scope of stakeholder engagement, and influence project design. Sites must be identified for a comprehensive gender analysis and action plan to take place, as well as for safeguards purposes.

Step 1: Develop Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Development of the SEP should be based on the project's stakeholder analysis. No one type or format of a stakeholder engagement plan will accommodate all projects. The process of developing the SEP must be inclusive and the draft SEP is designed to accommodate the needs and circumstances of different stakeholders. It identifies the information and types of interaction to be conducted in each phase of the project, and includes any other stakeholder engagement required by safeguards in the SIPP.

SEP content (See below SEP template) will depend on various factors including the nature, scale, location and duration of project, diverse interest of stakeholders, the scale of the project's potential positive and adverse impacts on people and the environment, and the likelihood of grievances.

It is important to be transparent about uncertainties and knowledge gaps during early stakeholder engagement. Working with a broad range of stakeholders will likely help to define project parameters and fill key knowledge gaps and, if necessary, generate alternative ideas regarding project design and potential risks and mitigation measures, monitoring and grievance mechanisms.

The draft SEP must be made available to stakeholders in formats and through channels that are appropriate to them. As relevant to the project, the draft SEP invites input on aspects such as: Whether the list of identified stakeholders is accurate;
- The proposed methods of notification and engagement (for example, where meetings and workshops may be held and how to communicate with disadvantaged and vulnerable groups);
- The proposed extent and format of engagement (for example, meetings and during of the consultation period);
- The format and the language of information to be provided.

Stakeholder views and feedback on these aspects are then reviewed and incorporated in the SEP as appropriate. If significant changes are made to the SEP a revised SEP is publicly disclosed.

As project information changes due to recommendations from assessments and mitigation plans, or as project activities are identified, the stakeholder engagement plan should be reviewed and modified accordingly to ensure its effectiveness in securing meaningful and effective stakeholder participation.

The SEP should anticipate if/when professional, neutral facilitators might be needed to lead key engagement activities. For projects where the stakeholder engagement process is likely to be complex or sensitive, social advisors or other expert staff should help design and facilitate the process and assist with participatory methodologies and other specialized techniques.

The grievance redress mechanism for the project needs to be described in the stakeholder engagement plan.

The SEP should outline a reasonable budget for stakeholder engagement activities, including potential support for groups to facilitate their participation when necessary.

Prior to project concept finalization, a validation workshop should be held with stakeholders that in addition to confirming the project design also includes a review and agreement on the SEP. With the start of project implementation an inception workshop should be held to assist project partners to understand the approved project design and understand their roles and responsibilities in the project.

Project Teams should also have an understanding of stakeholder engagement plans during project implementation monitoring including communications, reporting, and conflict resolution and grievance redress.

The use of SEP framework approach is when the design and location of the project cannot be known during project preparation, or when a project has multiple sub projects that will only be designed during project implementation. In these cases, the framework sets out the principles to be followed for stakeholder engagement and indicates how people are notified as key information becomes known. The SEP is updated as and when the specific details become known, for example the specific locations, stakeholders and schedule of activities.

Step 2: Determine Sites

For projects with on-ground activities, such as Natural Protected Areas or Marine Protected Areas projects, there should be a well-documented and defensible approach taken to site selection, either at the PIF stage or ProDoc stage. This can be multi-layered, for example, at PIF, landscapes or NPAs may be selected; at ProDoc this may be further narrowed down, for example, to areas within a landscape (specific NPAs, production areas, buffer zones, etc.) or areas within an NPA (specific habitats, or specific community areas within a buffer zone).

Ideally, full site selection is completed by ProDoc Phase II (detailed design) so that the development of activities and budget, consultations with local stakeholders, site specific environment and social management plans, and gender analysis is site-based and targeted.

Process for site selection:

Site selection should be a fully documented and justifiable process, using agreed site selection criteria (see below) and a number of information resources, such as:

1. Consultation with experts
2. Global databases, for example protected areas: IBAT, World Database on Protected Areas, Key Biodiversity Areas, IUCN Redlist of Threatened Species, Ramsar lists
3. National/local databases and information
4. Site assessments and consultations, if required

If choosing sites for expansion of protected areas, the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) methodology should be used.

Considerations for developing selection criteria:

1. ***Consolidate resources***. There is often pressure on government agencies or NGOs to "spread the wealth", i.e., to spread GEF project budget resources to as many sites as possible, and across a number of regions or landscapes, to support multiple constituencies. However, this leads to an approach where budget is spread too thin, and project sites are geographically far apart. This has two key disadvantages: (i) not enough budget for high impact at any one site, and (ii) higher transaction and management/oversight costs to the Executing Agency. As long as it supports the project objective, it is recommended to:
    a. Select <u>fewer project sites</u>, so there is sufficient budget to bring about impact at each project site, and for economies of scale in administration and management costs. Do not underestimate the logistical challenges and costs of working in remote locations, where sites may be hard to access driving up costs.. Keep in mind that the GEF generally measures results in total hectares (for NPAs) or tonnes of CO_2 – not by number of sites.
    b. <u>Consolidate activities</u>. Greater impacts will be achieved towards the project goals if activities are focused in fewer sites or sub-sites, rather than dispersing different activities across many different locations.
    c. Select sites in <u>one region or landscape</u>, so the costs for PMU oversight is minimized by traveling to project sites in close proximity.

2. ***Conditions for successful execution exist.*** This might include a number of factors that make a site low risk: lack of land tenure conflicts; good relationships with local communities; lack of socio-environmental conflicts or threats (mining, logging, etc.); accessibility to the site; good governance. Feasibility or pre-feasibility studies may be used to, for example, assess resources and conditions for ecotourism.

3. ***Baseline and capacity exist.*** Following the GEF incremental approach, project sites should have some baseline that will be a foundation from which to build upon with GEF financing. This foundation could be: government staffing and resources; existing or potential partnerships with NGOs, private sector, bi-laterals etc.; strong existing coordination with regional/local/sectoral entities; existing institutions and strategies.

4. ***Multiple global environmental benefits***. Selection criteria can include highly biodiverse sites, high potential for carbon storage and/or emission reduction, high potential for reducing land degradation, etc. – as directly related to the GEF focal area(s) and/or Impact Program that is funding the project.

Documentation/Outputs:

In the ProDoc, describe:

1. The process that was taken to select sites (e.g., who, corresponding data)
2. The selection criteria used
3. The final site(s), and provide information on the sites as appropriate, and include a map.

If site selection is not finalized in the ProDoc phase, as is ideal, agree with partners and describe in the ProDoc what the process will be for finalization of site selection in the early implementation stage. For example, if there is a short list of sites, final selection will be based on *xyz* criteria and the selection will be made by the Project Steering Committee based on analysis and recommendations from the WWF GEF Project Manager.

Each element of the project framework (environmental problem, barriers, baseline, Table B, activities, Theory of Change) should be developed based on a tight and logical storyline. A strong storyline will (a) show how all the elements of technical design are linked together, and (b) create flow, consistency, and focus across the project design and in the ProDoc itself.

The project framework describes:

- The **environmental problem**
- The project **objective**
- The key **barriers** to that objective being achieved
- The business-as-usual scenario (or what would happen without the GEF project funding). This is known as the project **baseline**.
- **Gaps** in those baseline initiatives.
- And the **project strategy** (or what would happen with the GEF project funding), consisting of:
    - The **Table B**: The components, outcomes, and outputs of the project
    - The **activities** (or what the project is financing) to achieve those outputs and outcomes
    - And the **Theory of Change**, or *how* the project interventions will ultimately achieve the project objective and subsequent global environmental benefits.

It may be useful for the planning team to review the project conceptual model, which visually describes the problem situation (including barriers) to be addressed by the project, and reflect on how the results chains lay out the strategies which will modify that situation to achieve the projects intended results. See figure below. From there, project teams may write a high-level summary of what the project is about, the barriers to the project from being achieved, and the proposed solution (project objective).
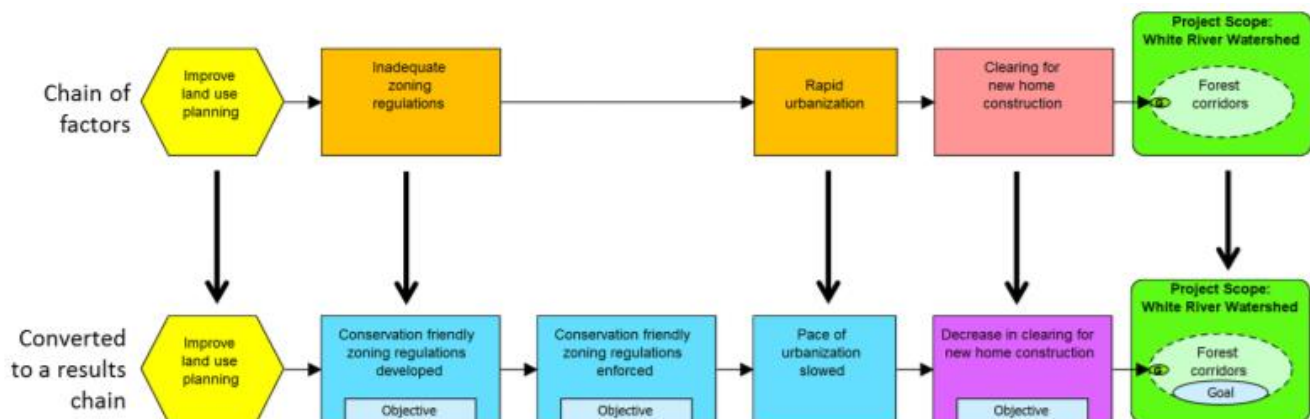
High-level summary: The Peruvian Government has worked to safeguard the globally significant biodiversity of the Amazon by establishing national protected areas. However, despite significant increases in annual budget appropriations, the necessary resources for effective protected area management have not kept pace with the NPA system growth. An increased public budget,

