

REVISED STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE

GEF ID	11085
Project title	Net-Zero Nature-Positive Accelerator Integrated Program
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1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

The NZNP IP program, which comprises 12 Country child projects and a Global child project, represents an ambitious effort to co-address climate and biodiversity goals which are expected to be achieved by supporting activities targeted at achieving climate, biodiversity, and land degradation targets by preserving and enhancing resilient carbon sinks in natural ecosystems and promoting nature-based solutions.

This comprehensive proposal adequately highlights the issues and barriers from a systems thinking perspective and presents appropriate actions and activities to address them. The program has a good balance between upstream and downstream activities to achieve transformational change. Even though the country projects target different sectors, lessons from the various sectors in the different countries will inform processes in other countries beyond the IP. Moreover, the Global Child project is designed to ensure that the relevant stakeholders are engaged, innovation is fostered, and inter-project learning and knowledge sharing occurs.

The theory of change (ToC) narrative and diagram are well prepared, with all critical elements of a ToC appropriately included. While child projects were not required to have a theory of change, developing one for each child project could help ensure they are well-designed and aligned with the overall program ToC.

Overall, STAP believes this is a viable IP that can deliver on its objectives if well implemented. STAP has provided some recommendations that can further help enhance the IP.

STAP's assessment*

- ✓ **Concur - STAP acknowledges that the concept has scientific and technical merit.**
Minor - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points to be addressed in project design
Major - STAP has identified significant concerns to be addressed in project design

Please contact the STAP Secretariat if you would like to discuss.

2. Project rationale, and project description – are they sound?

- The program adequately articulates the problem and issues to be addressed at the country level and the implications at the global scale. The drivers of the problem in the different contexts and the various components of the national systems, and how they interact are explained in the child projects. Upstream and downstream elements are addressed in each child project.
- The program will support several ambitious actions and activities to accelerate investment and implementation of nature-positive and net-zero pathways. There is clarity on the baseline at the child project level and the different futures that can unfold by taking different emission and natural resource exploitation pathways. The barriers and enablers to achieving the desired outcomes are described at the national and global child project levels.

- Appropriate actions are proposed to design fiscal, legal, and regulatory policy frameworks to overcome barriers to mobilizing and scaling up investment. The national and global child project objectives are aligned, well-formulated, and justified. The selected child projects cover a broad spectrum of sectors, and learnings from this integrated program will potentially have far-reaching impacts beyond the program execution period if well implemented.
- A detailed theory of change narrative and diagram that builds on a problem tree diagram was provided at the Global Child project level. All the critical elements of a good theory of change are included. While child projects were not required to have a theory of change, developing one for each could help ensure they are well-designed and aligned with the overall program theory of change.
- The upstream actions, including developing economic-wide strategies and fostering the enabling institutional, regulatory, and finance environment (e.g., Sustainable Budgeting Approach), will likely have far-reaching sector and economy-wide implications in generating global environmental benefits. Implementing a whole-of-economy approach will help ensure coherence between climate and biodiversity goals and other socioeconomic issues in countries; hence the importance of developing robust economic-wide strategies and creating the needed enabling conditions.
- The active engagement of key stakeholders is a significant strength of this IP. At the child project level, the envisaged activities are aligned with national processes in the selected sectors and appear to build and complement prior and current investments.
- The IP is innovatively co-addressing climate change and nature goals and includes elements of technological, finance, business models, policy, and institutional innovations, which is commendable. The IP noted incorporating aspects of circularity in policy design as one of the innovative thinking of the global platform and intends to use incentives to facilitate circular methods of production and consumption. Several child projects also noted the circular economy approach as part of their interventions. STAP encourages this approach and expects the global child project to distill knowledge and lessons on effectively transitioning to a circular economy across the various targeted sectors in the IP and how policy design can be an effective enabler.
- It is clear from the proposal that the proponents plan to learn from separate actions conducted in the two areas (climate change and nature). The global child project outlines a feasible plan for managing, exchanging, and archiving generated knowledge, primarily through Component 3. Knowledge management and learning will be foundational to achieving the desired transformation envisaged from this IP; hence, this aspect of the IP must be well-designed and implemented.
- The PFD notes significant global environmental benefits across core indicators 3, 4, 6, and 11 but provides no information on how the expected GEBs were estimated.
- The PFD appropriately addresses how it will achieve transformation through its three components and institutional, governance, and policy reforms at the child project level and interactions and are built on the GEF's transformation levers. The selected indicators for tracking the achievement of the program outcomes are also mostly aligned with STAP's metrics for transformational change (see section 3 for more details).

3. Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions

STAP was actively engaged during the PFD designing stage. We recommend the following as the IP is further developed:

1. Advancing policy coherence at the national level is a crucial element of the IP. We encourage all child projects to consider undertaking a policy gap analysis to understand where conflicting policies can hinder the achievement of the expected outcomes and ensure these are addressed appropriately.
2. Child projects could consider developing a theory of change aligned with the overall program theory of change to help guide their implementation.
3. STAP encourages the global child project to distill knowledge and lessons on effectively transitioning to a circular economy across the various targeted sectors in the IP and how policy design can be an effective enabler.
4. Provide brief information in the PFD on how the GEBs were estimated and any underlying assumptions.
5. To effectively track transformation, STAP would encourage the IP to consider having an indicator to measure the capacity for change (i.e., tracking whether organizations and other actors have or are developing the capacity for the required change and the ability to deliver change). Please see STAP's [paper on transformation](#) for more details.
6. Reflect on how to foster and capture all innovations and learnings across the IP and ensure a clear investment in activities that make the achievement of the expected outcomes and indicators happen.
7. While reporting IP achievements, exploring robust approaches for attributing emission reductions and positive nature benefits to IP actions will be essential.
8. The planned interventions in the IP are very cross-cutting with other GEF-8 IPs (agriculture and food, energy systems, built environment, industry and manufacturing, mobility, etc.), so we recommend that the proponent explore interactions with other IPs and GEF focal areas when developing the IP further.
9. Socioeconomic benefits – the PFD rightly identified the IP's potential to generate socioeconomic co-benefits, including jobs, economic growth, food security, resilience, etc. We encourage the proponent to put in place the provision to track, measure and report these co-benefits. For guidance on this, please see STAP's paper on [incorporating co-benefits in GEF's projects](#).
10. We encourage all child projects to carry out a robust climate risk screening as promised in the PFD.

*categories under review, subject to future revision

ANNEX: STAP'S SCREENING GUIDELINES

1. How well does the proposal explain the problem and issues to be addressed in the context of the **system** within which the problem sits and its drivers (e.g. population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, and technological changes), including how the various components of the system interact?
2. Does the project indicate how **uncertain futures** could unfold (e.g. using simple **narratives**), based on an understanding of the trends and interactions between the key elements of the system and its drivers?
3. Does the project describe the **baseline** problem and how it may evolve in the future in the absence of the project; and then identify the outcomes that the project seeks to achieve, how these outcomes will change the baseline, and what the key **barriers** and **enablers** are to achieving those outcomes?
4. Are the project's **objectives** well formulated and justified in relation to this system context? Is there a convincing explanation as to **why this particular project** has been selected in preference to other options, in the light of how the future may unfold?
5. How well does the **theory of change** provide an "explicit account of how and why the proposed interventions would achieve their intended outcomes and goal, based on outlining a set of key causal pathways arising from the activities and outputs of the interventions and the assumptions underlying these causal connections".
 - Does the project logic show how the project would ensure that expected outcomes are **enduring** and resilient to possible future changes identified in question 2 above, and to the effects of any conflicting policies (see question 9 below).
 - Is the theory of change grounded on a solid scientific foundation, and is it aligned with current scientific knowledge?
 - Does it explicitly consider how any necessary **institutional and behavioral** changes are to be achieved?
 - Does the theory of change diagram convincingly show the overall project logic, including causal pathways and outcomes?
6. Are the project **components** (interventions and activities) identified in the theory of change each described in sufficient detail to discern the main thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they address the problem, their justification as a robust solution, and the critical assumptions and risks to achieving them?
7. How likely is the project to generate global environmental benefits which would not have accrued without the GEF project (**additionality**)?
8. Does the project convincingly identify the relevant **stakeholders**, and their anticipated roles and responsibilities? is there an adequate explanation of how stakeholders will contribute to

the development and implementation of the project, and how they will benefit from the project to ensure enduring global environmental benefits, e.g. through co-benefits?

9. Does the description adequately explain:

- how the project will build on prior investments and complement current investments, both GEF and non-GEF,
- how the project incorporates **lessons learned** from previous projects in the country and region, and more widely from projects addressing similar issues elsewhere; and
- how country policies that are contradictory to the intended outcomes of the project (identified in section C) will be addressed (**policy coherence**)?

10. How adequate is the project's approach to generating, managing and exchanging **knowledge**, and how will lessons learned be captured for adaptive management and for the benefit of future projects?

11. Innovation and transformation:

- If the project is intended to be **innovative**: to what degree is it innovative, how will this ambition be achieved, how will barriers and enablers be addressed, and how might scaling be achieved?
- If the project is intended to be **transformative**: how well do the project's objectives contribute to transformative change, and are they sufficient to contribute to enduring, transformational change at a sufficient scale to deliver a step improvement in one or more GEBs? Is the proposed logic to achieve the goal credible, addressing necessary changes in institutions, social or cultural norms? Are barriers and enablers to scaling be addressed? And how will enduring scaling be achieved?

12. Have **risks** to the project design and implementation been identified appropriately in the risk table in section B, and have suitable mitigation measures been incorporated? (NB: risks to the durability of project outcomes from future changes in drivers should have been reflected in the theory of change and in project design, not in this table.)