

REVISED STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE, OCTOBER 2022

GEF ID	11508
Project title	Biodiversity Conservation in Indigenous Lands
Date of screen	13 May 2024
STAP Panel Member	John Donaldson - Graciela Metternicht
STAP Secretariat	Alessandro Moscuza

1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

The premise for the project is both promising and compelling. The focus on the management of indigenous lands (IL) responds to scientific evidence and global treaties, which have fore fronted the importance of IL for achieving conservation objectives, and the project pushes the envelope in empowering indigenous communities and organizations to implement the Territorial and Environmental Management Plans (PGTAs) they have co-developed. The proposal to provide direct financial assistance to indigenous-led organizations, and to capacitate them to execute project activities, also responds to specific requests made by indigenous representatives on several occasions, including the latest GEF Assembly, as well as recommendations from the academic literature (Brondizio et al. 2021; Fischer et al. 2023).

Notwithstanding these strengths, STAP's review found several areas that lacked a suitable amount of scoping and preparation, or where the information provided was not sufficient to show that the project can provide durable outcomes. Some of these concerns may be addressed by providing a fuller description of how PGTAs are designed to ensure enduring outcomes for biodiversity conservation. However, some aspects of project development fall short of what is expected from a CEO endorsement project document, such as identifying which indigenous peoples (IP) organizations have the capacity to carry out project activities (Component 1) or pre-engagement with women and youth to confirm their interest in specific capacity building initiatives (Component 3).

Although STAP rates the project as minor, there are significant issues pertinent to the delivery of global environmental benefits (GEBs) that this proposal still needs to address. STAP, therefore, strongly recommends that the proponent addresses the issues and recommendations presented in Sections 2 and 3 of this document before the project proceeds to implementation.

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*

Minor - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points 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 project rationale provides a good description that covers relevant aspects related to Indigenous Peoples (IP) and IL in the region and is supported by a moderate amount of quantitative data and evidence. Overall, STAP found this provides a solid justification and theoretical basis for the project, which focuses on the implementation and effectiveness of Environmental Territorial Management Plans (PGTAs) as the main administrative and implementation instruments for the National Policy for Territorial and Environmental Management of Indigenous Lands (PNGATI). However, the information on PGTAs in the proposal is often too vague to assess whether or not the structure and design of PGTAs deal comprehensively with the issues highlighted below. There are also

inherent political and security risks associated with the resumption of demarcation of Indigenous Land after a seven-year hiatus, which in the current political context are very low and mitigated by the fact that both the PNGATI and PGTA have strong political support at the federal government level. However, it would still be advisable to include some mitigating measures in the risk section of the proposal to address a potential future change in the national and/or local political context and the impact that this may have on the project, with specific reference to the implementation of PGTAs.

Several components include activities that rely on information that has still to be validated, including: identifying which IP organizations have the capacity to carry out project activities (Component 1); evaluating organizations to identify those that can participate in sustainable production chains (Component 2); engaging with women and youth to confirm their interest in specific capacity building initiatives (Component 3); and defining the information envisaged under Component 4. The lack of validation of these factors at the CEO endorsement stage of the project introduces a level of uncertainty that could jeopardize the successful completion of proposed project activities. Such validation and scoping is expected to have been completed at the CEO endorsement so that the final project proposal can describe clear activities based on prior processes and analyses (e.g. stakeholder mapping and consultation, partners and stakeholders identification, assessment of technical and project implementation capacity of key stakeholders and implementation partners).

The **Theory of Change (ToC)** dives straight into the areas where PGTAs will be implemented but does not fully explain the logic and pathways for change. For example, it is not clear how some of the activities will ensure enduring outcomes once project funding comes to an end, given that underfunding of PGTAs has been a perennial problem. Similarly, the project includes assumptions that PGTAs can overcome external pressures and achieve coherence among communities but does not provide any information to support these assumptions or what the project will do to make this happen. There does seem to be some evidence that specific short-term investments in PGTAs can result in enduring outcomes (e.g. Gomes et al 2022) but no evidence is presented in the proposal, nor is there sufficient discussion of how this will be achieved. The pathways are better described in the ToC diagram, although there is still a disconnect between some of the provisions made in the *outputs* and what is stated in both the *outcomes* and *long-term outcomes*, e.g. the causal pathways between improvement in control and survey of the territory stated in output 1.2 (under component 1) and the protection of Indigenous Lands & People (ILPs). Furthermore, the proposal did not specify whether the rights of Indigenous People (IP) already exist in a way that enables them to carry out project activities to address issues like land invasions or other illegal activities, nor whether IP receive the requisite support from relevant law enforcement agencies to ensure their safety and protection if they are exposed to conflict or retaliation as a result of some project activities. STAP did not find any clear provisions in the proposal that addressed this aspect, especially since site descriptions refer to recent violence in several of the indigenous lands listed (e.g. *Munduruku, Kayapó*).

