

### STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

<b>Part I: Project Information</b>	<b>Response</b>	
<b>GEF ID</b>	10779	
<b>Project Title</b>	Regional Initiative for Water and Environment in the transboundary basin of the Mono River	
<b>Date of Screening</b>	21 May 2021	
<b>STAP member screener</b>	Blake Ratner	
<b>STAP secretariat screener</b>	Virginia Gorsevski	
<b>STAP Overall Assessment and Rating</b>	<p><b>Minor.</b></p> <p>Given prior and ongoing related projects in the area, it is important to better specify how this project will add value and build upon prior lessons, particularly given IUCN’s own past engagement through BRIDGE and other initiatives – in West Africa and beyond.</p> <p>The theory of change is well specified and visualized, with useful distinction of enabling actions and links to underlying drivers of degradation. However, there are some inconsistencies with the specification of outcomes that should be addressed.</p> <p>Given the policy priority of hydropower development, it will be important to better articulate how improved coordination will address this and ensure that it doesn’t exacerbate environmental and social problems in the basin. At the local level, attention should be given to incentives for people to change practices leading to overfishing, erosion, pollution, etc.</p>	
<b>Part I: Project Information</b>	<b>What STAP looks for</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>B. Indicative Project Description Summary</b>		
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	The stated objective of this project is “to generate global environment benefits through enhanced cooperation between Togo and Benin on the Mono river Basin.”

		<p>Later under the proposed alternative scenario, the overall objective is “the development of good practices related to water, ecosystems and adaptation to climate change for sustainable services to people and nature in the transboundary basin of the Mono River.”</p> <p>The project itself largely responds to the first objective – that is, to strengthen cooperation, which would in theory support the overall objective of developing good water practices, etc.</p>
Project components	<p>A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project’s objectives?</p>	<p>Component 1: Mono River Basin development assessment and planning – TDA/SAP, as well as several pre-identified pilot activities.</p> <p>Component 2: Institutional and technical capacity strengthening – trainings, resource mobilization strategy, livelihoods</p> <p>Component 3: Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Communication – gender action plan, communication and KM strategy, IW:Learn</p> <p>In general, these components and associated outcomes and outputs support the project’s objective of enhanced cooperation. It is less clear that they will alone lead to the overall objective of development of good practices; however, combined with other ongoing activities and if well-coordinated, it is possible.</p>
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>Clearly structured; adaptation benefits clearly integrated.</p> <p>Importantly, target indicators for area under improved management, etc., are included, beyond the core IW indicators.</p>
	<p>Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?</p>	<p>Yes, progress is likely given the weakness of current institutions as a baseline.</p>

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>	<p>This project lists numerous outputs including TDA, pilot activities, early warning system, various strategies (communication and KM), best practice guidelines, database, NM&amp;E system).</p> <p>There is some confusion between outputs and outcomes (i.e. Output 2.1.3 relates to improved capacities and enhanced livelihoods which seem more like outcomes and there is little detail provided on how the latter (enhanced livelihoods) will be accomplished.</p>
<b>Part II: Project justification</b>	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	A detailed theory of change is provided (p. 41). The overarching impact is "securing long term economic potential for the Mono basin in the 2 countries in terms of agriculture development, fisheries production and hydropower generation" which is quite different from the objective of the project which focuses on enhancing cooperation and the overall objective which is to develop good practices, etc. – which is listed as a mid-term impact in the ToC.
<p><b>1. Project description.</b>  <b>Briefly describe:</b>  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 threats are well understood and supported with scientific information.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes – clearly identified, with good distinction between threats and barriers.
	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?	Yes, with good description of main ongoing activities underway that are relevant to this proposed project (e.g., WACA).

	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes with regards to institutional dimensions.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes, though there appears to be considerable overlap between the objectives of this project and other initiatives. It will be important to delineate and communicate the differences and how they complement and not duplicate each other.
	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;	
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Project proponents are aware of all relevant activities – describing the lessons learned would be very helpful to justify the merits of this project and how it will add value.
	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?	ToC well specified and visualized, with useful distinction of enabling actions and links to underlying drivers of degradation.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	<p>Approach combines efforts to build public awareness of the problems and solutions, strengthening data and capacity to better share information, and supporting policies and regulations. Together these aim to shift towards greater cooperation and improved water management.</p> <p>What is less clear is what the incentive will be for people to change practices leading to overfishing, erosion, pollution, etc. There is language about alternative livelihoods but little detail. These aspects should be developed prior to CEO endorsement stage.</p>
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	

	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	The TOC would be strengthened with more information about underlying assumptions and alternative pathways.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Aims to respond to results of TDA, including in prioritization of responses.
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
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	
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, with measurable targets included re hectares of terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use; area of land restored; landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) and under improved management. Unclear, however, how the estimates were derived.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Plausible
	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?	A project monitoring-evaluation system will be developed as part of this project.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	Assuming that flooding is the result of changing climate conditions, the flood management plan could be viewed as one activity, though this link could be made more clear.
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?	A potentially innovative feature of this project is an "innovative financing mechanism" which will "mobilize private sector investments and opportunities." However, without any details on what type of mechanism or how it will work, innovation is difficult to assess.

	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	As above. The project states that sustainability will be achieved as a result of the financial mechanism as well as knowledge management activities. More detail is needed.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	Given the weak institutional and governance situation and threats, transformational change is likely needed.
<b>1b. Project Map and Coordinates.</b> Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		A map with lat/long coordinates is provided.
<b>2. Stakeholders.</b> 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?	This project has consulted with ministries in each of the countries, civil society and the private sector but information here is scarce.  Useful additional detail on private sector participation provided separately, addressing key sectors: agriculture, infrastructure, water resources management and energy generation.
	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?	More information needed. Would benefit from a table relating stakeholders to roles anticipated.
<b>3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.</b> Please briefly include below any gender dimensions	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Multiple entry points noted for gender-responsive planning, accountability and benefit sharing. Importantly, there is recognition of the potential for conflict over roles and sharing of project-related

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no/tbd</p>		<p>benefits. These should be further addressed when Gender action plan is developed.</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>Yes. Gender Action Plan should detail how obstacles will be addressed.</p>
<p><b>5. Risks.</b> 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>	<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"> <li>• 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?</li> <li>• Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed?</li> </ul>	<p>Risks are comprehensive and many are addressed in project components (i.e. limited data, cooperation)</p> <p>Climate risk is "medium" and a separate climate risk screen is provided that offers additional information on the overall climate change projections and associated risks for the Mono Basin during a 30 year time frame.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with?</li> <li>• What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?</li> </ul>	
<b>6. Coordination.</b> 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 – the PIF identifies ongoing related activities and project team is coordinating with them
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Not explicitly detailed.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	Not clearly
	How have these lessons informed the project’s formulation?	This should be better specified prior to CEO endorsement, particularly given IUCN’s own past engagement through BRIDGE and other initiatives – in West Africa and beyond.
	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?	Needs specification.
<b>8. Knowledge management.</b> Outline the “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.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	KM is acknowledged as important but the approach described is general (e.g., communications strategy, IW:Learn). Good mention of twinning opportunities with other river basin organizations.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Communication strategy – to be developed as part of the project.

Notes

STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
1. <b>Concur</b>	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 <b><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></b>
2. <b>Minor issues to be considered during project design</b>	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><b>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</b></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>