

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10570
Project Title	Improving biodiversity mainstreaming in the agro-forestry and fishery sectors in São Tomé and Príncipe
Date of Screening	November 11, 2020
STAP member screener	Rosie Cooney
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Minor</p> <p>STAP welcomes this project from IFAD entitled “Improving mainstreaming in the agro-forestry and fishery sectors in São Tomé and Príncipe (STP).” The environmental and development challenges facing this island nation are numerous and complex and this project makes a strong case for targeting the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors.</p> <p>While there are many interesting components, outcomes and outputs contained with the planned project, STAP feels that it would benefit greatly from a clearer, more targeted approach that narrows the focus and provides greater depth and detail regarding how activities will be designed, including key assumptions and risks.</p> <p>A theory of change is presented; however, it reads more like a summary of the objective and the main components. Please refer to the recent STAP primer on Theory of Change for guidance on the difference between a logframe and a TOC, and how to develop the latter (Theory of Change Primer: A STAP Document, December 2019, Washington, DC.)</p> <p>There are several interesting and potentially innovative interventions including a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme as well as producing renewable energy from banana tree trunks; however, it is difficult to link these specifically with results with so little detail about how they will be developed and implemented. STAP welcomes the review of public expenditure in the agroforestry and fisheries sectors but – as with general</p>

	<p>awareness raising – it is not a certainty that knowing this information will result in desired changes without targeted incentives to change practices harmful to biodiversity. Perhaps this is where the PES scheme comes in, making it even more imperative that the details are worked out to ensure success in the long term.</p> <p>Finally, STAP welcomes the spatial and land use planning as way to delineate and prioritize areas of intervention. However, this should be seen not as an end result but as a process for bringing stakeholders together to visualize, discuss and agree on benefits and trade-offs (including avoidance of leakage). It would be helpful during PPG phase to describe how capacity will be built to ensure that plans can be updated with new data and knowledge, and to reflect changing circumstances after the GEF project concludes. The same is true for the national digital platform including mobile application which similarly sounds interesting but lacks detail.</p>	
<p>Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary</p>	<p>What STAP looks for</p>	<p>Response</p>
<p>Project Objective</p>	<p>Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?</p>	<p>The threats to biodiversity in STP are numerous: road and energy infrastructure projects, agricultural expansion linked to agribusiness and family farming, selective and illegal logging, overexploitation of non-timber forest products, dynamite fishing, pollution from the use of pesticides in connection with impregnated mosquito nets and agricultural chemical inputs, collection of sea turtles and their eggs and extraction of marine sand.</p> <p>The objective of this project is “to mainstream biodiversity conservation into the agro-forestry and fishery production and management to minimize the negative impacts of biodiversity and fishery sector development while enhancing the contribution of ecosystem services to livelihoods in São Tomé and Príncipe.”</p>

		Overall, mainstreaming biodiversity across these sectors (including the numerous ways in which this project will attempt this) does relate to the numerous problems identified; however, there are so many activities discussed throughout the PIF (both problems and solutions) that it is difficult to draw the lines from problem to objective with much precision. The project would benefit greatly from focusing on just a few, key targeted activities and undertaking in-depth analysis and stakeholder consultation to ensure that they are done well to increase the likelihood of success. Developing clear causal pathways for the changes needed in each sector, and how they will be brought about, would be a good start.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	In general.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	No.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	STP contains significant biodiversity and much of that is occurring outside of the protected area estate. Therefore, if successful, the project stands to generate global and local biodiversity benefits (along with carbon sequestration from forests and soil)
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?	There are many outputs – all of which are interesting and beneficial – however, a clearer theory of change that shows how these outputs link to the outcomes would provide a clearer picture and possibly identify gaps.
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
1. Project description. Briefly describe:	Is the problem statement well-defined?	The problem statement describes the many and varied threats facing STP. Again, the long list is

1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)		a bit overwhelming - road and energy infrastructure projects, agricultural expansion linked to agribusiness and family farming, selective and illegal logging, overexploitation of non-timber forest products, dynamite fishing, pollution from the use of pesticides in connection with impregnated mosquito nets and agricultural chemical inputs, collection of sea turtles and their eggs and extraction of marine sand – and could be better organized and linked to each of the targeted sectors.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes
	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?	N/A
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	No because it mainly refers to baseline projects. Otherwise, information is provided on species, etc.; however, the line between specific interventions and the achievement of biodiversity benefits is not clearly drawn.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	See above.
	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;	N/A
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	N/A
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	N/A

