



20  
23



ANNUAL  
REPORT



Baastel



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**Alain Lafontaine**  
**President**



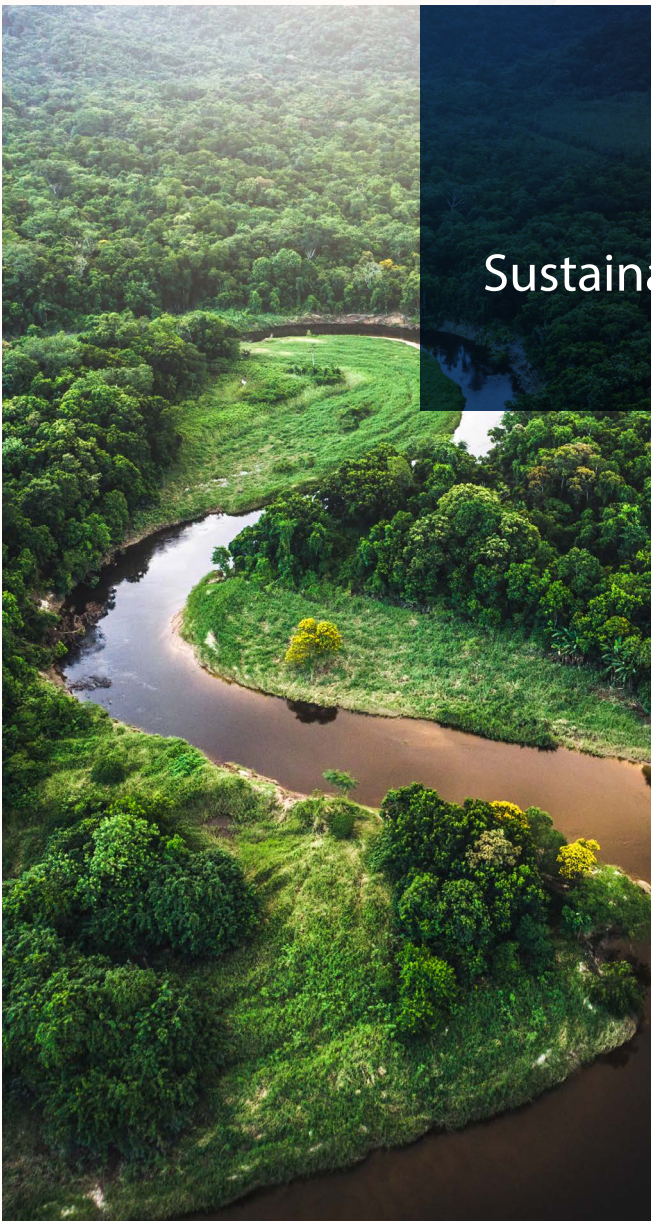
In the face of evolving global challenges, we remain steadfast in our commitment to sustainable development, international cooperation, and social impact. Through innovative approaches, rigorous analysis, and inclusive practices, we strive to make a meaningful difference in communities worldwide.

This report is a testament to the dedication and passion of our team, the resilience of our partners, and the trust of those we serve. Together, we have navigated complexities, embraced opportunities, and advanced towards a more equitable and sustainable future.

As we look ahead, we reaffirm our commitment to excellence, integrity, and collaboration. We invite you to explore this report, celebrate our achievements, and join us in our continued journey towards positive change.

# ABOUT BAASTEL

We are a consultancy firm established in 1989. Committed to sustainable and equitable development for all, we support decision-makers and stakeholders from grassroots to government, providing knowledge, skills, systems, and tools to enhance their impact.



## OUR VALUES

-  Human enterprise
-  Participatory management
-  Flexibility
-  Sensitivity to cultural diversity
-  Professionalism and integrity
-  Commitment to the vision

# COMPANY SUMMARY

In the past 35 years, Baastel has built a strong reputation as a global leader in strategic planning and policy advice, project and program design, technical assistance and monitoring and evaluation in four main areas: environment, social and economic development, disaster risk management, and result-based management. Baastel has provided services to bilateral and multilateral institutions, national, regional and municipal governments, non-governmental and private-sector organizations.



