

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10709
Project Title	Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Development through Productive Innovation and Competitiveness of the Rural Sector
Date of Screening	November 24, 2020
STAP member screener	Rosie Cooney
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Concur</p> <p>STAP welcomes this project from the World Bank to conserve biodiversity in select rural areas in Panama.</p> <p>The project is sound and well-structured, with interventions well-targeted to address challenges related to unsustainable agricultural production, among others. Importantly, this project begins with an eye towards ameliorating the lives of rural populations – particularly poor and marginalized communities including indigenous groups. Ensuring that local communities have a clear incentive to participate in the “productive alliances principle,” which has shown success in other areas, increases the likelihood that biodiversity friendly practices and outcomes will endure.</p> <p>STAP was pleased to note that the project incorporates lessons learned from past projects, including the importance of accounting for and monitoring benefits that accrue to the poorest and most marginalized groups – including incomes, changes in farm productivity, etc. as well as making sure all stakeholders have a shared understanding of the monitoring and evaluation approach to be used throughout the project.</p> <p>The theory of change is well articulated, drawing clear lines from challenges to activities to outputs, outcomes, etc. and identifies important underlying assumptions.</p> <p>A separate climate and disaster risk screening report for this project is included, indicating a high exposure rating of the</p>

	<p>project location, but low risk to the outcome/service delivery of the project.</p> <p>Overall, this project is sound and STAP commends the focus on developing baseline indicators and ensuring that stakeholders will be involved in this process as well as the monitoring and evaluation framework (lesson learned from past project).</p>	
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?	The project objective is: “To contribute to improved protected areas management and promote access to inclusive and biodiversity-friendly economic opportunities in project areas.”
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project’s objectives?	Planned activities fall under the following primary components: (1) strengthen the governance structure for land-use planning and reinforce the skills to promote knowledge management and dissemination for the protection of the country natural capital; (2) support for biodiversity friendly, climate-smart, economically viable, and inclusive initiatives (“subprojects”).
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	Within each of the two broader components are numerous activities focused on land use planning and capacity building (Component 1) and technical assistance and finance (Component 2). Technical assistance under Component 2 may ‘create the conditions to leverage private commercial finance for the modernization and climate change adaptation / mitigation of ecotourism, agricultural productive systems and development of new services and business lines in the rural space.’
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes
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?	The TOC lists several activities and their outputs and shows how they will contribute to short and medium term outcomes to achieve desired impact (reduced deforestation, improved biodiversity conservation, increased rural households revenues

		and increased sustainability of value chains in the rural space).
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
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Overarching context, including threats (unsustainable production, mining exploration and exploitation, hydroelectric projects, etc.) Data and references provided. Specific challenges shown on the TOC – not necessarily barriers to achieving specific outputs/outcomes.
	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?	Some baseline information is provided in terms of forest gain and loss from 2012 – 2019 (Figure 1).
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	For new PAs, the baseline is zero hectares. Could also measure rural incomes prior to project implementation.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Not currently. However, next steps include the development of a baseline scenario for intermediate and project development objective indicators and a monitoring and evaluation strategy will be defined for making quantitative information available to conduct an ex-ante and ex-post economic and financial analysis (EFA) to validate the viability and the impact of the proposed investments. The EFA will be complemented by the application of the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) to monitor the impact of

		investments under Component 1 to improve the management of the prioritized PAs. Will also use EX-ACT to determine potential reductions in GHGs.
	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;	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 outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	The theory of change for the concept stage is presented in a separate document. It draws clear lines from challenges to activities to outputs, etc. and includes underlying assumptions.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	The project seeks to build capacity while demarcating protected areas and acquiring data, development monitoring systems, etc. while simultaneously (?) providing technical assistance to and (more) capacity building to rural people for biodiversity-friendly practices that will presumably find a market (this is one of the main assumptions)
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	See above.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Yes
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	
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?	Yes

	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
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	\$3.5 m in GEF grant funding / 685,132.50 ha of PA created or under improved management and 1,000 ha non PA sustainably managed. 10,000 beneficiaries.
	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?	Key indicators are identified as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAS under improved management effectiveness. Aligned with GEF 7 – Core indicator 1. • Area under sustainable management practices (hectares). A World Bank corporate indicator aligned with the GEF 7 – Core indicator 4. • Jobs created under sustainable investment plans financed by the project (of which at least 25 percent are for women, 40 percent for IPs and 10 percent for ADs) • Individuals directly benefitting from the Project, disaggregated by gender and ethnicity (Inclusion). Aligned with GEF 7 – Core indicator 11.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	General information: The project will foster multi-sectoral and participatory approaches to climate resilience in the project areas to promote more resilient landscapes and ecosystem function. By strengthening the management of key protected areas and promoting biodiversity-friendly and climate-smart investments, the project will increase adaptation and mitigation to climate change capabilities of those rural inhabitants and country's natural capital.
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?	The “productive alliances principle”, which brings together rural people + a private sector agent to provide essential services or products + a private

		sector agent to provide technical assistance to come up with a joint biodiversity friendly business plan is a simple but interesting and innovative concept. Close attention will need to be paid to power dynamics within these alliances to ensure that rural people have the ability to participate and benefit fully and on equal terms.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Standard scaling up.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Both.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Maps are provided; however, not specific geographic coordinates of proposed project areas.
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?	Yes.

	<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>Outlined in table under section 2 (p. 19)</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>During project preparation, a diagnosis of gender-relevant issues will be carried out as part of the Environmental, Social, and Gender Assessment that will be part of the Project's Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). This assessment will explore the conditions of women in the project's areas of intervention and their participation in productive activities and decision-making instances, with a differentiated focus on Indigenous and Afro-descendant women.</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>While female labor force participation has grown in recent years, it is still about 67 percent and lags behind the regional average by a little over one percentage point, and behind the average of high-income countries by about 12 percentage points. Likewise, unemployment for women (5.1 percent) is higher than for men (3.1 percent), and a lower proportion of them work in agriculture (7.8 versus</p>

		18 percent) and industry (9.8 versus 24.7 percent). Furthermore, Indigenous women earn about 70 percent less than non-Indigenous women.
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?</p> <p>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 separate climate risk screening is provided, using data from the World Bank CCKP. Resilience to climate change is included in elements of the project.</p> <p>The project will foster multi-sectoral and participatory approaches to climate resilience in the project areas to promote more resilient landscapes and ecosystem function. By strengthening the management of key protected areas and promoting biodiversity-friendly and climate-smart investments, the project will increase adaptation and mitigation to climate change capabilities of those rural inhabitants and country’s natural capital.</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?	The project discusses the sustainable Production Systems and Conservation of Biodiversity Project (SPSCB), which is welcome but surely there are more GEF and non GEF projects in Panama. These are not listed.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Yes – but just this one (SPSCB)
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	The project lists several lessons learned from SPSCB.
	How have these lessons informed the project’s formulation?	Yes – the project clearly shows how lessons learned have been applied.
	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?	Unclear.
8. Knowledge management. Outline the “Knowledge Management Approach” for the project, and how it will contribute to the project’s overall impact,	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	Knowledge management is incorporated under Component 3 on M&E.

including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.		
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Standard.

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>

3. Major issues to be considered during project design	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:
	(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.