

## Audit Trail

### Stakeholder Comments on the Draft Approach Paper of the Formative Evaluation of the GEF Integrated Approach to Address the Drivers of Environmental Degradation

August 2020

#	Agency	Comment	Response and Action Taken
1	FAO	In the references consulted in the approach paper, the guidance notes for the IPs were not cited. These represented important policy and operational guidance for both Agencies and Countries and propose that they be taken into account in the evaluation.	<b>Agreed.</b> References added as GEF internal documents.
2	FAO	Based on the experience with the IAPs in GEF 6 and previous programmatic approaches, the Impact Programs incorporated a number of unique innovations. These included incentive funding for country participation, a pre-PIF competitive selection process amongst countries (through the preparation and evaluation of expressions of interest), and dedicated funding for a coordination or platform project to act as the knowledge “glue” between selected countries, extend the “reach” of the IP beyond selected countries, as well as to ensure that overall delivery of the IP achieves the ambitions of transformational change central to the GEF-7 Strategy. These characteristics which are unique to the IPs are not cited in the draft approach paper, would suggest that the key questions proposed in paragraph 13 include a focus on these novel features of the Impact Programs, including the process of rolling them out. This assessment could provide insight into how successful these innovations have been, along with any unintended consequences and guidance for GEF-8.	<b>Agreed.</b> The suggested description of the three innovations has been inserted in the background section (see para 5). We will definitely focus on them in the analysis.
3	GEF SEC	The Approach Paper title states this is “formative evaluation,” while text uses both evaluation or formative evaluation. It might be useful to clarify upfront that the focus is exclusively a “formative evaluation.”	<b>Agreed.</b> Added ‘formative’ before ‘evaluation’ where appropriate throughout the document.
4	GEF SEC	Para 5: “The Sustainable Cities IP, a continuation of its homonymous GEF-6 predecessor, the Sustainable Cities IAP, replicates the same sustainable urbanization approach to more cities and countries.” This is not entirely accurate. The GEF-7 approach is very different and includes several modifications, as outlined in the PFD.	<b>Agreed.</b> Language clarified to reflect this comment (see para 5).

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5	GEF SEC	Para 6: "This evaluation will therefore include a midterm assessment of the implementation of the GEF-6 IAPs, early results and lessons, and an assessment of how the lessons from these pilots <u>have been incorporated</u> in the IPs." Perhaps best to say - "are informing the IPs".	<b>Agreed.</b> Suggested text accepted (see para 6).
6	GEF SEC	Para 6: "the evaluation will be structured around three major pillars: (i) Sustainable Cities IAP and IP; (ii) <u>FOLUR IP and Food Security &amp; Commodities IAPs</u> ; and (iii) SFM and Amazon, Congo and Drylands IPs." This will be a much harder assessment to justify because there was no specific rationale for FOLUR IP to draw on the two IAP programs. Perhaps best to just look out how the two are linked to FOLUR, but not necessary imply the latter evolving from the former.	<b>Agreed.</b> Language clarified to reflect this comment (see para 6).
7	GEF SEC	Para 6: How will the proposed evolution for the SFM IP be demonstrated? In general, should the evolution instead be structured around the approach overall rather than drawing one to one from specific IAP to IP? Maybe extract common principles for this evolution or use the main categories (Para 10)- design, process and cross-cutting issues, to assess how the integrated approach has evolved and then indicate how the specific programs from IAP to IP met those principles or assess their performance based on the categories. Additionally, the structure of the design around three main pillars is not fleshed out in the Section on Scope, Issues and Key Questions. This may help with greater clarity.	<b>Agreed.</b> Language clarified to reflect his comment (see para 6). The evaluation is indeed structured around how the approach has evolved from GEF-6 to GEF-7, not on the specific programs it has been applied to. Having said that, the impact programs covered are exactly the ones on which the approach is being applied (as clearly stated in the guidance documents added to the references section in response to comment #1 above). Hence the evaluation focuses on them. Besides, while there was no specific rationale for the FOLUR to draw upon the Food Security and Commodities IAPs, there surely are elements in common as they all deal with food systems. The same applies to the Sustainable Cities IAP and IP as well as to the SFM programs.
8	GEF SEC	Para 7: Re the assessment in the presence of newly emerged crisis, is this only for the Cities IAP and IP as referenced in Para 8? The presence of COVID is having an impact on 'process' across IPs and IAP programs in terms of how projects are designed or implemented	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> The focus on cities is explained by the need to keep the scope of this analysis to a manageable level in an already complex and large evaluation, given the tight deadlines we face. The choice of limiting this assessment to the Cities program is driven by the opportunity to better observe the impacts of the

