

Component: C (Sustainable Management of River Flows)

Taskforce Members Present

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Reviewers' comments

Title of the Project: Sustainable management of E-flow for west coast rivers of Madagascar (case of Betsiboka river)

Country: Madagascar

Component: C (Sustainable Management of River Flows)

- 1. Is the background and justification of the proposed intervention sufficient?**
YES = 3

Comments

Reviewer 1: Alignment to the National Development Policy of Madagascar (2015-2019) and IWRM action plan is demonstrated. Compelling issues in relation to the sites/ rivers selected are sufficient explained, i.e. deforestation in the respective catchments for agriculture and livestock land uses and soil erosion from cultivation of steep slopes. Similar problems are experienced elsewhere but appear to be acute in this part of the region/country.

Reviewer 2: Generally the background and justification provided for some issues of relevance to the proposed intervention. It highlights more on the challenge of dam management following climate change perturbations that leads to reduced rice production, and further provides more insights on the current initiative by the government to establish the National Authority for Water and Sanitation and the finalization of IWRM document. **Nevertheless, there is a general lack of understanding of the EF concepts. EF is not about water for rice production but rather water for the environment to maintain environmental integrity while ensuring social benefits.**

Reviewer 3: While the rationale is stated, **it is not expressly stated or nuanced**. There are **three justifications offered, which were not linked very well**. One is on responding to the national development policy, another on effects of dams on environmental flow and yet another on the opportunity to contribute to the National Water Authority masterplan. These could be linked beautifully if well expressed

- 2. Are the objectives clear, aligned to the problem statement/justification and achievable within the project timeframe of 2.5 years and with the proposed budget?**
NO= 2, YES=1

Comments:

Reviewer 1: The above objectives when assessed relative to the problem statement are compelling. Budget is reasonable, but a **detailed description** would come in handy to evaluate this fact.

Reviewer 2: The objectives are clear, but again their **alignment** is not very neat. The agricultural production by small scale farmers, and the wider link to economic problems, does not seem adequately addressed by the objectives. This may be due to a language problem – I get the impression that the thought process happened in one language and the writing in another language. However, the envisaged scope of work is achievable in 2.5 years

Reviewer 3: The **objectives need to be relooked**. Some are too loaded and lack clarity orientation. **Given the budget and time, some objectives might be considered ambitious**.

- 3. Are the expected results aligned to the proposed objectives?**
NO=2, YES = 1

Comments:

Reviewer 1: Some **expected results are hard to measure and align** with the specific objectives. More adjustment and alignment is necessary and making them smarter.

Reviewer 2: The objectives and expected results and activities do align.

Reviewer 3: The concept note scantily references the results.

For example, specific objective is a summary of all other objectives. The formatting to align objectives to expected results is better as tabular

4. Does the project have regional relevance and thus potential for replication/up-scaling beyond the proposed site/country?

YES =3

Comments:

Reviewer 1: The stated mode of work, and proposed method of monitoring, can be upscaled, most notably the idea of including environmental flows in national water plans

*Reviewer 2: The **issues of EFlows in river basin management are very critical**. Adaptive EF has emerged as important tools for water management and allocation.*

Reviewer 3: The project proposes to develop and apply decision support tools that could be used in other areas within and beyond Madagascar

5. Would this concept benefit from major/further technical input?

YES=3

Reviewer 1: As much as new tools and decision support will be developed, existing EFA tools can be applied.

*Reviewer 2: The **methodology of e-flow assessment will require precise detail**, and the implication of e-flows on policy also needs to be stated.*

Reviewer 3: Technical input on EFA approaches is largely missing

6. Would you recommend this concept for consideration for full proposal development? If yes, please give compelling reasons:

YES = 3

Reviewer 1: The proposal addresses common set of problems across the region, which are particularly acute in Madagascar and selected study sites.

The project promises to build a broad partnership on river basin management. The list of partners reflects the transdisciplinary nature of the problem

The project will test and apply the tools that can be replicated in other countries

There seems to be an elaborate plan to raise awareness among stakeholders

Reviewer2: This is an interesting concept, which can really provide relevant solutions to water resources management in the country. **However, at the present stage, the concept is a bit weak scientifically.** It **does not link the objectives to any anticipated results,** nor does it amplify the relevance of any outcomes to action at policy level. Nevertheless, **the concept is strong on implementation plan, suggesting that the intentions are well founded. This can be a basis for further development.** I feel that with some **major revisions,** this concept has potential and can be carried on to full proposal stage.

Reviewer3: The proposal needs **further refinement to make it smarter and clearer.** The concept presents a key and pertinent issue in river basin management. What is largely **missing** is the **attribution of EFs** and an emphasis on **actions to be conducted to draw lessons** for up-scaling.

7. Any major comments/recommendations:

Reviewer 1

- Adaptive and iterative nature of the EFAs needs to be reflected in the proposed activities
- Is there a scope to incorporate an objective related to marine litter here, given the urban setting?

Reviewer 2:

- i. Rework the title to make it smarter
- ii. Strengthen the specific objectives to make them SMART.
- iii. Revise the objectives to make them relevant
- iv. Strengthen the outputs and make them relevant to the objectives

Reviewer 3: There is some scope to **revise this concept and produce a more rigorous document.** Revision in 3 main areas is necessary –
a) link the rationale to anticipated results,
b) provide potential policy implications for e-flow assessment results, and
c) more detail on e-flow assessment methodology.

8. General comments

- i. Budget needs do not align with the amount of work proposed, i.e. **the objectives are too broad relative to the budget**
- ii. The concept of Environmental Flow was missed; it appears there was a **lack of understanding on what Environmental Flows are.** Broad issues are discussed in the background; it is not clear how these are connected to the Environmental Flows.

- iii. Objectives: Awareness is a form of capacity building, thus SO1 and SO2 are related - they are both about capacity building
- iv. SO3 is too broad carrying two issues – (i) conducting EFA and (ii) integrate into operational rules. Better separate the two and make them smarter.
- v. SO4: The order is not logical, SO4 should come before SO3.
- vi. Ideally we should have three objective in this order:
 - a. Capacity building on EFA
 - b. Conducting EFA
 - c. Mainstream EFA into operational rules
- vii. Adopt **Theory of Change/ Logical framework/ Result Based matrices** approaches in mapping the outputs, specific objectives, the activities and indicators
- viii. '**Demonstration**' has a connotation of tested, accepted and validated. May be ideal to refer to **piloting** rather than demonstration

The concept note proposal is recommended for FULL PROPOSAL development stage.