The description of project components and activities presented a number of areas that could be improved. Under **Component 1**, it was not clear what strategies would be put in place to ensure that project activities take off in good time, especially since it appears that most (if not all) of the preparatory consultation work is still to be done, the local/indigenous organizations that are supposed to execute project activities have not yet been identified, and there is no clear understanding about the capacity of organizations on the ground to do so. The proposal stated that *"it will be essential to be transparent with the indigenous people on what cannot be financed by the project"* and that *"many PGTAs include activities that are not considered eligible to be funded by the GEF"*, but it did not say how the project will manage this aspect nor what measure are going to be put in place to ensure that IPs are not alienated and unmotivated to participate in project activities. It also did not explain whether the project has a clear communication and engagement plan to tackle this issue.

Under **Component 1.2**, the description of activities and equipment mentions protecting people and detecting illegal activities but does not seem to extend to other project objectives relating to 'restoring, protecting and maintaining biodiversity of indigenous land'. The deployment of equipment/technology could extend to monitoring and collecting metrics on whether the project is achieving its objectives and enable adaptive responses if this is not the case. Furthermore, there does not seem to be any consideration of links with INPE and AMAZON that have systems (e.g. PRODES) in place to monitor deforestation. The information this project collects

could feed into those programs and contribute to better monitoring of deforestation and actions to address deforestation and its drivers and pressures.

Under **component 2**, the proposal stated that activities related to the sustainable and inclusive production chains (subcomponent 2.3) will only be possible where indigenous organizations have a minimal level of capacity but did not indicate any criteria for evaluating readiness nor whether any assessments had been undertaken to identify which organizations had the necessary capacity to participate in project activities.

it was not clear what activities will actually be implemented as part of **sub-component 3.2**, nor which objectives or outcomes these activities are intended to support. The only type of activity that is defined clearly here is ensuring that women's projects are supported. In addition, there is an unverified assumption that women and youth would prioritize involvement in nature-based solutions, monitoring and climate change, without any evidence of prior engagement with those groups to confirm that this is indeed the case.

The section on learning from previous projects and experience provides an outline of other projects from which lessons can be learned but does not describe any lessons that have actually been used to inform the design of the current project. Such information on learning could help inform the design of the project, including how to ensure the durability of outcomes from PGTAs. In this regard, it is surprising that the project does not refer to the ex-post assessment of projects by the Amazon Fund (Gomes et al 2022), which included insights into the implementation and durability of projects with a focus on PGTA (with mostly positive outcomes).

The "**Gender Integration**" section of the proposal lacked detail and specificity and did not provide even a broad idea of the type of activities that would be supported or implemented as part of this project. In contrast, the section on "**Knowledge Management**" provided a clearer description and related set of actions for what the project intends to do in this area, and which are acceptable for this stage of project development. It is particularly encouraging to see the intention to systematize IP&LC knowledge, as well as the learning from the implementation of PGTAs, as these actions can lay the groundwork for other initiatives linked to the Global Biodiversity Framework. It will be important to have appropriate mechanisms for rapid learning from these initiatives to inform the development of similar outputs in other projects.

The "**Governance Structure**" section provided a detailed description of the governance arrangements for the project. The section on "**Execution Modalities**" indicates that a survey and mapping of indigenous organizations that have an interest and capacity to implement and manage the proposed project activities has not yet been carried out. This is another significant gap in project design and should have been completed at this stage as it can hinder the effective and timely implementation of project activities. Finally, the **risk section** generally did not adequately identify risk mitigating measures, which were often dismissed or did not explain what measures would be implemented if any of the risks materialize. Given the nature of the project, there is also the risk of poor cooperation between different ministries.

Although the project is clear regarding alignment with existing policies, it does not consider the 'horizontal coherence' that is needed amongst Ministries (E.g. key ministries like Ministry of Women, Ministry of Science, Innovation and Technology; Ministry of infrastructure).

