STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10852	
Project Title	Green Finance & Sustainable Agriculture in the Dry Forest Ecoregion of Ecuador and Peru	
Date of Screening	November 11, 2021	
STAP member screener	Mark Stafford Smith	
STAP secretariat screener	Guadalupe Duron	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	**Minor issues to be considered during project design.** STAP acknowledges the important novelty for GEF of the Development Bank of Latin America's project "Green Finance & Sustainable Agriculture in the Dry Forest Ecoregion of Ecuador and Peru". This project describes an NGI investment (~$6m) by the GEF to de-risk the issuing of green bonds in Ecuador and Peru, to support micro-finance to farmers in the dry forests biodiversity hotspot to improve their sustainable land management in ways that also benefits biodiversity and other GEBs. In its current form, the PIF is poorly structured and repetitive, thereby burying key assumptions in ways that make it hard to assess whether their consequences have been properly thought through; on face value this would have resulted in a STAP assessment of **Major issues with the proposal**. As a result and in view of the importance of NGI innovation, STAP engaged with the GEF Secretariat, CAF and CI to clarify how many of STAP's concerns related to this poor articulation as opposed to any fundamental flaws. As a result of this engagement, STAP is satisfied that the underlying intent is ok, albeit with some issues (over and above better expression of the logic) that need consideration. **STAP has therefore rated the proposal Minor, on the basis of a strong commitment from the GEF Secretariat to ensure these issues (as follows) are thoroughly addressed in further development**. Our key remaining concern is outlined in this box, but there are other issues through the screen that also need addressing. STAP reiterates its willingness to support these developments. STAP perceived the overarching key logic to be the following, which was more-or-less confirmed by an updated and cleaner expression of this logic from the proponents during the consultation: 1. Microfinance facilities are to be established (using local banking actors, with responsibilities for supporting the poor) targeted specifically at improved SLM that delivers both livelihood improvements that encourage farmers to maintain the improved management, and GEBs. 2. The loans are to be funded via green bonds issues in each country, with risks and hence interest rates and other terms reduced by GEF (and CAF) guarantees 3. The delivery of real SLM improvements with plausible pathways to increased GEBs (and livelihoods) will be supported by aligned (grant) investments in land use planning, conservation agreements, demonstration of	

practices and capacity building, funded separately within the overall intervention (and also supported by other projects, including some GEF ones e.g. FOLUR).
4. Through the use of the CI-pioneered Conservation Agreements tool applied at watershed levels with local smallholders, the provision of loans will be tied to selected improved management practices.

[In the PIF as provided, this is written up very tortuously and repetitively (e.g. the 38% guarantee by CAF/GEF is listed at least 6 separate times with the explanation of "guarantees provided by GEF and CAF" another 4 times; the 5 main components are listed at least 5 times; etc…), making it very hard to elicit critical design assumptions.]

STAP sees that some of the critical logic steps from GEF's point of view then seem to be:

a. GEF/CAF guarantee will allow lower interest rate, possibly longer term, loans that farmers will find attractive [and are distributed in ways that do not enhance or entrench inequality]
b. Loan assessment criteria will allow loans to target sustainable practices, which are also climate resilient [**and robust to changes in demand, population pressures, etc]
c. Aligned technical assistance plus the Conservation Agreements process etc will ensure these practices ensue
d. These practices will deliver livelihoods improvements quickly enough to encourage farmers to continue them (and repay the loans)…
e. AND will deliver enduring GEBs [**without leakage]

Then there is the hope of scaling that may also catalyse other entities to invest this way also and hence make the intervention not only enduring but also of wider impact, requiring learning and demonstration data about how these steps play out.

STAP believes that this project is a good example of GEF innovating by taking risks with new financial instrument approaches; as such, STAP strongly encourages this experimentation, but argues that such projects have a particular onus to monitor the drivers of success and failure closely so that GEF can learn from failures rapidly, and build on successes. (STAP notes that ensuring this rapid learning may require separate funding from GEF through the agencies, in order not to interfere with the core commercial procedures).

In that vein, all of these assumptions (or an equivalent suite) should be the subject of monitoring to ensure that they are fulfilled. Any intent to do this is not generally made explicit, though partly from scattered information in the PIF and partly from the our engagement with CI and CAF it is likely that they are all intended in different ways, thgouh the points marked ** are not clear and should be considered further.

