

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

| Part I: Project Information | Response |
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| GEF ID | 10526 |
| Project Title | Eliminate mercury use and adequately manage mercury and mercury wastes in the chloralkali sector in Mexico |
| Date of Screening | 15 May 2020 |
| STAP member screener | Jamidu Katima |
| STAP secretariat screener | Sunday Leonard |
| STAP Rating | Minor issues to be considered during project design |
| STAP Overall Assessment of the project proposal | <p>STAP welcomes the project on "elimination of mercury use and adequately managing mercury and mercury wastes in the chloralkali sector in Mexico." The project aims to eliminate about 100 tonnes of mercury, stabilizing and safely disposing of the same. The project will build the capacity of relevant stakeholders and implement the best available technology to achieve the objectives of the project.</p> <p>STAP has the following comments on the project:</p> <p>It was indicated that a theory of change was prepared and included in Annex A of the PIF. This is, however, missing. Annex A in the PIF is the project map and geographic coordinate, not a theory of change. A problem analysis was, however, provided in Figure 4. Given STAP guidelines on the importance of the theory of change, it is recommended that the proposal should consider developing a "theory of change" that builds on the problem analysis to capture the drivers and root causes, key assumptions, planned interventions, causal and alternative pathways, and outcomes. Please see STAP's theory of change primer for further guidance on theory of change preparation. (https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/STAP%20ToC%20Primer_webposting.pdf).</p> <p>Barriers and interventions: The PIF lists several barriers, including awareness, financial, technical, policy, and capacity. While the PIF shows how the awareness, financial, technical, and capacity barriers will be addressed, the interventions are very weak in overcoming the policy barriers. STAP recommends that this should be addressed as it may impact the success or failure of the project.</p> <p>Although the PIF stated that the BAT to be adopted for decommissioning is yet to be selected, it would have been useful to present examples of BAT that will be considered in the current PIF. Overall, the specifics on the activities of the project in the PIF is not detailed enough.</p> <p>Innovation, sustainability, and potential for scaling-up: This section does not explicitly discuss the innovative approach in this project, although the project will use BAT to eliminate mercury use. The PIF does not address the sustainability and scaling up aspects. The project proponent may review the GIZ paper:</p> |

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| | <p>scaling up in development cooperation - practical guidelines (https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Learning-and-Networking/sdc_km_tools/Documents/GIZ-Scaling-up-in-development-cooperation.pdf).</p> <p>The stakeholder section of the PIF presents relevant stakeholders and provides information on how they will be engaged in the project – this is good.</p> <p>The potential impact of climate change on achieving the objective of the project seems to have been ignored. The project involves the decontamination of mercury-contaminated sites and disposal of mercury-polluted materials. It is, hence, essential to consider how projected climate change will influence the decision on technologies and approaches to be adopted in the implementation. For example, how will projected climate change influence how contaminated lands are treated or how mercury-contaminated materials are disposed of? STAP recommends that a detailed climate risk screening should be prepared at the PPG stage. For guidance on climate risk screening, we suggest relevant STAP papers including guidance on climate risk screening of GEF projects April 2020 (https://stapgef.org/stap-chairs-report-gef-agency-retreat-1-april-2020) and STAP guidance on climate risk screening, June 2019 (https://stapgef.org/stap-guidance-climate-risk-screening)</p> <p>Coordination: It is shown in the PIF that SEMARNAT/INECC will implement the project with involvement from PROFEPA. However, under sections 2 and 4, the PIF commits to work with other stakeholders, including the private sector. The coordination of all players and stakeholders is, however, not explicit in the PIF. Section 6 did not present information on how the coordination will be done.</p> | |
| Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary | What STAP looks for | Response |
| Project Objective | Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis? | Yes |
| Project components | A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives? | Yes |
| Outcomes | A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits? | Yes (although they are not categorized as such) Yes |
| | Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated? | Yes |
| 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? | Yes – capacity building, introducing Best Available Technology during and after decommissioning, and stabilization of excess mercury |

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| Part II: Project justification | A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change. | Theory of change missing but problem analysis presented. |
| 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 |
| | Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references? | The barriers are well described, and project components are designed to address these barriers. However, there are no specific interventions to address the Policy barrier |
| | 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? | Although the project is focusing on chemical and waste cluster, the interventions will reduce a significant amount of CO2 releases. |
| 2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects | Is the baseline identified clearly? | Yes |
| | 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? | Needs more clarification. See STAP overall assessment for comments on the theory of change |
| | For multiple focal area projects: | NA |
| | are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators; | NA |
| | are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and | NA |
| | how did these lessons inform the design of this project? | NA |

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| 3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project | What is the theory of change? | Strengthening national and local capacity to effectively manage and monitor mercury and contaminated sites. |
| | What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving national capacity in the management of hazardous chemical facilities and mercury contaminated sites • Introducing BAT during and after decommissioning/convertng and seeking investment for environmental management • Stabilizing, treating and disposing excess mercury and contaminated materials from the two decommissioned and converted plants |
| | What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant agencies adopt a good practice guide and put in place plans for decontamination, monitoring and remediation of the contaminated sites of Monterrey and Coatzacoalcos • Converting Mercury cell chlor alkali facilities and decommissioning Mexico and nuancing mechanisms for clean-up and rehabilitation of the sites adopted • Storing and disposing of 100 metric tons of mercury safely |
| | Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions? | The assumptions are not explicitly defined |
| | Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes? | None |
| 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 |

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| | LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change? | NA |
| 6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF) | Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation 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/adaptation benefits explicitly defined? | Yes |
| | Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation? | Yes – estimation |
| | What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change? | This is not discussed |
| 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? | No |
| | Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors? | Scaling up is not discussed |
| | Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability? | No |
| 1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place. | | The map is provided |
| 2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local | Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers? | Yes |

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| <p>communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities.</p> <p>If none of the above, please explain why.</p> <p>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>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>The roles are discussed</p> |
| <p>3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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>Gender differentiated risks have been identified</p> <p>Gender opportunities are not discussed</p> <p>More thought on how to address the gender equality and empowerment is needed.</p> |

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| | Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed? | No |
| 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>Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? 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? • 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? | <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>NA</p> |
| 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? | Yes |
| | Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them? | Yes |
| | Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited? | Yes |
| | How have these lessons informed the project's formulation? | Yes |
| | 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? | Not discussed |

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| <p>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.</p> | <p>What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?</p> | <p>Knowledge management indicators and Metrix are not discussed</p> |
| | <p>What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?</p> | <p>Through workshops, network, regional and global forum</p> |

Notes

| STAP advisory response | Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed |
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| <p>1. Concur</p> | <p>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> |
| | <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> |
| <p>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</p> | <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> |

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| <p>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</p> | <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> |