

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10703	
Project Title	Promoting the blue economy and strengthening Fisheries governance of the Gulf of Thailand through the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (GoTFish)	
Date of Screening	19 May 2021	
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Concur.</p> <p>Proposed project aims to promote the blue economy and strengthen fisheries governance in the Gulf of Thailand using an ecosystem approach. The vision centers on realizing “Blue Economy potential,” which is a vague ambition unless grounded in specific indicators of ecological, social and economic change.</p> <p>The direct focus on incentives based on better understanding of the market and fishers’ behavior sets it apart and if successful could potentially yield positive results and lessons. Good indication of engagement with major private fisheries-sector players (e.g., Thai Union).</p> <p>Additional articulation of assumptions and mechanisms of change would be important in the next stages of project development. Project would also be greatly improved if climate change impacts, including scenario development and related identification of exposure, sensitivity, adaptive capacity, and opportunities were explicitly considered and incorporated into the project design and implementation.</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 objective of this project is “improve natural resource governance in the Gulf of

		<p>Thailand through the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) contributing to the Fisheries objectives of the South China Sea Strategic Action Programme (SCS-SAP)”</p> <p>This responds directly to the problem of weak governance, which is articulated along with limited law enforcement as a result of lack of budget, unregistered vessels, limited cooperation. The objective implies that implementing an EAF will improve governance.</p>
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project’s objectives?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Component 1 addresses regional decision-making processes among stakeholders for improved fisheries governance. Useful to clarify how prioritization from stakeholder workshops interacts with the role of science and evidence in terms of informing the development of priorities.</p> <p>Component 3 addresses marine spatial planning to enhance the management of marine ecological corridors relevant to transboundary fisheries. This makes sense though it ends at identification and establishment of management measures. How will this be resourced in the long run?</p>
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>However, it is not made explicit how the EAF approach is reflected across the various components. Experience shows this is difficult in practice (see, for example, Kenny et al., 2018, Delivering sustainable fisheries through adoption of a risk-based framework as part of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management,” <i>Marine Policy</i> 93: 232-240).</p>

	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Good potential, given experience of other fisheries restoration efforts, provided economic and institutional drivers are well addressed.
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?	Clearly structured.
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, with extensive referencing.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, with good mapping to indicate how relevant project components aim to respond.
	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, with appropriate integration of biodiversity objectives in protected areas activities.
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes. Extensive information provided regarding baseline agreements, programs, country-level actions, etc. Also data throughout the PIF on the state of fisheries and related ecosystem trends.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Adequate; however, given the breadth of initiatives underway, it will be important to specify approaches to estimate the distinct contribution of this project towards targeted benefits.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	See above.
	For multiple focal area projects:	Yes.
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	

	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Project states that lessons learned from past and ongoing projects will be valuable for GoTFish; however, few specifics are provided. Does state that focus on controlling IUU fishing has been successful but more work needed.
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	Lessons have informed prioritization; specific insights not stated. However, there is good specification of the distinct approaches to be applied in different territorial waters and zones within the GOT, implying application of prior learning throughout.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	<p>A visual TOC is presented, accompanied by a well-stated summary of the logic. While the visual is simple, it does summarize the approach, aiming to embed the planned actions in a set of guiding strategies. Additional articulation of assumptions and mechanisms of change would be important in the next stages of project development.</p> <p>The vision centers on realizing “Blue Economy potential,” which is a vague ambition unless grounded in specific indicators of ecological, social and economic change.</p>
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	See above.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project’s objectives?	
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Assumptions are not specifically articulated.
	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
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?	This project builds on years of existing efforts in this area. There is some evidence of country-specific improvements however, it is likely that transformational change will be needed for there to be significant change across the entire GoT.

	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 in terms of fisheries and BD (hectares)
	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?	Yes
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	Climate adaptation is noted but not well integrated into the project - an important opportunity for improvement.
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?	<p>Component 2 aims to mobilize the role of the private sector and other partners to work on incentives/disincentives suited for Southeast Asian fisheries, with worldwide reach.</p> <p>Good indication of engagement with major private fisheries-sector players (e.g., Thai Union).</p> <p>This component has the potential to yield interesting results – particularly with respect to behavior change and would be interesting and helpful to assess outcomes and improve the knowledge base on this topic to see if and how it could be applied more broadly – see STAP advisory document entitled “Why behavioral change matters to the GEF and what to do about it.”</p>
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Good consideration of different aspects.

	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	While there is room for progress with incremental measures to improve enforcement and enhance protection, trends indicate the need for a transformation.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		A map is provided including lat/long for the larger region. Additional maps provided in Annex – would be good if these annexes were better described.
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?	Stakeholder groups are described in reasonable groupings (country, fisherfolk, communities, regional and international organizations, civil society, academia and research, private sector).
	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?	Specifics and roles will be further refined during PPG.
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.	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Detailed reference to country-specific data on gender inequalities in the sector, citing relevant studies. Good indication of aim to address "human dimension in fisheries value chains," including gender dimensions identified as missing from prior SAP.

<p>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. Good reference to relevant organizations and networks that will be engaged to help define gender-responsive strategies.</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?</p> <p>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? 	<p>Yes. Climate change and climate impacts are included as "Environmental impacts" in the risks section, separate from the risks to project implementation.</p> <p>A separate ESS document is provided but no climate risk assessment. This project would be greatly improved if climate change impacts, including scenario development and related identification of exposure, sensitivity, adaptive capacity, and opportunities were explicitly considered and incorporated into the project design and implementation. As it currently stands, climate change impacts are an underlying threat and the</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? 	project claims to build resilience without specifying what is meant by this and how it will be achieved.
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.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Clear knowledge of prior projects but no explicit articulation of lessons learned.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	See above
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	See above
	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?	Adequate indication of links to other initiatives for exchange of lessons.
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?	Component 4: effective communication, monitoring and sharing knowledge and lessons learned among all the stakeholders and wider audience. This is standard; however, it is rare that lessons learned from earlier projects are reflected (or clearly articulated) in the design of projects that build on them. Would be good if this could be built in somehow.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Useful, preliminary indication of topics for knowledge exchange, including attention to transboundary governance, multi-stakeholder platforms, behavioral science lessons, gender dimensions and effectiveness of ecosystem protection measures such as corridors.

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>