

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10677
Project Title	Effective Implementation of Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol and Integration into Planned co-management arrangements in the Nyambai Forest Park of The Gambia.
Date of Screening	November 29 2020
STAP member screener	Rosie Cooney
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Minor</p> <p>STAP welcomes this proposal from UNEP to establish a framework for implementation for Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) for genetic resources in The Gambia, including the piloting of partnerships in Nyambai Forest Park.</p> <p>This is an ambitious project, with considerable potential, but which needs considerable strengthening during PPG phase. The problem statement is comprehensive, but the argument as to how this intervention will address these problems is not clearly made at any point.</p> <p>It appears very unlikely the project can achieve the stated global environmental benefits (GEBs) over the project timeframe, although there is a valid argument to be made that it is an important step toward achieving them (this, however, needs to be clearly articulated).</p> <p>A number of elements of the project remain vague (e.g. knowledge management), and the elements of the components (particularly 2 and 3) need much more careful development, in order to include all necessary and sufficient outputs/outcomes (and remove unrelated ones, such as invasive alien species).</p>

	The graphic TOC is very welcome - however, it needs considerable further development to clearly convey the logical steps toward achieving the project's goals.	
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?	<p>The objective of this project is "To create the enabling environment for the implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing of the Nagoya Protocol in The Gambia and pilot testing of some promising genetic resources in Nyambai Forest Park."</p> <p>This is a clear objective, but it is not clearly related to the problem diagnosis, which is a rich description of the many interrelated threats facing biodiversity in the Gambia, including habitat loss, pollution and uncontrolled wildfire, driven by a complex of deeper drivers. It is not made clear how these broad biodiversity threats will be addressed by establishing an ABS regime. The project itself is aimed only at establishing the enabling environment and some pilot efforts - it does not appear feasible to actually deliver GEBs in the time frame involved (which would involve successful commercialisation delivering returns to local communities who in turn are incentivised/capacitated to conserve the local environment better). This should be made clear in the quantification of GEBs.</p> <p>Achieving the objectives of this project is arguably an important step laying the basis for generation of GEBs - however, the reasoning and logic through which an ABS regime can generate benefits for conservation, and the pathway to doing so over a longer timeframe, should both be articulated here.</p>
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	In general, yes, noting more detailed discussion below.

Outcomes	<p>A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention.</p> <p>Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?</p>	<p>These are clear, noting that the project objectives do not encompass actually delivering improved on the ground conservation outcomes.</p> <p>The project does set out GEBs, corresponding to improved management of the NP that is the target of the pilot ABS - GEBs are quantified in the PIF, but the mechanisms to actually achieve on-the-ground improved management are not included within the project scope (see objective, above).</p>
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	This is difficult to judge - there are rather few examples of ABS arrangements successfully catalysing improved on-ground conservation globally.
Outputs	<p>A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project.</p> <p>Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?</p>	There do appear to be some important outputs missing here - discussed further below.
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
<p>1. Project description.</p> <p>Briefly describe:</p> <p>1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)</p>	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes, the problem sets out with considerable detail an array of threats to biodiversity in The Gambia. However, it does not make any clear logical link between these threats and an ABS regime, or clarify how establishing this regime will reduce these threats.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, these are quite clear.
	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 is clearly laid out.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Not really.

	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	See above.
	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	No - the project mentions many related projects and says lessons will be learned from them, but it would be good to see specific lessons learned from other efforts globally to implement ABS regimes. What has worked? What have the challenges been? This is particularly important given the early hope for ABS in catalysing biodiversity conservation has only rarely been borne out - what has characterised successful efforts? This project does not seem to be drawing on any specific lessons from other efforts.
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	See above.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	A graphic TOC is included, which is good to see, but the TOC here is really just a rearranged logframe, and needs further work in order to set out the sequence of logical steps to achieving the objective. For example, it is clear that box 1.1 (GoG adopts an updated national ABS framework) is an essential step on the way to achieving 1.2 (Relevant actors strengthen implementation of this ABS framework) - there should therefore be an arrow connecting them. There are many other such cross-linkages (e.g. box 2.1 (the valorisation of genetic resources) will contribute to box 3.1 (the development of partnerships for use of GRs)). As another example of further development needed here, there are two different impacts (the enabling environment for ABS, and the pilot in Nyambai) included in the final impact - the TOC should show which steps lead to which of them. The point of the TOC is to show how one thing leads to another - it is therefore really important to disaggregate different outputs/outcomes/intermediate