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			pandemic as it is felt more acutely in urban areas (see para 7, fourth line).
9	GEF SEC	Para 10: Regarding Design, as written, it seems to solely focus on the IPs. Should there be an assessment of how integrated approach has evolved in terms of design between the IAPs and IPs? In terms of Process, how is this being defined or what does it include? For the IAPs, I am not clear how an assessment of the progress with implementation will allow one to assess process. Maybe further clarity is needed here.	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> IAPs design was already assessed in the 2017 formative review. We will indeed focus on how design of the GEF integrated approach has evolved from GEF-6 to GEF-7. Process efficiency will be assessed in terms of timing, especially related to coordination and knowledge sharing.
10	GEF SEC	Para 12: Should we be looking at resilience in a broader sense, in keeping with the thinking going into the IAPs? Climate risk assessment would be narrower. Any consideration for inclusion of other cross cutting issues related to GEF policies such as KM and Stakeholder Engagement. These last two are very important for the coordination and governance mechanisms such as the multi-stakeholder platforms that are a feature of the programs. I note that questions “d” “f” and “h” in Para 13, cover some of these items. So, for consistency these aspects can be outlined in Para 12 as well.	<b>Agreed.</b> Changed where relevant in the text, to include resilience to non-climate risks as well as KM and stakeholder engagement (see para 12).
11	GEF SEC	Para 16: For FOLUR, landscapes weren't chosen based on disaggregated indicators of importance, but the interaction of different factors that made a landscape suitable. The areas most in need of restoration, ie. where the barest lands in a country exist for example, weren't a priority factor in selection of landscapes. But instead how restoring areas within a specific landscape can contribute to maintenance or improvement of ecosystem function. The integrated nature of landscape was what was important and reflected in EOI criteria.	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> We are aware of that. The geospatial analysis will consider several different factors that will simulate the multi-factor landscape approach as best as feasible.
12	GEF SEC	Para 19: “as not all child projects may get officially CEO endorsed by the end of 2020, the quality at entry analysis will be based either on CEO endorsement documents or child project concepts, whichever is most updated.” We do not recommend using Child Project Concepts since they are not intended to be used as "stand-alone" documents.	<b>Clarified</b> in the text (see para 19). We will consider the child project concepts within their respective PFD.
13	GEF SEC	Annex 1, para 10: “together, they are responsible for about 80% of the approximately 7.6 million hectares of tropical forest that are lost every year.” I don't think that this 80% is accurate. I think it's more like around 70% although some estimates have it a bit lower.	<b>Corrected.</b>

