

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10800
Project Title	Protecting and Restoring the Ocean's natural Capital, building Resilience and supporting region-wide Investments for sustainable Blue socio-Economic development (PROCARIBE+)
Date of Screening	24 May 2021
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Concur.</p> <p>STAP welcomes this project from UNDP to protect and restore the Ocean's natural capital, build resilience and support region-wide investments for blue socio-economic development in the wider Caribbean.</p> <p>The project encompasses many different issues from unsustainable fisheries to land based marine pollution, to promoting natural capital and blue carbon. It responds well to latest science-based priorities (High Level Panel report) on post-COVID blue recovery.</p> <p>The project is conceived at an ambitious geographic scale (44 states & territories), so learning to deliver systems change at this scale could in itself be innovative. There is also ambitious scope in the integration across sectors and between marine and terrestrial landscapes (S2S), including 23 transboundary river systems. Primary opportunities for scaling entail traction and exchange of lessons and approaches within the region. There is strong recognition of linkages to biodiversity and climate adaptation priorities. Good attention to institutionalization of mechanisms for future regional cooperation beyond the period of the project.</p> <p>A strong climate risk screening included. Further attention to scenarios if assumptions do not hold, and mechanisms</p>

	for regular stock-taking and adjustment, would strengthen preparedness for adaptive implementation.	
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 goal of this project is to protect, restore and harness natural coastal and marine capital of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf LMEs to catalyze investments in a climate-resilient, sustainable post-COVID Blue Economy, through strengthened regional coordination and collaboration, and wide-ranging partnerships. It is a very overarching and comprehensive objective that covers the main problem, which is degraded coastal areas and declining ocean health.
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.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Challenging to coordinate such a range of actors, but good potential.
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
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,	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes. Good distinction between underlying pressures/trends vs. impacts (degradation, pollution) and root causes. Given the complexity of these many and varied issues a graphic showing

root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)		interlinkages and cause and effect would be helpful.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Barriers to be addressed are listed (p. 29) and make sense though they appear tailored to support justification of this project (e.g., barrier is discontinuity of GEF financial support). This section could be improved by stating what, specifically, these are barriers to. It would be extremely helpful if they were incorporated into the TOC, for example.
	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?	n/a
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	This project demonstrates a strong understanding of baseline activities related to regional and national programs and strategy development. Data provided on trends is minimal, with reference instead to prior studies.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes and importantly, the PIF documents findings from the CLME+ Project Terminal Evaluation to show how work under this project will respond to the findings and build on past work.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes.
	For multiple focal area projects:	n/a
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	n/a
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	n/a
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	n/a
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected	What is the theory of change?	A theory of change is presented (p. 39) which essentially posits that the combination of enhanced regional cooperation combined with national –

outcomes and components of the project		<p>level planning, sector specific “blue economy” type activities, supported by better and more data and knowledge sharing will support the overall objective of post-COVID investments initially agreed via the TDA-SAP process.</p> <p>Numerous barriers and assumptions are listed – all of which make sense; however, given the number and types of interventions across such a large and diverse area, it would be helpful to simplify and/or break this TOC down to show specific causal pathways for different sectors or by outcome, etc. For example, what happens if the assumptions don’t hold up? What are the alternatives? Which actions address which (clusters of) barriers?</p>
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Clearly described.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project’s objectives?	Clearly described.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Mechanisms and assumptions make sense; however, it is not clear what happens if they don’t hold. As an example, Outcome 3 depends heavily on the use of spatial data for MSPs and one of the assumptions is that ‘data and information needed can be provided.’ If not, what is the alternate plan of action? Does this derail the entire effort?
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Some recognition, but further attention to scenarios if assumptions do not hold, and mechanisms for regular stock-taking and adjustment, would strengthen this aspect.
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?	Likely, given substantial prior investment to build upon.
	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 – particularly with respect to the MPAs newly created as this is easy to measure.
	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?	For each Component, many of the related outputs include specific indicators (i.e. natural capital/blue carbon integrated into NDCs)
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project’s resilience to climate change?	Intent is to mainstream climate considerations throughout the project.
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>Project is conceived at an ambitious geographic scale, so learning to deliver systems change at this scale could in itself be innovative. There is also ambitious scope in the integration across sectors and between marine and terrestrial landscapes (S2S). Primary opportunities for scaling entail traction and exchange of lessons and approaches within the region.</p> <p>Innovation and sustainability appear in the context of the blue economy and planned efforts to work with CSOs and MSMEs to create ‘blue’ businesses related to sustainable use/harvesting of renewable marine and coastal capital such as mariculture, mangrove products, etc.</p> <p>Under Output 3.2.1, One innovative “private/blended blue financing” instrument (from CLME+ scoping study; to be selected during PPG phase) will be tested at pilot-scale (1 OCM member country) and fine-tuned for region-wide replication/up-scaling.</p> <p>It will be important to coordinate with the UNEP BlueFin project which is similarly working on</p>

		developing blue financing mechanisms in the CLME.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	This project already encompasses a very large region and is undertaking numerous, diverse activities. In this context, it is important to define exactly what is meant by scaling and how it will be accomplished. Given the complexity of this large effort, it may be that gathering and sharing information including on data and creating and sustaining linkages and achieving results within the area may be more effective than scaling to other parts of the world, though it is critical (and the project acknowledges) to use the IW:LEARN, UNEP Regional Seas and other platforms to exchange lessons.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Transformational, systems change is required. Responds well to latest science-based priorities (High Level Panel report) on post-COVID blue recovery.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		A map is provided as are lat/long coordinates though not clear what they refer to exactly. Would be better to have a bounding box for the entire area.
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	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Yes. Stakeholders are identified by Component including very useful distinction of expected roles and “means of engagement.”

<p>peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.</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>Very broad scope of actors, suitably described at this stage of project development.</p>
<p>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 framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no/tbd</p>	<p>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>Good specification of dimensions in which gender priorities will be incorporated, building upon prior analyses, studies and projects. Dedicated gender specialist to be included.</p>

	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Yes; reasonably anticipated.
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>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? • What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures? 	<p>A reasonable range of risks are identified and rated.</p> <p>Insufficient data is rated as a 'high' risk and this is frequently cited throughout the project including as a barrier. Mitigating measures to 'explore the use of remote sensing' could be further developed prior to CEO endorsement to explain more specifically what type of data, and a strategy for collecting and analyzing it and to what end.</p> <p>Annex H provides a separate Climate Risk Screening which is comprehensive in that it identifies hazards, sensitivity and exposure, an overall risk rating and identifies measures to manage risk. It also includes additional information on projected regional scenarios. These data will be further refined during PPG phase to be more site-specific.</p>
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?	More information could be provided on lessons learned; however, this project refers to the terminal evaluation of the CLME+ project which is a step in the right direction.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	Yes.
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	Characterization of barriers, trends and priorities.
	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?	Good plan noted during inception phase for in-depth review of TDA/SAP process over prior decade and identification of lessons from other regions.
8. Knowledge management. Outline the	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	Lack of regional data management infrastructure identified as a constraint. Component 4 is devoted

<p>“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.</p>		<p>to knowledge management, and the CLME+ HUB is highlighted as the main mechanism by which knowledge will be gathered and shared.</p> <p>This is also where lessons learned from prior and similar projects will be shared (see above) as well as through IW:LEARN.</p>
	<p>What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?</p>	<p>IW:LEARN; documentation & dissemination of good practices.</p>

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>