supplemented by funds from new and innovative financial mechanisms at the site level, is needed. The project aims to address this, and promote a long term financial sustainability initiative to meet the costs for improved management effectiveness, and therefore protect globally important biodiversity in the Amazon into the future.		
Environmental Problem	The Peruvian Government has worked to safeguard the globally significant biodiversity of the Amazon by establishing national protected areas. However, the necessary resources for effective protected area management have not kept pace with the NPA system growth. Consequently, the NPA system is characterized by sub-optimal levels of management	✓
Barriers	Key barriers to sustainable financing include an insufficient public budget and lack of revenue from financial mechanisms at the site level	✓
Baseline/Gaps	Despite significant increases in annual budget appropriations and an initial agreement to advance a sustainable financing initiative, movement has been slow and therefore an optimal level of effective management will not be consolidated in the short and medium term.	✓
Objective	The project aims to promote a long term financial sustainability initiative to address the costs for improved management effectiveness, and therefore protect globally important biodiversity in the Amazon into the future.	✓

This storyline will then inform each element of technical design (barriers, baseline, activities). Below is detailed guidance on each of these elements. The methods presented in each section builds on or references other technical design elements to facilitate a strong storyline throughout.

Please note that technical design must ensure buy-in from the Executing Agency and Partners. The project design will be shared with key stakeholders during stakeholder engagement (link).

The **project objective** developed at PIF stage should be reiterated during *ProDoc Technical Design*. A good project objective describes what the project aims to achieve. Examples of good project objectives are provided below.

The **Environmental Problem** is a brief description of two things:
- The specific environmental issue that the project aims to address
- The Global Environmental Benefits that will be impacted if the problem is not solved

The Environmental Problem should link to the relevant GEF focal areas/global environmental benefits.

One example of a GEF environmental problem includes:

- Tropical forests and savannahs host the majority of terrestrial biodiversity, represent important carbon sinks, and provide numerous ecosystem services. However, these ecosystems are being increasingly deforested for commercial agriculture. Demand for a few key commodities is a root cause of this deforestation from agricultural production, with an estimated 70% of tropical deforestation alone coming from commercial agriculture for palm, soy, and beef (plus timber and pulp)

The environmental problem provides the foundation for the project objective, and justifies the importance of GEF funding.

Barriers can be defined as the underlying causes that are contributing to the environmental problem.

During *ProDoc Technical Design*, the Project Development Team should both (1) reassess the barriers identified at PIF stage (based on changes to the Table B, project strategy) and (2) deepen their analysis of those barriers.

Barriers represent a key part of the project design and storyline. The project should show what barriers are preventing the project objective from being achieved, and then demonstrate how the project strategy will address those barriers to achieve global environmental benefits.

How to identify and detail barriers

1) **Conceptual Model**
   A conceptual model is a diagram that illustrates the environmental problem the project wishes to address and shows the relationships among key factors that are related to the conservation issue at hand. Barriers and other contributing factors should be identified.

2) **Matrix**
   The matrix below may be used to map barriers to the project strategy. A column on "baseline" may also be added to complete the project storyline.

Category/type	Element	Barrier
1. Component language	1.1 Outcome	1.1 Provide a description of the barrier (limited capacity, limited awareness, etc.) that this output hopes to address. When possible, tie this barrier to negative environmental impacts.
2. Component language	2.1 Outcome	2.1 same as above
	Example: Increased supply chain transparency to facilitate verification of sustainably produced commodities	Example: Complex structure of the supply chain and disparate data means lack of transparency. This prevents companies, consumers, and governments from informed decision making and from verifying sustainable supply chains.

The baseline is a detailed account of the ongoing and planned activities/policies/initiatives taking place during the project period (e.g., the business-as-usual scenario, taking place without GEF funding) that contribute to: the project objective, solving the environmental problem, and/or the project strategies.

A baseline activity/initiative is one that:
- Will be leveraged to meet project outcomes and outputs.
  - o Relevant activities by the Executing Agency and project partners are included in the baseline.
  - o Co-financing is the financing associated with the project baseline. Therefore, co-financing sources should be reflected in the baseline (and the baseline should indicate who to approach for potential co-financing).
- Creates a foundation on which GEF financing is built to generate global environmental benefits. Therefore, gaps in the baseline can be briefly identified to foreshadow the project strategy.
  - o If the project is not directly building off of or coordinated in tandem with the proposed baseline activity/strategy, it is not considered baseline.
- Quantified when appropriate and possible (e.g., the baseline initiative contributes to xx hectares of improved management).
- Please note that the baseline cannot include other GEF projects.

The identified project baseline should closely fit the project storyline. The matrix below is one way of ensuring the barriers, baseline, and project interventions are closely linked. Once the baseline is identified, it should then be fleshed out in greater detail in consultation with relevant partners and stakeholders.

Barriers	Baseline	Project Strategy and Interventions	Global Environmental benefits
Barrier 1. Insufficient public budget allocations to cover the costs associated with the effective management of NPAs	Ministry of Economy and Finance allocations will be maintained or moderately increased for protected areas, following the historical trend. A significant increase in public budget is unlikely.	The Project aims to increase the public budget to cover costs for effective management of NPAs. Project strategies include: ● Targeted communication strategies to raise awareness on the values and benefits provided by protected areas, and to attract additional resources ● Sustainable finance pilots to showcase financial mechanisms and their feasibility in bringing in new funds	Improved financing for protected areas, which are home to numerous endemic and threatened species, forests and freshwater ecosystems, and ecosystem services of national, regional and global significance

PPMS: The Conceptual Model exercise, which describes the context surrounding the environmental problem, may identify baseline activities as opportunities. The baseline will also play a role during the results chain exercise in order to show how existing initiatives can be leveraged by the project. There may be additional brainstorming exercises to ensure the baseline is thoroughly understood.

A Theory of Change is a narrative and/ or diagram that explains the underlying theory that links what the project will do (strategies) to what the project desires to achieve (outcomes and project objective). The Theory of Change drafted at PIF Stage should be validated and detailed during the *ProDoc Detailed Design* Phase based on: conversations with project stakeholders, refined project strategy (and activities), and a clearer analysis of the baseline and project context.

A good Theory of Change meets several **key principles**:
- A series of if-then statements (e.g., **if** we do this intervention, **then** this will result) showing how project strategies will achieve the project objective, and contribute to Global Environmental Benefits. As such, the Theory of Change should be, to some extent, sequential.
- The Theory of Change is results-oriented, rather than a sequence of activities (e.g., how will your project interventions work versus what activities are planned). As such, a GEFable Theory of Change is typically at the Outcome-level (see Table B). At a minimum, it should capture how all components are connected.
- The Theory of Change for a GEF project should stay within the project scope (what GEF is funding + baseline), but may also indicate the long-term goals of the project.
- If the project is part of a larger program, (1) a broader, program-level Theory of Change should show how each Child Project contributes to the overall program objective, and (2) the project-level Theory of Change should describe key links to the program, to demonstrate overall impact and cohesion.

How to develop a theory of change

Given the importance of a Theory of Change, it is recommended that the Prodoc include: (1) detailed Results Chains, (2) a high-level supporting diagram, and (3) a narrative that describes the Theory of Change. See below.

Some guiding questions include
1. What is the desired result of the project (objective + environmental benefits)?
2. How will the strategies work together to achieve this?
3. Is the Theory of Change achievable in the project time period? Are there any assumptions/risks that may impact the project success?

1) **Results Chain(s) / Diagram**
   Diagrams are a popular way to visually demonstrate a project's Theory of Change (see examples attached), and should reflect major strategies and desired results.

   If Results Chains have been developed at PIF stage using PPMS (link), then the project team has a strong foundation. Both the detailed results chains and overarching results chain should be validated and further detailed. Together, these visually illustrate the logic behind how the project interventions will lead to the project desired results.

