

# Strengthening Biodiversity in Agriculture, Restoring Ecosystem Resilience, and Empowering IPLCs in Lao PDR

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**  
11793  
**Countries**  
Lao PDR  
**Project Name**  
Strengthening Biodiversity in Agriculture, Restoring Ecosystem Resilience, and Empowering IPLCs in Lao PDR  
**Agencies**  
FAO  
**Date received by PM**  
9/8/2025  
**Review completed by PM**  
  
**Program Manager**  
Benjamin Singer  
**Focal Area**  
Biodiversity  
**Project Type**  
GBFF

PIF

## CEO

### 1. General Project Information

**a) Is the Project Information table correctly filled, including specifying adequate executing partners? b) Are the project tags properly selected, i.e. any tag on 'support to IPLCs' or KMGBF target is justified given the project description.**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26

1. Please add the "Support to IPLC" tag.
2. Please ensure consistency regarding the executing agency (see screenshots below).

Since the PPG stage, two substantive adjustments have been made. First, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) have been merged into the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MoAE), which now serves as the project's Executive Partner. This restructuring strengthens institutional coherence and inter-ministerial collaboration, particularly for integrated biodiversity, agroecology, and One Health priorities. Second, the geographic scope has been refined from the original three-province design, which included Hin Nam No National Park in Khammouane Province, to focus on Xe Pian National Park (XPNP), Beung Kiat Ngong Wetlands (BKN) and the Xe Champhone Ramsar site (XCP) in Savannakhet and Champassak Provinces. This targeted focus reflects their globally significant biodiversity, high potential for IPLC engagement, and strong provincial readiness for implementation.

Project Title:	Strengthening Biodiversity in Agriculture, Restoring Ecosystem Resilience, and Empowering IPLCs in Lao PDR		
Region:	Asia	GEF Project ID:	11793
Country(ies):	Lao PDR	Type of Project:	GBFF
GEF Agency(ies):	FAO	GEF Agency Project ID:	11605
Project Executing Entity(s):	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	Project Executing Type:	Government
GEF Focal Area (s):	Biodiversity	Submission Date :	9/18/2025

2025/12/06 Thank you. Both points are cleared.

Agency Response

1. Support to IPLC has been tagged as advised.
2. Executing agency name has been made consistent throughout the document.

**c) Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected with corresponding CCM, CCA, BD and LD benefits made explicit in the project objective, log-frame and/or theory of change?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 Given the climate change mitigation impact potential of this project as indicated in core indicator 6, I recommend adding a CCM Rio Marker.

2025/12/06 Thank you, cleared

Agency Response1. CCM Rio Marker has been added and ExAct calculation has also been uploaded.

## **2. Project Summary**

**a) Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs and other key expected outcomes?**

**b) Does the summary capture the essence of the project?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 Please add the expected contributions to Global Environmental Benefits.

2025/12/06 Thank you, cleared.

Agency ResponseAdditional text on GEBs has been added to the project summary.

## **3. Project Description Overview**

**a) Is the project objective statement concise, clear and measurable?**

**b) Are the components, outcomes, and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?**

**c) Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and M&E included within the project components and budgeted for?**

**d) For multi-Trust Fund projects with GEFTF financing, are the GEFTFT Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**

**e) Is the PMC equal to or below 10% (for projects with GEF project financing less than or equal to \$2 million) or 5% (for projects above \$2 million)? If above, is the justification acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

## **Project Outline**

### **4. CHANGES COMPARED to PPG REQUEST**

**4.1 Are changes to the project design, including to elements put forward in the PPG request to meet GBFF selection criteria, been described and justified. And are they acceptable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

## **5 B. Project Rationale**

**a) Is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective and adequately addressed by the project design?**

**b) Have the role of stakeholders, incl. the private sector and local actors in the system been described and how they will contribute to GEBs and other project outcomes? Is the private sector seen mainly as a stakeholder or as financier?**

**c) If this is a blended finance project under GBFF Action Area 4, is there a description of how the project and its financial structure are addressing financial barriers?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 Given how critical it seems to be for this project, please explain what "One Health" is. Is it about human health? How connected is it to biodiversity?