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14	GEF SEC	Annex 1, para 13: “this Program draws from the WB’s vast experience in developing sustainable agriculture, commodities, and restoration programs, and ensures that the approach is integrated to enable the tackling of drivers of environmental degradation in a synergistic way. This will build on the experience of the IAP on Food Security in Africa...” I don't think that this is a relevant statement within this context and is somewhat misleading. The WB is the lead agency but not implementing across the entire portfolio of 27 countries.	<b>Agreed.</b> Language clarified to reflect this comment (see Annex 1, para 13).
15	GEF SEC	Annex 1, para 13: these project targets numbers do not reflect the latest WP.	<b>Corrected.</b>
16	GEF SEC	Annex 1, para 14: “It takes through commodities supply chains around the world to remove deforestation from their practice and become environmentally sustainable.” The program isn't only about deforestation from commercial commodities but other externalities from food crops and restoration. This makes it appear as a redux of the Commodities IAP.	<b>Agreed.</b> Language clarified to reflect this comment (see Annex 1, para 14).
17	GEF SEC	Annex 1, para 15 and 16, do not reflect June 2020 WP.	<b>Corrected.</b>
18	GEF SEC	Annex 2: The project statuses should be doubled checked for Commodities and Food Security IAPs as all projects are under implementation. Re FOLUR IP, the Burundi CEO Endorsement Request has been submitted, so the 'pending' status is inaccurate. The same applies to Mozambique under the Drylands IP. This CEO Endorsement Request has also been submitted.	<b>Corrected</b> the status as of July 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2020. Project statuses will be double checked and updated all along the evaluation, with a tentative final cutoff date of December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2020.
19	GEF SEC	Annex 2 table 7 is missing countries added in the June 2020 WP. 24 projects listed including Global Project. Missing the 4 just approved in June council.	<b>Corrected.</b>
20	GEF SEC	Table 6 on the IAP on Food Security (p21): The total GEF grant for the IAP-FS is \$106,359,290 and not 160 million! Subsequent totals in the columns on the right are then also wrong.	<b>Corrected.</b>
21	WB	The Draft Approach Paper would benefit from providing additional information on assessment techniques to the Approach section. The current version has a clear and detailed description of one of the methods – the geospatial analysis – but could provide greater detail regarding other methods. Specifically, the Approach section mentions three other methods: (i) portfolio and project cycle analysis; (ii) stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and an online survey; and (iii) in-depth country case studies,	<b>Agreed.</b> Description of methods and tools added (see para 15). The geospatial analysis is described in greater detail because it’s the method we started working at first, and its application is not affected by the pandemic. Other tools include a quality at entry document review, virtual interviews and focus groups, an online survey to reach out to country stakeholders, and deep dives in case studies in

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		which are considered but not planned. In addition, it mentions that quality at entry will be conducted using an IEO tool. It would be useful to have more information regarding the approach to the planned evaluation activities, such as a more detailed description of the proposed methods and a justification of method selection if a substantive discussion is desirable. Also, if the country case studies are cancelled, would the portfolio and project cycle analysis, stakeholder interviews/surveys, and geospatial analysis be sufficient to obtain reliable conclusions?	countries selected based on the presence in the countries of ongoing IAPs and planned IPs child projects. Some of these tools will need to have built-in flexibility due to the pandemic. The final report will contain a detailed account of the data and methods/tools used in the analysis and a description of the limitations encountered and related mitigation measures.
22	WB	Stakeholder consultations seem to be one of the main means of information gathering and verification of findings, but it is unclear who the stakeholders are. While the draft Approach paper mentions stakeholder engagement and states that representatives from the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Agencies, and the STAP will be consulted, it is unclear who the stakeholders to be interviewed are, who the focus group participants would be (or how focus groups would be conducted within current pandemic constraints), or what methods would be used to consult local stakeholders considering travel limitations.	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> In addition to the general elements of response to the issue of what methods we will use (see previous comment), we would like to highlight that the selection of stakeholders to interview depends primarily on the Agencies sharing a complete list with roles and contact details with IEO. Agencies are also expected to assist by introducing the IEO team to their respective stakeholders.
23	WB	While key evaluation questions mainly follow the outcomes of the 2017 IAP Evaluation, they do not seem to be clearly structured around the main evaluation areas or relate to the main objectives of the IAP/IP program. The main purpose of the IAP/IP program is to address the factors of environmental degradation. It seems that the key evaluation questions would be structured on that basis. However, they seem to be formed around the outcomes of the 2017 IAP Evaluation listed on page 3 of the draft Approach Paper. Also, the logic for the list of key evaluation questions could be clearer.	<b>Noted.</b> Questions have been clustered around two groups: (i) relevance and coherence of the design of the GEF integrated approach, and (ii) effectiveness and efficiency of its implementation. The reason being that these are the evaluable areas given the early design and/or implementation status of these programs. The questions include follow up to the functioning of the knowledge platforms and the coherence of M&E systems because this follow up was specifically recommended by the 2017 formative review.
24	WB	The Evaluation Report is planned to be delivered in June 2021, but it would be useful to have main/preliminary results earlier. This could then provide greater benefit and input toward the design of recently approved IP child projects. Is there a way to provide some preliminary results that would be useful for both ongoing project preparation and next year submissions?	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> Paragraph 23 and the timeline table already indicate that preliminary findings will be formulated in early January 2021, to inform the 1 <sup>st</sup> Replenishment Group Meeting in March 2021.

