STAP Scientific and Technical screening of the Project Identification Form (PIF)

Date of screening: September 12, 2007
Screener: Douglas Taylor, STAP Secretary
Panel member validation by: Paul Ferraro

I. PIF Information
(Paste here from the PIF)

1. GEF Trust Fund

Staples (IES): TBD
GEF AGENCY PROJECT ID: TBD
COUNTRY(IES): Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, China
PROJECT TITLE: Greater Mekong Subregion Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative
GEF AGENCY(IES): ADB, FAO
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: National government agencies (environment and forestry) in all GMS countries; NGOs (WWF, CI, FFI, Birdlife, WCS); Academic Institutions (Asian Institute of Technology, Murdoch University, Mae Fah Luang Univ); IUCN; UNEP
GEF FOCAL AREAS: Sustainable Forest Management
GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAM(S): SFM-1, SFM-2, SFM-4, SFM-5, SFM-7

II. STAP PIF Screening (based on Part I A Project Framework and Part II Questions of the PIF)

Background logical consistency informing STAP’s scientific and technical screening:

1. Is the Project Objective consistent with the Problem/Issue? YES ☐ NO ☐ PARTIAL ☒
   - If “No” or “Partial” explain: The Objective statement appears much more high level and one step removed from the stated purpose of the project, which is to expand and integrate the high biodiversity areas within and linking to PAs and conserve the remaining globally significant forests. For example, how will “equitable development” be measured?

2. Are the expected outcomes consistent with the Problem/Issue? YES ☑ NO ☐ PARTIAL ☐
   - If “No” or “Partial” explain: ___

3. Global environmental benefits scientifically valid? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - If “No” or “Unknown” explain: It is difficult to identify the GEBs except in a very general way

4. Problem definition scientifically valid? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - If “No” or “Unknown” explain:

5. Proposed intervention scientifically justified? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - If “No” or “Unknown” explain:

6. Methodology proposed:
   - Is there a scientifically valid baseline? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - Is a scientific control explicitly included? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - Is there scientific or technical innovation? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - Is the methodology replicable? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - If any of the above are marked “No” or “Unknown” explain: Innovative components are not identified

7. Is the incremental reasoning scientifically valid? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - If “No” or “Unknown” explain:

8. Are the risk statements scientifically valid and comprehensive? YES ☑ NO ☐ UNKNOWN ☒
   - If “No” explain: STAP is not sure why the proponent claimed that climate change will not adversely affect the project. There is a risk that climate change could impact catchment and forest management options

III. STAP Advisory Response (see next page for explanation)

9. Based on this PIF screening, STAP recommends the following action to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency (ies): No objection, but follow-up action required

IV. Further guidance from STAP
10. Follow-up action required: the proponent should contact STAP regarding the issues raised in this screening report, and to record the agreement reached. In such a wide ranging and complex project, the scientific aspects of project design are important to better understand and test regarding baselines, assumptions and choice of indicators to use. The project appears to be targeting production forests rather than sustainable forest management within production landscapes. These and other issues need clarification.

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<tr>
<th>STAP advisory response</th>
<th>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. No objection</td>
<td>STAP has no scientific/technical grounds to object to the approval of the concept. However, in Section IV, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasising any issues that could be improved and the proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission.</td>
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| 2. No objection, but follow-up action required. | STAP has no objection to the approval of the PIF, but has identified specific scientific/technical suggestions or opportunities, stated in section IV, that should be discussed with the proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. One or more options that remain open to STAP include:  
(i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues  
(ii) Setting an independent expert review point during early stage project development and agreeing terms of reference for this review  
The proponent should provide the report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement. |
| 3. Objection           | STAP objects to the approval of the PIF on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical faults in the concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. In the case of the project concept nevertheless being approved by the CEO of the GEF for development of the full project brief, a STAP review should be mandatory prior to submission of the project brief for CEO endorsement. |