2025/12/06 Thank you. This is cleared

### Agency Response

According to World Health Organization, "One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems. It recognizes that the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and interdependent". In short it connects human health and biological resources we depend on, and wider ecosystem and environment (thus is directly linked to biodiversity as well).

In this project, One Health will be operationalized for three project sites where human settlements, agricultural activities abut with forest, wetland landscapes that are protected for biodiversity. These areas have high risk of zoonotic diseases and pathogen spillover through human-wildlife-livestock interfaces. The project will support the establishment of One Health coordination mechanisms and platforms building on ongoing national initiatives such as the recent One Health Situational Analysis workshop and the development of the National Wildlife Disease Surveillance Network, which aims to integrate human health, animal health, wildlife, and environment sectors through both national policy frameworks and on-the-ground monitoring and response. To highlight the importance of "One Health" and its connection between human, livestock, wildlife and environment, we also integrated above explanations in second and third paragraph of Project Rationale, B.1. Country Context section.

### 6 B. Project Description

**6.1 a) Is there a concise theory of change (a narrative and a diagram) that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements are contributing to the objective, the identified causal pathways, the focus and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they provide a robust approach? Are underlying key assumptions listed?**

**b) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on previous and ongoing investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?**

**c) Are the project components (interventions and activities) described, proposed solutions, critical assumptions, and risks properly justified? Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other options?**

**d) Incremental/additional cost reasoning: Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12? Has the baseline scenario and/or associated baseline projects been described? Is the project incremental reasoning provisioned (including the role of the GEF)? Are the global environmental benefits identified?**

**e) Other Benefits: Are the socioeconomic benefits resulting from the project at the national and local levels sufficiently described?**

**f) Is the financing presented in the annexed financing table adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives? Are items charged to the PMC reasonable according to the GEF guidelines?**

**g) How does the project design ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers and adaptive management needs and options?**

**h) Are the relevant stakeholders (including women, IPLCs, private sector, CSOs) and their roles adequately described within the components?**

**i) Gender: Does the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities and have these been taken up in component design and descriptions?**

**j) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communications adequately described?**

**k) Policy Coherence: Have any policies, regulations, or subsidies been identified that could counteract the intended project outcomes? How will that be addressed?**

**l) Transformation and/or innovation: Is the project going to be transformative or innovative? Are the specific levers of transformation identified and described? Does it explain scaling up opportunities?**

**m) For blended finance project only, is the financial structure adequately explained?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26

1. The TOC diagram is blurry and difficult to read. Please upload a sharper version.
2. What are "biodiversity-positive incentive schemes"? Are they financing mechanisms? I note the inclusion of PES and eco-tourism as examples but this remains vague. Maybe rename them "sources of income"?
3. Output 2.1.3:
  - Does this output focus on value chains or on "incentive mechanisms" or both? If so, what are incentive mechanisms?
  - Will market studies be included to assess demand for specific products?
  - Are value chains going to be established or further developed, or both?
  - One major bottleneck for developing value chains is limited access to capital for SMEs. Does this project try to address this (e.g., through an on-granting mechanism or facilitating access to credit)?
4. Output 2.1.5: what are "IPLC-led One Health measures"?
5. Output 3.1.1. Who are the targeted users of the knowledge platform? What is the aim of establishing a knowledge platform, apart from (obviously) facilitating access to knowledge?
6. Outcome 3.1 targets: what is the frequency of the 2,500 user target? 2,500 users per day? Per year?
7. Please ensure that all outputs from knowledge and learning activities capture lessons learned and best practices on advancing inclusion/gender equality and disseminated widely. Under Monitoring and Evaluation, please specify that gender-specific results, including on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, will be included in PIRs, MTR and TE.

2025/12/06

- 1-2. Thank you, cleared.
3. Thank you. Please add this information with the level of detail provided in the review sheet to the CEO Endorsement Request.
4. Thank you, cleared.
5. Thank you. Please add this explanation to the CEO endorsement request.
- 6-7. Thank you, cleared.