STAP's major concern here is that there is no evidence of 'double loop learning' about whether the approach itself is correct – e.g. whether the nature of the practices being *promoted* is compatible with the loan style of financing to ensure the durability of the GEBs thus achieved (and if not how to tweak them). In discussions with

	CI, FAO and CAF, it seems there is a framework for 'permanent' monitoring of the GEBs being established, and possibly linked to the countries LDN commitments, which is good; STAP was still not convinced that there was an explicit intent to learn about the compatibility of the practices with loan financing in this regard, and there was no evidence of this in the PIF, so this should be further elucidated during project development. For example: there might be some climate smart practices which (in this context of smallholder loans) are more or less likely to result in GEB durability. For example (and there may be better ones for someone with local knowledge), the PIF shows climate smart practices for various production systems in Peru, including for cattle: stocking rate management, silvopastoralism and improved pastures. It could be that a loan for silvo-pastoralism results in established trees and enduring GEBs; whereas using the loan for improved pastures means that when the next financial squeeze comes on, the inputs needed to maintain the improved pastures fall away and they are invaded with weeds, losing all GEBs (precisely the *Hieracium* experience in New Zealand, in fact). Thus longitudinal learning might suggest that, in future, whilst improved pastures may still be a good CSA measure in some circumstances, they are not a good one to support with a loan; and GEF could embed that learning in future projects. More generally, the issue of durability has several dimensions: whether the measures implemented by a farmer are maintained beyond the life of the loan, particularly in the face of external changes such as climate (probably considered), increasing population pressures and demand, etc; even if so, whether the linked improvements in livelihoods result in any rebound or leakage effects (e.g. farmers making more money and using this to expand pressures elsewhere – perhaps handled adequately by the regional nature of the Conservation Agreements); and whether there is a context of policy coherence whereby improvements on these farms don't put pressure on degrading other areas (which could be addressed partly through the LDN process). Although some of the se issues were discussed in our engagement, they need formal reflection in the final proposal. STAP believes GEF must take these innovation risks, but cannot afford to do so unless a strong learning feedback loop is in place. Logic step (e) in particular requires consideration of how the outputs are going to lead to GEBs in a durable way that avoids leakage and rebound effects, and are robust to the identified trends in drivers, and that there be learning for the GEF (and local institutions) in terms of what practices are compatible with a loan funding approach. STAP does not expect these issues to be all 'solved' in the PIF but there should be evidence that they are recognized for follow up.	
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, though not demonstrated to be *resilient* to the diagnosis, see below.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	

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?	The intent is good and target GEBs important. See comments below on theory of change (ToC). Also, it is unclear what is meant by "technified" in outcome 3.1. and output 3.1.1. Please revise text.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Plausible, but key logic assumptions are weakly addressed, making this hard to say, but, more importantly, hard for GEF to learn from quickly.
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?	Plausible, but see below.
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?	Partly. The problems and drivers are described (see next section below). However, the problem analysis could usefully be strengthened by applying systems thinking to articulate the root causes of environmental degradation, and the relationships between variables, such as biophysical (description of soils), social (population growth, socio-economic traits of the targeted population), climatic (climate projections for targeted area), political governance (land tenure security), among other key variables. This type of analysis is essential for identifying causality, assumptions, barriers, risks, and in defining solution pathways. It can be shorter and simpler and still be much clearer. Please refer to STAP's systems-based theory of change for guidance.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Problems (rapid loss of the dry forests) and key drivers are well noted – the latter include deforestation for agriculture, other direct impacts of livestock and forestry, burning, exacerbated by poor land use planning, chemicals and waste, and contaminated water; with ultimate drivers of growing population and demand for agricultural products, as well as rural poverty (including households headed by women); and all threatened

