STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	**Response**	
GEF ID	10675	
Project Title	Safeguarding Marine & Terrestrial Biodiversity in Fiji (SAMBIO)	
Date of Screening	23 November 2020	
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	**Concur** STAP welcomes this project from Conservation International on safeguarding marine and terrestrial biodiversity in Fiji (SAMBIO). This project identifies globally significant biodiversity value and targets it for protection, with significant planned expansion to marine protected areas (MPAs) in particular. STAP finds that the intervention logic for this project is very well structured in addressing root causes and barriers, with a helpful theory of change diagram provided. STAP notes, however, that assumptions are not explicitly identified in the theory of change. This should be completed prior to CEO endorsement, along with measures to track these assumptions as part of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) / adaptive management framework. The climate aspects are well integrated into the project design. The climate risk screening has been completed, identifying significant threats related to sea level rise, storm surges, and flood events. A detailed vulnerability assessment is planned.	
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?	Good quantification of outcome targets.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	High biodiversity values, with appropriate site targeting, indicate good prospects for 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?	
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 good analysis of proximate and root causes. Identification of "increasing economic growth" as a root cause should be more correctly specified – not growth per se but expansion of destructive land uses to meet increased demand.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, with good referencing of relevant studies.
	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?	
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, with recognition of customary tenure as dominant form of landholding, existing LMMA networks and good reference to prior analyses.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes.

	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;	
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	Intervention logic well structured in addressing root causes and barriers, with helpful theory of change diagram provided (Annex E).
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Clearly structured.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Clearly structured.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Assumptions are not explicitly identified. This should be completed prior to CEO endorsement, along with measures to track these assumptions as part of M&E / adaptive management framework.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Planned stakeholder engagement processes and co-management approaches suggest readiness to adapt implementation.
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?	Well justified. Globally significant biodiversity value identified and targeted for protection, with significant expansion to marine protected areas in particular.
	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, well aligned with CBD / Aichi targets.

	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes, building upon past efforts.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes, well quantified.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	Yes, well quantified.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	Climate aspects well integrated. Climate risk screening completed, identifying significant threats related to sea level rise, storm surges, and flood events. Detailed vulnerability assessment planned.
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?	Innovations include integration of land and seascape modeling and conservation approaches. Potential innovations in co-management model, given breadth of stakeholder roles envisioned and geographic scale of action.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	While this is an expansion upon existing protected area networks, transformational change is required to address the substantial economic and institutional drivers of resource degradation.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Maps provided, geo coordinates missing.
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.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Adequate initial identification, with substantial plans for stakeholder engagement indicated. Good expectations for significant engagement of private tourism sector.

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.		
	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?	Initial roles identified, to be further developed during PPG stage.
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; participation and decision-making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project's results framework or logical	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Design notes disproportionate impact of climate change on women and marginalized groups. Good reference to earlier gender assessment findings. Good recognition of linkages to economic empowerment and benefit sharing, and particular roles of traditional institutions.

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?	Good initial indication, with plans to develop targeted responses.
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: • 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?	Adequate identification of risks and planned mitigation measures. "Intercultural and gender sensitive approaches" mislabeled as a risk: rephrase.
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, indicated earlier in the PIF.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Yes.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	Yes.
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	As noted in Baseline section.
	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, with good indication of plans to engage NGOs and existing global platforms to share knowledge and lessons.
8. Knowledge management. Outline the "Knowledge Management	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	Component 4 includes participatory M&E / adaptive management approach.

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 plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Good indication of plans to engage traditional networks, plus related projects, and IW:LEARN.

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 ***"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."***
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.

3. Major issues to be considered during project design	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:
	(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.