2025/12/23 Thank you, cleared.

## Agency Response

### Response to comments from 2025

3. We have added text under Output 2.1.3 to reflect our previous response to a review comment.
5. Output description under 3.1.1 has been updated.

1. A higher resolution TOC has been uploaded.

2. In this project, biodiversity-positive incentive schemes refer to institutional mechanisms such as PES frameworks, certification programs, or eco-tourism benefit-sharing arrangements that encourage and reward biodiversity-friendly practices. While they may be supported by financing mechanisms, their primary function is to create enabling conditions at national and sub-national levels that motivate IPLCs to sustain biodiversity-positive livelihood and sources of income. Component 1 focuses on institutionalizing these schemes, while Component 2 supports IPLCs in developing on-the-ground livelihoods that can be sustained through them. The integration of the incentives at the village level will also be supported by value chain studies to assess biodiversity benefits, market demand and local feasibilities.

3. Output 2.1.3 focus on both Value Chains and Incentive mechanisms, A value chain study will first be undertaken to identify products or services (e.g. NTFPs, eco-tourism, agroforestry) that IPLCs can provide without harming local biodiversity, and to assess demand and feasibility. Building on this, incentive mechanisms at national and sub-national levels (such as PES, certification schemes, eco-tourism revenue-sharing, or subsidies) will be applied to promote these value chains and create the enabling conditions needed for their long-term sustainability. Community consultation, capacity building and facilitation of market linkages will be included under the output 2.1.3.

- Output 2.1.3 will include value chain study that assess market demands and feasibility of products or services.

- The project aims to design and establish pilot value chain models as an initiative. However, the knowledge platform to be developed under Outcome 3 can play a role as a database for further expansion of value chains either in pilot models of project sites or in new areas.

- The project aims to design and establish pilot value chain models as an initiative. However, the knowledge platform to be developed under Outcome 3 can play a role as a database for further expansion of value chains either in pilot models of project sites or in new areas.

- Thank you for the valuable comment and for highlighting the importance of improving access to capital for SMEs. We fully recognize this as a critical enabling condition for value chain development.

- The project will not establish a separate on-granting mechanism but will instead build on and strengthen existing provincial SME support structures. In particular, Lao SME Service Centers are already established in both Savannakhet and Champasak provinces under the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI). These centers provide business advisory services, capacity building, and facilitation for SMEs to access financing through existing mechanisms such as the SME Promotion Fund and local financial institutions. The project can therefore facilitate access to existing credit and financial support mechanisms in close coordination with these SME Centers. We will make sure provincial SME Centers are included among key agencies in the implementation of value-chain-related activities, particularly under Output 2.1.3 (Biodiversity-positive/agroecological value chains established and scaled), to ensure that SMEs in project landscapes are better connected to advisory services, finance opportunities, and market linkages. Additionally, we also acknowledged the ADB's Climate-Friendly Agribusiness Value Chains Sector Project, an active initiative overlapping our project site in Savannakhet province, which also supports SME participation in climate-resilient and inclusive agribusiness value chains. To highlight this, the last sentence in Section C.2 Output 2.1.3 description in project proposal draft is edited to highlight SME support. The project will coordinate with provincial Small and Medium Enterprises Service Centers to facilitate market linkages, branding, and product development and to strengthen the commercial viability of biodiversity-positive products while reinforcing conservation outcomes and co-benefits.

4. By " IPLC led One health measure" we mean IPLC community-driven practices and governance actions that reduce human?wildlife?livestock interface health risks, integrate traditional ecological knowledge, and link local monitoring to national wildlife disease surveillance systems. These measures may include village biosecurity practices, community-based wildlife and livestock health monitoring and patrolling, rapid reporting, diagnostics and containments.

5. For 3.1.1 The target users include IPLCs, farmers, ministries (MoAE, MoH, MAF), provincial and district authorities, academia, and development partners. Beyond access, the platform aims to institutionalize biodiversity and health data flows between community and national levels, support policy and reporting processes, strengthen IPLC knowledge exchange, and provide an evidence base for adaptive management, restoration planning, incentive schemes, and zoonotic risk surveillance.

