

Part I: Project Information		Response
GEF ID		10198
Project Title		Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program - Phase II
Date of Screening		28-May-19
STAP member Screener		Rosie Cooney
STAP secretariat screener		Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment		Minor
		<p>STAP welcomes this project proposal from the World Bank for the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes (ASL) II Impact Program. In the long term, the program envisions a "...landscape mosaic of well-managed protected areas and indigenous territories, with sustainable use in the surrounding landscapes (to) conserve biodiversity and assure the required connectivity for key ecosystems and species to adapt to climate change" (p. 60).</p> <p>This is a realistic and well-conceived objective, and the components of this program should make a strong contribution to achieving this. But in some respects, the program description is rather unclear and confusingly written at times. It is not clear how the proposed interventions will effectively address the root causes behind environmental degradation in this region (particularly incentives for illegal deforestation). Much of the language in the theory of change is general and vague, encompassing a very broad array of possible interventions (e.g. "governance and incentives for protected and productive landscapes are enhanced through adoption of national policies and strategies which support sustainable development and aim to minimize deforestation and loss of ecosystem services"), making it difficult to discern a sharp conceptual analysis. The adoption of the "land sparing" approach is not adequately justified, given that the benefits of this approach accrue only when tied to robust governance mechanisms that ensure that intensification does indeed avert further deforestation. A number of innovations are identified in the PFD, including policy, institutional, business model, technological and financing innovations. In some cases, only the need for innovation is identified, e.g. with respect to forest product trade and re beliefs/awareness changing. STAP is pleased to see that the ASL will make use of recently-developed planning tools such as the Spatial Planning for Protected Areas in Response to Climate Change (SPARC) to take into consideration future projected changes due to climate change.</p> <p>The underlying assumption is that by working across (almost) the entire Amazon Basin, the likelihood of success will be greater due to coordinated efforts, sharing of information, etc. For this reason, the role of the coordinating entity will be very important – not only to arrange meetings and workshops – but to share data, lessons learned and to monitor progress on the ground in a way that serves to increase overall knowledge sharing and transparency. In this respect, the use of open source, publicly accessible spatial data such as information on forest cover, water quality, etc. will be useful as well as innovative.</p> <p>The risks identified in the PFD are fairly standard, and they appear manageable within the program framework. However, the PFD states that the major risk related to economic powerful drivers of deforestation (extractive industries, agribusiness, etc.) will be mitigated by integrated landscape planning. This seems hopeful - the risk of leakage is very real and the participation of countries in the program in and of itself is not likely act as a mitigation measure. However, this could be helped by the shared, transparent data from satellite remote sensing and other sources. Clear consideration of how to deal with this risk as a major barrier to transformation is necessary.</p> <p>Overall STAP finds this project has a reasonably strong likelihood of making large-scale positive change; however, as written it does not convincingly demonstrate that the suite of interventions proposed will address root causes of deforestation in the Amazon.</p>
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?	The program objective is "To improve integrated landscape management and conservation of ecosystems in targeted areas in the Amazon region" which is general and therefore encompasses the many drivers, etc. described in the threats section.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	* The logical linkage between the activities and how these target the root causes/threats is not clearly articulated.
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
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	*Reasonably, although this is not entirely convincing. In particular, it is not entirely clear how patterns of illegal logging will be turned around.
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?	Specific outputs are not listed for each of the Outcomes; however, examples are given for each Component such as surveys, risk assessments, legal protocols, innovative technologies, technical extension extension services, etc. These are meant to be indicative and so it's not possible to know if, combined, they will contribute to the stated outcomes as it will likely be very country and site specific.
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	* A TOC is there, but weak (see below)
1. Project description. Briefly describe:		

