

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10712
Project Title	Enhancing water-food security and climate resilience in volcanic island countries of the Pacific
Date of Screening	20 November 2020
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Concur</p> <p>STAP welcomes this project from FAO to enhance water-food security and climate resilience in the volcanic island countries of the Pacific. The project offers good prospects for national benefits with implications for regional, global scaling of lessons. Inclusion within the International Waters mandate relies on consideration of groundwater resources as “shared” among Pacific Islands, as defined by the 1997 SAP.</p> <p>Opportunities for improvements beyond the baseline within particular island states are favorable. Anticipated benefits for the Northeast Australian Shelf-Great Barrier Reef as a shared water ecosystem are indirect and difficult to quantify. The project offers a good identification of opportunities to integrate lessons on groundwater within IWRM and water-food nexus policies and practices.</p> <p>The project includes some innovative aspects including the integration of the land degradation neutrality (LDN) framework within IW programming. It applies technical innovations in groundwater analysis in volcanic systems, through a combination of volcanology, remote sensing, spring mapping, and fracture analysis.</p> <p>Efforts to apply remote guidance to training at scale is potentially innovative, given constraints of highly a distributed target population combined with possible enduring COVID-19 constraints.</p>

	Roles are identified for key government actors in the three countries, but only in a very preliminary manner for categories of civil society and private sector actors. Considerable consultation will be required (and is planned) during PPG stage.	
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?	Yes, very clearly responding to climate risks.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Opportunities for improvement from baseline within particular island states are favorable. Anticipated benefits for the Northeast Australian Shelf-Great Barrier Reef as a shared water ecosystem are indirect and difficult to quantify.
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?	Yes, with good combination of analysis, governance strengthening, piloting, and knowledge management.
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 very good regional background, and good visualization of hydrological regime. Responds well to priorities identified in earlier regional SAP project support and ongoing Ridge to Reef project.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, well substantiated.

	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, well specified by country.
	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?	Clear articulation of 3 main lines of action, with good recognition of need to address existing and potential conflicts among water users.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Clearly defined.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Well structured.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Theory of change diagram integrates assumptions.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Development of interventions targeting 'hot spots' to be identified on basis of analysis.

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?	Good prospect for national benefits with implications for regional, global scaling of lessons.
	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?	National benefits contribute to addressing global challenges of water security and climate adaptation.
	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, though inclusion within IW mandate relies on consideration of groundwater resources as “shared” among Pacific Islands, as defined by 1997 SAP.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	Measures are included at national scale.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project’s resilience to climate change?	Yes, this is a core focus. Climate risk screening exercise referenced.
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?	Integrates land degradation neutrality (LDN) framework within IW programming. Applies technical innovations in groundwater analysis in volcanic systems, through combination of volcanology, remote sensing, spring mapping, and fracture analysis. Efforts to apply remote guidance to training at scale is potentially innovative, given constraints of highly distributed target population combined with possible enduring COVID-19 constraints.
	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?	Given that very little groundwater management is in place, this is a fundamental transformation at the island / nation scale.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Provided.
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?	Roles identified for key government actors in the 3 countries, but only in a very preliminary manner for categories of civil society and private sector actors. Considerable consultation will be required (and is planned) during PPG stage.
	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?	Preliminary.
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	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Preliminary but with good indications of need to "challenge traditional gender roles and encourage development of women's skills and involvement in water management practices."

<p>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>Not yet identified specifically.</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? • Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? 	

	<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, very clearly.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Yes, consistently.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	Yes, well reviewed with specific points in Baseline subsection. Includes planned application of methodologies from GEF-supported Groundwater Governance Project.
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	Fundamental to project focus and approach.
	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 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 focuses on capacity development and KM. Good institutional framework exists for regional sharing among SPC nations and plans are indicated for broader South-South cooperation.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Good identification of opportunities to integrate lessons on groundwater within IWRM and water-food nexus policies and practices.

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>