## DID YOU KNOW...?

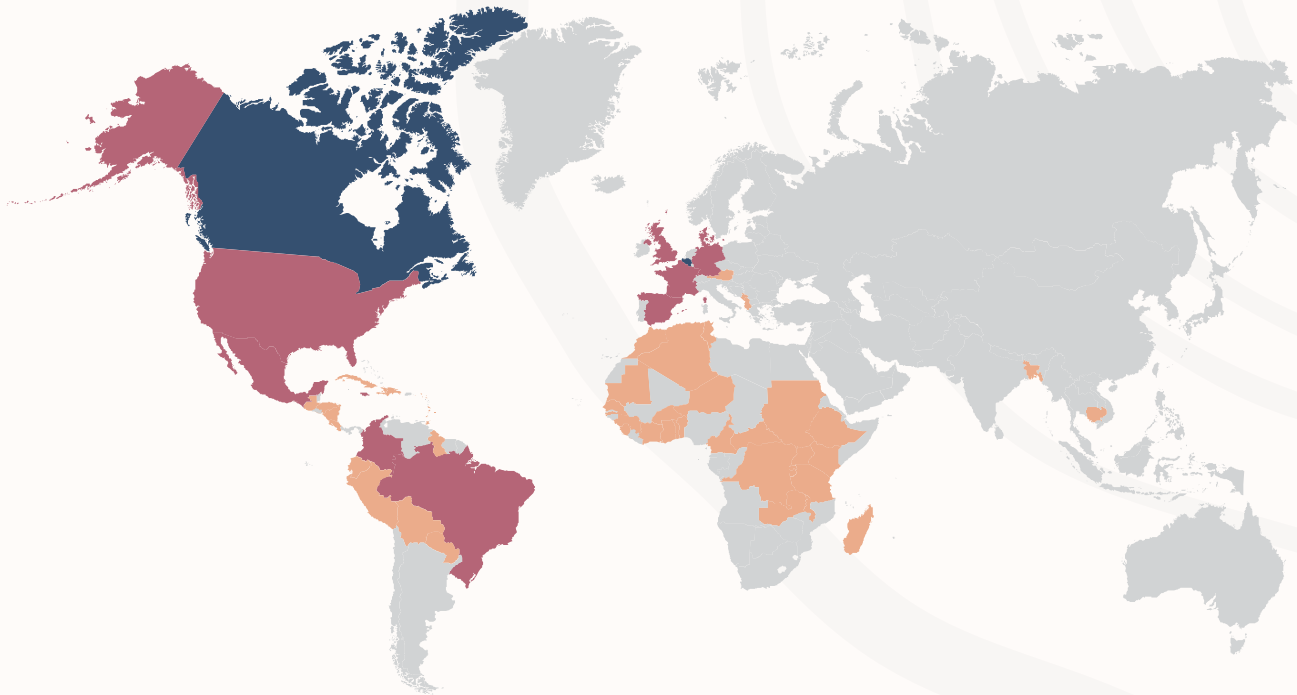
The name “Baastel” is a word play on the initials of the founders of the company: Philippe Bacle and Luc Asselin. Baastel is also the old French word for “bateleur”, i.e., a skilled artist and political advisor to kings who juggles balls in the air, the same balls you see in our logo. This is a reference to the roots of the company in the French language spoken in Quebec and a metaphor for our work as international development experts, which requires us to navigate the complexities of social and environmental issues with a balanced and evidence-based approach. This complex balance in our work as experts is also reflected in the company motto: “The art and science of management, promoting sustainable development.”



# COMPANY SUMMARY

With offices in Gatineau (Canada) and Brussels (Belgium) and consultants around the world, Baastel's network is global, but grounded in local expertise and knowledge. By September 2023, Baastel had 38 staff based in 12 countries, including 28 women and 10 men. In addition, 179 consultants from the broader Baastel network, based in over 50 countries, were involved in mandates that were completed during the fiscal year.

