

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10556	
Project Title	Strengthening ecological connectivity in the Dulobi-Boé Tchetché complex (DTB)	
Date of Screening	May 26 2020	
STAP member screener	Rosie Cooney	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Minor</p> <p>STAP welcomes this project from IUCN to strengthen ecological connectivity in biodiverse landscapes of Guinea-Bissau. It appears to hold great promise in terms of building on and connecting past projects. The focus on connectivity recognizes the importance of areas outside protected areas, and hold promise from both a biodiversity and land degradation perspective.</p> <p>However, this project will require a great deal of work over PPG phase if it is to produce a well-planned and robust project. The PIF suffers from a significant lack of important detail, specifically regarding how areas will be better managed and restored (Component 2). While the components are familiar (i.e. improved capacity, institutional strengthening, improved management), the description of how this will be accomplished is vague.</p> <p>For example, the project mentions important concepts such as sustainable use (of what?), investing in good practices and value chains, carbon markets, valuation of ecosystem services, and innovative co-management models, but provides limited or no details for any of these, including any basic outline of feasibility/suitability in this context. These approaches may be viable and promising in these landscapes but without further detail this cannot be confidently accepted.</p> <p>Sustainable tourism is mentioned as a possible alternative source of income but no information is given about current and projected tourism levels, the market, the actors, etc. It is unclear whether prior to COVID-19 there was a significant level of tourism in Guinea-Bissau, due to</p>	

	<p>concerns about political instability and conflict. Again, it is unclear whether this is a viable avenue for positive change in these landscapes.</p> <p>This project would benefit greatly from a robust theory of change that connects the disparate pieces, identifies the many critical assumptions that underlie its potential success, and transforms this project into one that effectively builds on existing GEF and non-GEF projects. See STAP guidance document on Theory of Change. There is also no mention of the potential impact of climate change on this project in the risk section or elsewhere. STAP advises that project proponents review the STAP guidance on climate risk screening during PPG phase.</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?	Elements of the objective are reasonable; however, it is not particularly clear. The objective is "Improved and sustained ecological connectivity between the DBT Complex and related transnational protected areas of Senegal and Guinea by strengthening biodiversity conservation and improving sustainable land use." Will connectivity be improved by strengthening biodiversity conservation or is it the other way around?
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	The planned activities support the objective in general (i.e. institution strengthening, management and restoration, and knowledge management). However, the details of each of the components is particularly vague. Throughout the document, the project mentions sustainable use and investing in good practices and value chains, incentive approaches like carbon markets and valuing ecosystem services, and innovative co-management models, but provides limited or no details on what is meant and how these will be accomplished. For example, sustainable tourism is mentioned as a possible alternative source of income to avoid destructive land use practices, but no information given about current and project tourism, the

		market, the actors, etc. In fact, the US State Department suggests avoiding travel in Guinea-Bissau due to crime and civil unrest. The potential of these mechanisms to incentivize positive changes does not inspire confidence.
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>Proposed outcomes are mainly quite good – improved policies, regulations, management, etc. coupled with restoration activities to support LDN target.</p> <p>Each of these outcomes include specific actions – not clear if they will be sufficient to achieve outcomes. For example, Output 2.1.2 to develop value chains of priority NTFP. These NTFPs are never identified, and no learning from previous experience in-country or in similar landscapes is present to suggest this approach has potential – without any detail, it's not clear how specifically this will lead to restoration of degraded land.</p> <p>Planned outcomes do not encompass important adaptation benefits.</p>
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Unclear as sufficient detail is not provided
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>	See above
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?	The threats to biodiversity are described as competition for natural resources, unsustainable agricultural practices, timber and non timber products exploitation, extensive animal husbandry and beekeeping...leading to deforestation depredation, land degradation. There is no real exploration of the root causes of the extensive deforestation and degradation, and little or no exploration of the economic drivers of this.

	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Barriers are broadly categorized (legal, institutional, financial, technical) with the assumption that addressing them will mitigate the threats described above. A key assumption is that people will change their unsustainable land use practices, but it's not clear that capacity building and assessment of existing law (p. 26) will be sufficient to counter legislation that favors cash crops such as cashews to the detriment of native species and biodiversity. The text is not clearly written and frequently very vague.
	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?	Yes the drivers would most effectively be addressed through multiple focal areas (LD and BD) and this is reflected in the objective (albeit written in an unclear manner).
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	The baseline refers to the many current and ongoing related projects. In this section the project refers, apparently approvingly, to one project that seeks to increase the area under rice cultivation and another that seeks to diversify farming away from rice.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Ha under improved management and restored as per GEF indicators
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Unclear re scientific baseline as this information is not provided. With regards to baseline activities, this project is clearly familiar with many ongoing related activities including GEF-funded projects. The additional cost for this project is in large part to 'connect' the various ongoing activities – this would be cost effective if the disconnect is somehow preventing progress (which should be much more clearly spelled out) and if this project is ultimately successful.
	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;	See above re baseline and indicators + improved METT score

