

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10548	
Project Title	Common Oceans - Sustainable utilization and conservation of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction	
Date of Screening	21 May 2020	
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Concur</p> <p>STAP welcomes this project from FAO to promote sustainable utilization and conservation of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).</p> <p>This is an ambitious and compelling project in an arena that requires a global approach. The program envisions a vast expanse of marine protected areas (12M ha) under improved management, with significant benefits for increasing sustainability of over-exploited fisheries.</p> <p>Deep challenges of governance and enforcement exist, but plan is well conceived to address these. Barriers and threats are well identified, with excellent use of data. The project presents a very strong treatment of incentives, monitoring systems and enforcement mechanisms to address IUU fishing. An explicit theory of change is provided, with clear delineation of anticipated causal pathways. Assumptions are clearly stated. Very good discussion of risks and mitigation measures.</p> <p>Knowledge management is treated substantively as a core program element, with good discussion of processes, tools and approaches. The project would benefit from clear identification of metrics to measure knowledge management achievements, relating these to the overall program objectives.</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?	A programmatic approach is proposed, encompassing five child projects with distributed leadership responsibilities among agencies.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	Program envisions a vast expanse of marine protected areas (12M ha) under improved management, with significant benefits for increasing sustainability of over-exploited fisheries.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Deep challenges of governance and enforcement exist, but plan is well conceived to address these.
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, well structured.
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.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, with excellent use of data. Very strong treatment of incentives, monitoring systems and enforcement mechanisms to address IUU fishing.
	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?	Yes.

	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes, with excellent integration of quantitative data on ecosystem status and trends as well as institutional analysis.
	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;	
	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?	Explicit theory of change provided, with clear delineation of anticipated causal pathways. Assumptions are clearly stated and (in Figure 2) associated with three stages of causal connections.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Well conceived.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Well conceived.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Yes. A key determinant of success will be the quality and effectiveness of the multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration processes supported. See new STAP Guidance Note, "Multi-stakeholder dialogue for transformational change" (available in advance of June 2020 GEF Council meeting).
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Yes, with explicit recognition of ocean acidification among multiple vectors of climate-induced change, and good references.
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	Strong likelihood of significant benefits, in an arena that requires a global approach.

trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing		
	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/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	Yes.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes, complex and very challenging; ambitious and compelling.
	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.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	Well integrated.
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?	Strong integration of innovative finance mechanisms, including blue bonds, trust funds and impact investing in sustainable fisheries. Good potential for technological innovation, in areas that are receiving growing attention, including high-tech monitoring of fishing activity and traceability in the commercial fish trade.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes, with thoughtful treatment of sustainability of the interventions and institution-building investments planned.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Clearly transformational ambition – and at global scale. Includes recognition of the need for shifts in public understanding of ocean priorities (“scaling deep”). See STAP paper “Achieving enduring outcomes from GEF investment.”
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide		

<p>geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.</p>		
<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>Comprehensive description of related initiatives is provided, with clear efforts to engage these. Strong engagement of private sector networks envisioned.</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>Thoughtful analysis of the relative strengths and roles of different actors in the ocean space.</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</p>	<p>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>Good preliminary analysis of gendered dimensions of fisheries value chains.</p>

<p>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>Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?</p>	<p>Yes, preliminary plans indicate appropriate attention to women's economic opportunities and gains in fisheries value chains, as well as meaningful participation in capacity building. Good intent to employ not only gender-disaggregated monitoring but also to promote "gender-transformative policies and frameworks."</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>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? • 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? 	<p>Very good discussion of risks and mitigation measures. Risk table is notable for providing analysis of the rationale behind judgment of probability and likely impact of each identified risk.</p> <p>Notable for inclusion of perverse incentives created by financial subsidies that enable fisheries overexploitation.</p> <p>Good recognition of risks related to stakeholder relationships and partnerships, with appropriate mitigating measures outlined.</p> <p>Climate change risks well identified, with mitigation measures including work on awareness raising and multi-sectoral collaboration.</p>

	<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?	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?	Evident in program design and risk mitigation measures.
	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?	Yes, well integrated into KM plans.
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?	KM treated substantively as a core program element. Good discussion of processes, tools and approaches, including highly interactive in-person and online learning and exchange. Would benefit from clear identification of metrics to measure KM achievements, relating these to the overall program objectives.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Multiple channels for information exchange are identified, building appropriately on existing initiatives.

Notes

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.