



AFB/B.46- 47/34
29 May 2026

Adaptation Fund Board

**REQUEST FOR NO-COST EXTENSION OF PROJECT
COMPLETION DATE: SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY
(BENIN, BURKINA FASO, AND NIGER)**

Background

1. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) during its intersessional period between thirty-third and thirty-fourth meeting of the Board, approved a four-year project titled “Integration of Climate Change Adaptation Measures in the Concerted Management of the WAP Transboundary Complex: ADAPT-WAP” submitted by the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) for a requested amount of US\$ 11,536,200 (decision B.33-34/25).
2. The project aims to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and improve the livelihoods of populations affected by climate change within the WAP complex through the establishment of a Multi-Risk Early Warning System and the implementation of concrete adaptation measures. This is to be achieved through interventions that focus on integrating climate change considerations into the management of the WAP complex, designing and implementing a Multi-Risk Early Warning System for droughts, floods, and fires, improving resilience through concrete adaptation actions, and strengthening awareness, communication, and capacity building for the concerted, integrated, and sustainable management of the WAP complex.
3. As mandated by Decision B.33-34/25, an agreement was signed between the Board and OSS in October 2019, and the project started implementation on 21 April 2020.
4. As of May 2026, the project had submitted three Project Performance Reports, all of which had been cleared by the Secretariat. The mid-term evaluation report has also been received and cleared by the secretariat. The full approved amount of US\$ 11,536,200 had been disbursed by the Trustee, representing 100 per cent of project funding.
5. On 2 February 2024, OSS requested direct project services and a first no-cost extension of eighteen months, from 20 April 2024 to 20 October 2025, which the Board approved through Decision B.42-43/3. On 8 July 2025, OSS submitted a second request for a no-cost extension of nine months, from 20 October 2025 to 20 July 2026, which the Board approved through Decision B.44-45/11.
6. The first two no-cost extensions were mainly justified by the delayed operational start caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, administrative and disbursement bottlenecks, the deterioration and persistence of insecurity in the WAP complex and its peripheral areas, delays in mobilizing civil society organizations as an alternative implementation modality, the termination of the agreement with APN in Benin, and changes within the Project Management Units.
7. On 26 May 2026, OSS submitted a request for a third no-cost extension of nine months, proposing to extend the project completion date from 20 July 2026 to 20 April 2027 (see Annex 1).
8. According to OSS, project implementation progressed significantly during the previous extension periods, with the regional entity and the executing entity in Niger having completed all activities under their responsibility. However, implementation remains delayed in Benin and Burkina Faso owing to persistent insecurity, political and institutional instability, procurement failures affecting hydraulic infrastructure works in Benin, capacity constraints affecting the Green Credit mechanism in Niger, and changes within the Project Management Unit in Burkina Faso. OSS indicated that almost all remaining activities have now been launched and that an additional extension is needed to complete delayed activities, deliver all expected

outputs, consolidate the sustainability of project achievements, and ensure attainment of the project's original objectives.

Secretariat's review of the request

9. Following its review of the request and considering the explanation provided by OSS, the Secretariat is of the view that this additional nine-month no-cost extension request is justified. As evidenced by the memo provided by OSS in Annex 1, the extension should provide sufficient time to complete the remaining activities.
10. The Secretariat acknowledges that the Designated Authorities have been notified, in accordance with the amended Policy for Project/Programme Delays, as specified in Annex 1.

Recommendation

11. The Board may wish to consider and approve the request for a nine-month no-cost extension of the project completion date from 20 July 2026 to 20 April 2027 for the project "*Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex: ADAPT-WAP*", as requested by OSS.

Annex

1. Request for an extension of project completion date from OSS, dated 26 May 2026



REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF CONCRETE ADAPTATION PROJECT/PROGRAMME

Request for extension of project/programme completion date

Implementing Entity Name: Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS)					
AF Project/programme ID: AF00000111					
Project/programme Title: Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex: ADAPT-WAP					
Countries: Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger					
Project/Programme Approval (date)	7/15/2019				
Expected Project/programme Completion (date)	04/20/2024	First Revised Completion (date)	07/20/2026	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	04/20/2027

