



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/PPRC.32/26
2 October 2023

Adaptation Fund Board
Project and Programme Review Committee
Thirty-second Meeting
Bonn, Germany, 10-11 October 2023

Agenda Item 14 b)

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF PROJECT COMPLETION DATE: THE SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY INSTITUTION (SOUTH AFRICA)

Background

1. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board), during its twenty-fourth meeting, approved a five-year project titled “Building Resilience in the greater uMngeni Catchment, South Africa”, submitted by the South Africa National Biodiversity Institution (SANBI), a national implementing entity of the Adaptation Fund, for a requested amount of US\$ 7,495,055 (Decision B.24/14).
2. The overall objective of the project is to incorporate climate adaptation response strategies into local practices so that assets, livelihoods and ecosystem services are protected from climate induced risks associated with expected droughts, seasonal shifts and storm-related disaster events. The project includes three main components: i) Providing small grants to vulnerable communities that deliver tangible and sustainable benefits; ii) Empowering local institutions to identify and implement adaptation response measures; and iii) Compiling and sharing lessons learned to facilitate future scaling up and replication of small grant-financing approaches.
3. As mandated by the decision, an agreement was prepared and signed between the Board and SANBI on 28th October 2014 and the project started implementation on 12th November 2015.
4. To date, the project implementing entity has submitted six project performance reports (PPRs). A total project funding of US\$ 7,495,055 including the project fees, has been disbursed by the trustee, which corresponds to 100% of the approved grant.
5. In May 2019, the first regular no-cost extension of the project completion date from 30 September 2020 to 31 March 2022 was granted based on the Board Decision B.33-34/6. A second no-cost extension of the project completion date from 31 March 2022 to 30 March 2023, due to implementation delays incurred under the COVID-19 pandemic, was approved by the secretariat. A third no-cost extension of the project completion date was granted based on the Board Decision B.39-40/2, due to COVID-19 restrictions and delays and challenges associated with the procurement of services through the Executing Entity.
6. In September 2023, SANBI submitted a request for a regular six-months no-cost extension of the project completion date from 30th September 2023 to 31st March 2024 (see annex 1). The reasons for this request, as outlined in the memo shared by SANBI, are multi-faceted, including: i) protracted delays and challenges associated with the procurement of services through the Executing Entities; ii) challenges and changes within the Executing Entities’ internal systems; and iii) delays related to high turnover of high-level staff and political leadership of the Executing Entities.

Secretariat’s review of the request

7. Following a review of the request by the secretariat and considering the explanation provided by SANBI, the secretariat is of the view that this six-months extension request is justified. As evidenced by the memo provided by SANBI (Annex 1), it is noted that this request should provide sufficient time to complete all project activities, organize closure/handover events with beneficiaries, complete the project Terminal Evaluation and other reporting requirements (final PPR, Project Completion Summary and audited financial statements).
8. Finally, the secretariat acknowledges that this no-cost project extension request has been agreed with the Executing Entity, and that the Designated Authority was notified, in accordance with the Adaptation Fund Policy for Project/Programme Delays, as specified in Annex 1.

Recommendation

9. Following the recommendation of the secretariat after its review of the request for an extension of the project completion date submitted by the South Africa National Biodiversity Institution (SANBI) for the project “Building Resilience in the greater uMngeni Catchment, South Africa”, as described in document AFB/PPRC.32/26, the Board may consider and decide to approve the request for a six-months extension of the project completion date from 30th September 2023 to 31st March 2024, for the project “Building Resilience in the greater uMngeni Catchment, South Africa”.

Annex

- 1) Request for a no-cost extension of the project completion date from SANBI for the project “Building Resilience in the greater uMngeni Catchment, South Africa”.