   EXAMPLE
   If consumers demand sustainable products, and investors require companies in their portfolio to meet certain environmental requirements, then companies will respond to these external pressures and

commit to sustainable sourcing policies. If companies purchase sustainable commodities and will not purchase unsustainable commodities, then producers will shift their practices to respond to this.
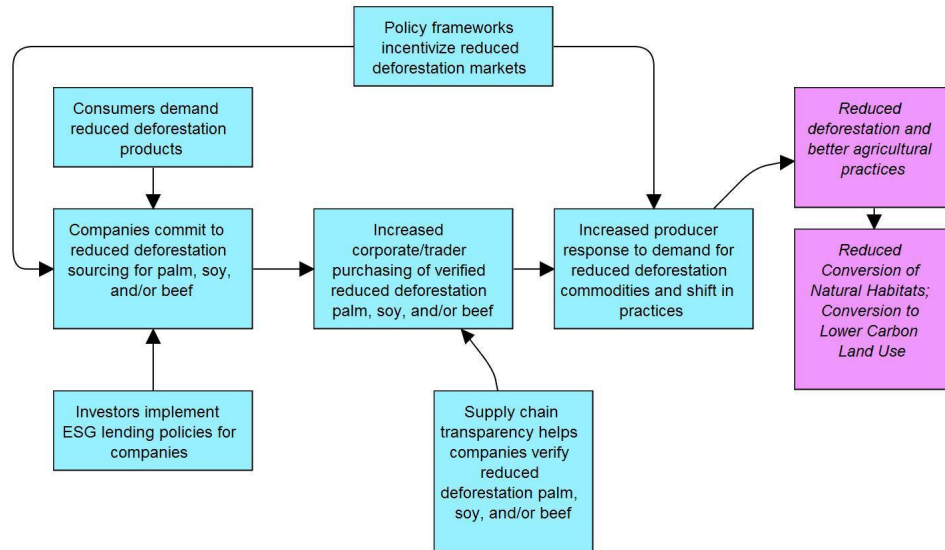
2) Narrative description

To develop a narrative Theory of Change, the Project Development Team may use the following steps:

1. Define the project/program objective.
2. Draft a series of if-then statements that demonstrate **how** project interventions will achieve the project/program objective, ensuring that all project components/strategies from the Table B are captured. It may be helpful to use the Results Chain diagrams to inform this statement.

Definitions

An **Outcome** is the medium-term effects achieved by an intervention's outputs.

> An **Output** is a tangible deliverable (e.g., workshop, report, etc.) and often leads to project outcomes/results.
>
> > **Activities** are the actions or tasks being undertaken by project staff or partners to achieve project outputs.

During ProDoc development, the Project Development Team should develop the activities needed to achieve project outputs, outcomes, and the project objective. For project activities, the Project Development Team should determine what activities are needed to get to the desired result (output), who will be responsible for its completion, when the activity needs to take place (sequencing), and what resources will be needed for each activity (i.e**.,** what the project needs to pay for to deliver on an output). The Gender Action Plan should be considered as activities are developed, with a gender responsive lens applied when possible.

Activities will be described in the ProDoc (Section 2.2 Project Strategies), and are also essential for starting safeguards processes, for completing the budget, for finding entry points to ensure a gender responsive project design, and as a discussion point for stakeholder engagement.

Please note that activities should be determined in consultation with key partners and refined through stakeholder engagement. Project strategies and supporting activities must be justified in the project strategy section (i.e., why a certain method/approach was utilized? How was this arrived at – science-based, requested by beneficiaries, etc.).

Project activities are often determined in two ways:

Results Chains: Activity level

The project Results Chains previously drafted at the PIF stage, should be developed at the Prodoc stage with detailed supporting activities. If not, the Results Chains should be re-examined and activities inserted where relevant. Consider what activities are needed to successfully meet the project's intended results (project outcomes and the project objective).

Example of promoting best practices
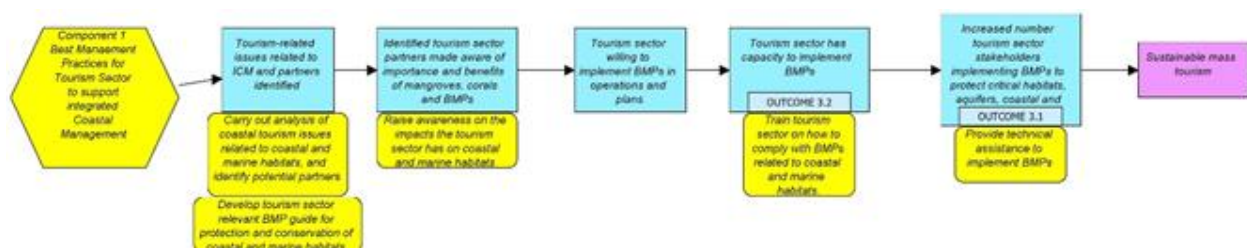
Policy example
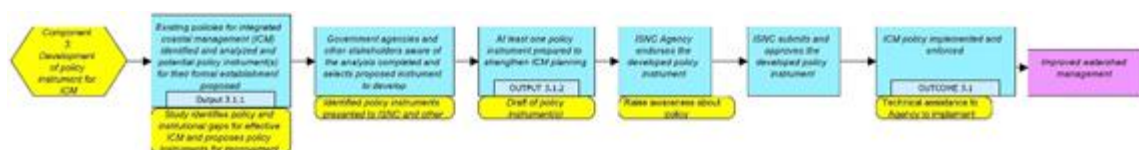
Activity-Level Matrices. In addition to identifying activities through the Results Chains, Project Development Teams can use a matrix (see below) to cross check there are sufficient activities per output, and that these activities adequately support the project outputs and outcomes.

Generating Responsible Demand for Reduced Deforestation Commodities

Outcome	Output	Activity	Budget notes	Responsible
2.1. Capacity of governments strengthened to inform policy dialogue around reduced deforestation in project demand markets	2.1.1. Learning exchanges, workshops, and technical support for project demand country governments to increase their capacity to meet SDG 12.7 on reduced deforestation demand	Develop application form for Government Learning Exchange program and receive approval from Steering Committee	Staff time for application development and online publication	WWF-US, Steering Committee
		Steering Committee to receive and review applications to host workshops, learning exchanges, research activities	Staff time to review applications	WWF-US, Steering Committee
		Issue Government Learning Exchange grant to selected applicant(s)	Staff time to draft and manage grant agreement	WWF-US

Land Degradation in the Churia Range, Nepal

Outcome	Output	Activity	Budget notes	Responsible
1.1. Improved agricultural management through innovative pilot practices introduced at the field level that reduce erosion and climate vulnerability across 1,000 ha	1.1.1. Bio-engineering introduced in at least 6 sites across 400 Ha in 3 districts to stabilize soils, reduce erosion, and restore productivity to heavily degraded areas	Recruit extension officer	Staff time, materials for bioengineering	District of Soil Conservation Office
		Purchase bamboo seedlings	Staff time, bamboo and materials	District of Soil Conservation Office
		Small community grants to plant bamboo seedlings and build bio-engineered walls	Staff time, materials for gully treatment	District of Soil Conservation Office

Sample project activities. Examples of project activities may include:

- Hosting meetings
- Convening workshops
- Developing reports
- Publishing media material
- Conducting a species population survey
- Routine patrolling

Incremental Cost is defined as "the increment or additional costs associated with transforming a project with national/local benefits into one with global environmental benefits as well."

The Incremental Cost of a project can be developed using the below matrix. The matrix shows:
1. The "business-as-usual" scenario (baseline) that would take place without GEF intervention .
2. The "GEF Alternative" (project interventions) that explains how the project will address key barriers and build on the baseline.
3. What global environmental benefits will be derived as a result of the GEF funding and project interventions. These Global Environmental Benefits should be linked to the project's focal areas.

The three matrix pieces above form the incremental cost reasoning—it shows how GEF "incremental" funds will be used to transform an existing baseline into a project that yields Global Environmental Benefits. The rationale for GEF funding rests on how GEF financing for the project is incremental, and how the project uses this funding to achieve GEF Global Environmental Benefits.

Barriers	Baseline	Project Interventions	Global Environmental benefits

Step 3: Incorporating Lessons

Incorporating lessons during Technical Design. During the technical design phase, it is encouraged that the planning team incorporates the latest information available into the project design. The WWF GEF Agency encourages the Project Development Team to seek out technical experts (inviting when appropriate to the workshop), research articles and studies, as well as reports (e.g. mid-term or terminal evaluation reports from other projects) that relate to the scope of the project or more specifically the environmental problem the project wishes to address. The WWF GEF Agency encourages planning teams to compile lessons learned, recommendations and/or best practices where possible. This will improve the logic of the project strategies, hopefully reduce assumptions and ensure that the activities are informed with the best information available.

Following the technical design workshop, new information may come to light such that the project strategies may continue to be refined or revisited. Planning should be iterative and incorporate new information as it is learned to improve the effectiveness of the project. As you make changes, you should also document the rationale behind them so that others will understand what you learned and why you made these changes.

For prodoc submission, planning teams are encouraged to submit a brief 1-2-page document summarizing major lessons from their research and explaining how the information they have gathered has or will be incorporated to improve project design and execution. This can be annexed to the body of the Prodoc.