6. The output target is cumulative, and to be achieved by the end of the project (2029). The project aims to have at least 2,500 distinct users actively accessing and contributing to the national digital knowledge platform cumulatively by 2029. We also updated the text to clarify this.

7. We confirm that all outputs from knowledge and learning activities will explicitly capture lessons learned and best practices on advancing inclusion and gender equality, and these will be disseminated widely through the project?s knowledge platform, peer-learning exchanges, and reports. The Gender Action Plan will be used to make sure the project activities and outputs reflect gender-specific results for Monitoring and Evaluation. It will be tracked and reported in the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), and Terminal Evaluation (TE).

We have also added a brief sentence in M&E Annex N highlighting consideration of gender disaggregated findings and lesson learned.

## **6.2 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project**

**a) Are the institutional arrangements, including potential executing partners, outlined on regional, national/local levels and a rationale provided? Has an organogram and/or funds flow diagram been included?**

**b) Comment on proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception). Is GEF in support of the request?**

**c) Is there a description of coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF and non-GEF financed initiatives (e.g., government, other bilateral/multilateral ).**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 In section C.7, figure 2 seems to be missing.

2025/12/06 Thank you, this is cleared.

Agency Response1. Figure 2 has been added

## **6.3 GEF Core indicators and GBFF indicators**

**a) Are the identified GBFF and relevant GEF core indicators calculated using the methodology and adhering to the overarching principles included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01)?**

**b) Are the project's targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through GBFF indicators, relevant GEF core indicators, and additional listed outcome indicators) reasonable and achievable?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 Please upload the CC mitigation calculations (e.g. as an ExACT spreadsheet).

2025/12/06 Thank you. This is currently under review and any comments will be sent separately so as to avoid delaying the review further.

2025/12/23 Thank you for your patience. As communicated separately, this is cleared.

Agency Response<sup>1</sup>. ExAct has been uploaded in Document section

#### 6.4 Risks

**a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? Is there any omission?**

**b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?**

**c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 2025/09/26 Cleared

Agency Response

#### 7 C. Alignment with Programming Strategies, Country/Regional Priorities

**7.1 a) Is the project adequately aligned with the GBFF Action Areas and, for MTF projects, with Focal Area objectives?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 Under the Action Area 4 description is a mention of biodiversity credits. I could not locate this in the project description. If one of the aims of this project is to explore or establish biodiversity credits, please add this to the project description.

2025/12/06 Thank you. Please make sure to explain this in the CEO endorsement request and to provide detail on the activities which will contribute to laying the groundwork for a biodiversity credit system to be established.

2025/12/23 Thank you, cleared.

Agency Response

Response to comment from 2025/12/06

Thank you. We updated the text for Action Area 4 under section ?D. Alignment with programming strategies and country/regional priorities?, to add details on the contributing activities.

Thank you for the comment. The establishment of biodiversity credits is not a major aim of this project. However, the project will focus on Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) and ecotourism revenues as practical and policy-aligned financing mechanisms that will be supported through capacity building, providing guidelines, and local implementation. These mechanisms represent realistic entry points for strengthening sustainable financing at the landscape level.

While Lao PDR has decree on carbon credit adopted in June 2025, biodiversity credits is yet to be established. Thus, the project will therefore not pilot biodiversity credits but will lay the groundwork for potential future participation in such schemes by improving institutional readiness, data systems, and community capacity in line with current initiatives.



