

STAP Response:

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| GEF ID | 10081 |
| Project Title | Consolidating biodiversity and land conservation policies and actions as pillars of sustainable development. |
| Country | Uruguay |
| GEF Agency | UNDP |
| STAP Overall Assessment | Minor issues to be considered during project design |

The overall objective of this project is worthwhile, but needs more analysis, prioritization, and technical substance.

The proposed project is a relatively small (\$2.6 m GEF financing), but includes a significant number of outputs (e.g. 12 in paragraph 30, and 31 under Component 2). The majority of outputs are described generically, without much technical or scientific basis. For example, Para 27 says "activities" will be implemented to deliver GEBs, without specifics; and Para 28 discusses tourism fees, but lacks data on tourism numbers and trends. Finally, the main justification seems to be that if the project succeeds in 'changing the rules' (e.g. legislation, strategic plans, financial mechanisms), it will achieve the desired result, again without sufficient specifics or quantification, nor an understanding of how complex this process might be.

In summary, the main problem is not the idea behind this project, but insufficient scientific and technical detail to show how the long list of outputs is to be delivered. This is an important project, and planned on a large scale. An alternative, less risky option, might be to focus on the three pilot sites and use UNDPs 'long-hook short-hook approach' to identify key policies/rules/legislation that are limiting factors, and to focus on resolving rules.

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID: 10081

Project Title: Consolidating biodiversity and land conservation policies and actions as pillars of sustainable development.

Date of Screening: December 3, 2018

Screener: Virginia Gorsevski

Panel Member: Brian Child

STAP Overall Assessment

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Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary

What STAP looks for

Response

Project Objective: To strengthen the systemic, financial and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management, enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of protected area management, stewardship of private lands and human well-being.

Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?

Somewhat, though a bit generic and wordy. Maybe just use the second half (i.e. "Enhance the effectiveness...")

Project components

A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?

Overall, the project components are logical. However, the outcomes and outputs are too numerous and ill-defined. In addition, the project is much stronger on biodiversity than land degradation. The latter would benefit greatly from taking advantage of guidance in the Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation (Orr et al., 2017) developed by the UNCCD, ensuring that all relevant elements are included in Ecuador's LDN Framework to enable achievement of LDN.

Outcomes

A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention.

Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits?

They probably do, but this is not clearly stated

Outputs

Are the global environmental benefits likely to be generated?

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?

No. The project is complex and lacks technical specifics.

Part II: Project justification

A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.

1. Project description. Briefly describe:

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| 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? | Yes. The PIF provides a lot of information on the threats to biodiversity and main factors contributing to land degradation. However, the data and information is not supported by scientific or other literature (no citations). |
| | Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references? | Barriers and threats are well described and supported by data but no references. |
| | 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 |
| 2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects | Is the baseline identified clearly? Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits? | Yes |
| | Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits? | Yes but for LDN, STAP recommends using Trends.Earth to quantify land cover, NDVI and soil carbon (see below). |
| | 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; | STAP recommends that for the LDN component, the project consider using Trends.Earth to quantitatively examine indicators for land degradation prior to and after the project is implemented. |
| | are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and | Yes, under "Coordination" the project describes how it with other initiatives and specifically what can be learned from past projects (e.g. GEF Project ID 4841). |

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| 3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project | how did these lessons inform the design of this project? | Does not specify. |
| | What is the theory of change? | No formal TOC is presented. |
| | What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes? | Component 1 sets the stage by focusing on the enabling environment. Component 2 follows on with technical assistance for implementation and Component 3 wraps up with MEL. The sequence is comprehensive and logical. The problem is not the sequence but the lack of underlying technical specifics. |
| | · 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? | Not really |
| | · Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes? | The project specifically discusses adaptive management to account for mid-course correction if necessary. |
| 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? | No |
| | LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change? | N/A |

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| 6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF) | Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits, and are they measurable? | N/A |
| | Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment? | N/A |
| | Are the global environmental benefits explicitly defined? | N/A |
| | Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation? | N/A |
| | What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change? | N/A |
| 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? | Not particularly |
| | Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors? | No |
| | Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability? | The project benefit from a narrower focus |

1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.

A map is provided and each of the project sites are georeferenced. The map could be improved by adding an inset which shows where this area is relative to the greater region.

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? Yes

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? Stakeholder roles are clearly articulated under section 2. Yes

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? Yes

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| <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, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design</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>Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control?</p> <p>Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? 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>No</p> <p>Yes. Risks are valid and comprehensive.</p> |
| <p>6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives</p> | <p>Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?</p> | <p>The impacts of climate change are discussed; however, specific information on future projections is not specified. STAP recommends that the project consult with the CI SPARC project to see if there is any additional information that is relevant to proposed project sites.</p> <p>No</p> <p>No, apart from assumption that project results (e.g. improved connectivity) will improve species ability to adapt to changing conditions. More specificity is needed on impacts and mitigation measures. See above</p> <p>Yes</p> |

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| | Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them? | Yes |
| | Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited? | No |
| | How have these lessons informed the project's formulation? | NA |
| | 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 |
| <p>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.</p> | <p>What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?</p> | <p>Component 3 is dedicated to knowledge management and will include the systematization of knowledge generated from this project and lessons learned.</p> |
| | <p>What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?</p> | <p>Will rely in part on UNDP-GEF sponsored networks.</p> |

STAP Notes