Where to access information. Reports and publications are increasingly public documents that can be accessed online via a search engine. For terminal evaluation and midterm reports, the UNDP and WB often make these reports available on the Web. The UN evaluation reports can be found at the following website, where you may search by country, key term (such as GEF) or date: http://www.unevaluation.org/evaluation/reports.

The World Bank Evaluation page also maintains a database of publicly available evaluation reports, as well as country specific reviews, project implementation completion reports (ICRs) and more at this website: https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/evaluations.

Certain scientific articles and white papers will be publicly and freely available via a simple search engine. If the team seeks access to research articles, but your organization does not have a subscription to academic databases, it is possible you can access these articles at the local library. Science Direct or Elsevier provides access to many scientific journal articles at a cost. (https://www.sciencedirect.com/) Otherwise, a simple online search could provide abstracts as well as author/contact information and it is possible to request a copy of the article from the author directly.

The Conservation Measures Partnership, a joint collaboration of major environmental NGOs that adhere to the same planning methodology as WWF, offers a database of conservation projects, including conceptual models, results chains and other documents available for review. You can access the database and sign up for free at https://www.miradishare.org/.

Finally, the best resources may come from local institutions, NGOs, and government partners. Do not hesitate to reach out to these stakeholders to gather information for your project.

Step 4: ProDoc Guidance Phase 2

After following the processes laid out in *ProDoc Phase 2: Detailed Design*, The Project Development Team can begin to draft corresponding sections of the ProDoc. Please remember this is an iterative process, and these sections will be revised multiple times based on (1) feedback from the project manager, and (2) feedback from stakeholder engagement and key partners (e.g., executing partners, government, staff leading child projects within the same program).

Section 1: Project Background and Situation Analysis

Please see attached guidance for writing Section 1. Section 1 largely links to the technical design step [link], and includes:
- Background and context
- Environmental problem, threats, and root causes
- Barriers
- Baseline analysis and gaps
- Coordination with GEF and non-GEF interventions

Section 2.1: Theory of Change

Section 2.2 Project Strategies and Expected Results (GEF Project Components)

Please see attached guidance for section 2.2. Defining your activities, Theory of Change, and Table B (see technical design step), as well as selecting the project sites, are necessary for informing these two sections.

ProDoc Phase 3: Consult and Refine

Phase page: Introduction

Once the project activities and a shortlist (or final selection) of sites is known, the project needs to consult and refine on the project design. Refinement of the project strategy takes places based on:

1. **Stakeholder Consultations**. Building on previous consultations, the Project Development Team needs to check the project strategies and activities with project stakeholders. Stakeholder consultation is an iterative process, and is necessary for ensuring project strategies reflect stakeholder priorities, and can contribute to the sustainability of the project by ensuring buy-in and ownership early on.
2. **Gender Perspective**. A Gender Analysis and Action Plan needs to be completed to ensure a gender perspective is properly mainstreamed throughout the project design.

Once the project knows what is being financed, and the general sites that the project will work in, the project can be categorized for Safeguards purposes.

Conversations around the project governance for execution should also be initiated at this stage. This included identifying reporting lines and fund flows.

Step 1: Conduct Gender Analysis

Pre-requisites/Inputs. The *Gender Desktop Assessment* completed during PIF stage provides the general context on national/regional policies and gender dynamics in the project scope. Results Chains may point to initial gender entry points.

Gender Analysis. The Project Development Team must conduct a Gender Analysis to validate the information found in the desktop gender assessment and examine gender dynamics, gender differentiated impacts and risks, opportunities to address gender gaps and promote the empowerment of women, at a more intricate level.

The Gender Analysis should be done by a Gender Specialist (e.g., through a consultant or in-house, depending on capacity). A sample Terms of Reference is available. The main objective of a Gender Analysis is to collect gender-specific data, including:
- · Women and men's roles, needs, and knowledge in the project area
- · Control and decision-making process among women and men at the community level
- · Access and control over the management of natural resources
- · Access to land by women and men in the project area

The Gender Analysis will vary in detail depending on whether the project is site based or a global/influence/policy-based project. The document "Sample Questions: Gender Analysis" provides guiding questions for both scenarios. Gender-sensitive stakeholder engagement [link] is critical to this Analysis.

The Gender Analysis should provide a set of recommendations that can be incorporated into overall project design and within the Gender Action Plan.

Gender Action Plan. Following the Gender Analysis, a Gender Specialist (can be the same specialist used for the Gender Analysis) needs to develop a Gender Action Plan. While the Gender Analysis reveals the current gender context within the project sites, the Action Plan shows how the project aims to mainstream gender and empower women during execution. The Action Plan will:
   a. Lay out gender entry points
   b. Ensure activities to deliver project outputs are gender-responsive, and recommend how these activities will be monitored throughout execution (see results framework)
   c. Provide recommendations for including gender in the overall project design (including budget, stakeholder engagement, M&E, etc.)
   d. Provide a set of gender-sensitive indicators and identify outputs and outcomes where sex-disaggregated data and information should be collected
   e. See the Gender Action Plan Template below for detailed information

In the ProDoc, explain clearly how outreach efforts, activities, resources, services, opportunities and communication, will be made equally available to both women and men during the life of the project. Activities described in the ProDoc should be gender-responsive, and gender should be described in multiple sections of the ProDoc (stakeholder engagement, budget, results framework, M&E). During project execution, the Executing Agency will be required to describe these activities in various reports (e.g., Annual workplan, semi-annual and annual reports, mid-term evaluation report, final report, etc.).

Step 1: Stakeholder engagement

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan guides stakeholders and the Project Team as to when, how and with whom consultations and exchanges should be undertaken throughout the life of the project. The Project Team will undertake a process of meaningful stakeholder consultation in a manner that provides stakeholders the opportunities to express their views on project design, risks, impacts and mitigation measures, and allows the Project Team to consider and respond to them. Consultation should be carried out on an ongoing basis as the nature of issues, impacts and opportunities evolves.

All efforts should be taken to work with the relevant stakeholders to design the engagement and consultation processes, including mechanisms of inclusiveness, respecting cultural sensitivities, and any required consent processes. Moreover, a general solicitation of feedback or input cannot be relied upon, nor accepted as the sole method of consultation. Stakeholder engagement may be minimal at certain times and intense at others depending on the issues and project phase. Targeted input from selected stakeholder groups may be needed at key points in project development and implementation.

If the project may involve indigenous people (IP) stakeholders, additional measures will be required to ensure their full and effective participation. If the project may affect IP rights and interests, lands, resources and territories, the FPIC process will need to be initiated early and respected throughout the project.

The aim of consultations is to inform the Project Team's decisions, where appropriate. Not all stakeholder groups can agree on project activities, their impacts and mitigation, so the goal of engagement is not always to achieve consensus but to hear from stakeholder groups and to take their comments and concerns into account in making project decisions.

Careful documentation of stakeholder consultations can demonstrate to stakeholders that their input has been considered and incorporated into the project. Summary reports of each consultation should be produced, circulated to participants, and publicly disclosed in an accessible manner. Any commitments made to the stakeholders should be carefully recorded. In addition, stakeholders should be provided regular updates on the environment and social assessments and mitigation plans progress and modification to the project design.[7]

Documentation
Documentation of stakeholder engagement includes the following, as appropriate:

1. Date and location of each meeting, with copy of the notification to stakeholders;
2. The purpose of the engagements (e.g. to inform stakeholders of an intended project to gather their views on potential environmental and social impacts of an intended project);
3. The form of engagement and consultation (e.g. face to face meetings, townhalls, workshops, focus groups, written consultations, etc);
4. Number of participants and categories of participants;
5. Summary of main points and concerns raised by stakeholders;
6. Summary of how stakeholder concerns were responded to and taken into account, and;
7. Issues and activities that require follow up actions, including clarifying how stakeholders are informed of decisions.

---

[7] IFC Stakeholder Engagement pg 124

Step 2: Finalize Project Governance

Project governance for a project encompasses the reporting and financial arrangements between the GEF Agency, the Project Management Unit, the Executing Agency, the Project Steering Committee, and any sub grantees that will be receiving GEF funds. If the project is part of a larger program, the links to program level governance should also be detailed.

The diagram below is a generic example of an execution arrangement, including lines of reporting in blue and cash flow in green (as part of an agreement). Discussions regarding specific project arrangements with the WWF GEF Project Manager will help determine the final execution framework that should be included in the ProDoc. Final agreements will reflect this framework once the project commences execution.

