

Part I: Project Information		Response
GEF ID	10161	
Project Title	Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainable Land Management to Improve Livelihoods and Protect Biodiversity in Nauru	
Date of Screening	6-Dec-19	
STAP member Screener	Rosie Cooney	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment		<p>Minor issues to be considered during project design. STAP welcomes the project entitled "Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainable Land Management to Improve Livelihoods and Protect Biodiversity in Nauru" from UNEP. STAP believes this is a generally quite well-planned, clear and focused proposal with a high chance of success. However, STAP advises that there is a need for attention to several points. The language and objectives around biodiversity and ecosystem services is unclear at a number of points. There is a lack of clarity around some outputs and how they contribute to outcomes. Community engagement and mechanisms to gain community support and buy-in could be considerably strengthened. Lessons learned from other projects could be much more clear, explicit and extensive. However, while the GEBs achieved are small in absolute terms they are very important for Nauru, and the rehabilitation of mined lands represents an important innovation with enduring impact. Overall, 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.</p>
Part I: Project Information		
B. Indicative Project Description Summary		
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	The objective is clear "To achieve land degradation neutrality and improve ecosystem services in Nauru through integrated landscape management and conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity". Map showing topside and bottomside would be helpful for reader in understanding the island's situation.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	The planned activities generally appear sound and well-tailored to achieve the objective, although the objective uses the language of ecosystem services, whereas the biodiversity conservation aspects of the proposal does not translate the conserved biodiversity into ecosystem services. This relationship between biodiversity conserved and ecosystem services provided is not made clear. Note that there are inconsistencies between the project indicative description and the later description of components - in the indicative description component 2 has a large capacity-building component and component 4 doesn't, where as in the description of components component 4 is also about capacity-building.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention.	
	Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits?	Yes, while limited in scale they principally encompass biodiversity conservation through improved conservation of threatened and endemic species, and land restoration and sustainable land management. The figure of 500 local people benefiting (p42) is not justified in any way - what is the basis of the reasoning here? Who are they and how will they benefit?
	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?	
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, this is quite clear. It might be helpful to have the map in Fig 6 in main body of proposal for easier understanding of the geophysical context.

	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, this is adequate.
	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?	Yes
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, this is quite clear.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes.
	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;	Yes
	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?	Not explicitly - the project does clarify various earlier efforts that have resulted in little change, but says little about what the lessons from these efforts are. More clarity on this so that this project doesn't fall into the same traps would be very welcome.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	There is no explicit theory of change, and fleshing this out would be helpful.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Regarding the description of components of work, some questions: (i) Note that the legislative change and EIA/SEA are also approaches for mainstreaming biodiversity - this is not being pursued through land use planning alone (arguably LUP alone is not adequate to mainstream biodiversity). (i) in component 2, the land use aims of the restored lands are not made clear. It seems clear these are to be used for agriculture, but it also says the newly restored soils will be planted with seeds that were know to grow there, which would suggest restoring components of native ecosystems. Can this be clarified? (ii) Also, if these lands are all privately owned, what is the role of the landowner here? This is not discussed beyond the brief statements in the project indicative outline that they will be included. (iii) What is the aim of the study to assess the economic impact of degraded land? what is done with the findings and how do they contribute to achieving the objectives? (iv) Re component 3, earlier the project indicates virtually all land is owned freehold - so how will protected areas be established on these lands? If these lands are privately owned, has any consideration been given to more flexible/innovative forms of PA, such as incentive mechanisms for private PAs or community-managed ones, in choosing to establish state-run PAs? (v) While establishing sound management plans is clearly necessary, note that writing something into a plan does not ensure it happens: text such as "The management plans will contain provisions to ensure that encroachment and hunting do not happen in the identified areas" seem to imply that it does. Ensuring these don't happen takes community buy-in and support, as well as the more obvious mechanisms like enforcement (mentioned later). (vi) In component 3 and 4, it would be good to see much more attention to strong community engagement in both planning and implementation of these activities from the outset, to encourage buy-in and durability of the outcomes. Component 4 in particular is rather one-way and top-down, which is unlikely to foster real community support and ownership of the outcomes i.e. rather than just "informing" and "encouraging" the community about or to do certain things, it would be helpful to see this component involving asking them why these practices happen and what they think could reduce them, and asking them what they need to effectively help conserve them.
	· What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	This is reasonably clear, but see above.
	· Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Yes, although little attention to institutional and governance aspects.

	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	No, this is not explicitly addressed.
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?	Yes, this appears sound.
	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?	Yes, and they are measurable.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes, the outcomes are modest in scale, but very important for Nauru, and the investment is relatively modest.
	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?	In assessment of risks the proposal states "Within the process of developing the policy framework and institutional capacity, such as the MLUP, climate change consideration will be taken into account including extreme weather events, especially for drought. In designing integrated land and water management measures, information regarding historical and current rainfall as well as the rainfall variability will be taken into consideration in analyzing viable interventions – i.e. type of vegetation for re-vegetation, etc". It is not very clear exactly how climate change risks are taken into account in developing policy frameworks, and whether future as well as past rainfall patterns are being considered.
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?	It is innovative in the approach to restoring land, given the specific and unique situation facing Nauru. It is not particularly innovative in other ways, using quite standard approaches of PA establishment, legislative reform, capacity building, cross-government integration etc. But in the local context, these do appear important innovations. It does engage the private sector, which may be somewhat innovative.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes, this is reasonably clear, although the whole issue of gaining community buy-in and engagement is not particularly strong.
	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?	Stakeholders have been identified, and this section indicates they will all be involved, but this has no detail on how. Their involvement is not highlighted in relevant sections that describe the components, so it is hard to see that such involvement is really built in to the thinking here.
	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?	See above.

<p>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</p>	<p>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
	<p>Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?</p>	<p>Yes, potentially, given the patriarchal system. While the project says women will play a full and equal role there is no specific attention paid to how they will be involved exactly, whether they will face barriers to participation, and how such barriers will be overcome.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control?</p>	<p>The first risk is not clearly specified - what are the land tenure issues and why would they lead to lack of community buy-in?</p>
	<p>Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project?</p>	
	<p>For climate risk, and climate resilience measures:</p>	
	<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? 	<p>See 6 above.</p>
	<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? 	<p>To some extent the whole approach of fostering land restoration increases resilience to climate change, but this issue needs more explicit attention, particularly in the context of rising sea levels.</p>

	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?	It is drawing on regional experiences.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	More would be welcome.
	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?	This appears strong.
	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.	
	* 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>	
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	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:	
	(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, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.	
	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.	
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	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:	
	(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.	