

## STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE

GEF ID	11180
Project title	Strengthening integrated transboundary management of the Incomati and Maputo river basins
Date of screen	June 6, 2023
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### 1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

The objective of this project is to promote integrated source-to-sea management of the Incomati and Maputo River Basins and coastal zones to ensure environmental security and inclusive livelihoods.

This is a standard GEF IW project based on the TDA-SAP process using a 'source to sea' lens. While the baseline situation is well described, including the threats, little attempt is made to consider alternative future scenarios and their potential impact on people and ecosystems in the river basins (apart from climate scenarios). The potential to ameliorate the current situation exists; however, the project lacks information regarding incentives for cooperation and for local people to embrace community-based gender-sensitive alternative livelihoods, making it difficult to assess the overall likelihood of success.

*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 rationale is well documented. Barriers to improved management of the river basin include limited technical, institutional and operational capacity of INMACOM, lack of data and information for basin monitoring and transboundary exchange of these data, poor transboundary coordination (despite overlapping geographies), gaps in scientific knowledge, absence of key transboundary management instruments, and general lack of basin-wide investment (beginning with an investment plan). This project proposes to use a 'source to sea' approach to address upstream and downstream activities in a holistic, systemic way that is premised on greater transboundary cooperation and planning.

Lacking is information on the ultimate vision for the basins, the underlying drivers of current institutional challenges (Where do the barriers come from? What solutions do they obstruct and how?), the overarching trends, and how these could change given different scenarios. How will this proposed project alter the current trajectory in a manner sufficient to make a substantial impact on nature and people?

The theory of change (ToC) is based on the hypothesis that “through building a scientific understanding of the system from source to sea, promoting a holistic planning approach that is based on an understanding of the impact of land-based activities on the ecosystem and demonstrating approaches that will address environmental problems in the transboundary river basins and TFCA, the project will enhance water security, food security, energy security and environmental security... and also contribute to reducing the impacts of land-based activities on the Maputo Bay.” The indicative design covers five components: 1) improved capacity and collaboration; 2) better and more up-to-date information and knowledge management tools (including development of TDA); 3) planning and investment mobilization (including SAP); 4) livelihoods demonstration projects; and 5) knowledge management & learning.

Despite its detail, the ToC leaves unclear how the outcomes targeted will lead to tangible improvements on the ground. The first impact assumes that sustainable transboundary partnerships and cooperation will necessarily lead to GEBs; the second assumes that promotion of “inclusive livelihoods” will lead to enhanced water, energy, and environmental security; and the third that inclusive and collaborative stakeholder engagement will lead to empowerment of women and girls. The identified impacts, moreover, include aspects referring to process or approach: “promotion of inclusive livelihoods...” and “inclusive and collaborative stakeholder engagement...” These are plausible change mechanisms but confusing to include among “impacts.”

*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. Review and sharpen theory of change to better describe the change mechanisms envisioned (the logic behind the arrows). This includes better differentiating the envisioned approach from the actual impacts targeted.
2. Clearly articulate what is meant by ‘gender-sensitive, inclusive livelihoods’ and how these will be accomplished in practice. What type of demonstration projects? If successful, how would they be scaled? What are the incentives for people to switch from current practices?
3. Provide better articulation of future potential scenarios beyond climate change. Are people already starting to adapt? If so, what are they doing and how will this project respond? Clearly the project is not the only or primary driver of change.
4. Claims of innovation (water-energy-food environment nexus) are not substantiated, nor is the role of the private sector which is vague (demonstration projects such as PES schemes, investments in community agriculture). What innovations show promise to shift land and water use practices? What would be the role of the private sector in a PES scheme?
5. In building a more robust picture of change pathways, consider: What features of strengthened transboundary governance are likely to be most challenging to build? In what ways do the envisioned approaches build upon past successes or failures in the region? What elements of the source-to-sea model are expected to yield learning that may be applicable more broadly?

*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.)