Please note: If the project is part of a larger program, the Program Steering Committee should also be described.
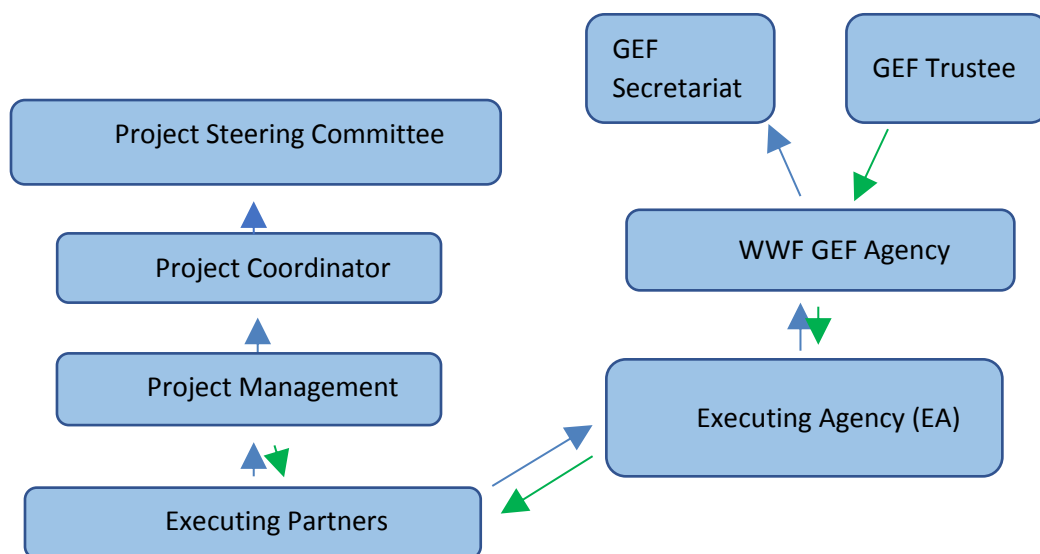
Project Steering Committee (PSC): The PSC is the highest decision-making authority of the project. Members of the PSC typically include government representatives, key project partners, and the WWF GEF Agency. The PSC will ensure that adaptive management throughout project execution is in conformity with the GEF Policies. The PSC will ensure that necessary political and coordination conditions are in place for the project execution as committed in the ProDoc. It is also responsible for troubleshooting and resolving key issues as they arise.

Program Steering Committee: The Program Steering Committee is responsible for high-level decision making at the program level. It is also responsible for coordination throughout program execution.

Executing Agency (EA): The Executing Agency is the primary recipient of the GEF Project funds and signatory to the WWF-GEF Grant Agreement. The EA is responsible for strategic guidance and operations of the project, and must ensure compliance with WWF.

Project Coordinator: The Project Coordinator will typically be an existing high-level staff sitting in the Executing Agency. He/she is the primary representative, and is responsible for high level decisions and any significant troubleshooting.

Project Management Unit (PMU): The PMU is responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of project activities and fulfillment of its goals. The PMU often includes a Project Manager, a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Officer, and a Finance and Operations Manager.

Executing Partners: Executing partners are responsible for executing specific activities under the project, per sub-grant agreements.

WWF GEF Agency: The WWF GEF Agency represents the donor (GEF), and is responsible for overall supervision and oversight of the project. WWF-US was accredited by GEF for this role.

Step 2: Safeguards Categorization

Once the Project Development Team defines the project activities and sites (or what the project is financing), the WWF GEF Agency Safeguards Specialist will screen the project for environmental and social impacts and categorize the project into one of the three categorizes – A, B or C.

- Category A: full or comprehensive Environment and Social Impact Assessment [ESIA] is
- Required
- Category B: Partial assessment is required
- Category C: no further assessment is required

In determining the category, the WWF GEF Agency will consider relevant risks such as type, location, sensitivity and scale of the project, the nature and magnitude of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts, and the capacity and the commitment of the Executing Agency to manage the environmental and social risks and impacts in a manner consistent with WWF's SIPP. Other areas of risk may also be relevant to the delivery of environmental and social mitigation measures and outcomes, depending on the specific project and the context in which it is being developed. WWF will disclose the project's category on WWF's website and in project documents.

Please note, categorization is the responsibility of the WWF GEF Agency. Once the project is categorized, the Safeguards Specialist will discuss next steps with the Project Team.

Please read the full description in the Safeguards Manual.

Step 3: Developing the ProDoc for Phase 3

After following the processes laid out in *ProDoc Phase 3: Consult and Refine*, the Project Development Team can begin to draft corresponding sections of the ProDoc. Please remember this is an iterative process, and these sections will be revised multiple times based on (1) feedback from the project manager, and (2) feedback from stakeholder engagement and key partners (e.g., executing partners, government, staff leading child projects within the same program).

Section 2: GEF Intervention Strategy

Based on findings from the Gender Analysis and Stakeholder Consultation, the project strategy should be refined. Accordingly, the Project Development Team should revise *Section 2.2: Project Strategies and Expected Results* (as well as sections on the baseline and barriers, as relevant).

All remaining Section 2 subsections may be drafted. See attached guidelines for specific instructions.

Section 3: Project governance

Once the project governance has been discussed and finalized [link], the Project Development Team may write ProDoc *Section 3: Project Governance.* Please follow the attached guidance document.

Section 4: Stakeholder Engagement

Following Stakeholder Engagement (and recognizing that stakeholder engagement will likely continue throughout project development), document the results in *ProDoc Section 4: Stakeholder Engagement*. Guidance document attached.

Section 6: Gender equality and women's empowerment

Once the Project Development Team has completed a Gender Analysis and Action Plan, as well as gathered gender-specific information from stakeholder consultation, the Project Development Team should summarize the results under *Section 6: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*.

ProDoc Phase 4: Safeguards and Finalize

Phase page: Introduction

Once the activities and sites are known, the Executing Agency can advance the safeguards processes. Safeguards assessments should be conducted as early as possible, so the results and recommendations can be fully integrated into the project design.

In addition, enough information is known about the project that several processes can take place:
- The project can be budgeted
- Finalize the project results framework, so that the project is properly monitored and it's impacts measurable during project execution.

Project documentation should be completed at this stage.

Step 1: Safeguards Assessment and Disclosure

Safeguards Assessment

Depending on the project's categorization, the WWF GEF Safeguards Specialist will advise the Executing Agency if a full or partial assessment is required. Depending on the project, additional assessments and management plans may be necessary to comply with WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP). The Executing Agency will decide if assessments and mitigation plans will be prepared by an external expert or by internal staff. The WWF GEF Safeguards specialist will oversee the preparation of the TOR if external experts are involved and the quality of the assessments and mitigation plan. Once these assessments and mitigation plans are approved they need to be disclosed according to with WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP).

Recommendations from these assessments and mitigation measures must be integrated into the project design to ensure that the project is environmentally and socially sustainable.

Safeguards Disclosure

All final safeguards documents, including WWF-specific safeguards documents such as the Safeguards Categorization Memo and the Safeguards Compliance Memo, will be publicly disclosed. Depending on the project, disclosure can take up to 45 days. Full disclosure must be completed before Agency Approval and execution start.

Please read the full description in the Safeguards Manual.

Step 1: Complete M&E Plan, Results Framework, and Tracking Tool(s)

Overview

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a process used to track project progress, inform strategic decision-making, foster adaptive management, and assess/ensure overall results and impact of the project.

- **Monitoring** is the continuous and systematic collection of data based on specific indicators to understand progress towards desired results in a project or program Theory of Change.
- **Evaluation** is a periodic and often external assessment of a project. It is focused on impact and should provide information on lessons learned—not only for the project, but for other projects, donors, stakeholders, etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan is used to describe how the M&E system will work during execution and may be considered the M&E Standard Operating Procedure. The Planwill identify staff involved in M&E, the Results Framework matrix (the indicators that will be used to monitor project progress), a description of reports and tools that will be used to assess progress, and a plan for how information will be stored, documented and shared. It may be helpful to provide diagrams to visualize data flow and management. The following are points to consider when developing the larger plan for monitoring and evaluation.

- The project decides on systems and tools to use for documenting, storing and sharing products associated with monitoring and evaluation. These may include: Smartsheet or excel for the results framework; SharePoint, Smartsheet, Dropbox, One Drive, or a project website for managing tasks, uploading documents and/or sharing information and reports.
- Roles, responsibilities and timeline are clearly defined for collection, analysis, documentation, and sharing of M&E information and reports (e.g. progress reports and results framework). Note: these responsibilities are often a joint collaboration between the M&E officer, field staff, project manager and consultants (i.e. for surveys). (See governance section).
- Project partners are engaged and approve of the monitoring plan. Stakeholders may participate in project monitoring to increase buy-in and reduce costs (e.g. monitoring of community forests may take place in full or in part by community members trained by the project);
- M&E is aligned with the knowledge management strategy. Ensure key stakeholders (such as the operational focal point) are aware about major M&E activities and products, such as workshops, evaluation reports, and knowledge products (e.g. report on best practices and lessons).
- In addition to the results framework and annual work plan tracking (link), the team is advised to allocate some resources to monitoring context, risk and any new research (i.e. best practice reports) or innovations that could potentially alter the projects strategies or chances of success. This type of monitoring may be informal and could be a function of the M&E officer to systematically document in the project progress reports and review during the recommended reflection exercise or workshop mentioned below.
- It is recommended that teams hold an annual reflection workshop to review project progress to inform project decision making (i.e., refining Theory of Change, informing new annual work plans). This may include assessing whether changes to the project strategy are needed, and, if so, to plan for these adjustments.
- The M&E plan should be properly budgeted (see budget section).