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25	STAP	On the questions to be asked (paragraph 13): Note links between questions c and h and i. STAP recommends that analysis of questions h (knowledge sharing) and i (reporting) make explicit reference to the program theory of change and project logic, whether explicit or implied. For example, the program theory of change should contain causal pathways to manage and coordinate the child projects, including on knowledge systems and learning. It will be critical to assess the degree to which this logic is well formulated at design, as well as the degree to which it influences the focus and design of knowledge platforms, and the degree to which this logic is borne out (or not) through results reporting.	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> Although undeniably there are links between the three questions, question “c” clearly belongs to the relevance of design cluster, while “h” and “i” to the efficiency and effectiveness cluster (see response to comment #24 above). Having said that, we will definitely refer to the programs ToC and project logic in the analysis.
26	STAP	Three cross-cutting themes were meant to be addressed in the IAPs: knowledge management, gender, and resilience. Was the focus on resilience specific to climate resilience, or resilience of the system - i.e. general resilience? As we are learning with COVID-19, assessing and managing the resilience of the system – climate and non-climate risks – is critically important. Thus, if there is scope in the evaluation to assess how resilience thinking, which is inclusive of climate and non-climate risks, is being used in the programs to deal with uncertainty, foster complex adaptive thinking, this would be good.	<b>Agreed.</b> We will look at both climate and non-climate resilience (see response to comment #10).
27	STAP	In December 2019, the OECD amended its definition of sustainability to encompass the resilience of the system. To what extent will the evaluation of the IAPs/IPs apply the OECD’s definition of sustainability, which is line with STAP’s durability principles <sup>1</sup> ?	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> The evaluation will apply the definition of sustainability provided in the recently updated GEF Evaluation Policy (GEF IEO 2019). However, resilience will be considered as appropriate in the sustainability analysis.
28	STAP	We suggest adding a question on transformative scaling, given that a premise of the IAPs is achieving transformative scaling, or scaling for transformational impacts. For example, a new proposed question: <i>To what extent is each program demonstrating progress along credible scaling pathways to achieve transformational change? Where possible to assess, what changes may be required in adaptive program implementation to increase program impact and durability at scale?</i>	<b>Agreed.</b> The notion of transformational change has been embedded in question “c”.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.stapgef.org/achieving-enduring-outcomes-gef-investment>



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		<p>This analysis could build upon question “c” on theory of change to focus on scaling pathways, as a theory of change is integral to guiding implementation and longer-term scaling of impact.<sup>2</sup> Also, the analysis can draw from STAP’s durability paper for ideas on what to look for on how, and to what extent, the program, and projects, are dealing with transformative scaling.</p> <p>For example, the durability paper states: “Analyse the barriers to, and enablers of, scaling and transformation, which may include, for example institutional, governance, cultural, and vested interests, etc. Assess the potential risks and vulnerabilities of the key components of the system, to measure its resilience to expected and unexpected shocks and changes, and the need for incremental adaptation or more fundamental transformational change.”<sup>3</sup></p>	
29	STAP	<p>Finally, we suggest a summary question to assess the <i>overall value of the integrative approach to GEF programming as represented by the IAPs and IPs in relation to cost-effectiveness and likely impact</i>. As a formative evaluation, in the absence of full outcome evidence, a conclusive answer is of course not possible. Nevertheless, the conclusion of IEO’s 2018 formative evaluation of the IAPs (conducted in 2017) points to the tension between potential increased effectiveness (drawing from the comparative advantages of multiple GEF Agencies, scale and scope, etc.) versus organizational complexity, time requirements, and demands on management capacity. Three years later, we must be able to go further in assessing whether, indeed, these additional challenges are worthwhile on balance in light of the early outcomes and progress towards future outcomes. This, we suspect, is at the crux of GEF Council decision-making regarding GEF-8. In essence, <i>we know the integrated approach is difficult, but is it worth expanding further, and if so, what needs to happen to maximize the benefits realized? What shortcomings need to be addressed?</i></p>	<p><b>Noted and no action taken.</b> We will definitely aim at assessing early intermediate results after three years of IAPs’ implementation. We added question “h” to that effect. However, expectations should not be raised about a conclusive answer to that question. It is highly unlikely that, as acknowledged in the comment, we will be able to observe full outcome evidence. Having said that, we are very much aware of the tension highlighted by the 2017 formative review between potential increased effectiveness and operational complexity, and we will definitely report on how this tension has evolved after three years’ implementation.</p>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN\\_GEF\\_STAP\\_C.57\\_Inf.04\\_Theory%20of%20Change%20Primer\\_0.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF_STAP_C.57_Inf.04_Theory%20of%20Change%20Primer_0.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/DURABILITY\\_web%20posting\\_2.pdf](https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/DURABILITY_web%20posting_2.pdf);