		<p>impacts/impacts etc to show what leads to what. Further, however, it would be good to see a TOC that actually links project interventions to eventual GEBs, even the TOC makes clear that this project is only tackling some of the steps toward that eventual goal. See below under "mechanisms of change".</p>
	<p>What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?</p>	<p>See below for full explanation.</p>
	<p>What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?</p>	<p>Component 1 is quite clear and includes in general activities clearly contributing to achieving the outcome, apart from a section on invasive alien species which appears unrelated to achieving the outcome here.</p> <p>Component 2, which aims at valorisation, value-adding and commercialisation of the genetic resources of Nyambai Forest Park, is very unclear in its scope: there are a lot of ambiguities here and lack of clarity about what exactly the outputs and outcomes are here. It is not clear what is meant by valorisation: is this economic valuation, or assessment of the current values/benefits of the PA to stakeholders? It is also not clear how understanding current values of the biodiversity in the PA will necessarily identify opportunities for value-adding or commercialisation - this requires knowledge on the market and characteristics of demand. This component also appears to be talking at times about straightforward harvesting, value-adding and sale of wild resources by local communities rather than understanding what genetic resources may be of interest to market players. The complexities of identifying relevant traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and understanding what potential market values the genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge may have do not appear to be recognised here - it is not a straightforward process of cataloguing what is out there. In</p>

		<p>Component 3 (enhancing ABS partnerships in the Park), again, this is likely to be a long and complex process. For instance, where traditional knowledge is involved the legitimate holders of that knowledge will need to be identified (these may be communities well beyond the Park boundaries), as these may all be legitimate parties to a benefit-sharing agreement, and there may need to be long negotiation processes to reach agreement. This component also does not highlight any activities to engage or reach out to potential commercial/scientific actors who may be interested in using the resources - involvement of the private sector is highlighted later in the PIF, but perhaps specific activities/outputs should be included here around their engagement.</p>
	<p>Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?</p>	<p>The valorisation step and the link from it to successful partnerships includes a lot of assumptions - for instance, that there will be partners who want to form partnerships around the specified resources, that ownership of the resources can be determined and is not subject to contestation, that holders of the traditional knowledge can be identified in a straightforward way, that the community knowledge-holders can be brought together to reach agreement about entering into a partnership and division of benefits, that those seeking access to the resources follow the official benefit-sharing process rather than accessing the resources in an unauthorised manner, that agreement can be reached around benefit-sharing, etc. All these assumptions are involved in moving from establishment of a regulatory regime to the point of actual having partnerships in place that deliver biodiversity/livelihood benefits - all these should be incorporated in and made explicit in a theory of change (and there are many more steps and assumptions that could be unpacked here).</p>

	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	No, this is not clear.
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?	<p>While a plausible argument can be constructed that this project will lay the necessary groundwork for achievement of GEBs at a later stage through incentivising biodiversity conservation, it appears very unlikely to actually achieve these GEBs over the project lifetime.</p> <p>The proposal suggests the area of Nyambai NP will be land under improved management due to the pilot partnerships around use of genetic resources. However, to get to the point where all the IP issues have been addressed, an agreement has been negotiated, the agreement is delivering local benefits, and those benefits are actually improving on-ground management, is likely to be a very long process, judging by global experiences (and a very uncertain one).</p> <p>It is entirely reasonable that for a project aimed at establishing a fundamental policy framework, like this, that quantifiable biodiversity benefits cannot be established. That is fine, but there is still the need to articulate how - through what logical pathways - this project is (eventually) expected to deliver biodiversity benefits. This is the job of a good TOC.</p>
	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?	See above.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	No, not over the project duration. There is definitely an argument that this project is laying an essential basis for GEBs further down the track, but a realistic TOC showing all the key steps that are

		necessary to reach this goal, and clarifying what this project is likely to be able to achieve over this timeframe, is an important step in planning.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	There is an explicit definition of GEBs included, but see above.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	No.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	None are identified.
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?	Yes, an ABS regime represents a policy innovation that, if successful, could shift incentives in the system around valuing biodiversity.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	There is an inherent scaling aspect, given the shift in policy architecture and supporting capacity and procedures to implement it.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	The project aims at transformational change.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Map is 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	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	This appears quite comprehensive, although the local communities in and around the Forest Park should also be engaged.

<p>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>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>This is quite well described.</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>Yes, this appears sound.</p>

	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	See above.
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>The list of risks are a good start, but there are others such as the risk no genetic resources of value to commercial actors will be identified, that biopiracy occurs, that conflicts over IP or benefit-sharing occur among/within communities, that agreement with the bioprospecting partner cannot be reached, etc.</p> <p>The impacts of climate change on biodiversity is mentioned as a risk, but the measures to address it remain vague. The project is viewed as increasing resilience to climate change, but again, in rather vague terms. This needs to be further developed in PPG phase. Detailed climate projections, and understanding likely impacts on biological resources and livelihood strategies, would be an important first step.</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?	No. There is one specific lesson mentioned, but it appears in the Knowledge Management section, and doesn't seem to bear any relation to the activities/outputs/outcomes in the main proposal.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	No, this is quite weak.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	See above.
	How have these lessons informed the project’s formulation?	See above.
	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?	This is not clear.
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	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	There are so many forms of knowledge dissemination mentioned in this section it is hard to gain a clear sense of what is actually planned in this project, and how it will be managed. Only the last paragraph seems to be actually about knowledge management in the project, and it is quite vague.

from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.		
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	These appear to remain vague at this stage.

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>