REVISED STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE, OCTOBER 2022

GEF ID	11761
Project title	GEF-8 Inclusive Conservation Initiative
Date of screen	November 26, 2024
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1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

STAP is pleased to see the continuation and expansion of investments in direct finance for IPs and LCs and the strong emphasis on self-determined priorities. The level of interest in the GEF-7 ICI is impressive. The proposal is well-written and the narrative is compelling, with an adequate description of the system, the problems, their drivers, and the project interventions at a global-level. It incorporates learnings from the GEF-7 ICI. Overall the STAP's suggestions are intended to enhance an already exciting project as described.

The proposal states that the project takes a systems-change approach and this is partially convincing, but it lacks sufficient detail on the key levers for systems change and how the project interventions will address these. The estimation of project benefits seems somewhat arbitrary and in the next phase of project design, when Impact and Accelerator Partners are identified, this should be re-assessed, and methods for estimating benefits should be described.

STAP is concerned about the potential for elite capture. It is mentioned in the risk table; however, the proposal would be strengthened if this were more explicitly considered (e.g., an effort made to evaluate the current baseline with respect to elite capture and IP and LC finance, and specific mitigation actions identified). Also, what are other potential unintended consequences and how can they be mitigated? The description of the baseline for funding and capacity could be expanded, as some significant activities are not considered. It would be helpful if the baseline description could also describe geographic patterns of funding and capacity. Are there any geographies that have not received sufficient investments, given their importance for biodiversity and global environmental benefits (GEBs)?

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*

☐ Concur - STAP acknowledges that the concept has scientific and technical merit

☐ **Minor** - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points to be addressed in project design

☐ Major - STAP has identified significant concerns 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 summary** was quite brief but well-written. The description of the components was very clear and to the point, as was the explanation of the different categories of partners and their proposed functions/roles within the project. The description of some of the more theoretical concepts was supported by evidence from referenced sources, which was fairly adequate. The proposal states that the definitive/final estimate for the project benefits to be reported against the GEF Core Indicators will be further refined at the PPG stage, which is fine, but it would have been good to at least see a methodology for how the project benefits will be calculated.

The **project rationale** provides a very good description of the context and background, which is underpinned by

ample references to reputable scientific and technical literature sources and is correlated well with the project objectives at several junctures.

The project has a fairly well-defined **objective**, which is appropriate for the type of intervention. However this could and should also be phrased more aptly in the next version of the proposal.

The section on **future scenarios** is very brief and too broad/superficial. As a result, it does not provide a convincing account of how different scenarios could unfold in the future.

The description of the existing **baseline** provides a very good overview of existing IPLC networks, allied organizations, conservation organizations and multilateral institutions supporting IPLCs. However this is also quite brief and could be expanded in places to provide more details and information. This is specifically the case for the description of existing IPLC networks, which is absolutely crucial to the success of the project.

The description of the **barriers** is fully adequate and provided a clear overview of the obstacles that the project will need to overcome in order to be successful.

The proposal makes several references to **systems thinking** and provides a link to a report published by WWF, which provides a very detailed discussion and analysis about the topic. However, it did not include a description of how the project would apply systems thinking in practice or through its activities and rather repeats some of the information provided in other sections of the proposal.

While the overall **theory of change (ToC)** provided an interesting proposition and included all the basic/standard elements and is sound at a global scale, it somewhat failed to convert these into ambitious goals and outcomes, especially when drilling down to the local context. Because local contexts are very variable, each sub-project will need to have its own, more explicit ToC. The ToC presented is basically targeted at the portfolio level, but in the next phase of design, more details will be needed on how the two types of partnerships will contribute to the overall ToC. The **causal links** presented could also be significantly strengthened and improved. Most of the elements needed to achieve these are disseminated throughout the proposal, but need to be brought together more effectively. The diagram is also not very straightforward and could be improved by making it more linear and less counter-intuitive (i.e. too many arrows pointing in different directions and unclear labeling). Furthermore, if the project is going to be transformational, as suggested, more detailed **causal pathways** are needed, especially related to **scaling**.

