

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: 29 January 2010

Screener: David Cunningham

Panel member validation by: Brian Huntley

I. PIF Information

Full size project **GEF Trust Fund**
GEF PROJECT ID: 4158 **PROJECT DURATION:** 60 months
COUNTRY: Cuba

PROJECT TITLE: Agricultural biodiversity conservation and Man and Biosphere Reserves in Cuba: Bridging managed and natural landscapes

GEF AGENCY: UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Instituto de Investigaciones Fundamentales en Agricultura Tropical (INIFAT), Cuba; Centro Nacional de Areas Protegidas (CNAP), Cuba; Bioversity International

GEF FOCAL AREA: Biodiversity

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAMS: BD-SO1: SP3; S02: SP4; SP5

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:
Minor revision required

III. Further guidance from STAP

2. Part B of the PIF points to an important risk of this project: "Cuban institutions have been conducting research on in situ conservation of agricultural biodiversity since 1992 with the support of Bioversity International, the German Technical Cooperation agency (GTZ), the International Development Research Center–Canada (IDRC), and an Italian NGO CROCEVIA. The results of this work suggest that it is possible to achieve the integration of agricultural biodiversity use with conservation in ways that provide direct benefits to the rural livelihoods of communities in the Biosphere Reserves." (italics and underlining added). The project will extend this experience to 25 years by which time we would hope to understand the impacts of this type of intervention much more fully, on biodiversity conservation and on livelihoods. While this project itself is relatively small, with a GEF grant of only \$1.4 million, it could help contribute to the evidence base for these types of investments that are part of the GEF portfolio and other initiatives.
3. This project has elements in common with the UNEP/FAO GEF project 3808, *Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use for improved human nutrition and wellbeing*, also being considered in the March 2010 Intersessional Work Program. The Panel refers UNEP to its screening report on that project also.
4. Another risk that could be elaborated in the full proposal is hinted at in Part H: "The project will not concentrate on individual objectives (e.g. the mitigation of mining impacts in Cuban biosphere reserves) or separate sectors (e.g. poverty alleviation, biodiversity conservation, responsible tourism, agriculture, water, soil), but will pursue an integrated systems approach in which solutions are sought in the synergies created between the different objectives and sectors." The Panel supports this as a goal but notes that evaluating the impact of "synergies created" by the project will be difficult. Given the importance and wide interest in rigorously tested models of agro-biodiversity mainstreaming, the project document could detail an M&E process that might allow feedback to similar projects in the agro-biodiversity and Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) arena.
5. Certification is mentioned several times in the PIF, mainly in the context of "development of marketing programmes for certified and non-certified agrobiodiversity products". It is not clear what will be certified, products, sustainable agricultural practices, or even ecotourism? STAP is currently producing an advisory document on certification that will be provided to UNEP as soon as possible.

<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.	<p>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:</p> <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 <p>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.</p>
3. Major revision required	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>