	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	<p>The project acknowledges the many ongoing related projects working towards the same or similar objectives and positions this project as somewhat of a ‘link’ between them. Both programmatically as well as geographically, with its focus on corridors between PAs, for example.</p> <p>One almost has the impression that this is an extension of a UNDP project, which is never identified by name of GEF ID (UNDP has had 15 GEF-funded projects in Guinea-Bissau).</p> <p>However, no explicit lessons learned from this or any other project are described.</p>
	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 ToC is referenced; however, it is not included in the PIF and was not available in the GEF Portal. In the absence of that, it is not clear that this project is benefitting from a clear ToC. No clear theory of change is set out in narrative form. Rather, it seems to be mainly about building on or connecting existing projects as described above.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Capacity building + improved policies + management plans + collaboration with stakeholders + financing mechanism (not described in detail) = improved connectivity between protected areas.
	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?	No. There is no identification of the underlying assumptions. There are many large and unacknowledged assumptions underlying this project, such as that sustainable tourism or value chains in sustainably produced NTFPs could be economically viable – these should be clearly thought through and set out. This project would benefit greatly from a Theory of Change, which allows identification of critical assumptions that

		underlie sequential steps that a project must realise to achieve its goals. See STAP primer on Theory of Change.
	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
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?	Maybe
	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?	If area is restored and connectivity improved then definitely there will be benefits in terms of biodiversity conservation, reduced (or reversed) land degradation, and carbon capture.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	This is a four-year project for ~\$4.8 million to improve the management of ~3,000 km ² protected area and 400 km ² of restored land + 1055 km ² of land under improved practices and 110,000 metric tons of CO ₂ e sequestered. This is reasonable.
	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?	METT scores will be improved for the management component. No methodologies or indicators for land restoration, improved land management. Since this project is supporting the LDN targets, it would benefit from reviewing the STAP guidance for GEF Projects on LDN.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	None described though other projects such as the PAPBio programme of the EU is summarized which is intended to address climate change so if this project build on it, possibly it would be include in the overall approach but this is unclear.
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 project is somewhat innovative by taking a corridor approach; though the lack of detail on how this will be accomplished is cause for concern.

		The project also says it will crowd in investors with no explanation of what this means or how it will be done except to say that it will “mobilize the experience and expertise of Guinea-Bissau in natural resources management, and existing mechanisms such as the BioGuinee Fund” which is unclear.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	The projects innovation is such that apparently there will be a regional desire to replicate.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	transformational
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Project coordinates are provided, as is a map. The map is unfortunately blurry but appears to be quite specific and useful.
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?	<p>Stakeholders identified are those which have participated in the development of the PIF. Interestingly, the table of stakeholders identifies weaknesses of each, which is not the norm for GEF project proposals. This clearly shows that many are lacking in staff, funds, capacity, etc.</p> <p>Specific NGOs are not listed though there is a wide array of local community groups. It is clear from the latter that conflict is an issue. For this reason the stakeholder process should seek to incorporate specific mechanisms for dealing with conflicting aims, etc. to minimize risk to the project.</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?	See above.
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	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Standard information provided. Will apply IUCN's ESMS and hire a gender specialist during PPG phase.
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	
5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that	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? For climate risk, and climate resilience measures:	Risks are comprehensive. High reliance on IBAP to avoid political risks. Land access conflicts listed as high risk with a mitigation measure identified as territorial and social diagnosis to identify land uses,

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	<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>conflict zones and traditional means of conflict resolution. This is interesting and could be discussed in detail in the Components as one of the outputs since competition over natural resources is identified as a major issue.</p> <p>Climate risk is not mentioned despite the fact that Guinea-Bissau is a coastal country and there may be other potential climate impacts specific to the DTB complex area. See STAP guidance document on climate risk screening.</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?	Yes – this is the strength (and basis) for this project.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	No
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	No
	How have these lessons informed the project’s formulation?	No
	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 project is intended to be that mechanism
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?	The KM approach described on p. 48 is uninspiring and unclear (could be due to non-native English). In essence it relies on an inclusive communication strategy to achieve compromise and commitment of stakeholders. This is more about multi-stakeholder dialogue than knowledge management.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	Component 3 lists generic outputs for M&E and KM including the gender strategy and documentation and dissemination of good management and restoration.

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.

3. Major issues to be considered during project design	<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>