		by climate change. The ultimate drivers are not subsequently fully addressed, see below. The challenge of getting finance to farmers is also noted and is the focus of the project, noting the short-term pressures on their management, and from any current financing support. It is argued that financial risks constitute "the main barriers" to achieving a sustainable ag model; this seems a bold claim which could do with justification. Recommend defining explicitly in a theory of change farmer's financial risk as a barrier to achieving sustainable agriculture, and describe the pathway for removing this barrier. Apply the same method to other barriers identified during the project design. Progress is also well (if repetitively) noted as regards Peru and Ecuador recognizing these issues, and institutional arrangements to prepare for addressing them. [This section is poorly structured, mixed up, lengthy, and repetitive.]
	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?	Yes, it is desirable that this is an MFA since farms (the ultimate intervention unit) integrate opportunities for many GEBs.
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Partly, the baseline, including diverse good developments that do not address the target issue of this project, is described at length, convincingly though probably with more detail than is needed. There is extensive experience in Latin America (over decades) with credit schemes to promote sustainable agriculture targeting small to medium sized farmers. Please describe CI's and FAO's experience in this regard, with specific relevance to

		addressing the logic chain in this proposal (which of course requires that the steps in this chain be explained clearly). The project is based on CI's previous experience in 17 countries in the region with similar approaches, as well as FAO's extensive experience in this in this area as well. Consider other GEF Agencies as appropriate.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Not yet. The PIF proposes defining baselines for land management, and finance. For land, recommend conducting a land potential assessment, which determines the suitability for land uses such as cropping, grazing, forestry, and other uses. Suggest referring to STAP's Land Degradation Neutrality Guidelines, which includes a section on land potential assessment. LDN indicators (land cover, land productivity, and carbon stocks) also could be used as indicators to monitor and evaluate progress in achieving land and forest restoration, and sustainable land management. Ecuador is receiving GEF support to establish a LDN baseline, which includes Manabi and Santa Elena, two target areas of this project. Suggest looking into possible coordination with GEF's Ecuador LDN project (we believe this is in fact occurring but not made clear, nor linked to the logic of ensuring GEB durability).
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Not at this stage.
	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;	Core indicators have been identified on land and forest restoration, improved landscape area – inclusive of biodiversity. As the project is designed, recommend identifying additional indicators to track progress towards achieving each outcome.
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Lessons are not described. Suggest describing lessons from the green bond experiences listed in the PIF in Peru and Ecuador, and how these experiences will contribute to this project. A table could be created briefly listing each green bond

		project, lessons, and how they are expected to contribute to this project.
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	See above.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	STAP welcomes the presentation of a ToC figure in the PIF; however, a ToC requires an associated concise summary of its basis and of the logic that the figure illustrates (see STAP's ToC Primer). There is a long lead-in to the ToC, describing sustainable agriculture models, green bonds, conservation agreements, and the benefits of biodiversity to agriculture which could be curtailed, although these are briefly needed to support the key logic steps (as above). It is a strength of the proposal that all of this information is available, and a real *strength* of the ToC that the full suite of activities is included to show how the financing aspect funded by GEF is complemented by a number of other necessary components funded by additional partners which will target practices and capacity building. (But the text could be structured much better and briefly for the reader.) The *weakness* of the ToC and the supporting text is that it does not list explicit assumptions, such as those listed (a-e) above. These obvious potential concerns are in fact partially covered in the risk assessment and elsewhere but not systematically nor completely (as noted above). The current ToC is too skeletal in terms of causal pathway details to structure some of the assumptions in. It would be reasonable to indicate in the PIF that not all have been resolved and will be as the ProDoc is completed, but as written the PIF seems unaware this will be needed.

		STAP strongly recommends that ToCs, even if relatively simple at the PIF stage, adhere to the key process elements outlined in the ToC STAP Primer. As mentioned earlier, a first step is to strengthen the problem analysis using a systems analysis that helps identify the root causes that impede biodiversity conservation, and the finance of sustainable agriculture in the target area. Solution pathways can then be developed and better organized to address causality, especially once key assumptions, barriers (including barriers to green lending), and risks have been explicitly identified in the theory of change. Much of the needed background information is already there, but not organised to show the causal pathways and related assumptions. For the GEF investment, the project team should particularly develop the causal pathways for component 4 (Increase in the Availability of Investment in Sustainable Agriculture) and how it eventually drives more GEBs that are durable. This component focuses on changing incentives, increasing opportunities, or removing barriers to sustainable finance for agriculture. To achieve outcomes from component 4 will require reflecting on key assumptions, barriers, and risks; therefore, this component has great potential for generating learning that underpins broader desired changes for this initiative, and for future GEF green bond/loan projects. The ToC should also make the case for the components being truly *necessary and sufficient* for achieving the impacts – this is not addressed explicitly here but would seem plausible thanks to the comprehensive scope of the ToC. One exception to this might be the issue of durability in the face of external drivers, as mentioned below.