## WHERE WE ARE



**2**  
Offices

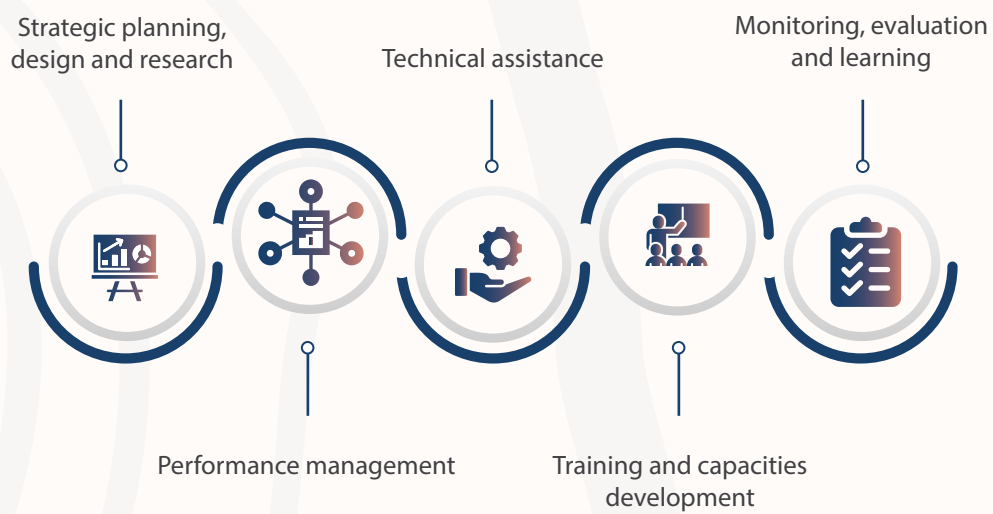
**38**  
Staff

**179**  
International Experts

# OUR SERVICES

Serving decision-makers and stakeholders for over 35 years

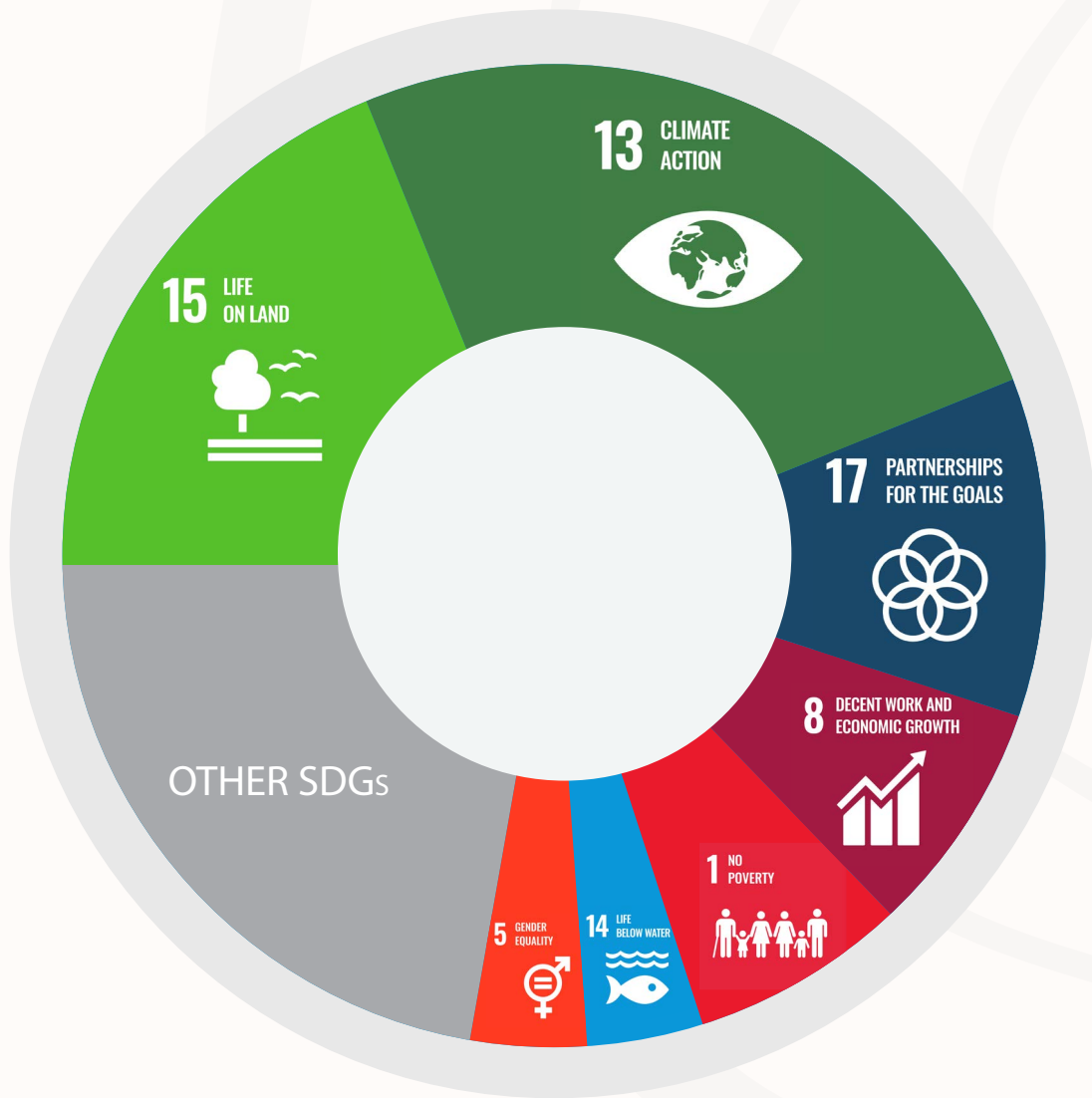
Baastel offers services that address the entire project and program cycle and beyond. In the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals, Baastel recognizes the need for progress in all three of our overlapping impact areas: social, economic and environmental; our commitment to gender equality, human rights, inclusion, and sustainability cut across all three.



# HOW WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our commitment to sustainability is the bedrock of Baastel's mission, as reflected in the impactful mandates that we completed in fiscal year 2023.

25% of our mandates directly contributed to advancing Climate Action (SDG 13) and 19% to Life on Land (SDG 15). In addition, our work supported progress towards other Sustainable Development Goals, including Partnerships for Goals (SDG 17) Decent Work & Economic Growth (SDG 8), Poverty Reduction (SDG 1), Life Below Water (SDG 14), and Gender Equality (SDG 5), which is also a crosscutting theme in our work. This underscores our multifaceted strategy towards supporting the achievement of sustainable development.

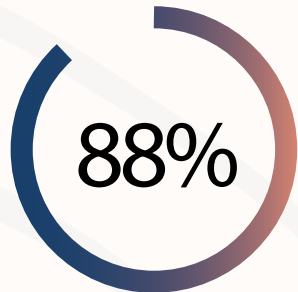






HOW

# WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE



88%

Client satisfaction

4.36

Quality rating

The impact of Baastel's work is palpable. A resounding 68% of surveyed clients have already integrated our deliverables into their operations, with an additional 16% expressing a strong intent to leverage these resources. Throughout fiscal year 2023, Baastel consistently achieved an impressive average service quality rating of 4.36 out of 5. Moreover, 88% of respondents highlighted that Baastel's services substantially met or exceeded their organizational needs.

