

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10873	
Project Title	Effectively Managing Networks of Marine Protected Areas in Large Marine Ecosystems in the ASEAN Region (ASEAN ENMAPS)	
Date of Screening	08 November 2021	
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner	
STAP secretariat screener	Alessandro Moscuza	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Minor.</p> <p>This project aims to develop and improve the management of networks of marine protected areas and marine corridors within selected Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) in the ASEAN region for the conservation of globally significant biodiversity and support for sustainable fisheries and other ecosystem goods and services. Clear and well-structured with reasonable evidence cited. Gender analysis is exceptionally comprehensive. While description of related project investments is extensive, additional detail on status of marine resources and effectiveness of current governance and management efforts would provide a stronger basis for subsequent baseline comparison. STAP recommends further analysis prior to CEO endorsement on the potential innovations particularly regarding policies and governance, financing mechanisms and business models. The governance challenges and the rapid pace of resource decline in the face of climate and economic threats suggests a transformation in governance practice is required. While the project refers to transformative outcomes, a more explicit articulation of assumptions and anticipated challenges would increase confidence in the preparedness to pursue these outcomes.</p>	
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, the PIF includes an extensive, finely detailed and well-articulated section, which defines the project objectives and provides ample background information and context to justify the need for the intervention.

Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	Yes, the project is structured around three clearly defined components, which are sequenced and logically linked to one another to justify the project's main objective (i.e. to effectively manage a network of marine protected areas in the ASEAN region). The first component provides a scientific basis and analysis to determine the extent of ecological, socioeconomic and institutional issues to be tackled by the project activities. The second component focuses on the management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by taking into account the results from Component 1, and the third delivers training, capacity development, learning, knowledge management and outreach.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	The PIF comprises a total of four outcomes, which are clearly sequenced and nested. The scope of the outcomes is described clearly throughout the proposal as are the logical and causal linkages between these and supporting outputs and activities.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	The PIF includes a clear description of the Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) that are expected to be delivered, clear justification of the biodiversity and economic importance of the marine resources in focus, and documented evidence of the extreme threats (e.g., extent of coral bleaching), supported by a handful of references from the scientific literature. There is reasonable likelihood of realizing planned benefits.
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?	The PIF contains a total of eleven outputs, which describe clearly the expected operational results and deliverables from this intervention. The outputs are logically sequenced and nested. The scope of the outputs fits well with that of the other project elements and supports the overall structure of the project.
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	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes, the PIF includes a brief and well-organized description of the environmental problems, root causes and barriers that the project aims to tackle. Since this particular project has a regional scope, the description of the problems is organized geographically by sub-regional areas. The analysis of issues affecting the

need to be addressed (systems description)		different regions was also supported by a handful of academic references.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	The PIF includes a short description of the barriers that the project is aiming to overcome. It is complemented by a section on root causes and together with the “environmental problems” section provides an acceptable level of detail. The proposal also includes a useful “mind-map” diagram (ACB, 2017) that illustrates the complexity of environmental threats and their expected impacts.
	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, the description of environmental problems and root causes straddle a number of focal areas: biodiversity, chemicals and waste, climate adaptation and international waters.
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	The PIF includes a detailed description of existing and associated projects, which are organized by theme and/or country where relevant. This provided a clear picture of the existing landscape of similar and related interventions in the region.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project’s benefits?	No, additional detail on status of marine resources and effectiveness of current governance and management efforts would provide a stronger basis for comparison.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Adequate with regard to associated projects and investments.
	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;	Yes, the PIF includes a section specifically aimed at describing how the project is aligned with the GEF-7 Biodiversity Focal Area and the International Waters Focal Area strategies as well as how planned activities support synergies between the two focal areas. The description of baseline interventions includes a number of technical references and is supported by a range of data (e.g. on zoning, planning, and existing MPAs).
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Yes, the PIF includes references to a number of lessons from previous projects, which range from the impact of inadequate investment in MPA management to a lack of adequate understanding of the stakeholders impacted by the ecological interactions in the marine and coastal environment.

	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	Reflected in focus on stakeholder engagement, scientific analysis, and pilot investments.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	The project envisions transformative changes in the management of networks of MPAs in the LMEs, building upon national initiatives to develop and manage MPAs and use of ICM and MSPs and increasing coverage of management and protection of marine corridors. This upscaling of conservation areas aspires to attain improved support and sustainability to fisheries and other ecosystem goods and services. To accomplish this, the proposed ASEAN ENMAPS project aims to leverage regional conservation investments of similar mandates in the ASEAN, through a three-pronged approach. A useful summary Theory of Change diagram is provided (Annex D), with brief identification of barriers & drivers of change.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	The science-based approaches, which is the focus of Component 1 will define MPA networks in specific LMEs or across LMEs, identify new MPAs, support necessary management decisions to determine the scale of connectivity in the LMEs and identify biological and spatial boundaries in conservation corridors between and among MPAs. Results thereof will also serve as a basis for plans and decision-making on incorporating marine connectivity in spatial planning and in establishing coordination mechanisms across local governments, including transboundary arrangements across the littoral countries. Once the bases for scaling up of MPAs and connectivities are established in Component 1, Component 2 will focus on improving the management of individual MPAs and the network of MPAs through a range of interventions such as capacity-building on ICM and adaptive management approaches, which will also be streamlined in the development or refining of management plans.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Development and implementation of investment projects that will promote the benefits of ecosystem management, restoration and responsible governance at the core of the social and economic development of communities will also be supported. To sustain these gains, partnerships among various sectors, including the