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

<p>The "Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP transboundary complex: ADAPT-WAP" stands as the first regional climate change project for the largest and most ecologically significant continuum of unharmed transboundary ecosystems in the West African savannah belt. The project was designed to be aligned with the sustainable development and climate change adaptation priorities of the three participating countries. It is fully consistent with the transboundary management and development plans for Block W and the national parks of the WAP complex, as well as with national and regional policies, strategies, and priorities related to sustainable development and climate resilience.</p> <p>The project aims, on the one hand, to strengthen the capacities of stakeholders to address climate change impacts and to integrate adaptation measures into development planning at different levels and, on the other hand, to enhance the resilience of ecosystems within the WAP complex and of the most vulnerable local communities through concrete adaptation interventions implemented within a regional framework.</p> <p>The first two no-cost extensions, of 18 months and 9 months respectively, granted to OSS and extending the project completion date to 20 July 2026, were mainly justified by the delayed operational start caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, administrative and disbursement bottlenecks, the deterioration and persistence of insecurity in the WAP complex and its peripheral areas, delays in mobilizing Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as an alternative implementation modality, the termination of the agreement with APN in Benin, and changes within the Project Management Units (PMUs).</p> <p>During these extension periods, project implementation progressed significantly thanks to the corrective measures and adaptive strategies put in place to address the challenges encountered. However, despite this overall progress, the level of implementation varies significantly among the four executing entities,</p>

namely one regional entity and three national entities in the beneficiary countries: Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger.

The regional entity, as well as the executing entity in Niger, have completed and finalized all activities under their responsibility. By contrast, in Burkina Faso and Benin, although notable progress has been made, the overall level of implementation remains relatively low. Most large-scale activities and contracts are still ongoing, with delays mainly due to external factors such as insecurity, political instability, electoral periods, and other contextual constraints.

Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that almost all remaining activities have now been launched. These activities have also generated strong expectations among beneficiary populations, particularly those related to improving access to water.

In this context, the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) obtained Direct Project Services (DPS) from the Adaptation Fund (Decision No. B.42-43/3), following a joint request from the three Executing Entities. This arrangement enabled the Implementing Entity to oversee key procurement processes tailored to country-specific needs and substantially strengthened the operational performance of the Project Management Units (PMUs), particularly in Benin and Burkina Faso.

However, despite the sustained efforts deployed by OSS and the Executing Entities, including the use of CSOs to maintain implementation in insecure areas, the project continues to face major constraints. These challenges justify the need for a third no-cost extension. The main reasons are summarized below:

1. Persistent and unpredictable security situation in the WAP complex and peripheral areas:

The security situation in the WAP complex and surrounding intervention areas remains highly unstable and unpredictable. This has caused major disruptions to several field activities, including access to project sites, deployment of technical teams, supervision missions, and engagement with beneficiary communities.

Although alternative implementation arrangements through local CSOs have been adopted, these conditions continue to significantly slow down progress on the ground. The implementation of the Adapt-WAP Green Credit mechanism has been particularly affected in all three countries. In several areas, its roll-out has had to be slowed down, adjusted, or limited to locations where minimum security conditions could be ensured, thereby delaying the achievement of expected results.

In Niger, this challenge is compounded by significant capacity constraints faced by BAGRI, the partner financial institution responsible for implementing the Green Credit mechanism, in fulfilling its responsibilities as per the signed agreement. This situation has limited vulnerable communities' access to micro-credit opportunities and, consequently, their ability to improve their livelihoods through income-generating activities.

2. Delays in hydraulic infrastructure works in Benin:

In Benin, major delays were recorded in the implementation of hydraulic infrastructure works. These delays were caused, on the one hand, by the need to relocate previously selected sites due to the prevailing security situation and, on the other hand, by the failure of procurement processes on two separate occasions.

Companies have shown reluctance to operate in security-sensitive areas, while those that participated in the bidding processes did not meet the required technical qualifications and quality standards. As a result, no bidder could be retained.

To address this situation, a new approach is being adopted, involving the General Directorate of Water, the institution responsible for national water-related activities, in all stages of implementation. This is being carried out in close coordination with the PMU, local communities, and authorities, with the aim of ensuring the effective execution of this major component.

3. Institutional changes in Burkina Faso:

In Burkina Faso, implementation delays were mainly caused by institutional changes introduced by the Government, including the dissolution of the Ministry of Environment. This led to a transition period during which the new supervisory ministry for the Executing Entity had to be identified, resulting in a temporary suspension of project activities.

Only recently was a decision made to continue implementation through OFINAP, now placed under the authority of the Ministry of Security. While this institutional reconfiguration has allowed activities to resume, it has also contributed to significant delays.

In addition, the PMU experienced a key personnel change with the retirement of the Technical Project Officer. His successor only took office in November 2025, and a transition period was required for the new appointee to become fully familiar with the project's objectives, procedures, and implementation arrangements. This also contributed to delays in execution.

In light with the above, the implementing entity, OSS, is formally requesting an additional no-cost project extension for a period of nine (09) months. This will allow to:

- *Ensure the full completion of activities that have been delayed due to various contingencies;*
- *Guarantee the delivery of all expected outputs,*
- *Consolidate the sustainability of project achievements; and*
- *Ensure the effective attainment of the project's original objectives.*

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 authorities (DA) of the three countries have been notified.



Mr. Nabil BEN KHATRA, Executive Secretary of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) as the Project contact person.

Date: May 26th, 2026

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