

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10573
Project Title	Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture
Date of Screening	20 November 2020
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Concur</p> <p>STAP welcomes the Blue Horizon project from WWF-US to provide ocean relief through seaweed aquaculture.</p> <p>The project has an excellent focus on a promising market opportunity for low-impact food production with strong environmental benefits, aligned with Blue Economy agenda. This includes potential to offset more environmentally harmful land-based food production systems.</p> <p>It also offers an excellent opportunity for scaling market-driven solutions, with good prospects for driving increased private investment in target countries and beyond. The project includes investment to support innovative technology (off-shore production) and financing (carbon credit markets). It also follows the global analysis on siting farms and selection of technologies, which increases the project's likelihood of success and scaling.</p> <p>The theory of change provides good specification of how project outcomes respond to primary barriers. It provides clear logic with excellent benefits addressing climate change and biodiversity, in addition to economic and food-security benefits. There is a very good initial specification of quantified targets.</p> <p>The project offers very good, specific and well-referenced identification of gender barriers, as well as positive trends to take these barriers into account. Among GEF projects,</p>

	<p>this is an unusually good opportunity to advance gender equality through employment and entrepreneurship at multiple stages of input provision, production, processing and trade. Even if the direct numbers of beneficiaries targeted are modest, the potential for scaling these benefits is much larger and merits attention.</p> <p>Finally, the project does a good job identifying multinational private sector and foundation actors. However, stakeholder identification at the national and sub-national levels remains preliminary. Initial identification of roles is provided; however, this needs further development before CEO endorsement.</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?	Yes
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	Yes
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	Yes, with excellent focus on promising market opportunity for low-impact food production.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes. Conditions are favorable, with good potential for scaling beyond the target countries.
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?	Yes.
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	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes. Excellent description of quantified benefits achievable (prior World Bank analysis)

need to be addressed (systems description)		
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, with focus on near-shore marine environments threatened by eutrophication and climate change. Good analysis of barriers to scaling production within the seaweed value chains.
	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?	
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, with quantification of current levels of production as well as associated projects.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes.
	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;	
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	Combination of regional and global coordination, policy and enabling environment at national level, and investment in seaweed value chains will facilitate rapid increase in sustainable production, delivering GEBs.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Theory of change diagram provides good specification of how project outcomes respond to primary barriers.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Well described.

	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?	M&E and annual reviews anticipate adaptive management measures.
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, clear logic with excellent benefits addressing climate change and biodiversity, in addition to economic and food-security benefits. Very good initial specification of quantified targets.
	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?	
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	
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?	Excellent opportunity for scaling market-driven solutions aligned with Blue Economy agenda. Good prospects for driving increased private investment in target countries and beyond. Project includes investment to support innovative technology (off-shore production) and financing (carbon credit markets). Also follows global analysis on siting farms and selection of technologies, which increases likelihood of success and scaling.

	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes, though additional detail on mechanisms for scaling, leveraging existing networks (SEAFDEC, Global Seaweed Coalition) would be helpful prior to CEO endorsement.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	This is a domain where incremental change is beneficial, but rapid scaling of the technology and value chains will require some degree of transformation in policy & regulatory environment and investment patterns.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Maps lack geo-coordinates and site or provincial-level detail.
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?	Stakeholder identification at national and sub-national levels remains preliminary. Good identification of multinational private sector and foundation actors.
	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?	Preliminary identification of roles provided; needs further development before CEO endorsement.

<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.</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>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>Very good, specific and well-referenced identification of gender barriers, as well as positive trends to take into account.</p> <p>Among GEF projects, this is an unusually good opportunity to advance gender equality through employment and entrepreneurship at multiple stages of input provision, production, processing and trade. Even if the direct numbers of beneficiaries targeted are modest, the potential for scaling these benefits is much larger and merits attention.</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. Well discussed.</p>
<p>5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible,</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"> • How will the project's objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 	<p>Brief but adequate.</p> <p>Includes important issue of potential for conflict between small- and medium-scale producers, and effect on inequality.</p> <p>Climate risk screening technology is indicated but should be further elaborated.</p>

propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design	<p>2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? 	
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?	Relevant regional and global projects and initiatives are identified.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Mechanisms are in place for learning.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	Would be good to specify particular lessons learned prior to CEO endorsement.
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	Good to make this more explicit.
	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?	Yes, core focus of component 4.
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 from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	KM well integrated as component 4. Would be good to specify indicators and metrics for KM.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Appropriate preliminary products are indicated. Usefully includes identification of lessons related to "improved zoning, private sector engagement, feasibility of carbon markets, supply demand models for different seaweed products."

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>

<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>