Results Framework

The Results Framework (RF) is a matrix that shows the different levels of results expected from a project and provides the instruction for how those results will be monitored and evaluated for progress toward the Theory of Change. The RF is a key M&E tool for GEF projects and is required in the ProDoc and CEO Endorsement Request document. Initial indicators will have been developed during ProDoc Technical Design workshop (link), and should be validated and expanded upon at this stage.

Steps to Develop a Results Framework

Once project components, outcomes, activities and project sites (if relevant) are determined, the team should use the following template (see full template attached) and the following steps to develop their Results Framework:

1. Refine indicators based on information needs (should be clear in Results Chains) and resources available. Draft indicators should have been developed during the technical design workshop.
2. Select a method for how information will be collected for each indicator.
3. Determine when, by whom, and where data gets collected.
4. Collect baseline data and refine targets based on that data.
5. Assess risks and assumptions for each outcome-indicator and form a risk mitigation strategy for key risks.
6. Estimate costs associated with measuring each indicator (will contribute to overall M&E budget).

Table 1 Results Framework Template

Indicator / unit	Definition	Method	Frequency	Who	Disaggregation	Baseline	Targets (annual, or mid-term and close)		Notes/ Assumptions	Cost to monitor
							YR1	YR 2		
Objective 1:										
Outcome 1:										

A good results framework should meet the following recommendations:

Indicators:

- Indicators should be provided at the Outcome and Objective level. It is recommended that there is at least one indicator per Outcome and Objective.
- The indicator and methodology should be clearly defined and understood. There should be no ambiguity over how to measure or interpret the data. If a different person were to measure the results from year to year, it should be interpreted similarly.
- When possible, try to align or adopt indicators from the GEF-6 Tracking Tools or GEF-7 Core and sub indicators.
- Output indicators are considered optional and may be tracked internally.
- Refer to the Gender Action Plan to ensure recommended indicators are considered, that RF indicators are gender-sensitive, and that targets are disaggregated by gender when possible.

Targets
- Targets should be quantitative when possible. If qualitative indicators are provided, a clear and objective methodology should be described.
- It is recommended that the team choose achievable and conservative targets. It is better to show that targets have been exceeded during project execution, rather than not met. Teams can develop realistic targets by analyzing the baseline. Both the baseline and targets should be determined by CEO Endorsement.
- Project teams are encouraged to have annual targets when possible. The annual Development Objective (DO) rating, which is submitted to the GEF Secretariat, is based on achievement of indicator targets in the results framework.

Other
- The RF should be aligned with Results Chains (link) and activities in work plan (to be developed later, link).
- The RF should be agreed upon by project partners and relevant stakeholders.
- Data collection methods should consider cost and feasibility. Is there scientific data widely available?
- The cost column in the results framework should inform and align with the M&E budget [link to budget].
- Project partners should be involved in the development of relevant indicators, targets and methods, to ensure targets are realistic and the information can be feasibly collected.
- Key assumptions and risks should be identified and incorporated into the risk analysis table (link). For example, the project assumes that when people are given control over the management of their natural resources and given adequate training or equipment, that they will manage those resources more sustainably. However, there might be unforeseen factors, such as climate change impacting those resources, external demand for those resources, or illegal activity that could impact whether that assumption holds true. In combination with monitoring, a mitigation plan (e.g. training for community patrols to address illegal activity) can help provide a plan B for action to improve the chances of success.

Tracking Tool and Core Indicators

While the projects have specific indicators to measure their success or failure, there are also GEF indicators that are measured and reported to the GEF Secretariat to provide information on the achievement of GEF Global Environmental Benefits in their portfolio. For this reason, it is advised to utilize the GEF tracking tool or core indicators in the Results Framework when possible, to keep the number of indicators to a minimum.

GEF 6
Tracking Tool: The GEF tracking tool is a set of standard indicators for each GEF focal area (i.e., biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, etc.) and programs that help the GEF Secretariat to track and report on progress towards Global Environmental Benefits at the GEF portfolio level. Tracking Tools are required to be completed for GEF 5 and GEF 6 projects.

For full-sized projects (FSPs), tracking tools must be completed three times during the project's life: at CEO Endorsement, at mid-term and at project close. For medium-sized projects (MSPs), tracking tools must be completed twice during the project's life: at CEO Approval and at project completion. See link to access tracking tools and guidelines: ***https://www.thegef.org/gef/tracking_tools.***

GEF 7
GEF Core and Sub-Indicators: For projects under GEF 7, Tracking Tools are to be replaced with core indicators. Additional information will be provided once core and sub indicators are approved.

Step 2: Draft detailed budget

Detailed ProDoc budget
A detailed budget using the template provided is required for the Prodoc. The detailed budget should be structured according to the budget included in the PIF. Therefore, it will be required that each component be budgeted in detail including the Project Management Costs (PMC) (i.e., salaries, travel, workshops, consultants, grants to partners, etc.). Each expense line item within each component will need to be split according to the output toward which it is contributing. The generic detailed budget template here (link) will be modified to include the outcomes and outputs specific to each project. The following points should be considered when developing the detailed budget for the ProDoc:

Budget Variance from PIF	Unless you are budgeting for a child project under a Program, there **should not be more than 5% variance against the component totals included in the PIF** and the component totals in the detailed ProDoc Budget.
Project Management Costs	The **PMC** should never be more than 5% of the total project. (see Eligible Expenses to be budgeted as Project Management Costs).
Project startup and closeout costs	● Projects can opt for a **3-6 month start-up period** to recruit the Project Manager and Finance Manager, before project execution officially begins. Consideration should be given to the budget implications of the startup phase. ● Projects often have a **3-6 month closeout phase**. Associated costs includes the final evaluation, the final project audit, the receipt and review of all sub recipient deliverables, etc. All core staff, and associated expenses, required to complete these activities (including providing comments on the final evaluation) should be budgeted. ● **The startup and the closeout phases should be included in the overall project timeline.** (i.e., if project execution takes 5 years then an additional 9-12 months should be added to the project duration for startup and closeout) This will have been reflected in the PIF.
M&E	Activities associated with **monitoring and evaluation** (link) should be budgeted and represent at least 10% of the overall budget. (see Eligible Expenses to be budgeted as Monitoring and Evaluation)
Executing Partners	The budget should describe the role of executing partners. If a single partner is receiving $300,000 or more, a separate budget detailing the partners' expenses by component and output will also need to be submitted.

Programmatic expenses	If the project is part of a larger program, programmatic expenses should be incorporated into the project budget. This may include travel expenses for a program kickoff workshop, programmatic workshops/meetings, etc.
International Waters Projects	If the project is funded with funding from **International Waters (IW)**, 1% of the total funding from IW should be budgeted to activities that contribute to IW Learn. This could include participation in IW Learn workshops or other activities that contribute to knowledge sharing. (see IW Learn Website http://iwlearn.net/)

In addition to project activities, the following expenses should be included in the budget:

- An **annual audit**.
- A **terminal evaluation** and, if the project is a full-size project (FSP), a **mid-term evaluation**. Please note that the budget for the project evaluations will be held by the WWF GEF Agency. It is expected that the Project Management Team will contribute to the selection of the evaluators that will be contracted directly by the GEF Agency.
- Costs associated with implementing safeguards assessments and mitigation plans to ensure the proposed project is environmentally and socially sustainable.
- The **Gender** Action Plan (link) should be referenced, and any budget implications incorporated.
- Annual reflection exercises to review M&E data with key partners and suggest changes to the project theory of change for adaptive management purposes (e.g. changes to workplan).
- Projects should budget up to 5% of the overall project in each of the components for **adaptive management** (not including PMC). This budget allows for additional costs resulting from unforeseen factors that impact project execution.

The following expenses should NOT be included in the budget. These costs should be included under co-financing:
- Cost recovery for staff not directly responsible for execution.

Budget Notes

Budget notes explain how all cost estimates were derived and justify presented estimates are reasonable and necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project. Budget Notes are included in the ProDoc (link to Budget Notes template).

Co-finance

Co-financing simply refers to the financial value of the project baseline, from which the GEF project is building off.   Co-financing often draws on cash and in-kind support. Cash contributions may include: a) Cost share — current staff time, travel, and other related expenditures not covered by GEF funding; b) Leveraging — resources that support the GEF project baseline or project activities, but are not from GEF funds. In-kind support includes such things as office space, equipment, and other indirect costs.

When defining co-financing with partners, begin with noting the relevant existing work presented in the project baseline and then value the associated cost of that work. The value of these programs (both existing work that the project will need to use to meet project objectives as well as planned government programs over life of the project) can be counted as co-financing.

Note that while GEF requires letters of co-financing, each named partner (see template here), co-financing is not a legally-binding agreement nor directly audited. Co-financing cannot be counted twice by different GEF projects. It is important to remember that GEF expects co-financing for all aspects of the project, including project management and that overall co-financing cannot be decreased from the total included in the PIF.

The WWF GEF Agency Project Manager can assist with assessing co-finance opportunities.