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30	STAP	We recognize as well that extending the already long list of evaluation questions may dilute rather than sharpen the focus, so there may be value in consolidating or structuring the list into 3-5 categories of related questions, or sub-questions.	<b>Noted and no action taken</b> (see reply to comment #24 above).
31	STAP	Can the evaluation draw on social science to address some of the questions on governance? (e.g. “To what extent have important factors such as governance (including environmental governance and related institutions), financial and other sustainability factors been considered in the design of both IAPs and IPs?”) For example, researchers are improving understanding and responses to environmental change by using tools to assess how power dynamics affect the function and beneficiaries of polycentric governance. Thus, for some of the questions, the evaluation could go deeper on governance by asking “...under what conditions do different types of actors, with different types of power, achieve their preferred outcomes?” <sup>4</sup> These questions focus on power dynamics that are more enabling in looking into how a variety of actors functioning across multiple scales and venues. Refer to Morrison, T.H. et al (see footnote) for these questions and a typology of polycentric governance.	<b>Noted.</b> Thanks a lot for suggesting to assess environmental governance based on analyzing power dynamics and polycentric governance. Although a very interesting approach, we are not convinced it is applicable to the GEF. The GEF works with Governments and as such it recognizes their central institutional responsibilities in setting the legal frameworks that ultimately define power dynamics of the actors involved the access and use of natural resources and the protection of the environment. We think that a more adequate way to approach this analysis is through: (i) an assessment of stakeholder engagement that considers the role of all actors involved in these programs and child projects, from governments to NGOs, the private sector, and civil society; (ii) an assessment of how these programs and child projects plan to influence the country environmental legal framework to promote good environmental governance; and (iii) an assessment of the capacity building components targeting environmental governance of these programs and child projects (see the description inserted in para 16).
32	STAP	Para 16 states “The relevance analysis of the design of the food systems-related interventions (Food Security and Commodities IAPs, and FOLUR IP) will use geospatial analysis to assess whether the targeted locations at the national and sub-national level correspond to the critical areas of environmental degradation targeted by the GEF (see	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> The geospatial analysis is part of question “b”. dealing with the comparative advantage and additionality of GEF interventions. The IP/IAP programs aim to be additional by integrating several environmental benefits, and the geospatial analysis evaluates if GEF has

