

REVISED STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE, OCTOBER 2022

GEF ID	11198
Project title	Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program Phase 3
Date of screen	6 June 2023
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1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

This is a strong proposal, building on the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes (ASL) phases 1 & 2. The proposal provides a good analysis of the current situation, highlighting the progress that has been made through past interventions but also pointing out areas where interventions have been less successful and where substantial challenges remain.

Other strengths include: a well thought out theory of change, which integrates components of the program and appears to have been used to build a collective vision for the IP among the participating countries; an intention to identify and scale effective solutions, particularly those that have already been identified from ASL 1 & 2; an intention to further develop and strengthen knowledge management and sharing systems to accelerate the spread and uptake of good practices and solutions emerging from innovative approaches; and an intention to strengthen policy coherence not just within countries but also across the region.

STAP has noted several aspects of the program that have broader implications for the GEF, and particularly for other critical forest biomes, including: the intention to further develop and test indicators for transformative change; the integration of knowledge from scientific and indigenous knowledge systems; and support for other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) involving indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs). It will be important for the Regional Coordination project and child projects to be designed so that the outcomes of these activities can be assessed at an early stage and shared both within the ASL and more broadly in the GEF.

Note to STAP screeners: a summary of STAP's view of the project (not of the project itself), covering both strengths and weaknesses.

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?

See annex on STAP's screening guidelines.

The proposal is underpinned by good background information and a systematized analysis of lessons learned from ASL phases 1 & 2. The proposal also acknowledges, up front, many of the data and knowledge gaps and the underlying uncertainty associated with these gaps. Overall, it presents a compelling case for the achievement of global environmental benefits and the additionality of the ASL3 program.

The **theory of change** presents a credible and coherent framework for the project with a good justification for the four components and related activities. The barriers are based on lessons learned from previous ASL projects together with additional inputs from participating countries. The program is designed to promote

policy coherence through activities in individual countries and regionally across the Amazon basin, including in the headwaters for the main river systems. Component 3 (Supporting governance incentives and policy transformations) includes critical activities, such as analyzing gaps in policies and legal frameworks as well as reviewing and aligning incentives and regulations to mobilize positive changes while eliminating harmful practices.

The need to achieve impact across the Amazon and to **scale** successful practices is a recurrent theme in the PFD. It is a pity that the intentions were not illustrated by more examples as this would provide a better understanding of what is already known versus areas where solutions have not yet been identified. This was done for restoration, where the PFD notes that there are many examples of successful restoration and these form a basis for identifying good practice and scaling up effective solutions. A strong point is the intention not only to scale up through extending successful practices into new areas but also to deepen the impact of interventions in areas such as enforcement, inclusive governance and eliminating perverse incentives.

The PFD provides summary information on engagement with **stakeholders** and is underpinned by a detailed analysis of stakeholder engagement from ASL 1 & 2. Since this phase 3 of the ASL, there is an expectation of strong stakeholder engagement, and this seems to be supported by the evidence provided.

Knowledge management and sharing is identified as a critical activity for the PFD and is intended to integrate seamlessly with the systems developed for ASL 1 & 2. The detail is insufficient to make any specific comments about functionality, but the proposal does adequately identify what sort of outputs and outcomes are needed from the knowledge management system to support better forest management. A strong point is the intention to investigate ways to integrate information from scientific studies and indigenous knowledge systems.

The PFD mentions many areas of **innovation**, including participatory governance mechanisms involving both IPLCs and the private sector, business models to accelerate restoration, and financial mechanisms. To some extent the impact of innovation is a bit obscured by nesting the proposed activities to identify and share innovations under one component (Promoting capacity building, communication and regional cooperation). Although the component does adequately cover the need to identify, scale and share effective solutions, it will be important to regard innovation as a cross-cutting activity to ensure that the innovative approaches that are being tested under other components (e.g. sustainable production practices, restoration, financial mechanisms) are also properly identified so that effective solutions can be more rapidly adopted.

Note: provide a general appraisal, asking whether relevant screening guideline questions have been addressed adequately – not all the questions will be relevant to all proposals; no need to comment on every question, only those needing more attention, noting any done very well, but ensure that all are considered. Comments should be helpful, evaluative, and qualitative, rather than yes/no.

3. Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions

- 1) Several activities in the PFD have the potential for broader uptake in the GEF and to better support aspects of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. These include exploring the development of OECMs on indigenous lands, integration of scientific and indigenous knowledge systems, and the development and testing of indicators for transformative change across the four levers set out in the GEF-8 programming document. It will be important to design the Regional Coordination project and other child projects in such a way that these aspects feed into other GEF-wide initiatives and ensure that effective solutions are identified as early as possible during project implementation and then shared more broadly in the GEF.
- 2) Areas of innovation should be more clearly identified in the next phase of the regional coordination and country-level child projects to ensure they are designed to properly test innovative solutions, identify pathways for scaling and facilitate rapid learning.

Note: number key points clearly and provide useful information or suggestions, including key literature where relevant. Completed screens should be no more than two or three pages in length.

*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.)