

Part I: Project Information		Response
GEF ID		10108
Project Title		Fostering Water Security in the Trifino Region: Promoting the formulation of a TDA/SAP for its transboundary Lempa River Basin
Date of Screening		20-May-19
STAP member Screener		B. Ratner
STAP secretariat screener		Z. Zommers
STAP Overall Assessment		Minor issues
		The tri-national Trifinio Plan has been in existence for over three decades. It is not adequately explained how the proposed project will affect change that is distinct from prior efforts in quality, scale or sustainability. There is no explicit theory of change provided, and it is not sufficiently clear how the national and regional-level objectives integrate with the objective of “building community based ecosystem resilience to climate change.” The PIF claims the Trinational Commission “entirely lacks the institutional, financial, and technical capacity along with an integrated management framework to drive reforms in a holistic manner.” Cost reasoning rests on the likelihood of achieving a transformation, distinct from prior investments, so this needs to be more fully assessed. Transboundary governance benefits are plausible but need to be complemented with indicators to assess the magnitude of associated environmental benefits. Description of stakeholder roles is inadequate, including the opportunity for indigenous communities not only to benefit from services such as education programs but to substantively influence project design. Inadequate indication so far as to how lessons from earlier efforts have been integrated into the project design.
Part I: Project Information	What STAP looks for	Response
B. Indicative Project Description Summary		
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	Yes. Project seeks to reduce stress on transboundary water resources in the Trifinio region by developing a strategic action plan for the River basin and also seeks to build community-based ecosystem resilience.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project’s objectives?	Yes. Activities focus on: 1) improving understanding of environmental issues and water uses; 2) developing an inventory of legislative instruments and ways to enhance cooperation; 3) demonstrating integrated water resource management solutions; 4) water resources monitoring program and decision making tool.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention.	Biodiversity significance well described.
	Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits?	Targeted outcomes include consensus on main environmental transboundary issues, strengthening of cooperation mechanisms, increased understanding of IWRM approaches, and new tools for decision making and enhanced visibility of the project. Regional environmental benefits are clear.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	
Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Organization is clear. Unclear how the “innovative solutions” (Outcome 3) were selected or whether they are the most relevant.

Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
1. Project description. Briefly describe:		
1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes. Good framing in context of water security and ecosystem resilience.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	A detailed description of the area is provided. Problems include unsustainable use of water, ground water pollution, loss of forest cover, land degradation. Barriers include lack of support from authorities, lack of knowledge, limited financial and technical capacity.
	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysis identify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	The baseline includes many different projects and actions. The PIF mentions 17 on-going and completed projects since 1992. The Trifinio Plan has been in existence for over three decades. The PIF notes that past project terminal evaluations encourage identification of financial options, and that local stakeholders be involved. They also mention a lack of strategic vision from the states to formulate policies or a shared management process. Yet it is not adequately explained how the proposed project will affect change that is distinct from prior efforts in quality, scale or sustainability.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	
	For multiple focal area projects:	
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	No explicit theory of change provided. The project aims to enhance tri-national cooperation for the management of water resources; strengthen national and regional institutions, increase their capacity to manage water security and ecosystem challenges and create awareness. It is not sufficiently clear how the national and regional-level objectives integrate with the objective of "building community based ecosystem resilience to climate change."
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	

	· What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	
	· Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	
	· Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	The PIF claims the Trilateral Commission "entirely lacks the institutional, financial, and technical capacity along with an integrated management framework to drive reforms in a holistic manner." Cost reasoning rests on the likelihood of achieving a transformation, distinct from prior investments, so this needs to be more fully assessed.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits, and are they measurable?	Transboundary governance benefits are plausible but need to be complemented with indicators to assess the magnitude of associated environmental benefits. Community-level climate resilience concerns integrated.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	
	Are the global environmental benefits explicitly defined?	
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	
7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up	Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?	Good integration of water security threats framework. Emphasis on financial sustainability, closed-loop sustainable agriculture, and novel approaches to sharing good practices among indigenous communities may be innovative, depending on details of design.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	

1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		
2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities. If none of the above, please explain why. In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Stakeholder identification is very preliminary. NGO co-financing is a positive sign.
	What are the stakeholders' roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?	Description of roles is inadequate, including the opportunity for indigenous communities not only to benefit from services such as education programs but to substantively influence project design. The prior terminal evaluation mentioned in the PIF highlights the importance of involving local communities and points this out as a shortcoming, so lessons and plans for redressing these past failures need to be well specified during project preparation.
3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes/no/ tbd. If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision-making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no /tbd	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Inadequate.
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Gender differentiated risks are not mentioned and generalizations appear unhelpful, such as the assertion that women are not knowledgeable "in economic matters." Further information on risks should be provided.
5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design	Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control?	A variety of risks have been identified; however, the list is inadequate. For example, the climate risk mentioned relates to floods. But climate may also influence the suitability of coffee or other crops grown in the region. This is not mentioned. This should be further assessed in the TDA. Another risk that could be mentioned is lack of political support or engagement. This was mentioned as a barrier and it is not clear how it will be addressed. Other risks such as migration induced by persistent poverty and environmental change should be considered.
	Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project?	
	For climate risk, and climate resilience measures:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will the project's objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures? 	
6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives	Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?	Inadequate indication so far as to how lessons from earlier efforts have been integrated into the project design. Details about other projects are included and feedback and evaluation information provided. Mechanisms for how to feed lessons learned into this project are not clearly articulated.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	
	Is there an adequate mechanism to feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into future projects?	
8. Knowledge management. Outline the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, and how it will contribute to the project's overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	Objective 4 relates to knowledge management. Emphasis appears to be on awareness raising and meteorological information sharing (via the PIACT app). Project preparation should elaborate on plans to test and learn about strategies for addressing the core transboundary governance challenges.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	
STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed	
1. Concur	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. The proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.	

	<p>* In cases where the STAP acknowledges the project has merit on scientific and technical grounds, the STAP will recognize this in the screen by stating that <i>“STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal and encourages the proponent to develop it with same rigor. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design.”</i></p>	
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:</p>	
	<p>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;</p>	
	<p>(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.</p>	
	<p>The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.</p>	
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	<p>STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:</p>	
	<p>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.</p>	