<sup>4</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2019.101934>



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		Annex 3 for a concise description).” While this is a worthwhile endeavor, it is not clear how this activity matches up with any of the key evaluation questions in Para 13.	chosen to work in locations where several environmental/commodity issues intersect.
33	STAP	<p>The proposed approach refers to geospatial analysis regarding site selection to assess appropriate targeting. e.g. “Overlaying these datasets with areas where the IAPs/IPs have chosen to work will allow a spatial assessment of how well the programs have chosen target countries and subnational regions where they would have the most impact addressing key environmental themes associated to the target commodities and crops.”</p> <p>STAP recommends for the geospatial analysis to: a) define multi-criteria decision making that provides a socio-ecological perspective, and enables the inclusion of national development planning; b) relate layers to the criteria; c) adopt a spatial modelling approach that enables the inclusion of social and economic data that are relevant to the criteria, and that enable an assessment of trade-offs (e.g. weighted linear combination, fuzzy logic).</p>	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> These suggestions will be considered for the geospatial analysis. In many cases it is foreseen that there will not be geospatial data layers available that accurately represent socioeconomic and political factors that are important to country/site selection. In this case, it is a preferred approach to concentrate on more readily available environmental indicators while highlighting socioeconomic gaps. The goal of the analysis is not to show where GEF should work with a high degree of accuracy but rather to show which areas of the world in which several environmental issues overlap, where integrated approaches could lead to high impact (socioeconomic and political variables notwithstanding).
34	STAP	The team is advised to determine the weighting in a participatory manner, with those that will benefit from the intervention. To this end techniques such as the AHP and other participatory techniques of weight assignment are recommended. It is also recommended that more than one alternative ‘suitability’/priority of intervention scenarios be designed. Some modelling may show an ‘ideal’ intervention from a biophysical perspective, yet the incorporation of the ‘political’ layer for the nation, may determine an alternative location.	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> Participatory weighting will be done as feasible; however, given the timeline of the project and the wide range of commodities and environmental issues, it may not be possible to reach all necessary stakeholders. If this is the case, the analysis will avoid creating definitive weighted indices and instead present the spatial location of indicators separately.
35	STAP	Para 5 states in Annex 3 states that “...areas where programs can have the most impact are therefore those which both produce large quantities of the commodity crops and in which the crops represent an important economic driver.” SPAM data could be used for the former; however, it is not clear that it can be used to determine the latter. It may be possible to find spatially explicit data on the percentage of GDP that each crop represents to each country, which would be interesting but what is the underlying rationale for prioritizing this in terms of its impact on the environment? For	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> We are aware of the difficulty of including economic indicators in this analysis. The goal of including the % of GDP indicator is to ensure that smaller countries where commodities represent an important portion of the economy would not be overshadowed by large countries. However, initial research shows that there is not a good data source showing these values. Alternative methods will be explored.

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		example, could there be a crop that does not contribute very much to GDP but which contributes disproportionately to soil erosion, habitat destruction, or other? Perhaps this is just illustrative or is this meant to be an indication/proxy for government support or buy-in assuming that the more a crop contributes to GDP, the more support it has from the national government?	
36	STAP	Regarding natural habitat degradation. This reads “Areas that are most susceptible to future degradation are generally found near areas of historical conversion of natural land covers to anthropogenic land uses, especially croplands.” This may be true but would be good to cite papers to this effect. Also, the MODIS data set might be preferable since it doesn’t only include tree cover (which may be problematic in some parts of the world where degradation is occurring but is not picked up due to different definition of forest); however, as mentioned this would include a trade-off in terms of resolution (500 m vs. 30 m). Are there other options?	<b>Agreed.</b> References will be added to the methodological chapter of the report and related technical annexes. MODIS could be better in terms of showing non-deforestation-related degradation, however it should be noted that forest loss is easier to detect remotely than other types of land degradation. There are other global land cover change datasets that can be explored, although any global land cover change dataset will come with accuracy issues.
37	STAP	Regarding biodiversity importance – this is important; however, the link to Global Forest Watch does not provide any relevant data (at least not with the link provided). There are many sources for biodiversity data that could be explored. See Table 5 in <a href="#">STAP Earth Observation document</a> , for example or the proposed monitoring framework for the CBD Post 2020 framework for ideas ( <a href="#">Table 1, page 15</a> ). Additionally, questions have been raised about Global Forest Watch with regards to the verification/validation process of the products. Caution should be exerted, therefore, in their use. STAP recommends the ESA annual Land cover, and other relevant global coverage that originate from the ESA CCI (climate change initiative), which provide layers that can be useful for the spatial analysis and the intended modelling. Strongly recommended is the inclusion of the ESA CCI biomass layer.	<b>Noted.</b> We thank STAP for these recommendations and sources of additional resources. They will be used for the final selection of the geospatial layers used in the analysis.
38	STAP	FEWS-NET is a good source for food insecurity data; however, not sure it works in all of the countries where there are GEF IP projects.	<b>Noted.</b> if STAP is knowledgeable of any more comprehensive, global data sources showing food insecurity we welcome the suggestions.
39	STAP	Para 7 states that “FOLUR’s main goal is to improve agricultural sustainability and biodiversity is more of a co-benefit.” This is peculiar for the GEF whose mandate is to focus on global environmental benefits – not agricultural sustainability.	<b>Agreed.</b> The language in this sentence has been clarified. However, the language in the FOLUR PFD document lists