Annex 1: Request for a no-cost extension of the project completion date from SANBI for the project “Building Resilience in the greater uMngeni Catchment, South Africa”

ANNEX A: REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF CONCRETE ADAPTATION PROJECT/PROGRAMME

Request for extension of project/programme completion date

Implementing Entity Name: South African National Biodiversity Institute			
AF Project/programme ID: ZAF/NIE/Water/2013/1			
Project/programme Title: Building Resilience in the Greater uMngeni Catchment			
Country: South Africa			
Project/Programme Approval (date): 10 October 2014			
Expected Project/programme Completion (date):	30 September 2023	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	31 March 2024

Reasons/justifications for the extension of project/programme completion:

SANBI would like to request a further six-month no-cost extension for the project entitled: “Building Resilience in the Greater uMngeni Catchment”.

SANBI anticipates that the implementation of all operational project activities will be close to completion by the current end date of 30 September 2023, and is requesting the additional six months to allow for the finalisation of some of these project activities, and final reporting by Executing Entity and sub-Executing Entity staff.

It is acknowledged that at the time of the previous six-month no-cost extension request (September 2022) it was anticipated that the final reporting on the project would be concluded by the end of September 2023. However, delays in implementing the final set of project activities have resulted in delays in Executing Entity and sub-Executing Entity staff being able to consolidate the final set of results and develop the final reports. These delays have also meant the Terminal Evaluation of the project has not started yet.

As has been reported in previous no-cost extension requests and in the annual Project Performance Reports, the implementation of the project has been behind schedule for a number of years. The primary reason for this slower than anticipated progress has been related to protracted delays and challenges associated with the procurement of services through the Executing Entity, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, and more recently through the sub-Executing Entity, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as delays associated with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The procurement delays have been partly due to challenges and changes within the Executing Entity's and sub-Executing Entity's internal systems, and partly as a result of high turnover in high level staff and political leadership of the Executing Entity. In November 2021 SANBI applied to use the Direct Project Services methodology to undertake procurement of some services on behalf of the Executing Entity. Whilst this procurement was successfully undertaken, it too was delayed. The procurement challenges were further exacerbated by National Treasury regulations which put a moratorium on all Government-led procurement for a period during Year 7 of the project. This came at a critical time for the project, and resulted in the procurement of service providers for Component 2.1 (Built Environment) through the Executing Entity being stalled. That procurement was shifted to the sub-Executing Entity

through a contract amendment. However, this procurement too was delayed for the reasons noted above.

The requested six-month no cost extension will be utilised to:

- Conclude the final project activities that will allow the project to deliver on its targets. This includes finalising the Component 2.1 Built Environment activities, and finalising an agreement with the mandated department (i.e. the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs: Provincial Disaster Management Centre) to sustain the operations of the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System developed through the project. This is the final step in the investment into Component 1 (Early Warning Systems) of the project, and without the extension, there is a risk that core elements of the system will not be operationalised and the overall objective target of ~25,000 vulnerable people to climate driven impacts will not be achieved.
- Hold "handover ceremonies" where the adaptation assets that materialised through the project will be officially handed over to the benefitting communities. This has been requested by the Executing Entity, and will be a ceremonial process through which the political leadership within the District and Local Municipalities will engage directly with community members. Processes to ensure that communities take ownership of the assets have been ongoing since inception, and an administrative asset transfer process will take place in parallel to the ceremonial handover.
- Complete the final reporting of the project, including the Year 8 final technical and financial project reporting to SANBI by the Executing Entity and sub-Executing Entity, the Year 8 Project Performance Report and Project Completion Summary (a Year 9 Project Performance Report will be required as well, but will include only minor additions to the Year 8 report) and the final audits of project expenses of the Executing Entity and sub-Executing Entity.
- Complete the Terminal Evaluation of the project.

It should be noted that the majority of the project's targets have been achieved, and at times exceeded. This final no-cost extension request will enable these results, and those of the final project activities, to be adequately consolidated, reported, evaluated, and shared with the Adaptation Fund.

Implementing Entity certification

This request has been prepared in accordance with Adaptation Fund policies and procedures, has been agreed by participating executing entities, and the designated authority (DA) has been notified.

Name & Signature



Project/programme contact person: Dr Mandy Barnett

Date: (Month, Day, Year) 09/20/2023

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