The description of the **project components** was one of the strongest aspects of the proposal. The components are really well structured and include a coherent set of activities that fit well together and complement one another to provide a clearly defined vision/sense of direction of what the project is aiming to achieve.

Country policies that fail to recognize or support Indigenous tenure and resource rights are mentioned as a project **risk (political and governance),** but perhaps this should also be considered as a barrier. For example, there are countries without legal recognition of IP and LC tenure and resource rights or that actively seek to direct finance away from IP and LCs. This potentially seems to be more than a risk. Regardless, a more specific pathway should be described for mitigating the situation.

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. Provide a more detailed description of the Accelerator Partners to clarify whether these must be IP and LC-led mechanisms, or whether they will be other types of organizations. Also, describe the role of sub-grantees more fully. At what level will the sub-grantees operate, i.e., local, regional or global? The proposal indicates

they will be "well positioned to work with communities," but in some cases would sub-grantees be individual Indigenous territories or communities? Will sub-grantees use fiscal sponsors and, if so, is there a plan to phase these out over time?

2. Expand the description of the existing baseline, with specific reference to the IPLC networks. This should build on the information provided in the PIF, which is a good basis to start from.

3. The sub-section on future scenarios should be rewritten and further developed/expanded to explain how different trends and drivers could influence their unfolding, including identifying the most likely/probable. This should then inform the design of interventions that are robust to the plausible futures. Please see STAP primer on simple future narratives for guidance on this.

4. It would be good for the next iteration of the proposal to describe in more detail how the project would actually apply systems thinking through its activities, beyond just involving different types of partners. A good way to do this would be to identify different components/elements of the system that the ICI is trying to change or influence and then describe how different project activities would impact them.

5. As the proposal recognizes, stakeholder consultation is an important project component. Given the cultural diversity among the target beneficiaries, a diversity of consultation approaches is needed. What models for consultation have been considered and what are the most effective mechanisms of consultation in different contexts?

6. The ToC diagram should be redesigned to ensure this flows more coherently and provides a more linear illustration of the intended causal pathways, which are very well-described in the description of the project components, outputs and outcomes. Rethink and rephrase the ToC narrative description to ensure this reflects what is already conveyed through the description of the project components.

7. Outcome 4.2 would be strengthened if it were revised to include, not only dissemination outwards from the project to the broader IP & LC community, but also dissemination inwards from other projects and actors. This seems particularly important since this is a dynamic and rapidly evolving area and would help ensure the project continuously incorporates learnings from this broader community. For example, in addition to what is already mentioned in the proposal, the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) initiative is operating a technical assistance facility that is driven by IP self-determined needs. The Christensen Fund has recently created the Raven Indigenous Outcomes Fund which supports self-determined Indigenous outcomes by providing 'catalytic capital' for projects that can have a transformative impact for Indigenous communities." The Wildlife Conservation Society has collaborated with Indigenous communities to create a tool, https://herramientasgti.org/ that supports specific key needs in territorial management: Indigenous peoples' rights, strengthening organizational systems, territorial management planning, territorial zoning, natural resource use regulation, analysis of nature-based production chains with a gender perspective, territorial control, administration, sustainable financing and social, economic, cultural and environmental monitoring. It provides resources such as booklets, manuals, questionnaires, databases, report formats and training modules. The Legacy Landscape Fund has just announced a USD 35.5 million fund to provide direct finance to IPs and LCs for maintaining ecological integrity in significant areas for biodiversity globally. This would contribute to better explaining how the project will build on prior investments and complement current investments, both GEF and non-GEF. Further, these models potentially could contribute to scaling and transformation.

8. Parts of the Risk Table need to be revised. For example, the explanation of risk is the same for climate and for environmental and social risks. This seems to be an error. The description of mitigation for political and governance risks is somewhat generic and should be written in a more systematic manner.

Note: number key points clearly and provide useful information or suggestions, including key literature where relevant.

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.)