

<b>Part I: Project Information</b>		<b>Response</b>
GEF ID	10420	
Project Title	Promoting Sustainable Agricultural Production and Conservation of Key Biodiversity Species through Land Restoration and Efficient Use of Ecosystems in the Dallol Bosso and Surrounding Areas	
Date of Screening	9-Dec-19	
STAP member Screener	Rosie Cooney	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment		<b>Major issues to be considered during project design:</b> STAP welcomes the focus on this high priority area of Niger, and the proposal to address land degradation and establish institutional arrangements for effective conservation of the only remaining population of the West African giraffe. However, this proposal has serious weaknesses. It is poorly written and at times hard to understand. There is a lack of detail and reliance on vague aspirational language at a number of points. The internal logic is unclear - for instance, there are inconsistencies among outputs and outcomes. Component 3 and 4 focus on decreasing post-harvest agricultural waste, without making a clear case that this will lead to the achievement of GEBs. There is inadequate attention to governance arrangements for the proposed protected area, particularly in relation to the large human populations that would live within it. There are major assumptions underlying the project logic that are not recognised or justified. STAP recommends development of a clear, explicit graphic and narrative theory of change, clearly linking intervention pathways to addressing drivers/root causes of the problem and achieving the project objective through a logically linked set of steps. This will also enable identification of critical assumptions at each step.
<b>Part I: Project Information</b>		
<b>B. Indicative Project Description Summary</b>		
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	The stated objective is "To strengthen national, regional and municipal capacity and actions to implement an integrated ecosystem management approach in the Dallol Bosso landscape in Niger". Yes, overall this objective is clear and responds logically to the problem diagnosis.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	These are unclear and hard to follow. For instance, Outcome 2.2 is "The provided technical assistance provided to enables land and wildlife conservation income generating activities", which does not make sense. There is also confusion within components. Outcome 2.1 is "Funding and technical assistance provided to demonstrate land restoration and biodiversity measures to improve local livelihoods..", but then Output 2.2.1 is "Alternative Income Generating Activities ... implemented with local communities to reduce threats to the [PAs]". So is the conservation to help people's livelihoods, or is the livelihood support to help conservation? This needs clarity and consistency. Output 2.1.1 (creation of the Giraffe PA) is not clearly related to its corresponding outcome (Funding and technical assistance provided to demonstrate land restoration and biodiversity measures to improve local livelihoods in Dallol Bosso). There is no "component 3" - instead Outcome 3.1 has been copied here, apparently in error. There is no clear link to GEBs in this component, or in component 4 - why is it assumed that reducing post-harvest losses will contribute to biodiversity conservation?
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?	
	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?	Not clear, especially for components 3 and 4.
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
<b>1. Project description. Briefly describe:</b>		
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?	Key threats are identified as extensive conversion of shrublands and forest to crops and grassland, due to agricultural expansion and fuelwood harvesting. This is reducing giraffe habitat. Human-wildlife conflict with both giraffes and hippos is increasing. Land degradation is severe and expanding, and exacerbated by climate change. The problem statement does not clearly distinguish proximate drivers of threat from their deeper drivers, and no socio-economic or political drivers/causes are articulated. Some points are unclear: in the hippo sanctuary, it seems there are local populations resident, and yet all agriculture and forest use is prohibited. How do these populations live? The EIA cited for the damaging impacts of the Kandadji Ecosystems Regeneration and Niger Valley Development Programme is from 2006 - is this the most recent assessment of the impact?

