

Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel



The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, administered by UNEP, advises the Global Environment Facility (Version 5)

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

Date of screening: 10 November 2008

Screener: David Cunningham

Panel member validation by: Paul Ferraro

I. PIF Information

Full size project GEF Trust Fund

GEFSEC PROJECT ID: 3751

GEF AGENCY PROJECT ID:

COUNTRY(IES): India

PROJECT TITLE: Capacity Building on Biosafety for Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol - Phase II

GEF AGENCY(IES): UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNER(S): Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India

GEF FOCAL AREA (S): Biodiversity

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAM(S): SP 6: Building Capacity for the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

NAME OF PARENT PROGRAM/UMBRELLA PROJECT:

PROJECT FRAMEWORK

II. STAP Advisory Response (*see table below for explanation*)

1. Based on this PIF screening, STAP's advisory response to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency(ies):
Consent

III. Further guidance from STAP

2. STAP acknowledges this proposal on biosafety capacity building in India and recommends only that the subsequent project documents clarify whether the focus is on agricultural LMOs for each component.
3. The GEF has provided support to more than 30 countries for implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). Other countries have developed significant biosafety capacity, including non-parties to the CPB. Therefore, the ability to replicate the outcomes of these initiatives should yield significant time and cost efficiencies in this project. Some of the proposed biosafety measures will require adaptation of established systems from other countries and regions to the circumstances of India and these include:
 - a. *Baseline data on the presence of wild relatives of LMOs (2.1).* The PIF aims to address "all LMO-related activities" and hence the scale of this work is potentially very large and may require significant investments in surveying and describing the biota of India. Within the timeframe and budget proposed it may be more realistic to take a risk-based approach and focus on wild relatives of LMO's that are most likely to be developed in or introduced to India. The ongoing benefit of this work would be the capacity to assemble baseline data on wild relatives of any new LMOs to be considered in the country's biosafety system.
 - b. *Sampling and testing (2.3).* In this context, sampling and testing may be considered a sub-component of the identity preservation system feasibility study costed in the same line item. A review of strategies in countries with similar circumstances would be useful to identify best practices to adopt in India. As noted above, the PIF does not identify any category of LMOs or industry sectors but the implication is that the sampling, detection, quantification and certification review will focus on agricultural systems and not the medical, environmental and other industrial biotechnology sectors.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	STAP acknowledges that on scientific/technical grounds the concept has merit. However, 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 for CEO endorsement.
2. Minor revision required.	STAP has identified specific scientific/technical suggestions or opportunities 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues (ii) Setting a review point during early stage project development and agreeing terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.
3. Major revision required	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical omissions in the concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. Normally, a STAP approved review will be mandatory prior to submission of the project brief for CEO endorsement. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.