Step 3: Complete draft ProDoc and CEO Endorsement Document for Phase 4

After following the processes laid out in *ProDoc Phase 4: Safeguards and Finalize*, the Project Development Team can begin to draft corresponding sections of the **ProDoc**. Please remember this is an iterative process, and these sections will be revised multiple times based on (1) feedback from the project manager, and (2) feedback from stakeholder engagement and key partners (e.g., executing partners, government, staff leading child projects within the same program).

Finalize Section 2: GEF Intervention Strategy
Based on any safeguards assessments (if relevant), as well as considerations of the project budget (and whether that impacts any strategies or activities planned), the Project Development Team can finalize *Section 2.2: Project Strategies and Expected Results*.

Section 5: Environment and Social Safeguards
Summarize the results of any required safeguards processes under *Section 5: Environment and Social Safeguards*.

Section 7: Monitoring and Evaluation
Based on the M&E budget, Results Framework, and discussions around M&E planning, the Project Development Team may write *Section 7: Monitoring and Evaluation* according to the attached guidance.

Section 8: Project Financing and Budget
Section 8: Project Financing and Budget is based the detailed budget (excel). A narrative description should be described in this section. See attached guidance.

Section 9: Technical Appendices
All remaining technical appendices may be drafted, or if already completed (such as conceptual model, Results Chains, site selection criteria), consolidated. See attached guidance for suggested appendices. Additional Appendices may be added as needed.

Once the ProDoc is complete, the **CEO Endorsement Template** can be drafted. The WWF GEF ProDoc was developed to allow significant amounts of the ProDoc information to be included in the CEO Endorsement. The text for each relevant section should not be simply copied, but instead be a concise statement with reference to additional material cited in the ProDoc.

**Please note the CEO Endorsement Template can be drafted here, or following the validation workshop [link] to ensure all information is agreed upon and reduce duplicating the transfer of information.

ProDoc Phase 5: Submit

Phase page: Introduction

Once a project has been fully designed and detailed in the ProDoc and CEO Endorsement Template, the project should be validated with key partners to ensure support for the project.

A WWF GEF Agency Upstream Review will identify any last changes that are needed before project submission. A final formal review will ensure the project documents are ready for submission.

Documentation submitted to the GEF includes:
- **Project Document (ProDoc)**— the ProDoc is a WWF GEF Agency template. It is the "business plan" of the GEF project, and details the project strategy and information needed for successful project delivery.
- **CEO Endorsement Request Document**—a GEF template that presents the project at a high level (e.g., summarizes specific information presented in the ProDoc).
- **Tracking Tools (GEF 6)/Core Indicators (GEF 7)**—The GEF Tracking Tool is a set of standard indicators for each GEF focal area that helps the GEF Secretariat track and report progress at the GEF portfolio level. A Tracking Tool must be submitted per project focal area (e.g., if a project is funded under the biodiversity and climate change focal areas, a tracking tool for biodiversity and climate change must be submitted). An explanation for Core indicators will be provided once GEF 7 begins.
- **Co-financing Commitment Letters**—Each co-financing source must sign a letter (template provided) that states the amount of funding that will be provided, and the component(s) that the funding corresponds to. During execution, co-financing sources will need to report on their commitments each year.

While the project is under review by the GEF Secretariat and GEF CEO, the Executing Agency can start preparing for execution. These preparations and associated documentation are needed for Agency Approval [link]—the last step before execution of activities may begin.

Step 1: Validation Workshop

Once the ProDoc is nearly completed, it is best practice to hold a final validation workshop with all the project partners involved in the project's development. The goal of the ProDoc validation workshop is to finalize all the key elements of the project design and secure agreement and support for the project by key partners. The validation workshop can also achieve the following additional functions:

- Serve as a forum to finalize conversations on co-financing and budget with key project partners;
- Explain next steps in the GEF project cycle, including drafting grant agreement, agency approval, and project implementation;
- Managing expectations around timing and funding;
- Initiate or conclude the process of GEF OFP ProDoc review by the relevant government ministry, depending on the OFP internal process in country. At a minimum, a copy of the ProDoc and CEO Endorsement document should be sent to the OFP prior to submission.

Participation at a validation workshop should be limited to project partners that have had an active role in the project development to date and/or are receiving GEF funding during execution. This may include: the Project Development Team, executing partners, relevant government ministries, and the OFP.

Step 2: Submit ProDoc Package

A full proposal package is considered complete when the following documents are completed and approved: (a) WWF GEF Project Document; (b) GEF Request for CEO Endorsement/Approval Template; (c) GEF Focal Area Tracking Tool(s), and; (d) Letters of Commitment from all co-financing partners .

The **WWF GEF Agency** review follows the same format as the review done prior to PIF/PFD submission:
> **Upstream Review:** The WWF GEF Agency will review the ProDoc package to ensure: a) alignment with GEF objectives and policies; b) compliance with WWF GEF policies and procedures, and; c) quality and GEFability of the document. The upstream review will provide comments for detailed revisions of the PIF/PFD.

> **Formal Review**: The formal review takes place once all revisions are incorporated, and the full ProDoc package is ready for submission. The formal review will typically consist of minimal changes, and ensures that all previous comments have been addressed.

Government and partner sign-off:
- Before submission to the GEF Secretariat, the ProDoc package should be sent around to partners and relevant government ministries (including the OFP) for final sign-off.

GEF Secretariat Review
Once the ProDoc package is approved by the WWF GEF Agency and signed-off by partners and government, it will go to the GEF Secretariat for technical clearance. Revisions may be (and usually are) requested by the GEF Secretariat through a formal Review Sheet (see attachment). There may be multiple reviews from the GEF Secretariat. Each comment must be addressed in the ProDoc and CEO Endorsement Document in blue text, with a short description provided in the response matrix noting the corresponding page numbers where adjustments were made.

Questions asked during the review by both the WWF GEF Agency and GEF Secretariat include (for a full list of review questions, see attachments below):
- If there are any changes from that presented in the PIF, have justifications been provided?
- Is the project structure/ design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?
- Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?
- Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience?)

Once technically cleared by the GEF Secretariat, **final approval** takes place:
- For standalone projects, a technically cleared project will be sent to the CEO for formal approval.
- For programs and child project annexes, the ProDoc package is circulated to Council for comment (4 weeks). Changes may be requested to the project documents. Once the project passes Council inspection, the technically cleared project will be sent to the CEO for formal approval.

All submitted GEF project documents are public. The last step before execution of activities may begin is Agency Approval (link).

Agency Approval

Phase page: Introduction

Once a project achieves CEO Endorsement, WWF GEF Agency finalizes with the Executing Agency all necessary conditions for contracting the project execution.

Step 1: Agency Approval Process

Prior to contracting, some documentation may be needed for Agency Approval, including:

- **Due diligence completed**—due diligence assessments completed with the Executing Agency (link)
- **Safeguards disclosure completed**—(link)
- **Baseline data for Results Framework completed**—any pending baseline data should be gathered and included in a final and approved Results Framework
- **Draft/Final Project Management Unit Terms of Reference (TOR's)**—TORs must be drafted for all proposed PMU staff. Sample TORs are provided for a Project Manager, M&E Officer, Project Coordinator, and Finance and Administration Officer below.
- **TOR for Project Steering Committee and members**—Sample TORs are provided below.
- **Any EA negotiations completed**
- **Project is operational**

Additional steps or documentation may be requested by the Project Manager. Completing the above preconditions can take place while the project is under review for CEO Endorsement to ensure a quick execution start date.

Grant (Execution) Agreement
The WWF GEF agency and lead Executing Agency will negotiate the contracting and funding terms of the project. The template below includes the standard deliverables listed in the Grant Agreement. Further information regarding the standard deliverables can be found under the Deliverables Section [link to Deliverables Section].

Execution

Phase page: Introduction

Project execution is the final stage of the GEF project cycle, and is the result of all key decisions and plans made during the project development process. Project execution begins when the team responsible for managing the project (the Project Management Unit) is nominated and recruited, and the spending of GEF funds on project activities begins.

The Project Execution section of Tracks will cover:
- Roles and Responsibilities (Implementation versus Execution)
- Inception Workshop
- Annual Workplan and Budget
- Project Progress Report
- Quarterly Financial Report
- Mid-Term and Terminal Project Evaluations
- Project Implementation Support Missions
- Project Implementation Report
- GEF Focal Area Tracking Tools / GEF Core and Sub-Indicators
- Project Closeout Report

Step 1: Inception Workshop

The Inception workshop takes place after the grant is signed between the WWF GEF Agency and the Executing Agency, and the PMU staff have been contracted. The Inception Workshop the official launch of the project. At the request of government authorities, an official ceremony may take place.

The WWF GEF Agency will ensure that the project management unit (PMU) staff have a clear understanding the mutual working relations.

It is also common to hold the first meeting of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) immediately following the inception workshop. This first meeting should be used to review the PSC's Terms of Reference, and to secure approval or a no-objection to the project annual workplan and budget and any other key project documents.