## OUR CLIENTS HAVE SAID...



High-quality work, carried out to a tight deadline, on a complex and politically exposed project. Well done to the team of consultants.



Baastel was very professional and efficient from start to finish. The team was reliable, responsive to our needs and produced a good-quality report.



The evaluation team comprised six experts who all performed their duties well. All deadlines were met and with a high quality of work. The team used a variety of mixed methods - both quantitative and qualitative - and came up with a robust analysis of the issues arising and sound recommendations.



The final report on the adaptation strategy and action plan is a comprehensive document of very high quality, reflecting the significant commitment of Baastel's consultants and fully meeting the initial terms of reference in that it contains a large amount of strategic information...

# PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE 2023

During fiscal year 2023, Baastel successfully completed 68 mandates for 46 clients at the national, regional, or global scale; a large part of our work was multi-region, in Sub-Saharan Africa, or in Latin America and the Caribbean.

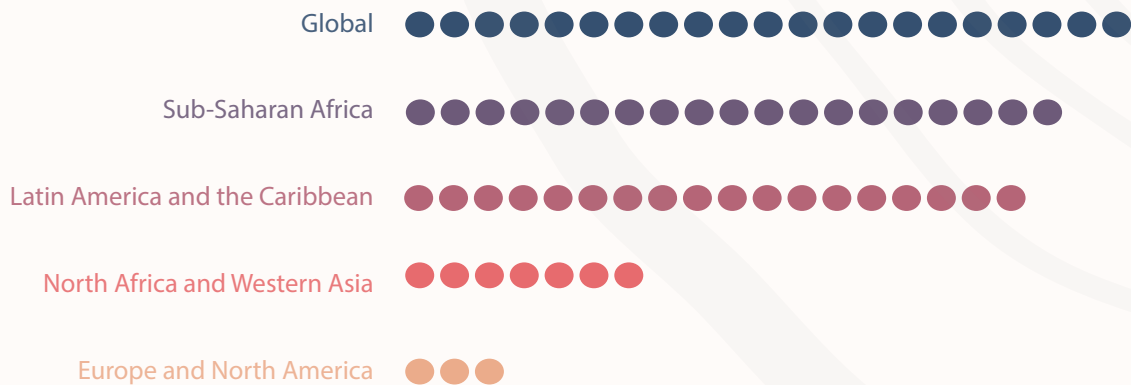


68 projects



46 clients

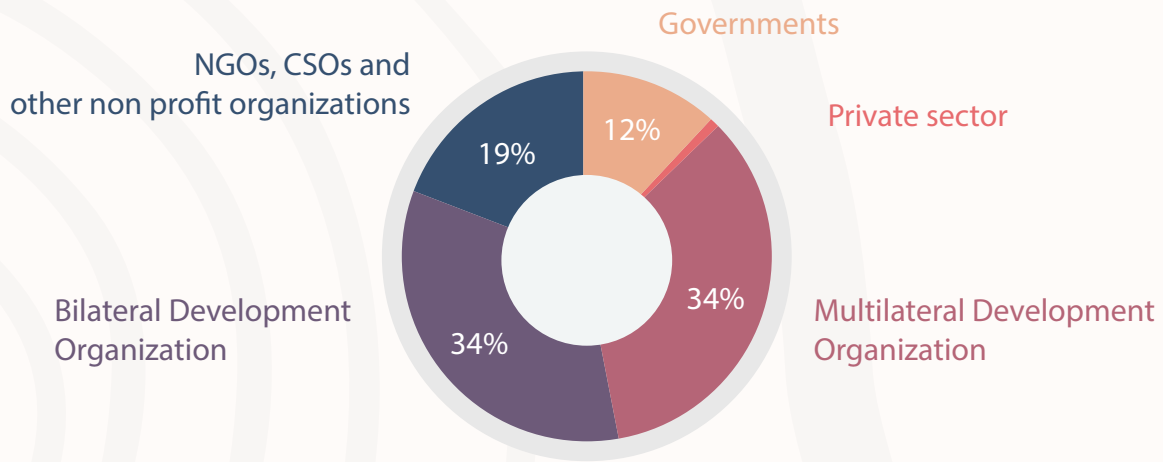
## GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF OUR WORK



# PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE 2023

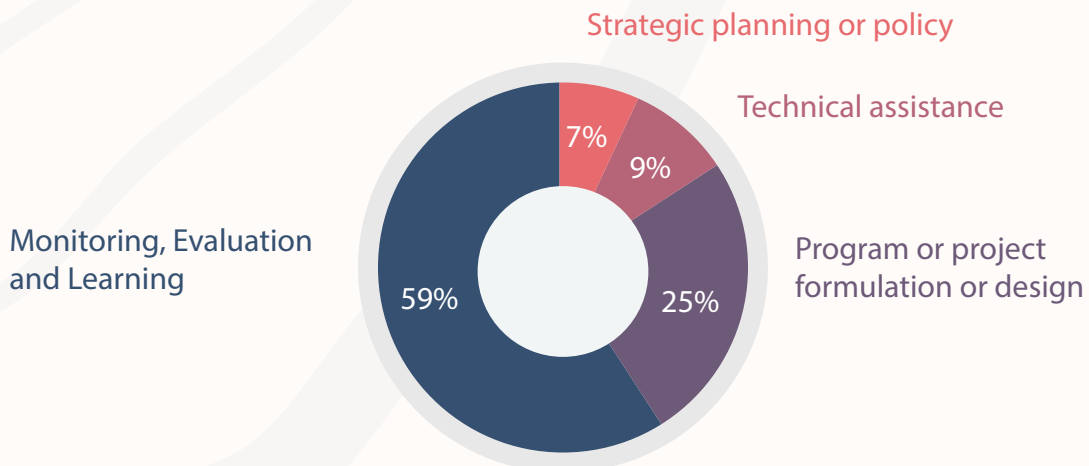
Baastel assisted its clients on a wide range of socio-economic and environmental topics, providing services in program or project formulation, strategic planning, policy advice, technical assistance, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. Our clients are governments, international organizations, international cooperation agencies, NGOs, and private sector institutions.

## OUR CLIENTS



In 2023, monitoring and evaluation remained our main area of work, particularly evaluations, which represent around half of all M&E mandates and encompass interventions in areas such as ecosystem conservation, climate change adaptation, sustainable development, economic development, livelihoods, and aid effectiveness, among others. Program and project design are also a large part of our work, particularly in areas such as ecosystem conservation and restoration, climate change, and biodiversity. In addition, we assisted international organizations in the environmental arena with policy advice, strategic planning, and technical assistance.

## OUR MANDATES

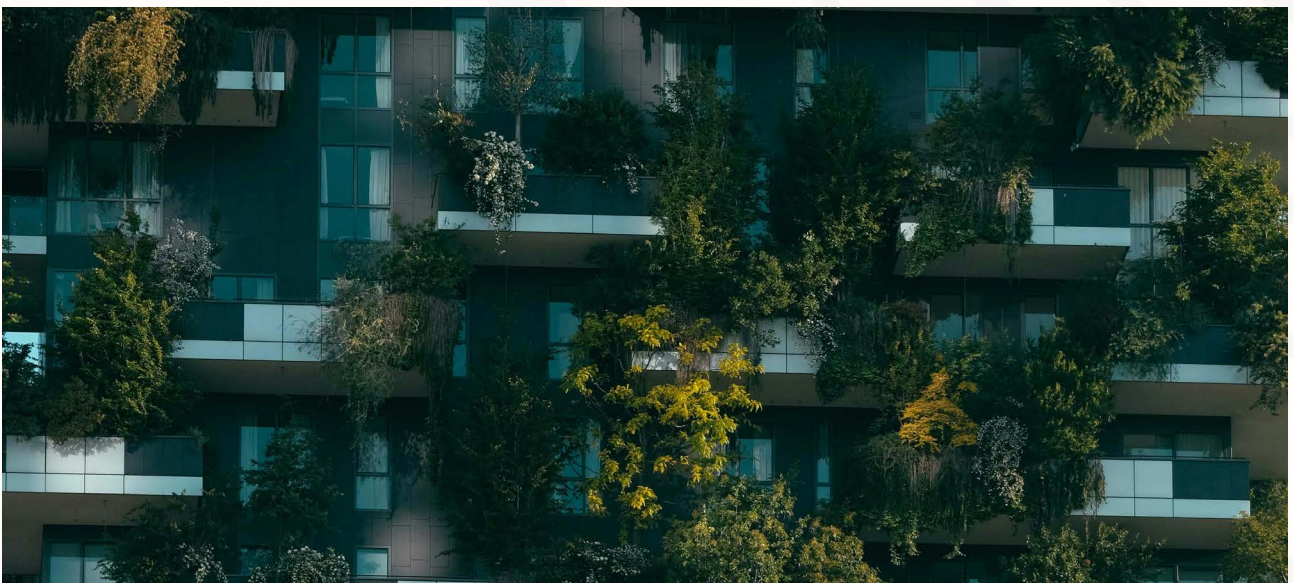


# ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

As Baastel's mission is to contribute to sustainable human development globally, it has become essential for us to further enhance our environmental commitment to mitigate any negative impacts generated by our activities and take our share of responsibility in addressing the urgency of the global environmental and climate crisis. It is within this context that the company adopted a Green Plan in December 2018, which identifies key actions for Baastel to reduce its environmental footprint in the following areas: integrate the Green Plan objectives in the company's internal procedures, improve the environmental management of offices, and limit emissions from the services provided.

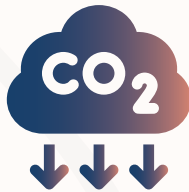


To improve environmental management at Baastel's offices, several measures have been implemented, including the development of procedures and tools to monitor Baastel's environmental impact and the establishment of partnerships with green energy suppliers for our offices. Baastel also participated in the 2023 Ma Petite Planète (MPP) challenge, which seeks to raise awareness around the themes of ecology and solidarity by providing a series of environmental and ecological challenges to staff over a period of three weeks.

