

## STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
<b>GEF ID</b>	10685
<b>Project Title</b>	Build back a blue and stronger Mediterranean
<b>Date of Screening</b>	23 November 2020
<b>STAP member screener</b>	Blake Ratner
<b>STAP secretariat screener</b>	Virginia Gorsevski
<b>STAP Overall Assessment and Rating</b>	<p><b>Concur</b></p> <p>STAP welcomes this project from Conservation International to build back a blue and stronger Mediterranean. The project design is well structured, responding directly to identified barriers. The project presents a clear theory of change diagram, including specification of assumptions and drivers of change associated with particular causal connections.</p> <p>The project identifies very good linkages within the region and beyond to other MPA networks (Caribbean, West Africa, etc.) There is a good prospect for achievement of global environmental benefits (GEBs), particularly recognizing the substantial gaps in performance between marine protected areas (MPAs) with adequate capacity and without. The project does a good job incorporating sustainable financing measures.</p> <p>Innovative financial mechanisms for MPA core costs are proposed, addressing a frequent source of underperformance. There is good prospect to develop and share innovative practices in the regionally-networked approach to capacity building and cross-regional exchange.</p> <p>Regarding the private sector, project plans indicate a focus on potential supporting partners, in finance and aligned areas such as tourism. More consideration needs to be paid to engaging industry sources of ecosystem damage, including land-based polluting industries and destructive fisheries. Sources of ecosystem decline beyond climate</p>

	change should be considered, including risks related to inability to shift private sector incentives driving destructive practices.	
<b>Part I: Project Information</b> <b>B. Indicative Project Description Summary</b>	<b>What STAP looks for</b>	<b>Response</b>
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, clearly structured.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	Yes, with well quantified outcome targets.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes, building upon significant past investments.
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, clearly structured.
<b>Part II: Project justification</b>	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
<b>1. Project description.</b> <b>Briefly describe:</b> 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 references to published studies. Problem analysis includes exceptional vulnerability of Mediterranean Sea to climate change.
	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?	

2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, with good review of large number of related initiatives.
	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?	Well structured, responding directly to identified barriers. Clear theory of change diagram included with specification of assumptions and drivers of change associated with particular causal connections.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Well structured.
	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?	Yes, with very good linkages identified within the region and beyond to other MPA networks (Caribbean, West Africa, etc.)
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Yes, with M&E component aimed to support adaptive management.
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 achievement of GEBs, particularly recognizing the substantial gaps in performance between MPAs with adequate capacity and without. Good incorporation of sustainable financing measures.

	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.
	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 considerations well integrated in design. Project design focuses on marine areas identified as highly exposed to climate risk. Climate risk screening exercise draws upon good, recent peer-reviewed literature.
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?	Innovative financial mechanisms for MPA core costs proposed, addressing a frequent source of underperformance. Good prospect to develop and share innovative practices in the regionally-networked approach to capacity building and cross-regional exchange.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes, this is a strong focus.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Fundamental transformation required to move from mere designation of MPAs to ecosystem restoration, addressing underlying drivers of change.
<b>1b.</b> Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Good country maps provided, but geo coordinates missing.

<p><b>2. Stakeholders.</b> 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.</p>	<p>Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?</p>	<p>Good preliminary identification of stakeholder roles, with additional consultations planned.</p>
	<p>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?</p>	<p>Commendable inclusion of trust fund networks. Private sector, CSO and vulnerable groups listed without much elaboration—these will need to be emphasized during planned PPG consultations. Regarding private sector, plans indicate a focus on potential supporting partners, in finance and aligned areas such as tourism. More consideration needs to be paid to engaging industry sources of ecosystem damage, including land-based polluting industries and destructive fisheries.</p>
<p><b>3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.</b> 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</p>	<p>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>Adequate. Good indication of plans for a “gender accountability system” to track gender mainstreaming, and consideration of women's access to financing.</p>

<p>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; issues of gender inclusion identified, responses to be developed.</p>
<p><b>5. Risks.</b> 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"> <li>• 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?</li> <li>• Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed?</li> <li>• Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with?</li> <li>• What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?</li> </ul>	<p>Risks identified are incomplete. Sources of ecosystem decline beyond climate change should be considered, including risks related to inability to shift private sector incentives driving destructive practices.</p>

<b>6. Coordination.</b> 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, well integrated.
	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?	Scientific data, analysis of MPA performance, capacity needs.
	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.
<b>8. Knowledge management.</b> 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?	Knowledge management objectives and activities are well integrated in project design. However, metrics of knowledge management performance should be developed prior to CEO endorsement.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Very good, preliminary plans for regional and cross-regional exchange.

Notes

STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
<p><b>1. Concur</b></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 <b><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></b></p>
<p><b>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</b></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><b>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</b></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>