

Part I: Project Information		Response
GEF ID	10386	
Project Title	Natural Capital Accounting and Assessment: Informing development planning, sustainable tourism development and other incentives for improved conservation and sustainable landscapes	
Date of Screening	7-Dec-19	
STAP member Screener	Rosie Cooney	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment		<p>Minor issues to be considered during project design: STAP welcomes the project from UNEP entitled "Natural capital accounting and assessment: informing development planning, sustainable tourism development and other incentives for improved conservation and sustainable landscapes." Natural capital accounting is an important delivery mechanism for biodiversity mainstreaming and STAP is pleased to see that projects are supporting work in this area. However, as noted by the GEF in their GEF-7 programming strategy, there is a risk that natural capital accounting efforts can lead to significant data collection without a specific target decision or policy question in mind and should therefore be co-developed with specifically targeted decision-makers and stakeholders. For that reason STAP is pleased to see that this effort is focused on specific geographies and the tourism sector and engages relevant national and local stakeholders. STAP is similarly pleased to see a Theory of Change presented in the PIF; however, notes that the text contained under the immediate states/outcomes and the multiple arrows is confusing and it is not clear how the first table (project outcomes and outputs) relates to the middle table on intermediate states/outcomes. STAP recommends that a more coherent TOC be developed that includes key elements such as pathways of change and underlying assumptions. This is particularly important for this project given the numerous risks identified including complicated issues such as property rights, lack of trust and commitment by local communities, staff turnover, decentralized government.</p>
Part I: Project Information		
B. Indicative Project Description Summary		
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	The project objective is "To improve financial sustainability of protected areas and landscapes in the Philippines by mainstreaming the values of biodiversity and natural capital in government planning, especially for eco-tourism development." The project objective is quite broad but generally captures the essence of the problem diagnosis and the objective of the project.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	Component 1 seeks to increase capacity for NCA at sub-national level; Component 2 focuses on establishing financial mechanisms in 2 PAs; Component 3 applies outputs from first 2 components to create a national investment plan for sustainable tourism in additional PAs and development zones. These components support the objective.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention.	There are numerous outcomes and outputs associated with each of the 3 components. While all of them seem relevant and worthwhile, it is not entirely clear how they all connect to each other in a logical, step-wise manner, despite the theory of change presented in Annex E.
	Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits?	Yes
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	If successful, then 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?	See above.
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	A theory of change is presented in Annex E.
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?	Good project description and information about targeted landscapes. However, the project mixes underlying root causes (population growth), direct drivers (mining, clearing for agriculture, illegal logging), and impacts (e.g. loss of primary forests, species decline). In terms of root causes, what are root causes of e.g. illegal wildlife trade, agricultural expansion, illegal mining? This could highlight institutional, socio-economic, capacity and political factors as well.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	See above re threats. Barriers focus on information and limited capacity for implementation of biodiversity and natural capital accounting. The links between the barriers and threats are not well developed: it is not clear which specific threat better information and capacity addresses, and what about the other threats? How would better information and capacity building address the overlap of formal mining blocks overlapping with PAs, for example? Or road construction, illegal logging, population growth, or the various other threats/drivers identified in previous sections? Are there other barriers to addressing these threats that should be listed (institutional, political, economic)?
	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?	N/A
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Substantial information provided on baseline programs on management and protection of biodiversity and other natural capital and natural capital assessment and accounting. Scientific baseline information is not provided in this section.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Later sections of the PIF explain how this proposed project will build on and/or coordinate with ongoing activities related to natural capital accounting, etc.
	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;	N/A
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	N/A
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	N/A
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	An elaborate TOC diagram is provided on page 42. However, the logic is unclear. First there is an analysis that shows contribution of 2 PAs to the local economy. Assuming this is sizable, the results would change sectoral policies including their budget. At the same time, business plans are developed for each PA that are based on the identification of economic opportunities and conservation agreements. And finally, the success of this effort for 2 PAs will influence the development of a national investment plan for nature-based businesses in other specific tourism zones.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	As above
	· What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	The outcomes mirror the information above with numerous specific outputs for each outcome related to building capacity for NCA, conservation enterprises, etc.
	· Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	In theory, if the true value of natural capital and biodiversity is well understood and is adequately large, then this information may convince policy makers to change their policies, planning and resource allocation accordingly, at least if long-term public interest is the major driver of decisions (as is clear - not always the case). However, much of the entire project rests on this assumption which seems risky with no clear 'back up' plan or strategy for adaptive management. Many of the risks are substantial such as highly decentralized government structure, uncontrolled unsustainable tourism, etc.
	· Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Not really (see above)

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?	In theory.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	N/A
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits, and are they measurable?	If the PAs are better managed, then yes the GEBs are global in terms of biodiversity conservation, which would be significant in these highly biodiverse PA land and seascapes.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes, this is a modest investment.
	Are the global environmental benefits explicitly defined?	They are described
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	The project includes the development of indicators and M&E specifically for NCA-related activities. Component 3 includes a target for M&E data to indicate positive trends.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	None identified
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?	Yes this project is innovative in that natural capital accounting is a relatively new and unexplored area for the GEF. If successful, there is significant potential for replicability, especially since Component 3 is solely dedicated to this effort.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes in Component 3
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Transformational change will be needed.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Numerous maps are provided, albeit blurry and without clear coordinates.
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.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Yes
	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?	
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	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Sufficient

	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	
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	Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control?	Seven categories of risk are outlined - all valid, and collectively appearing comprehensive. This does highlight the inherent riskiness of this project, as much of it depends upon effectively addressing complex issues such as property rights, lack of trust and commitment by local communities, staff turnover, decentralized government, etc. most of which is outside of the project's direct control - especially climate change.
	Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project?	As above
	For climate risk, and climate resilience measures:	
	· 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?	The project lists climate change as a risk as a result of prolonged drought or seasonal floodings; however, no specific data sets or scenarios are described in detail. The project lists climate change risk as low and will address through improving productivity and resilience in rural PA landscapes, co-management, etc.
	· Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed?	No
	· Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with?	Generally (see above)
	· What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?	Technical specialists familiar with climate science and the potential impacts of climate change on the Philippines should be consulted in the development of PA management plans.

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?	While it is clear that the project proponents are aware of many ongoing and prior related activities it is not clear that there is a specific mechanism for sharing lessons from earlier 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?	The KM plan is somewhat ill defined and general having to do with a 'communication platform' in Component 1 and capacity building at the national and local level. There are many different actors and scales involved in this work and it will be very challenging to coordinate data gathering, analysis, dissemination, etc. The TOC includes a steering committee which is not mentioned earlier in the project - not clear how this relates.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Component 3 is focused on replicability and scaling up to other areas in the Philippines.
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 "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."	
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.	