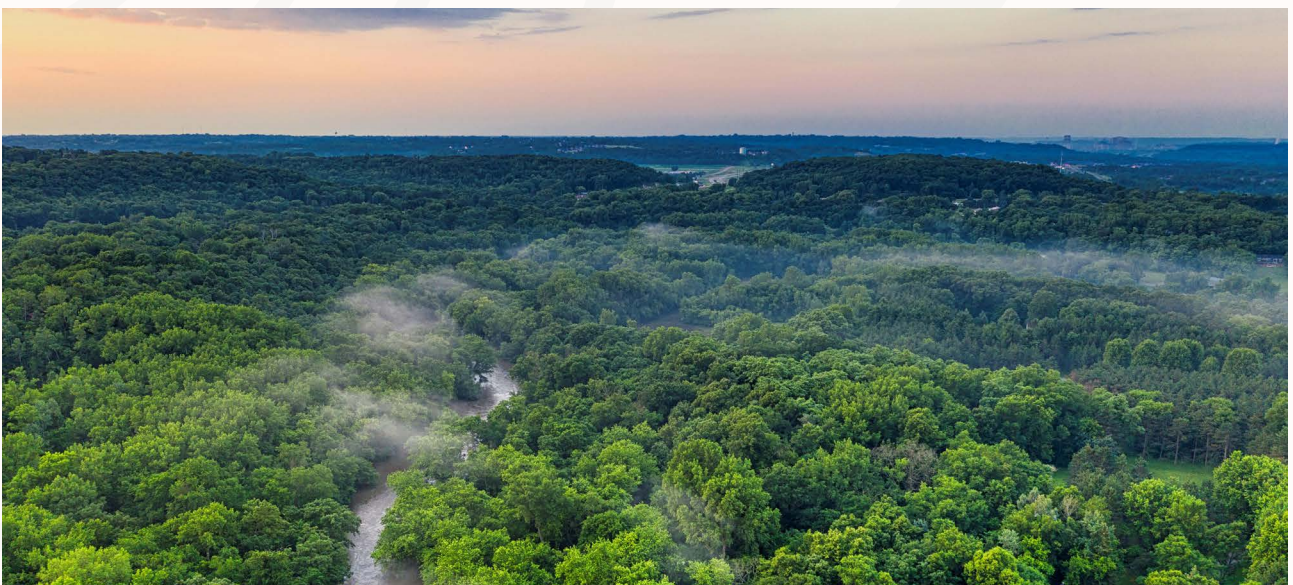


# ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Air travel constitutes the most significant source of greenhouse gas emissions from the company, primarily due to the nature of Baastel's services, often requiring the physical presence of consultants on project sites around the world.



The company is committed to limiting emissions by offering an optional "low-carbon scenario" in proposals, encouraging alternatives to air travel whenever possible. These scenarios promote train travel for suitable routes and the use of videoconferences, in addition to leveraging Baastel's extensive network of national consultants. When air travel is necessary, Baastel takes responsibility for its environmental impact by offsetting the related carbon emissions by supporting Planetair.ca's climate change mitigation projects. In 2023, Baastel offset 65 metric tons of CO2 emissions generated the previous year through Planetair.ca. This commitment underscores Baastel's dedication to environmental sustainability and our proactive stance towards mitigating climate change.





# BAASTEL IN ACTION

In the ever-evolving realm of international development consultancy, Baastel emerges as a pioneering force, driven by a profound commitment to sustainable progress.

By helping our clients enhance their sustainable development impact with a series of vast initiatives spanning diverse sectors and geographies, Baastel's transformative footprint resonates deeply across the global landscape.


Through an exploration of some of our work in 2023, this section aims to celebrate Baastel's legacy and inspire collective action towards a future defined by resilience and equity in global development efforts.

# SUPPORTING COMPLEMENTARITY AND COHERENCE IN CLIMATE FINANCE

Since 2018, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) have been collaborating on various initiatives to enhance their complementarity and coherence in response to decisions of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In 2021, these efforts were structured under the Long-Term Vision of Complementarity, Coherence and Collaboration.

In this context, Baastel helped the GEF and the GCF look deep into their internal processes and policies and identify pathways to increase their complementarity and coherence and thus improve access to impactful climate finance for developing countries and partner agencies.

Based on extensive stakeholder consultations and an in-depth review of GEF and GCF policies, frameworks, guidelines, and reports, Baastel identified key entry-points and seven actionable recommendations to further the complementarity and coherence of the GEF and the GCF in three areas: (1) programming, country support and engagement; (2) processes and policies; and (3) institutional coordination.



