

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10552
Project Title	Natural Capital Values of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in Sri Lanka Integrated into Sustainable Development Planning
Date of Screening	22 November 2020
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Minor</p> <p>STAP welcomes the project from IUCN to integrate natural capital values of coastal and marine ecosystems in Sri Land’s development planning.</p> <p>The project presents a strong opportunity for demonstrating the feasibility of natural capital accounting in a developing country context. However, outcomes need further specification of indicators of success, beyond numbers of districts and sites adopting improved practices. For example, what is the volume of investment mobilized in support of new planning priorities (beyond project co-financing)? What are indicators of scaling and adoption in other units of government, and at the national level?</p> <p>The theory of change is not explicitly presented, including no visual presentation. Activities are clearly presented but not assumptions on which success depends. There is a very high reliance on an assumption of good will and collaboration among the key stakeholders, including private sector actors.</p> <p>Additional analysis is recommended, prior to CEO endorsement, on the political economy factors that could undermine success (including likely opposing forces) and how to mitigate these. These should include incentives for private sector engagement, and motivations for government adoption of new practices despite disruptions of post-</p>

	<p>conflict setting, COVID-19, and momentum of ‘business as usual’ planning and investment practices.</p> <p>The description of the project’s knowledge management (KM) approach is very preliminary, given the central importance to achieving project objectives. Metrics of success in KM should be developed, particularly to support mainstreaming and the adoption of good practices in other units of government and other sites beyond those targeted. What are the existing networks that can be leveraged to influence a shift in practices? For example: legislative bodies, professional networks, industry associations, training institutes, etc. What are the opportunities for the most leverage in these networks? Which actors need to be empowered to exercise that influence?</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.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project’s objectives?	Yes.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	Wording of Component 2 is awkward. Outcomes need further specification of indicators of success, beyond numbers of districts and sites adopting improved practices. Suggest addressing this before CEO endorsement. For example, what is the volume of investment mobilized in support of new planning priorities (beyond project co-financing)? What are indicators of scaling and adoption in other units of government, and at national level?
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Good potential, if planning processes translate successfully to on-ground shifts in effectiveness of resource conservation and restoration.
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?	Very process-oriented description of activities and outputs. Success will depend upon skills, networks, influence of implementation team.

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?	Yes
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, barriers are well defined and referenced.
	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.
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, good description of baseline policy and regulatory framework, including opportunity identified.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes, but additional specification of metrics for mainstreaming would be important before CEO endorsement.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes.
	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.
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Good potential integration with GCF funded project.
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	Good identification of related experiences in other countries for exchange of lessons.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected	What is the theory of change?	Capacity strengthening and support to 'multi-stakeholder implementation' will deliver mainstreaming of improved planning and investment.

outcomes and components of the project		Theory of change is not explicitly presented, including no visual presentation.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Activities are clearly presented but not assumptions on which success depends.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Linkages need further elaboration.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	There is a very high reliance on an assumption of good will and collaboration among the key stakeholders, including private sector actors. Additional analysis is recommended, prior to CEO endorsement, on the political economy factors that could undermine success (including likely opposing forces) and how to mitigate these.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Participatory design elements imply considerable scope for adaptation.
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?	High likelihood at site level; more risk for goals of broader national mainstreaming.
	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. But as noted above, additional metrics are needed or mainstreaming and scaling.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes
	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?	As noted above, additional metrics are needed or mainstreaming and scaling.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	Climate risk analysis included.

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?	Strong opportunity for demonstrating feasibility of natural capital accounting in a developing country context. Significant network of terrestrial and marine protected areas provide a foundation for BD and LD benefits. Good integration of additional climate and CW considerations, including linkages to BD. Focus is on conflict affected northern and eastern land/seascapes.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Clear expectation, but mechanisms of scaling need further elaboration before CEO endorsement.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Improving effectiveness of co-management of specific protected areas can demonstrate incremental improvement, but broader goal of mainstreaming NCA is transformational.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Included.
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?	Good preliminary indication of government and NGO actors, including community-led efforts by Small Fishers Federation. Identification of private sector actors and roles is inadequately addressed; this will be key to potential influence on investment trends. (Additional detail is provided in subsection 4, particularly related to finance institutions, but this is still very general.)

their respective roles and means of engagement.		
	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?	Needs further development.
<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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no/tbd</p>	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Very good summary of gender dimensions, including in relation to indigenous groups, resource management and decision-making
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Yes, good preliminary overview, with plans for Gender Action Plan.

<p>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</p>	<p>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:</p> <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? 	<p>Appropriate risks identified. Prior to CEO endorsement, recommend drawing upon this analysis of risks to influence articulation of an explicit theory of change, including assumptions and strategies to address countervailing pressures. These include incentives for private sector engagement, and motivations for government adoption of new practices despite disruptions of post-conflict setting, COVID-19, and momentum of ‘business as usual’ planning and investment practices.</p>
<p>6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives</p>	<p>Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?</p>	<p>Not adequately specified here, though there are many relevant projects identified in the baseline section.</p>
	<p>Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?</p>	
	<p>Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?</p>	
	<p>How have these lessons informed the project’s formulation?</p>	
	<p>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?</p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?</p>	<p>Description of KM approach is very preliminary, given the central importance to achieving project objectives. Metrics of success in KM should be developed, particularly to support mainstreaming and adoption of good practices in other units of government and other sites beyond those targeted. KM aspects well integrated in Component 2.</p>

	<p>What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?</p>	<p>Activities and products are identified, but this needs further development before CEO endorsement. What are the existing networks that can be leveraged to influence a shift in practices? For example: legislative bodies, professional networks, industry associations, training institutes, etc. What are the opportunities for the most leverage in these networks? Which actors need to be empowered to exercise that influence?</p>
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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>