**7.2 Is the project aligned with the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, National Biodiversity Finance Plans, and/or similar instruments to identify national and/or regional priorities. For MTF projects, is the project aligned with other relevant country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and relevant sectors)?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

**7.3 Does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

**8 D. Policy Requirements**

**8.1 Are the Policy Requirement sections completed?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

**8.2 Is the Gender Action Plan uploaded?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

**8.3 Is the stakeholder engagement plan uploaded?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

**8.4 IPLCs:**

**a) Has the amount of GBFF project financing to support actions by IPLCs been sufficiently justified and have changes compared to PPG request stage, if any, been adequately justified?**

**b) If applicable, does Section C 'Project Description' describe the IPLCs who will benefit from the project and detail their role in the project? Have appropriate project tags related to IPLCs been selected?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 There is no explanation as to how the figure of \$800,000 was calculated. In order to provide an informed figure in this section, please proceed as follows:

- Identify IPLCs among the beneficiaries, taking care to use self-identification as a means of identification. Non-indigenous local communities should not be included.
- Identify and cost the activities that support actions by IPLCs, i.e., that empower them and place them in the driver's seat rather than considering them as passive recipients of aid.
- Pro-rate the cost of these activities by the percentage of IPLCs among the project beneficiaries.
- Provide an explanation in the CEO ER of how you arrived at the final figure.

2025/12/06

Thank you very much for having added some explanation. Please provide a summary (1-2 paragraphs max) of the social and cultural makeup of IPLCs in the targeted regions and how they have been involved in designing the project to date.

Please also look out for GBFF guidelines on supporting actions by IPLCs which will be published as an information document for the 5th Council meeting to be held this month. These guidelines will go into effect immediately and I recommend you follow and integrate these guidelines prior to your next submission.

2025/12/23 Thank you, this is cleared.

## Agency Response

### Responses to 2025/12/06

Text has been added under section B2 on ethnic diversity of the project sites.

On involvement on IPLCs on design stage, information has been added to C4 Cross Cutting Considerations under IPLC sub heading.

Across the three project landscapes (XCP, BKN, XPNP), Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) constitute the majority of residents in and around the Ramsar/protected sites. The Annex IPPF specifies the ethnic composition and village counts in each site and sets out FPIC-based self-identification and village-level verification to be completed during Year 1.

Based on budget matrix submitted, we counted only budget lines where IPLCs are empowered as decision-makers or implementers (not passive recipients), including:

? VLUP updates, ecological restoration, and community conservation zone establishment (USD 598,333).

? Community capacity building and workshops (USD 179,000).

In total IPLC-relevant allocation amounts to USD 777,333.

We summed up the budget lines for the above IPLC-empowerment activities, which total approximately USD 777,333. At this stage, reliable disaggregated data on the proportion of IPLCs among project beneficiaries is not yet available, so a pro-rated share cannot be applied. For purposes of continuity, we have retained the USD 800,000 figure used at PPG stage, with the understanding that the final pro-rated figure will be confirmed at Inception once FPIC and self-identification exercises provide verified data on the IPLC proportion in each project site.

## 9 Annexes

### Annex A: Financing Tables

**9.1 GEF Financing Table and Focal Area Elements: Is the proposed GEF financing (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 2025/09/26 cleared

## Agency Response

### 9.2 Source of Funds

**If using GEF TF resources, does the sources of funds table match with the amounts in the OFP's LOE?**

**Note: the table only captures sources of funds from the country's STAR allocation**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 cleared, although the LOE is dated 2026??

2025/12/06 Thanks. That 4 really looks like a 6... cleared...

Agency Response The year on the letter is 2024, and the way the 4 is written can be misunderstood as 6.

**9.3 Confirmed co-financing for the project, by name and type:**

**Noting GBFF does not require but encourages co-financing, are the amounts, sources, and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?**

**e.g. Have letters of co-finance been submitted, correctly classified as investment mobilized or in-kind/recurring expenditures? If investment mobilized: is there an explanation below the table to describe the nature of co-finance? If letters are not in English, is a translation provided?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 2025/09/26 cleared

Agency Response

**Annex C: Project Results Framework**

**9.4 a) Have the GBFF indicators and relevant GEF core indicators been included?**

**b) Have SMART indicators been used; are means of verification well thought out; are the targets appropriate for the total project financing (too high? Too low?)**

**c) Are all relevant indicators sex disaggregated?**

**d) Is the Project Results Framework included in the Project Document pasted in the Template?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 The OHAT indicator lists mid-term and final targets as "X/10". Please revise.