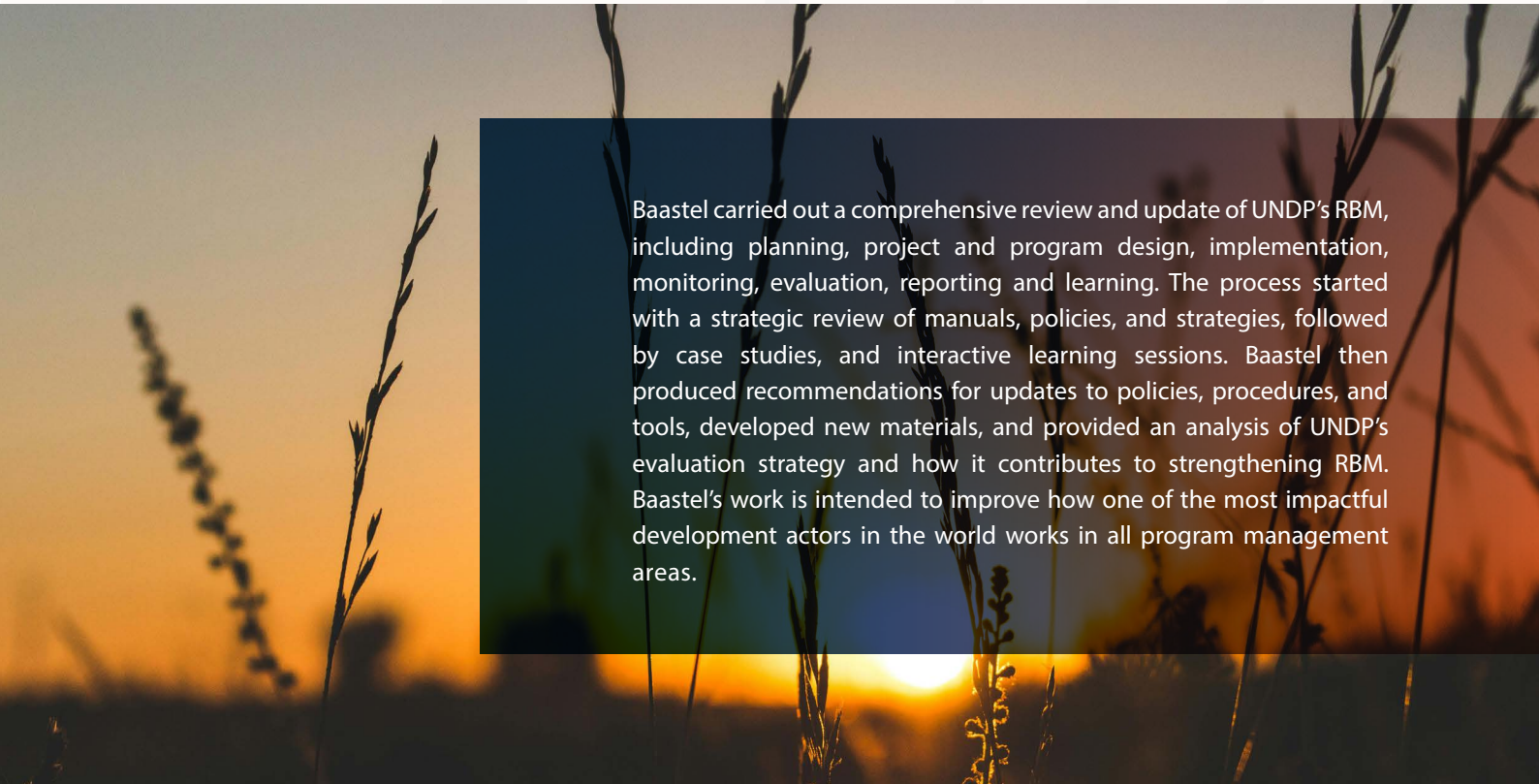
The conclusions and recommendations from this study, presented at the 64th GEF Council meeting in June 2023, have contributed to the ongoing efforts of these climate funds to strengthen their complementarity and coherence, which were stepped up in December 2023 with a joint commitment to develop an action plan to enhance access to climate finance and increase its impact.



## STRENGTHENING UNDP'S RBM POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND TOOLS

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is all about human development: the organization works in more than 160 countries around the world to support locally led solutions to development challenges, as well as on initiatives oriented towards the advancement of the SDGs. The organization's areas of focus are sustainable development, governance and peace, and climate and disaster resilience. Some examples of UNDP's many achievements in 2023 include increased access to essential services for 71 million people, and the adoption of e-commerce or e-governance solutions in 82 countries.

Baastel helped UNDP upgrade their Results-Based Management (RBM) and Monitoring & Evaluation approaches, particularly its universally utilized RBM Manual (i.e. the Handbook). This review included RBM-related policies and strategies, procedures and tools, and training material for UNDP staff.



Baastel carried out a comprehensive review and update of UNDP's RBM, including planning, project and program design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning. The process started with a strategic review of manuals, policies, and strategies, followed by case studies, and interactive learning sessions. Baastel then produced recommendations for updates to policies, procedures, and tools, developed new materials, and provided an analysis of UNDP's evaluation strategy and how it contributes to strengthening RBM. Baastel's work is intended to improve how one of the most impactful development actors in the world works in all program management areas.