		private sectors, will be established. Partnerships are also envisaged to gain sustainable financing, increase investments, and strengthen local (within countries) and multi-country cooperation (across countries and LMEs) to address priority concerns in MPA governance.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Yes, the mechanisms of change are plausible and are supported by a well-presented diagram, which illustrates the proposed logical chain of progression from the outputs through the outcomes and on to the overall impact. However, the current version of the ToC does not appear to include any assumptions. STAP therefore recommends that these be added in the next version of the proposal.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Yes, this aspect is described in the narrative description section of the ToC.
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?	Plausible, though governance challenges and climate threats are extensive.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	
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?	Yes, the PIF provides an explanation of why the expected environmental benefits will be global in nature and supports this with references from the technical and academic literature. The main measurable outcome will be the increase in the area and management of existing MPAs, as well their state of health, which should deliver additional secondary co-benefits such as improvement in livelihoods, nutrition and earnings from specific activities that are also measurable. Climate adaptation benefits are well integrated.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes, though extent of pilot investments and policy influence targeted appears modest in relation to the funding level and regional scope.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes

	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	Yes, the PIF includes a section on core indicators, which aims to monitor and measure various aspects of the expected GEBs, which specific reference to the extent, and characteristics of protected areas.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	Climate adaptation benefits figure among central goals.
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?	Not especially. The PIF notes potential innovations with regards to integration and policy coherence across biodiversity and fisheries management goals, as well as regional coherence within existing LME and ASEAN structures. STAP recommends further analysis prior to CEO endorsement on the potential innovations particularly regarding policies and governance, financing mechanisms and business models. (The section on private sector engagement alludes to innovative financing aspects which should feature more centrally among the potential innovations described.)
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Partly. While the investment covers a vast marine region, it would improve the case to more explicitly detail how innovations are intended to scale (a) beyond the target MPAs and (b) among private sector actors operating adjacent to and beyond MPAs. And while behavioral change is referenced, it would be helpful to indicate the mechanisms anticipated to address behavioral change.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	The governance challenges and the rapid pace of resource decline in the face of climate and economic threats suggests a transformation in governance practice is required. While the project refers to transformative outcomes, a more explicit articulation of assumptions and anticipated challenges would increase confidence in the preparedness to pursue these outcomes.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		-
2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Reasonable breadth of stakeholders identified, from regional governing bodies to national governments and local authorities, as well as indigenous groups, academia, civil society, women's groups and the private sector. Descriptions remain generic in most cases but

<p>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>anticipated roles suggest a good foundation for future engagement.</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>Different stakeholder groups are being consulted for differing reasons varying from participation in the project advisory board on policy and programming to legal and institutional support and technical assistance.</p>
<p>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;</p>	<p>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>Yes, the proposal includes a strong gender analysis section. Good coverage of aspects relating to: closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; improving women's participation and decision-making; and generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Also includes reference to relevant standards and exceptional specificity in relation to inclusive approaches to capacity development.</p>

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		
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Yes, well addressed as described above.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 project PIF includes a section on risk, which covers some of the categories that would be expected or a project of this kind, scope and size (e.g. environmental risks and mitigating measures; political risks and mitigating measures; unforeseen global events such as COVID 19 and climate risks). However, the content provided was minimal and the underlying analysis quite superficial (with the exception of COVID 19). STAP recommends that the implementing agency revisit and strengthen this section prior to CEO endorsement. The revised version should also include a section on planned/proposed mitigation actions and an expanded sub-section on climate-related risks—with detail on future scenarios.
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?	The PIF includes a section on co-ordination, which outlines and illustrates the institutional structure of the project. Strong potential for sharing based on a long history of related investments in the region.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Good recognition of prior projects with some explicit reference to lessons learned.
	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?	Yes, see comments below on KM.
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 results and lessons of the project will be packaged and disseminated into knowledge products to ensure that the learnings and best practices are documented and shared with relevant stakeholders, which will be the outcomes of Component 3. Knowledge management, learning and networking will utilize existing knowledge sharing platforms in the region to engage the relevant project stakeholders in further learning and building of core capacities in MPA management and other management tools needed in successfully implementing the project. As a source for potential replication and scaling up of best practices, the project will incorporate all the learning through knowledge management mechanisms in the region, such as the Southeast Asia Knowledge Base (SeaKB), the ASEAN Clearing House Mechanism, ASEAN Biodiversity Dashboard, and IW LEARN, among others.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	The project structure includes a dedicated component (Component 3) addressing knowledge management. The project is also planning to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy that will be supported with a KM platform. The content of the platform will be derived from the results of Component 1 (Science-based approach to supporting and expanding ecological networks of MPAs) and will be directed at enhancing the knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) of local and national government bodies charged with developing and implementing coastal management and fisheries policies and programs.

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 <i>“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.”</i>
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.

<p>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</p>	<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>