2025/12/06 Thank you for this. If the baseline is unknown, you could say "baseline +3" or "baseline +5". Should you maintain 5/10 as final target, please explain here why you are not aiming for higher.

2025/12/23 Thank you, this is cleared.

Agency Response

**Response to 2025/12/06**

**We will adjust the baseline scores as suggested. Now, we have updated the midterm target as ?at least baseline+2 or higher? and final target as ?at least baseline +4 or higher**

**The One Health assessment is to be commenced every two years. Given that the project will probably only be able to look at one assessment, the targets were decided with national stakeholders.**

We have revised the mid-term and final targets for OHAT indicator in the Annex C.

At the moment, a national assessment has been conducted using One Health Assessment Tool (OHAT) developed by FAO and partners (including WHO, WOA, and UNEP). However, the workshop and assessment report is not published yet and hence the exact baseline score is still unknown.

However, we have set up mid-term and final scores the project aim to contribute to National OHAT assessment planned to be conducted every two years

**Annex D: Status of utilization of PPG**

**9.5 Is the use of PPG attached in Annex: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG) properly itemized according to the guidelines?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 Please list the activities implemented during the PPG phase rather than listing broad categories to better assess the validity of each. Additionally, ?GOE? is not eligible.

2025/12/06 Thank you, cleared.

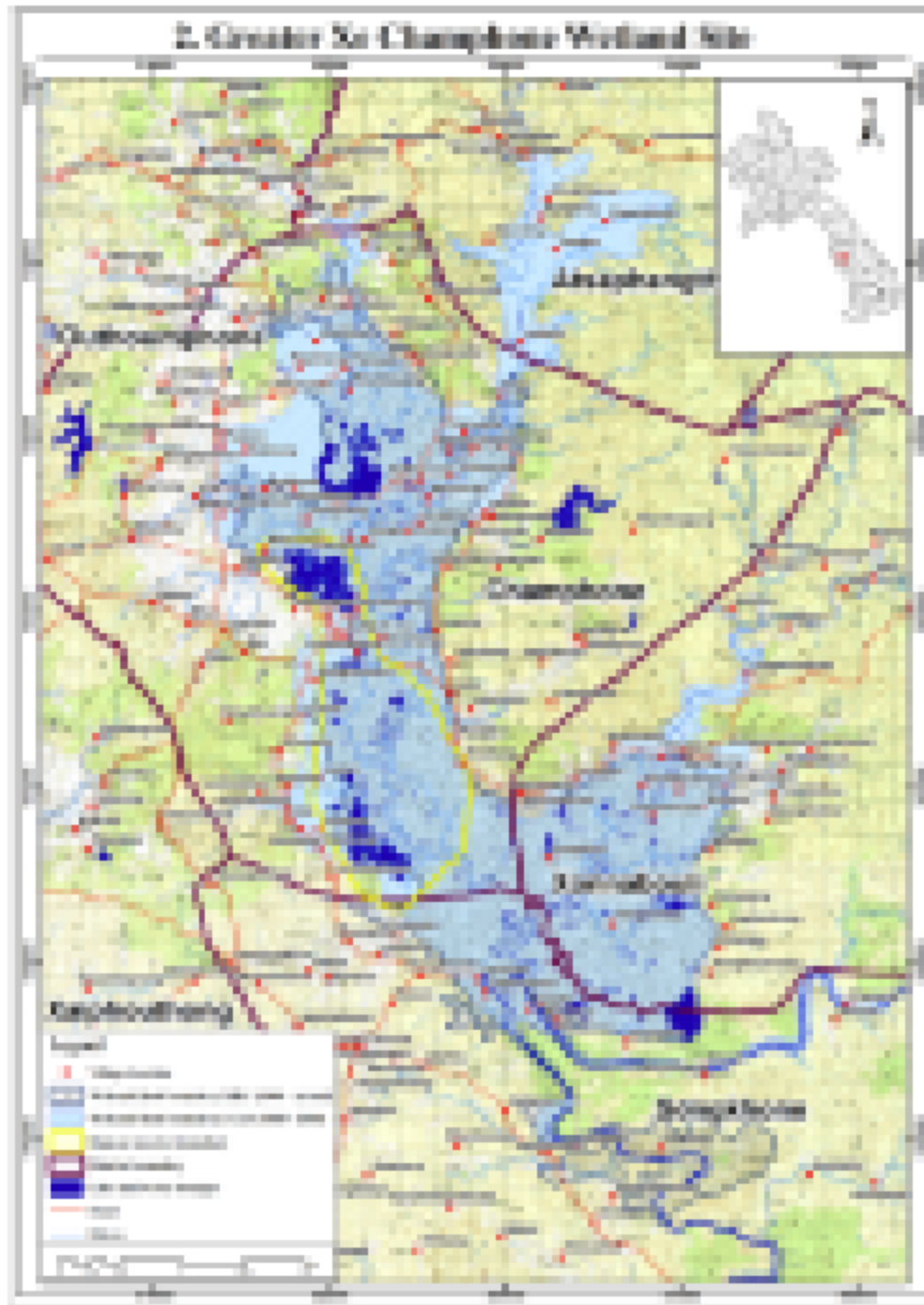
Agency Response Updated Status of PPG utilization has been provided.