	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Barriers are articulated but without stating what they are barriers to? Land tenure is typically a critical barrier, so STAP recommends separating this out as a barrier in order that it receives adequate focused attention, not subsumed into Barrier 1 on lack of an overarching national framework on LDN. The whole of Barrier 2 is unclear. It is unclear what this means: "Further, no mechanisms exist where development activities can be planned in areas not used by wildlife in order to minimize human-wildlife conflict, thus benefiting both wildlife and investment security". Why would development activities outside of wildlife areas reduce HWC, unless they involved people moving out of wildlife areas? Likewise, the meaning of "Niger appreciates the establishment and management of the Giraffe Zone is an integral part of the economic development and planning process that will lead to sustainable development embedded in the national cultural conservation policy aspirations" is unclear, as are most sentences in this Barrier. There is a great deal of vague language, but no specific characterisation of a barrier to change. Barrier 3 is not linked to biodiversity or LDN - no articulation of why this is a problem for biodiversity/LDN is set out. The description of the factors leading to PHL are internally inconsistent (i.e. the list in the sentence starting "In sum" is a different set of factors to those otherwise described. Barrier 4 says Barrier 3 was about socio-economic and biophysical barriers, while it is about capacity barriers, but Barrier 3 was also largely about lack of capacity. Barrier 4 is likewise focused on PHL, but does make some effort to link it to environmental attributes, stating that it leads "to over-exploitation of natural resources and the broader environment" as well as increasing emissions. But much more information is required to build the argument that reducing PHL would reduce either natural resource exploitation or emissions, given that increasing processing will presumably also require power and increase emissions?
	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?	No, the proposal describes a number of other initiatives, but doesn't make their relationship to this proposal clear, or articulate clearly what would happen in the absence of this project.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	No.
	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	Not adequately.
	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?	There is no explicit theory of change, or a clear implicit one.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Component 1 is aimed at setting up national structures and capacity for achieving LDN, through a multi-sectoral platform, an information hub, capacity building, strengthening land tenure, and develop an Integrated Landscape Mgt Plan for Dallon Bosso. It is stated land tenure will be strengthened, but no detail as to how. This is often a complex and lengthy process. Component 2 is about actions for biodiversity conservation and addressing land degradation in Dallon Bosso, mainly establishing the Giraffe PA. Unclear writing means this is hard to work out what is meant at several points e.g. "The implementation of the land use plan to safeguard hippos is rationalised on the fact that doing so with The use of land use plans (LUPs) to improve the management of hippos has been further substantiated, reflecting the current land uses, prevailing land tenure (communal) and community livelihoods." It seems that a PA (possibly Cat V) will be established, land use planning will take place within it along with support for alternative livelihoods, in order to reduce human pressures on key species. Restoration of key habitat (tiger bush) will take place within the PA. There is a great deal of vague aspirational language in this component but very little detail e.g. "The business plans will be creating and implementing strategies that combine bold commitments to sustainability in conservation and restoration efforts with practical solutions that deliver benefits to the bottom line and the environment." There is a big focus on securing investment to support restoration efforts, but the role of the local communities vis a vis these investors is not clear - who will be contracting with whom? How will respect for tenure rights and FPIC of communities be secured, both in relation to the PA itself (which should only go ahead with FPIC) and for these investments? How will potential conflicts between the protected area status and the development/livelihood needs of local communities be reconciled? What governance arrangements are being proposed - given this is a landscape in which a large population lives and works, is a co-management structure being proposed? Ecotourism is referred to at various points with no detail about the tourism potential of the area, current tourism visitation rates, constraints, requirements, etc. Component 3 focuses on reducing post-harvest losses through irrigation, solar energy systems, early warning systems for disease/pest outbreaks etc (quite a different list to the earlier description of this component), but the rationale for how this contributes to GEBs is poorly developed, and rests on unsubstantiated assumptions, particularly that if farmers produce more food, then natural resource exploitation will reduce. This is possible, but alternative plausible scenarios are that expanded processing/production facilities make increased production more viable and farmers expand their footprint, or that it triggers in-migration from other areas. There is not a priori reason to believe farmers will stop their productive activity at the point when basic subsistence needs are met (they don't do this in any developed country). Establishing irrigation systems can also impact negatively on river systems and aquatic life - it is not clear these potential impacts have been considered. Component 4 is difficult to conceptually distinguish from component 3, as it likewise involves reducing post-harvest losses, mainly here via building skills and capacity. The argument that these components will help achieve the objective is not clearly made.

	<p>Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?</p>	<p>No, assumptions are not well identified - in particular for components 3 and 4. In component 1, the proposal states that developing a management plan for the target landscape will "will result in decisions made in the optimum use of land in terms of biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services and socio-economic development". This seems an enormous assumption - there are many pitfalls between the making of a plan and the outcome of optimum decisions being made in practice. In component 2, the proposal states (later, p 39) that "Having a legal status a protected area will clarify and strengthen tenure rights of the people, including their negotiating abilities regarding environmental goods and services in the Giraffe Zone." Why would establishing a PA strengthen tenure? For many communities, it undermines it, unless they have strong management rights. For the assumptions re components 3 and 4 see above. Later in the incremental cost reasoning (p38), the proposal makes an enormous assumption in saying "Any investments in promoting eco-tourism will be one-off, and the operations will sustain themselves from revenues". Many other examples could be listed.</p>
	<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?</p>	
<p>5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing</p>	<p>GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?</p>	<p>The incremental cost reasoning is inadequate - the case that Components 3 and 4 will help deliver GEBs is not adequately made. The incremental cost reasoning states "Alternatively put, without the GEF support, the situation in the Giraffe Zone and surrounding areas is characterized by frequent cases of human-animal conflicts, with giraffes and hippos poached in a legal and institutional vacuum since the area is hitherto unprotected." But killing these animals is already illegal - establishing the PA will not change this. What will change in relation to poaching? Further, poaching was not identified as a problem for the species in the problem statement, so it is not clear why it is raised here.</p>
	<p>LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?</p>	
<p>6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)</p>	<p>Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits, and are they measurable?</p>	<p>The GEBs are stated to be 70.9K ha newly created PA, 35K ha degraded agricultural land restored. 71K ha under improved management to benefit biodiversity.</p>
	<p>Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
	<p>Are the global environmental benefits explicitly defined?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
	<p>Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
	<p>What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?</p>	
<p>7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up</p>	<p>Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?</p>	<p>Not really, although these approaches would represent innovations in the context of the prevailing system in Niger.</p>
	<p>Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?</p>	
	<p>Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?</p>	
<p>1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.</p>		
<p><b>2. Stakeholders.</b> 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>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><b>3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.</b> 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>To some extent.</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><b>5. Risks.</b> 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>These are fairly reasonable.</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>These are only addressed minimally, by saying drought impacts will be addressed by using appropriate crop races, and agroforestry systems that enable resilience.</p>
	<p>· Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed?</p>	<p>No.</p>
	<p>· Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with?</p>	<p>Not explicitly, apart from above.</p>
	<p>· What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?</p>	<p>Not explicitly addressed.</p>
<p><b>6. Coordination.</b> Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives</p>	<p>Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?</p>	<p>Minimally.</p>
	<p>Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?</p>	<p>No, this is weak. What has worked in similar projects? What has not worked?</p>
	<p>Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?</p>	
	<p>How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?</p>	
	<p>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?</p>	
<p><b>8. Knowledge management.</b> 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>This is reasonable.</p>
	<p>What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?</p>	
<p><b>STAP advisory response</b></p>	<p><b>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</b></p>	
<p><b>1. Concur</b></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><b>"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."</b></i></p>	
<b>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</b>	<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>	
<b>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</b>	<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>	