	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?	As above.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	As above: the mechanisms are plausible, but underlying assumptions are not addressed clearly.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	There is some discussion of how climate (for example) may affect crops such as cocoa, but where one might expect a resulting explicit intent to ensure there is regular review of which SLM and market development practices are recommended, none is mentioned.
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?	As above.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	Non-applicable.
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?	Potentially, but needs better logic outline to measure the right ancillary variables. As mentioned previously, consider using LDN indicators, and other associated metrics that measure sustainable land management, and biodiversity conservation. The PIF also discusses the possibility of generating co-benefits on carbon sequestration. FAO's EX-ACT tool could be used to estimate avoided emissions from AFOLU.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	As above – the project needs to be pursued to test whether these benefits can be achieved, as this would be valuable leverage for GEF; but STAP is concerned the logic is not spelled out clearly enough as yet to ensure this test is compelling.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes – with sensible levels of precision.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits	Metrics are indicated, but these may not assure durability. Please refer to suggestions above on

	will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	indicators, and metrics. [Subsequent discussion suggests monitoring is planned to be 'permanent, which is good; this needs to be made clear.] Additionally, component 4 indicates that a "market demand study" will be undertaken. Presumably there must be some preliminary data/analysis available (not cited) on potential crops, value chains, and markets.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	The PIF contains some partial discussion of climate, and SLM practices are specifically targeted at climate-smart ones; but the explicit climate risk screening document fails to echo much of this, and is feeble. As a result the document does not explicitly articulate obvious options such as a regular review of recommended practices to ensure they are still likely to be adaptive as climate change unfolds.
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, but not matched by an obligation to ensure well-targeted monitoring for learning. See suggestion above on emphasizing and elaborating component 4 in the theory of change – where the expected outcome relies significantly on innovation and learning.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Scaling of the GEF component is really about extending the green bonds for SLM more widely; this is mentioned but without any driving model, noting (section 1a7) that if the mechanism proves successful it 'could' encourage more, lessons "*will* be replicable", and that micro-finance institutions '*will* benefit by learning' about the approach. These assumptions are not assured. STAP urges the proponents to develop a *simple* separate ToC aimed specifically at scaling by the PRODOC stage, so that any actions needed during this project to improve the chances of subsequent scaling are considered in good time. (Monitoring the achievement of some of the assumptions mentioned earlier would be likely candidates.) Elements to consider when developing a scaling

		pathway include: i) identifying key stakeholders needed to achieve the desired scaling, including partnerships, especially those who are different to the original project; ii) what resources are needed for scaling (financial, knowledge repositories, data); and iii) how will learning from scaling take place – how will component 5 generate learning and evidence on scaling.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	1a.7 also discusses 'economic and financial' durability after the project, asserting the additional assumption that "it will ultimately become more profitable to farm sustainably rather than conventionally", partly thanks to CSA measures being more resilient in the face of climate change, presumably warranting more similar green bonds with a decreasing need for GEF to take part of the risk. This is all tied up with the assumptions articulated above, and needs critical assessment and monitoring though the project. Although durability in the face of climate is at least mentioned here (in ways not echoed in the climate risk assessment), more is needed to ensure the process adapts to an evolving understanding of what practices and enterprises are likely to remain resilient under the changing understanding of future climates. The same can be said of other drivers that were identified above but then not addressed. In particular: (i) Population pressures and rising demand: what will ensure that improvements in land management are not overwhelmed by short term demands for profits? Or, even if GEBs are maintained where achieved through the project, that pressures to clear forest do not move to other lands that might have otherwise been safe? This could be partly addressed by ensuring that any land