Step 2: Reporting Responsibilities

Sub-step/box: Annual Workplan and Budget (AWP&B)

Teaser text (description of box):
Deliverable: AWP&B, submitted annually
Responsible: PMU
Submitted to: WWF GEF Agency

One of the key documents used to track GEF project progress is the Annual Workplan and Budget (AWP&B). The AWP&B plans the specific activities and associated budget in advance of each project year, and then tracks progress against annual targets to ensure timely delivery and appropriate spending of funds.

The **Project Implementation Rating** is calculated based on progress against the work plan targets (% average activities achieved). This rating is sent to the GEF Secretariat annually, starting after the first year of the project.

Developing the Annual Work Plan and Budget

The WWF GEF Agency shall provide an AWP&B template in advance of project inception. Prior to the start of each project year (including prior to inception), the AWP&B is developed by the project team. The WWF GEF Agency can assist project teams with its development. The AWP&B should be closely aligned with the project results framework and estimated budget presented in the approved ProDoc. It should be adjusted to reflect lessons and recommendations that are identified in: M&E data, the annual reflection exercise/workshop, project progress reports, the mid-term project evaluation and/or from Project Implementation Support Mission Reports.

The AWP&B is reviewed and approved/given a no-objection by the Project Steering Committee and the WWF GEF Agency annually, per the project grant agreement.

Deliverable: Project Progress Report, submitted bi-annually (every 6 months)
Responsible: PMU
Submitted to: WWF GEF Agency

The Project Progress Report (PPR) is a WWF GEF reporting requirement used to track GEF project progress on a six-month basis. The due dates for the PPR are listed in the project grant agreement. The WWF GEF Agency will provide the PPR template to the Project Management Unit, it is also available here [link].

The 6-month and annual PPR must be filled out by the PMU, with descriptions on:
- The results and impacts achieved to date, with reference to the results framework
- Progress against the Annual Work Plan and Budget, including budget expenditure and whether activities are being executed on time
- Lessons learned
- Project strengths and challenges
- Changes to the project strategy, and associated adaptive management measures
- Progress on gender mainstreaming methods and indicators (if relevant)

The annual PPR is a cumulative document, meaning it should reflect the full project year. Unlike the 6-month PPR, the annual PPR requires both the updated Results Framework and self-evaluation ratings. These ratings include:
1) **Implementation Progress Rating**—success in achieving the project work plan
2) **Development Objective Rating**—achievement of the Project Objective(s) and Outcome indicator targets, as written in the Results Framework
3) **Project Risk Rating**—analysis of project risks and associated mitigation measures

WWF GEF rating criteria can here (link).

Reporting to GEF

The PPR is the main document used by the WWF GEF Agency to track project results. The PPR is used during the WWF GEF Agency Project Implementation Support Mission to measure impact. The PPR is also used by the WWF GEF Agency to produce the GEF Secretariat required Project Implementation Report (PIR) – the only annual project report sent and reviewed by the GEF Secretariat that is presented in aggregate to the GEF Council.

Teaser text (description of box):
Deliverable: Financial Report, submitted quarterly
Responsible: PMU
Submitted to: WWF GEF Agency

The Quarterly Financial Report (QFR) is the main financial report sent from the project management unit to the WWF GEF Agency every three months while the project is under execution. The QFR tracks project spending against the Annual Workplan and Budget (AWP&B). The QFR is also used to manage project cash requests to ensure consistent flow of funds into the project during execution.

The specific schedule for when the QFR is due is listed in the project grant agreement. The WWF GEF Agency will provide the QFR template [link].

Sub-step/box: Mid-term Evaluation & Terminal Evaluation

Teaser text (description of box):
Deliverable: Mid-term (required for Full sized projects) and terminal evaluation
Responsible: Independent consultant, typically managed by WWF GEF Agency
Submitted to: WWF GEF Agency and GEF Independent Evaluation Office

As publicly funded projects, all GEF projects must be evaluated by independent third-party experts. The function of the evaluation is to validate project results, ensure proper compliance with GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency policies and procedures, and to provide recommendations to improve current and future project performance. Once finalized, all project evaluations are to be considered public documents and are submitted to the GEF Independent Evaluation Office for a final review.

Full-sized Projects are required to conduct a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) at the half-way point of the project, and a Terminal Evaluation. Medium sized projects are only required to conduct an independent Terminal Evaluation. The terminal evaluation must be submitted within six months of the project close.

The WWF GEF Agency is responsible for the evaluation process but requires the logistical support of the executing agency/project management unit to facilitate. The project budget covers evaluation expenses; the project grant agreement explains the specific requirements, as well as the roles and responsibilities, for conducting project evaluations. The WWF GEF Agency maintains templates and guidance for the evaluation process.

Deliverable: Project Implementation Supervision Mission Report (PrISM)
Responsible: WWF GEF Agency
Submitted to: PMU, OFP, and partners

The GEF Secretariat requires GEF agencies to conduct a Project Implementation Support Mission (also known as a supervision mission) at least once per year, or more frequently if necessary, to ensure successful project delivery. The objectives of the mission include:

- Track project progress per GEF Focal Area Tracking Tools, project monitoring plans, and semi-annual WWF GEF Project Progress Reports (TPRs);
- Provide necessary project assistance (technical, financial, project management, other);
- Support development of project mitigation plans for underperforming projects as necessary (based on GEF Independent Evaluation Office project ratings);
- Brief relevant country GEF Operational Focal Points (OFPs) on project status;
- Other support as necessary.

The Project Implementation Support Mission team consists of at least one member of the WWF GEF Agency Management Unit and technical staff focusing on project results, finance and administration, safeguards, gender, etc., as necessary. If a Project Implementation Support Mission and mid-term review or terminal evaluation overlap, independent evaluators may also participate as part of the mission team.

As outlined in project grant agreements, the Executing Agency—and more specifically, the PMU—is responsible for organizing and facilitating the WWF GEF Agency's Project Implementation Support Mission logistics, including organization/coordination for: (a) overall mission itinerary; (b) meeting(s) with country OFPs and other key stakeholders; (c) field visit(s) to project sites, and; (d) other specific support as necessary.

Following a Project Implementation Support Mission, the mission team (WWF GEF Agency) will produce a Project Implementation Support Mission Report (PrISM) that summarizes the observations and recommendations for the Project Management Unit (PMU) and executing partners to ensure successful project execution. Reports are drafted in English and are considered public documents upon completion.

Deliverable: PIR, submitted to the GEF annually
Responsible: WWF GEF Agency
Submitted to: GEF Secretariat

The Project Implementation Report (PIR) is an annual report required by the GEF Secretariat to track progress of all GEF projects under execution. Submission of the PIR is the responsibility of the WWF GEF Agency.

The information reported in the PIR closely mirrors the internal WWF GEF Project Progress Report (PPR), including: (1) an annual update on technical project results against the project's results framework, and; (2) GEF Agency-assessed project ratings. As with the PPR, the GEF requests the following ratings for each project:

1) **Implementation Progress Rating**—success in achieving the project work plan
2) **Development Objective Rating**—achievement of the Project Objective(s) and Outcome indicator targets, as written in the Results Framework
3) **Project Risk Rating**—analysis of project risks and associated mitigation measures

The criteria used by the WWF GEF Agency to rate projects is included here [link]. Information from previous PPR's inform both the annual update and the project ratings submitted to the GEF. Projects with sub-optimal project ratings are required to develop mitigation plans to get the project back on track.

The GEF Secretariat aggregates all the PIRs received each year into annual corporate scorecards presented to the GEF Council for review. The GEF Council may inquire about underperforming projects at any time.

Deliverable: Tracking tool for relevant focal areas
Medium sized project: Submitted at CEO Endorsement and project close
Full sized project: submitted at CEO endorsement, midterm, and close
Responsible: PMU
Submitted to: WWF GEF Agency and GEF Secretariat

Projects funded under GEF 6
Tracking Tool: The GEF Secretariat developed set of standard indicators for each GEF focal area (i.e. biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, etc.) to measure replenishment objectives at a project and an aggregate level. For full-sized projects (FSPs), tracking tools must be completed three times during the project's life: at CEO Endorsement, at mid-term and at project close. For medium-sized projects (MSPs), tracking tools must be completed twice during the project's life: at CEO Approval and at project completion. See link to access tracking tools and guidelines: ***https://www.thegef.org/gef/tracking_tools.***

Projects funded under GEF 7
GEF Core and Sub-Indicators: For projects under GEF 7, Tracking Tools are to be replaced with core indicators. Additional information will be provided once core and sub indicators are approved.

Sub-step/box: Project Closeout Report

Teaser text (description of box):
Deliverable: Project Closeout Report, submitted at project close
Responsible: PMU
Submitted to: WWF GEF Agency

Upon completion of a GEF project, a final project closeout report is required. The Project Closeout Report has a similar structure to the PPR, and highlights project results/successes, reflects on lessons learned, summarizes best practices, provides information on sustainability/exit plans, and identifies areas for follow-up, improvement, or future investment. The Project Closeout Report represents an important knowledge management product.