## SUPPORTING BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND LIVELIHOODS IN WEST AFRICA

Baastel conducted a contextual analysis and feasibility study for a project that will support the West African Savannah Foundation, financed by the French Development Agency (AFD) and the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM). Through predictable and sustainable funding, the project will contribute to the long-term conservation of natural resources and biodiversity in the W-Arly-Pendjari complex –the largest complex of terrestrial, semi-aquatic and aquatic ecosystems stretching along the West African savannah belt, of exceptional importance in terms of biodiversity– and to the livelihoods of 17,000 people in the surrounding rural communities.

The contextual analysis focused on the peripheral zones of the W National Park in Benin, including areas facing increasing conflict and tension. Using a participatory data collection process, Baastel produced a GIS-mapped social, economic and environmental vulnerability assessment, which informed the subsequent technical, institutional and financial feasibility of the project. For the feasibility study, Baastel adopted a “do no harm” approach for the prevention of crises and conflicts with the double purpose of avoiding the reinforcement of existing inequalities, tensions and conflicts and of accompanying the management of these issues.



Both the context analysis and the feasibility study were instrumental for the AFD and the FFEM to approve financial commitments amounting to EUR 12 million. Following approval of these financial commitments, Baastel supported the first steps of project implementation, including the financial agreement, the environmental and social impact assessment, the procurement plan and the development of the key terms of reference to kick-start project implementation.



# STRENGTHENING THE AFD PORTFOLIO OF PROJECTS WITH ADAPTATION CO-BENEFITS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Baastel evaluated the climate change adaptation co-benefits of a sample of 35 projects implemented by the French Development Agency (AFD) in Sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar between 2007 and 2018 with a focus on two sectors: agriculture, and water and sanitation. This evaluation was requested by the AFD to assess the relevance and impact of its growing portfolio of projects with adaptation co-benefits, i.e., that contribute to reducing the vulnerability of assets, populations, or ecosystems.

Through a portfolio analysis, three case studies in Senegal, Niger, and Madagascar, and a benchmark analysis against the practices of other donors, Baastel helped the AFD identify three key opportunities to strengthen the portfolio of projects with adaptation co-benefits: (1) improve project design to optimize adaptation co-benefits and reinforce their evaluability; (2) promote the integration of projects with adaptation co-benefits into public policy dialogue on climate; and (3) ensure that projects reduce the vulnerability to climate change of the most vulnerable populations in the long term. Baastel provided five recommendations to address these challenges and strengthen the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into the project cycle.



## FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THREE GENDER PROJECTS IN GUATEMALA

Baastel conducted formative evaluations of three key projects as part of the Guatemala bilateral development program with Global Affairs Canada. These evaluations aimed to assess the performance of 3 projects : the Sustainable Economic Growth for Women and Youth in Alta Verapaz (CRECER), Economic Empowerment of Q'eqchi' Women and Youth in Alta Verapaz (Camino Verde), and Women's Rights and Gender-Sensitive Justice in Guatemala projects. Baastel's assessments provided insights into achieved results and proposed improvements for the remaining

The overarching goal was to empower marginalized groups, especially Indigenous women and youth in Alta Verapaz, by fostering economic empowerment and strengthening the justice system. Baastel's evaluations focused on these three projects due to their substantial impact on the targeted communities.

Baastel adopted a comprehensive approach, integrating a theory-based methodology and a user-centered evaluation framework. This approach actively engaged stakeholders in the evaluation process, fostering collaboration and ensuring the relevance of the findings. Baastel's team conducted validation workshops, allowing for iterative feedback and the refinement of recommendations.

The evaluations conducted by Baastel generated actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing project efficiency and inclusivity. Among other things, recommendations emphasized the need to streamline project governance structures, making them more adaptable and efficient, and to address inequalities in the distribution of project benefits across participating cooperatives by providing extra support to those with lower capacities.



# EVALUATING RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN THE PAN-AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION (PAHO)

PAHO is a UN organization that fosters technical cooperation among member states of the Americas so as to promote people's health throughout the region. In doing so, the organization seeks to promote the well-being of individuals, their families and their communities. PAHO has been implementing a Results-Based Management (RBM) approach since 2008 as a central operating principle to improve organizational effectiveness, efficiency, alignment with results, and accountability.

Baastel evaluated PAHO's current RBM approach in terms of its efficiency and its effectiveness to add value to its mission by fostering a culture of results, and by providing relevant and sufficient evidence for decision-making aimed at the achievement of its intended results and its contributions to the SDG. The review included PAHO's RBM implementation from 2008 to 2022, examining the extent to which RBM has been used to make better planning and management decisions at all organizational levels, and improve accountability and transparency to Member States, highlighting gaps and making recommendations on how RBM practices may improve to keep PAHO fit for purpose.



Improved RBM practices in PAHO will contribute to better strategic and operational planning practices, more efficient resource allocation, greater accountability for results and transparency, improved internal and external coordination, more cohesion and collaboration within the organization, the timely use of relevant evidence-informed lessons for decision-making and, in general, a stronger organization, more effective in facing challenges and adapting to a changing and demanding context.





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