		degradation gains are registered under the countries' LDN commitments. At least the issue should be acknowledged (ii) Rising poverty and inequality; these could similarly put pressures on lands not being managed under these instruments. In fact there is a material risk that, even though the banks involved are required to target the poor, loans may still be differentially available to the poorest (or some other component of the population) thus entrenching inequality – this probably cannot be addressed within a commercial instrument such as this, but highlights the need for complementary actions to ensure existing inequalities are not further entrenched, with bad social outcomes that also undermine the GEBs long-term.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		A map is provided. Please refer to STAP's advice on Earth Observation (See page A1-1) for guidance on the elements to include in a project map.
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	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	The stakeholder section only lists national entities, though mentions on-line consultations with CSOs without any details. Several of the assumptions above will depend on farmer reactions. It will be vital to test the approach with community representatives before the ProDoc stage. We appreciate the commercial focus of this model; but it raises the question of whether a blended model with farmer cooperatives might be another model that engages community support more. Issues of trust behind this could be another topic for monitoring explicitly in the theory of change A wide range of private sector organizations are mentioned, including 4 'green' firms – it would be good to see how their involvement affects the achievement of the assumptions above; again there

their respective roles and means of engagement.		is no hint of a monitoring and learning process around such issues.
	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?	The gender section is feeble, sounding like an afterthought, and gender as an issue is hardly mentioned in the rest of the document. It would be good to see an analysis of whether any adjustment to the loan approach would be needed to engage with women-led farms (or at least an acknowledgement of the need for this), so that these considerations are part of design, not just delivery.
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Likely but not yet 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? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? 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? • 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?	The risk list is quite comprehensive, and some of the concerns about assumptions start to be considered here, which suggests they have been considered but not systematically worked through (which would be helped by structuring them around the ToC). Additionally, there seems to be confusion over whether this investment is overall is of moderate/low risk or high risk. The introduction seems to indicate the investment will be low risk. In the barriers section, however, it appears that the that this investment will be high risk. Increased productivity will incentivize expansion of agriculture, ie a rebound effect undermining durability – this is a real risk and this is the first time it has been mentioned, whereas the intervention should surely be designed with this in mind. Land ownership/lack of collateral risk – this is couched in terms of failure to repay; but this aspect will no doubt be managed sufficiently by the commercial systems. A greater risk here is that there is a systematic pattern of people to whom loans are not made and that this entrenches or exacerbates inequality (an issue completely absent from the social/environmental risk screen); and/or that it is correlated with places that need protection in ways that mean the 'wrong' farms get loans in terms of achieving maximal GEBs. Either of these risks could interact with Indigenous people. Potential negative impacts on protected areas – it is good that this is recognized and spillover/leakage/ rebound impacts should be analyzed carefully. Climate risk: the treats and the separate risk analysis are articulate in noting the potential climate vulnerabilities and impacts on the region, and the main PIF text emphasizes the use of CSA

		approaches strongly, as well as noting a few specifics such as the sensitivity of cocoa. The separate risk assessment then makes the extraordinary claim that the climate risk analysis methodology cannot be applied and concludes the risk is no more than moderate. Yet, the material provided in the text is already plenty to make several conclusions about managing for future climates – (i) focus on measures that are climate smart (already done); (ii) given uncertainty, plan for a regular review of the recommended SLM/CSA measures for which loans will be valid (not stated); (iii) ensure there is on-going capacity building in association with this in components 2 and 3 (not made explicit); etc. Overall, ensure the project is run with an adaptive outlook, and seeking practices which are likely to be ***robust*** to whatever plausible climate future emerges.
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?	Partly. Please describe how learning from previous initiatives will complement this project.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	See above.
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	See above.
	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, component 5 provides the mechanisms for monitoring evaluation and learning. Suggest linking component 5 with the theory of change.
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 approach at present is quite weak; it seems to intend to cover the on-ground aspects of supporting improved practices ok, which is good. But it does not address learning about the innovative approach itself (ie it may handle single loop learning ok, but not double loop learning) – for example, how successfully the instruments deliver better SLM, livelihoods and GEBs, and how this success is influenced by the choice of

		allocation criteria and loan assessment criteria in different contexts. GEF needs this to learn, and to scale this approach.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	The project will focus on knowledge exchange, and systematizing lessons learned. See comment above on learning.

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 ***"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.