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's stated theory of change is: mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the agricultural sector development (agriculture, forestry and fishery) at national and local level through biodiversity-based agriculture to enhance on the contribution of ecosystem services to livelihoods and reduce the impacts on biodiversity require: i) Strengthened and harmonized policies and standards to mainstream biodiversity conservation into the agricultural sector ii) Increased sustainable, biodiversity-friendly agricultural, agroforestry and fisher production and financing through the adoption and scaling up of biodiversity-compatible practices and to produce certified biodiversity based agriculture products using incentives such as payment for ecosystem services (PES), certification and labelisation while at the same time supporting the agricultural and fishery sectors to enter specific niche markets adapted to national supply." This is not clearly written and a graphic TOC showing the sequence of (interlinked) steps that need to come about to achieve the desired impact would be extremely useful.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Harmonize policies and institutions at the national level, capacity development, coordination - then planning and piloting - then M&E and KM.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	As before, there are many activities, but it is difficult to see linkages without a well-articulated theory of change, including causal pathways for each sector or key intervention.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Hard to say without a TOC that would incorporate underlying assumptions for each pathway.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	No. And this is a problem.

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?	Unclear at this point.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	N/A
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, potentially.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	\$3.5 million in GEF grant for 10,700 HA restored (not clear where this land will be located) and 20,000 HA of marine habitat under improved practices. And 155,523 Co2e avoided.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	See above
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	There is a monitoring plan; however, it focuses mainly on
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	
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?	No. This project was flagged by the GEF as innovative but there is no evidence of this apart from potentially a PES component. However, this is not well described in the project so it is unclear whether or not it can be successful in delivering GEBs – particularly in the long run. Review of public expenditures is interesting but similarly does not quality as particularly innovative.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	No. The project makes the assumption that including multiple stakeholders will ensure sustainability, for which evidence is not cited. The project states that government re-allocation of harmful subsidies, taxes, fees towards biodiversity conservation and sustainable agroforestry and fishery will also support

		sustainability and scaling; however, there is a significant risk that this will not occur and is not, in fact, one of the project outcomes.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Transformational change will be needed given the extent of the threats and challenges described in this project.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		The coordinates for this project (latitude 0° 25'N and longitude 6 20'E) represent a point in the north of STP.
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 their respective roles and means of engagement.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Yes. In addition, the project outlines the process of stakeholder engagement, including interviews with government, local communities, etc. followed by public meetings.
	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?	See Table 2 (pp. 53 – 54)
3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	A gender action plan will be developed at PPG stage and baseline targets (p. 43)

<p>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>		
	<p>Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?</p>	<p>Yes. Gender mainstreaming plan to be developed.</p>
<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? 	<p>Many of the risks are actually threats to biodiversity (i.e. pressure on fishing resources) or barriers to be addressed by the project itself (i.e. lack of capacity, lack of collaboration).</p> <p>The project would be much improved if these factors were incorporated into a theory of change to better isolate actual risks to the project such as inflation and natural hazards.</p> <p>Climate change is mentioned as a risk throughout; however, a climate risk assessment is not included in the PIF.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures? 	
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. The project has a good understanding of prior and ongoing related projects.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Key lessons from one prior IFAD project (2003 – 2015) are listed: i) Linked interventions in the provision of agricultural organic inputs and techniques, farmers’ professional development, and rural infrastructure were crucial to ensure that gains in agricultural yields resulted in increased sales revenues, asset ownership, and income for beneficiary households; ii) gains in yields and sales revenues were not restricted to project-targeted crops but extended to other crops such as sugar cane, tobacco, fruit, and tuber; iii) The projects accentuated households’ specialization in agricultural activities as a source of income, mostly at expenses of self-employment; iv) The project cooperatives played a key role articulating different agents in the value chains, thus buffering the impact of price shocks and building the resilience; v) Although the qualitative evidence suggests that the projects generated a high level of satisfaction among beneficiary women, it showed no significant measurable impacts on women’s empowerment.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	See above.
	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.
8. Knowledge management. Outline the “Knowledge Management Approach” for the project, and how it will contribute to	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	Standard approach including a national platform, which is mentioned but provides little detail on how it will operate.

the project's overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.		
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	See above.

Notes

STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
<p>1. Concur</p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>* 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></p>
<p>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</p>	<p>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:</p>
	<p>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;</p>
	<p>(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.</p>
	<p>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>

<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>