**Annex E: Project map and coordinates**

**9.6 Have geographic coordinates of project locations been entered in the dedicated table? Are relevant illustrative maps included?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 all maps are blurry to a certain extent but the middle two are completely unreadable (see screenshot below). Could you upload again using higher-resolution versions?



2025/12/06

Thank you for these efforts. The uploaded maps are marginally better but still difficult to read. Please add a reference in the CEO ER to the Prodoc, indicating for instance that "these maps are available in higher resolution in Project Document Annex E".

2025/12/23 Thank you, cleared

## Agency Response

Response to 2025/12/06

Reference has been added in CEO ER document to the annex of Agency Project document where higher resolution images are available

Due to system limitations, which does not allow very high resolution maps to be uploaded, we have tried our best to upload an improved resolution map the system has accepted.

### **Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Documentation and Rating**

**9.7 Have the relevant safeguard documents been uploaded to the GEF Portal? Has the safeguards rating been provided and filled out in the ER field below the risk table?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

## Agency Response

### **Annex G: GEF Budget template**

**9.8 a) Is the GEF budget template attached and appropriately filled out incl. items such as the executing partner for each budget line?**

**b) Are the activities / expenditures reasonably and accurately charged to the three identified sources (Components, M&E and PMC)?**

**c) Are TORs for key project staff funded by GEF grant and/or co-finance attached?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 cleared

## Agency Response

### **Annex H: Blended Finance Relevant Annexes**

**9.9 a) Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to assess the following criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments.**

**b) Is the Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request2025/09/26 N/A

## Agency Response

### **Additional Annexes**

### **10. GEFSEC DECISION**

#### **10.1 GEFSEC Recommendation**

**Is the project recommended for approval?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

2025/09/26 This is a good submission with few, if any, major comments. The project scope and expected achievements are modest but commensurate with the scale of funding. We look forward to the resubmission after the comments raised have been integrated.

2025/12/06 I wish to apologize for the delay in reviewing this proposal due to an extended period of heavy workload, and thank the country and agency for their patience. Many thanks for integrating so many of the comments; only a few remain outstanding.

Please note:

1. The ExACT spreadsheet is currently being reviewed. To prevent any further delay, I shall send you any comments separately in the coming days.

2. The guidelines for supporting actions by IPLCs is expected to be published in the coming days here: <https://www.thegef.org/events/5th-gbff-council-meeting#documents>. Please look through it and adapt the CEO endorsement request accordingly prior to the next submission.

2025/12/23 With all comments cleared, I am recommending this project for approval.

#### **10.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency during the inception and implementation phase**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

#### **10.3 Review Dates**

	<b>CEO Approval</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	9/26/2025	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	12/6/2025	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	12/23/2025	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		