<p>1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)</p>	<p>Is the problem statement well-defined?</p>	<p>There are some issues here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *An initial ambiguity (which makes it hard in part to understand the impact of some components), is that it is unclear whether the text includes areas managed in line with conservation by indigenous people/local communities in the term "protected areas" or not. It is inconsistent on this point - in some places (e.g. in para 2 and 12), indigenous territories are clearly not included in the term PAs, whereas elsewhere they explicitly are or it is unclear. *para 7: also wild meat - this is estimated at >1million ton per annum harvested, just for Brazilian Amazon-very important for health/nutrition (see http://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/Books/BCoad1901.pdf) *para 8: 350 indigenous villages? Is this meant to say "tribes"? *para 10: text is inconsistent with graph - text indicates 2017 was worst year for deforestation, graph indicates 2016 *Table 1: not clear why the focus on aquaculture here - there are great examples of sustainable wild fisheries that could be scaled up in the Amazon, and they have none of the potential detrimental impacts associated with aquaculture. Justification for this approach would be helpful. *weak land tenure for indigenous people/local communities is mentioned once as a root cause, but then this is never returned to, even in discussions of the expanding agricultural frontier, deforestation and IWT, despite the fact that land grabbing of indigenous land is part of this phenomenon, and the strong evidence indigenous-titled lands more effectively resist deforestation. * More broadly, the discussion on peoples of the Amazon, the extent of their occupation (including in lands subject to forestry), and how they use and rely on forest resources, is very minimal. *In the summary problem statement (para 18) there is a distinction drawn between protection needed for protected areas (including indigenous territories) and planning/management needed outside. But there is a great deal of use of resources going on in protected areas (use of wild plant/animal resources in indigenous territories, for example). Support for sound management is surely needed inside PAs as well? *In the explanatory paragraphs (1-17) also, the issue of wild animal overexploitation (including wildmeat) should presumably be addressed - it is a primary cause of biodiversity loss in the Amazon, quite distinct from deforestation. It is a subset of overexploitation but quite distinct from timber harvesting. This should also be raised as an issue linked to extractives expansion and accompanying infrastructure - roads are generally associated with enabling and expanding wildmeat hunting. *paras 22 and 23 are not clearly written and are hard to follow. *the brief references to the land sharing/land sparing debate are inadequate - this appears to be a really fundamental part of the reasoning of the project (although this is not entirely clear) and needs adequate explanation, noting that land sparing is only favourable to land sharing where there are strong governance mechanisms to ensure the land "spared" stays spared - are these conditions actually likely to be in place at the end of the project? Otherwise intensification is unlikely to reduce deforestation. This issue is returned to in para 26, but the reasoning of the project is not clear here. This underlines the need for a really clear and detailed TOC, to clarify how/where/why this will help move the situation toward the desired objectives, and the assumptions involved in all the steps toward this. Also not clear why risks are being dealt with at this point in the program document. Structure is hard to follow. *discussion of fishing is inadequate: statements like "Selective fishing, however, endangers both the exploited species and the ecosystem" is misleadingly generalised - some fishing is sustainable, some unsustainable. And the discussion of Arapaima in particular leaves out the impressive recoveries of Arapaima in the Amazon in recent years under a newer, community-based monitoring and management approach. The text seems to imply what is needed is more government enforcement, whereas experiences like this suggest in some cases at least what is needed is stronger community management rights/capacity: see Campos-Silva, J. V. and Peres, C. A. (2016) "Community-based management induces rapid recovery of a high-value tropical freshwater fishery." Scientific Reports 6: 34745 (Campos-Silva, J. V. and Peres, C. A.
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	<p>Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?</p>	<p>Barriers: This (p 40 onward) is not setting out barriers to change/transformation so much as articulating how the program will address drivers, and mainly proximate drivers. Barriers are what makes it hard to do this.</p>
	<p>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?</p>	

2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	*para 50 suggests countries' efforts have dramatically slowed the rate of deforestation, and yet earlier information presented in the PFD makes clear that deforestation has been going steeply up in recent years (see Fig 1)? (And Amazon has just announced deforestation is 20% up on last year). So if these efforts are not working, it would be good to be clear on why these are not working if this project is to learn relevant lessons and have a high likelihood of success. *the info in this section doesn't tell us much about what the actual expected trajectories of deforestation etc are in these countries
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	See above
	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	*The program is building on experiences from ASL1, and indicates in certain cases it has learned lessons from these e.g. in component 1, on financing of protected areas. It also sets out a number of general lessons learned "how" to implement the program e.g. building trust, using a common language. However, given the experience from ASL1 and from other work, it would be good to have more explicit lessons learned reflected here about the "how" i.e. activities. What has been learned in previous projects about what works, and what doesn't? How has this shaped the components of the program? Or given ASL2 largely continues and expands ASL 1, did everything work well and as planned to deliver reduced deforestation etc? If so, can this be said explicitly.
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	*For example, para 139: the text indicates component 2 will be scaling up national level efforts to make forest exploitation more consistent with forest/biodiversity conservation. But what has actually been learned from these national level efforts? What did and didn't work here? What actually are the necessary "paradigm shifts and behavioural changes" mentioned here?