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			sustainable food systems as a main goal of the program, whereas biodiversity is not listed as a main goal.
40	STAP	Recommend the team to use global soil maps, global maps of NPP, to consider the inclusion of the IUCN red list of ecosystems <sup>5</sup> . The geospatial analysis can include national data that is available through platforms like NASA SERVIR and other national country agencies.	<b>Noted.</b> These additional data sources will be considered in the selection of final layers. We welcome further details on what environmental indicators would be addressed by soils maps and NPP.

#### Additional comments made at the reference group meeting

41	IFAD	To what extent do you expect individual IAP to provide inputs to this evaluation?	<b>Noted.</b> We expect you to provide us contact details for interviews (project staff, country stakeholders, etc.), project data, and any other information that allows us to conduct this evaluation. This includes any available internal governance and coordination as well as knowledge sharing record, such as meeting minutes reporting on decisions and follow up at program level. Also, anything that came out from workshops or other program level coordination events, including in terms of lessons learned, please share it with us. The knowledge platforms will be looked into in detail to see if and how they are operating and if they serve the program additionality purpose in terms of knowledge sharing as well as scaling up. Also, anything that's been done to adjust implementation under the COVID-19 situation would be very useful.
42	IFAD	The evaluation should find its way to dig into the following questions: whether the sum at program level is greater than the parts at child project level: are we delivering that? Are the IPs having adequate resources to achieve their ambitions? We should look into some assumptions we had before replicating. The current evaluation	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> The analysis on whether the sum at program level is greater than the parts at child project level was already extensively conducted in the Programmatic Approaches Evaluation (GEF IEO 2018). The

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.iucn.org/theme/ecosystem-management/our-work/red-list-ecosystems#:~:text=The%20Red%20List%20of%20Ecosystems%20complements%20the%20IUCN%20Red%20List,national%2C%20regional%20and%20global%20levels>

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		question “g” asks: how have programs been impacted by the current COVID-19 crisis? We could flip the question and ask: are we building resilience for countries to cope with systemic risks like the COVID-19 crisis?	2017 IAP evaluation largely built on the conclusion from that evaluation that yes, programmatic approaches deliver more benefits than the same funding invested in comparable standalone projects, provided that organizational complexity is kept at a manageable level. This important finding will be considered as we assess the GEF integrated approach in this evaluation. The proposed flip of question “g” does not change the substance of the investigation. Resilience to adapt to crises (climate and non-climate, including Covid-19) will be analyzed under question “e”, the results will be triangulated with the results of analyses related to question “g”.
43	WWF	The IAPs and IPs are designed to achieve impacts at scale and to move away from the STAR silos. The evaluation questions should cover to what extent do the IAPs and IPs achieve impacts at scale? What’s the role of lead agency versus GEF SEC? We could also do comparisons with programs that do not have IAP/IP set-asides.	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> While we will certainly aim at assessing IAPs intermediate results after three years’ implementation, it is too early to report on achievement of impact at scale (see response to comment #29 above). As The program decision making structure and internal governance including the roles of GEF SEC versus GEF Agencies is covered by question “f”. We will consider the feasibility of comparing these programs with previous programs without IAP/IP set-asides using evidence from the Programmatic Approaches Evaluation.
44	UNEP	The Conventions were not big fans of the IPs during the last replenishment process. Even if it’s too early to evaluate the impacts, we should aim at assessing whether IAPs and IPs show the potential to deliver better to the conventions in terms of qualitative outcomes and quantitative GEBs. IAPs and IPs are different types of programs with financial incentives and set-asides: are the high transaction costs associated with them worth it?	<b>Noted and no action taken.</b> We learned about the Conventions’ skepticism for the IAPs during the 2017 formative review. The potential to deliver better to the conventions will be part of a qualitative assessment under question “a”.