

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: October 21, 2010

Screeener: David Cunningham

Panel member validation by: Meryl Williams; Sandra Diaz
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I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 4329

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Global

PROJECT TITLE: 5th Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: UNOPS

GEF FOCAL AREA: Multi Focal Area

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAMS:

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

Based on this PIF screening, STAP's advisory response to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency(ies): **Minor revision required**

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes this proposal for the continuation of the UNDP-GEF SGP into a fifth phase. The SGP is uniquely placed to handle both multi-focal area (MFA) issues in a local setting and to combine the delivery of GEBs with actions to reduce poverty and promote local livelihoods. The underlying philosophy of 'think globally, act locally' is admirable and the focus on community based organisations, with strong emphasis on capacity building through 'learning by doing' is commendable.

The programme is highly innovative, and not 'risk averse'. As such it tests approaches in low-capacity countries and within communities with limited experience in the management of complex projects, but through this exposure to risk, the programme is developing pertinent experience and sharing this across larger scale, more costly projects.

The fact that the SGP has worked and will continue to work with some of the poorest and most disadvantaged sectors of society that at the same time have the greatest reliance on their natural resources makes the whole proposal very compelling and worthy of strongest support.

STAP broadly supports the selection of objectives from the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies. These are the objectives that are most conveniently operational at a local level, to bring global and local benefits into alignment.

STAP asks for a minor revision and makes the following points to strengthen the full project brief, by enhancing the scientific and technical quality of the proposal.

1. The Project Framework at Part B of the PIF lists Expected Outcomes that harmonise well with the GEF-5 focal area strategies. STAP would question, however, the specification of Expected Outputs. These are all in terms of the numbers of projects (i.e. the activities to each the Outcomes) in each focal area, which misses the opportunity of specifying project deliverables.

2. STAP notes favourably the intention for the SGP to support "integrated and synergistic multi-focal area approaches." However, it questions the structure of the Expected Outputs (930 BD projects; 390 CC; 410 LD etc.) since this apparently de-constructs the MFA approach which STAP strongly supports as being appropriate at local level, to projects that target only single focal areas. This may be the unintended consequence of the way the Project Framework has been constructed, but is nevertheless disappointing and possibly unduly restrictive of truly MFA single projects under the SGP, except in a few cases such as OP5 which is very multi-focal (Support the conservation and

enhancement of carbon stocks through sustainable management and climate proofing of land use, land use change and forestry) The SGP is advised to examine where further MFA approaches could be highlighted in order to provide leads to community-led project applicants. For example, under OP8, protected areas within transboundary water systems would be a natural synergy. Other MFA examples could be given.

3. Project Component 1. (Biodiversity). It is not clear that the expected output of supporting the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation through 930 community-led and NGO projects can be achieved. The strength of the SGP is to achieve global benefits at the very local level. Most studies indicate that biodiversity conservation is already appreciated in local and community situations, and certainly by the civil society organisations trying to promote it. It is unlikely that local projects could influence mainstreaming at the national level. The PIF mentions measures such as organic certification and community-level enforcement measures. However, these are not in themselves necessarily 'mainstreaming', although they can be indicators of biodiversity conservation being taken more seriously by actors at one level or another. The process of mainstreaming needs to be elaborated; and the level at which the mainstreaming may occur needs to be specified. If this is not detailed in the full proposal, then it is unlikely that project developers under the SGP will or could take this most important Output seriously. One way 'mainstreaming' could be further strengthened in the medium term is to integrate the SGP projects more closely with UNDP's core activities in poverty reduction and with country UNDAFs. STAP understands that currently the SGP is treated very much as a stand-alone project in each UNDP Country Office, often weakly integrated with other national and local-level projects. Some attention in the full project brief as to how the SGP will be integrated institutionally in-country so that the SGP's outputs support multiple objectives, influence other activities and are continued long term would make the whole proposal far more convincing.

4. Against Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9 of the SGP (mainstreaming biodiversity; low GHG technologies; low-GHG transport; ecosystem services; trans-boundary water; POPs), 'knowledge management' (KM) is mentioned in the text (p.10). Again, under Objective 10 knowledge management is specified as a "key cross-cutting activity" to be applied across focal areas at the global, national and community levels." STAP is most interested in this but wonders how this will be achieved, and who will undertake the challenging task of collating best practices and lessons, and then providing a platform so these may be accessed by others. This is particularly relevant in the case of land degradation and sustainable land management, where the UNCCD and a current GEF-MSP are attempting to resolve the challenge. It would be good for the KM issue to be elaborated. For example, is this envisaged to be for the SGP globally, to be handled by UNDP; or is this more relevant at national level, in which case the institutions and financing will need to be considered.

5. Attention to the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area 'learning objectives' is highly relevant, and should receive close attention, in particular the STAP guidance on opportunities for more critical evaluation of approaches such as certification, payments for ecosystem services, and community forest management.

<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.