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. Clarify what mechanisms and guarantees are in place for the protection of IPs and enforcement of protected areas (PAs) if further invasions/transgressions are detected. This could include ways to achieve better connection/collaboration between local communities and law enforcement agencies

(e.g. through a tailored framework agreement to be complemented by regular meetings and more direct engagement).

2. Complete preliminary consultations that would be expected at this level of project development or indicate how the preparatory work will be undertaken in such a way that inherent uncertainties do not jeopardize implementation of the project. The issues that should be addressed comprise the following:
 - a. Scoping, assessment and mapping of indigenous organizations across the 15 IL to determine their level of implementation capacity so that appropriate organizations can be identified and capacitated to carry out project activities (Component 1).
 - b. Consultation and preliminary (stakeholder) engagement to identify what issues are important to women, youth and other vulnerable social groups, as well as their level of awareness and prior understanding of specific issues that the project would like to cover in target areas (e.g. monitoring), as this will influence significantly the type of activities that should be conducted by the project (e.g. awareness raising, training, coaching etc.). (Component 3)
 - c. Identification of organizations that meet minimum criteria for involvement in sustainable production chains (Component 2).
3. Provide a clearer description, under the project rationale and ToC, for how PGTA's are designed to achieve better biodiversity outcomes with an adequate discussion of the assumptions (e.g. that the PGTA's can overcome external pressures, that sustainable supply chains are sufficient to improve livelihoods and reduce destructive activities).
4. Revise the "Stakeholder Engagement" section to provide clear and verifiable evidence that stakeholder engagement plans have been developed and are based on meaningful consultations with key stakeholders such as representatives of indigenous groups from the 15 indigenous lands where the project is planning to operate and a representative sample of actors across all social groups including women and youth.
5. Provide a clear description of planned activities for the sections on "Gender Integration" and indicate how these activities align with the overall objectives of the project.
6. Provide more specific details about M&E responsibilities and how performance reporting (i.e., the flow of data and information) will be managed within the project structure and between different implementing parties/actors.
7. Revise the risk section to ensure that: a) the risk ratings reflect the true scale of the impact and potential for disruption that each risk category could cause and b) the project identifies a range of clear and robust measures that could be deployed if any of the risks are verified. The section should also consider the risk of 'lack of horizontal cooperation' (amongst key Ministries that are not part of the Steering Committee) and its impact on project implementation, dissemination of knowledge arising from the project, and durability of the outcomes.
8. Reassess the annual milestones specified in Table B for component 4 on knowledge management, which are insufficient to assess the performance of activities and plans to be executed under this component.
9. The project could be further strengthened by exploring links to other initiatives, particularly in the following areas:
 - a. Links to Brazilian Universities that already possess a track record of working in building capacity, training and education around the use of technology for collecting, collating and

integrating data and information that can serve the objectives set in this project. Universities can also help build capacity of MIOP Staff (a risk identified).

- b. Connecting Component 1.2. with existing operational platforms of IMAZON, IBAMA and INPE that already report on deforestation, illegal mining, etc. to ensure that investments in subcomponent 1.2 serve multiple purposes of monitoring and surveillance for maintaining biodiversity in ILs.
- c. Engaging with the Science Policy for the Amazon (SPA) initiative, which is funded by the GEF. This initiative can provide existing knowledge on best practices and offer ideas and lessons learned that could help optimize the design of activities related to the Territorial & Environmental Management Plans (PGTA), especially in relation to subcomponent 1.2 and component 4.

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.

References:

Brondizio, ES, Andersson, K, Fábio de Castro, Célia Futemma, Carl Salk, Maria Tengö, Marina Londres, Daiana CM Tourne, Taís S Gonzalez, Adriana Molina-Garzón, Gabriela Russo Lopes, Sacha MO Siani. (2021). Making place-based sustainability initiatives visible in the Brazilian Amazon. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, Volume 49, 2021, Pages 66-78.

Fischer, Harry & Chhatre, Ashwini & Duddu, Apurva & Pradhan, Nabin & Agrawal, Arun. (2023). Community forest governance and synergies among carbon, biodiversity and livelihoods. *Nature Climate Change*, Volume 13, 2023.

Gomes, A, Baniwa, G & Caldas (2022). Ex-Post Effectiveness Evaluation Report on Indigenous Projects within the scope of the Amazon Fund/BNDES. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)

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.)