<p>3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project</p>	<p>What is the theory of change?</p>	<p>There is no clear description of how the proposed actions will tackle and change root causes. Much of the language in the TOC is rather general and vague, encompassing a very broad array of possible interventions (e.g. "governance and incentives for protected and productive landscapes are enhanced through adoption of national policies and strategies which support sustainable development and aim to minimize deforestation and loss of ecosystem services"), making it hard to discern a sharp conceptual analysis. The Theory of Change only partly addresses root causes in a convincing way. In some activities it seems to address proximate drivers rather than tackling underlying root causes.</p> <p>*It would be helpful to include a diagram for the problem statement, showing how root causes lead to drivers, and then a different diagram for the TOC. Currently these are rather confusingly combined into one.</p> <p>*It's very hard to work out conceptual relationships between these elements Fig 4 is attempting to graphically convey.</p> <p>*Fig 5 (which follows some 11 pages later) appears to be portraying the same thing, but with more detail and with outputs clarified. But where does reducing illegal logging fit in here?</p> <p>*The approach is shaped by a distinction between protected areas and production areas. But what about Cat V and VI PAs? Production i.e. via sustainable use, is a key feature of these (typically). Does the distinction that shapes this program really reflect the complexity of reality?</p>
	<p>What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?</p>	
	<p>· What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?</p>	<p>* It is really hard to see how this suite of activities (set out around p60) will tackle the key driver of deforestation - that clearing land for cattle is economically favourable (particularly illegally). Where is this spelt out clearly?</p> <p>*The document highlights early on that it will use a "land-sparing" approach, but where the program components are articulated (p66), this is not mentioned?</p> <p>*One element which is clearly needed in the region but which seems to fall between component 1 and component 2 is support for sustainable forest enterprises and sustainable use within PAs, many of which are indigenous territories (in which people depend on use of the forest). Where does this fit in?</p> <p>*Relatedly, there is a rather uncomfortable split of indigenous/community issues between component 1 (establishment/better management of PAs, including indigenous) and component 2 (supporting forest-friendly production activities, including indigenous/community).</p> <p>*Again relatedly, the text at times seems to treat component 2 as if it is all about the private sector (e.g. para 154), and in other places about both the commercial private sector and indigenous/local communities. There are very different dynamics around these different groups and their forest use and it is not entirely clear these have been thought through clearly in relation to IPLCs.</p>
	<p>· Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?</p>	<p>*As stated above, it is hard to see how interventions that target agriculture and extractive industries will change incentives for those illegally converting standing forest to pasture. This appears to be a critical driver, but how the program is actually shifting the incentives in this situation at the scale necessary is not clear.</p>

	· Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	*Hard to see this.
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, if successful
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	Yes, if successful
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
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes
	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?	* A number of important innovations are identified in the PFD, including policy, institutional, business model, technological and financing innovations. These include, for instance, spatial land use monitoring and planning tools, smart-phone based monitoring, new protected area financing models, creating new value chains for sustainable NTFPs, developing producer associations for sustainable forest products, and strengthening national and regional policy frameworks for conservation and sustainable use. Establishing a platform to enable region-wide learning and information exchange is also innovative.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	*There is a vision of how these innovations will scale in various ways, although more explicit consideration of forms of scaling and the barriers likely to be encountered in each would be welcome.
	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.		

<p>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.</p>	<p>Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?</p>	<p>The project describes the roles of various stakeholders throughout the PFD and states that participant countries will be conducting consultations with key stakeholders for their areas, including indigenous people, local communities, NGOs, private sector, etc. Therefore it is likely (but should be confirmed) that this information will be developed more fully during PPG stage and before the actual projects are initiated.</p>
	<p>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?</p>	<p>See above</p>
<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>Each country project will develop gender sensitive strategies during project preparation.</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>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>Risks identified are standard and generally manageable within the program framework. However, the major risk related to economic powerful drivers of deforestation (extractive industries, agribusiness, etc.) will be mitigated by integrated landscape planning which seems hopeful but maybe a bit naive. In terms of outside risks, changes in regional political context is identified and will be addressed through strong sensitization and communication programs, etc.</p>
	<p>Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project?</p>	
	<p>For climate risk, and climate resilience measures:</p>	
	<p>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>	<p>The project does a good job considering the inter-relationship between the Amazon Basin and climate change, including a potential tipping point that may have severe impacts on regional weather patterns and local livelihoods. The project mentions SPARC, which is nearly completed and will be a good source of information to tap into for this project.</p>

	· Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed?	
	· Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with?	
	· 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?	To some extent.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	There is little evidence presented here that the project is learning from experience in what types of intervention work in practice to combat deforestation etc (not just "how").
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	There are some 'lessons learned' discussed throughout the PFD which are interesting, such as the importance of ex-ante land occupation planning processes (para 42.) and para 110 lists several lessons learned from implementation of ASL 1 and other projects in the region; however, as mentioned previously these are mainly related to the overall process of developing a large-scale program.
	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?	Good. Lots of emphasis on learning across projects and sharing best practice, which is great. It would be good to see some linkages between subcomponent 4.3, the tracking of M&E outcomes, to subcomponent 4.2, the knowledge management and comms., so that there is direct feedback to all the projects about what is working and what is being achieved.
	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>	