

**STAP Response:**

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| <b>GEF ID</b>                  | 10076           |
| <b>Project Title</b>           | EBM of PACA LME |
| <b>STAP Overall Assessment</b> | Concur          |

The PIF provides a thorough and well-documented presentation of baseline information drawn from a wide variety of sources and clearly identifies the diversity of threats to marine ecosystems and the need for a transboundary approach. The project proposes that a regional cooperation framework for EBM will motivate and sustain coordinated action at regional level and governance arrangements to address the key threats to coastal and marine biodiversity and ecosystem services.

For certain measures of ecosystem status, there is a wide range of estimation from different sources, and many sources describe only sub-units of the Pacific Central America LME (PACA). This is to be expected given the state of prior analysis at the LME scale, and underlines the value of the proposed transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA).

The PIF provides good identification of targeted contributions to Aichi Biodiversity Targets and SDG Goal 14, in addition to the core GEF-7 targets. Among targeted innovations, it aims for "new approaches to build collaborative management at the LME scale." In addition to additional work to provide quantitative measures of the full set of project targets, a key focus in full project preparation should be to delineate the planned innovations and methods for testing their effectiveness.

Other elements, including stakeholder identification, gender equality and risks are addressed briefly but adequately for this stage; the STAP recommends a fuller treatment before CEO endorsement stage. Likewise, it will be important to develop a fuller treatment of lessons from earlier projects (within the region and in other LMEs) and how these have informed the project theory of change and activities.

Additionally, the plans for knowledge management would benefit from an elaboration of mechanisms to promote exchange of lessons beyond documentation and online distribution of lessons, particularly with regard to the function of the proposed "working groups" at regional scale. If done well, these could potentially provide an additional track for transboundary cooperation beyond the more formal intergovernmental links.