

# 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: @@@@ @@, @@@@

Screeener: Thomas Hammond

Panel member validation by: Meryl Williams

Consultant(s): Paul Grigoriev

### I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*

**FULL SIZE PROJECT**    **GEF TRUST FUND**

**GEF PROJECT ID:** 4730

**PROJECT DURATION :**

**COUNTRIES :** Azerbaijan

**PROJECT TITLE:** Increasing Representation of Effectively Managed Marine Ecosystems in the Protected Area System

**GEF AGENCIES:** UNDP

**OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:** Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

**GEF FOCAL AREA:** Biodiversity

### 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 timely proposal to strengthen the governance framework and institutional knowledge base for marine protected areas, increase the coverage of coastal and marine ecosystems in protected areas, and improve the management effectiveness of these areas on the basis of a sample demonstration. The PIF gives promise that, with high economic growth, investment in social and economic progress and environmental protection is possible, despite the environmental costs of the oil industry development that also generates the growth.

The proposal generally demonstrates logical consistency with regard to the links between the problem definition, the objective and expected outcomes. Nevertheless, aside from overfishing and direct marine pollution, the major negative impacts on the coastal and marine environment originate on land through habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation associated with construction, overgrazing, agricultural pollution, and encroachment into sensitive coastal areas. Investment into coastal and marine conservation without addressing these threats will prove futile in the long term. More information on how the project will specifically address this should be provided. The emphasis on the CCEMA in this regard is questionable from the perspective of this project's objective and expected outcomes. The global environmental benefits of this proposal are clear and valid if the project is effectively implemented.

In effect, what is being proposed is the start of marine conservation efforts in the country and thus the baseline is practically non-existent. Establishing the baseline and controls should be a priority during the preparation of the full project.

Some inconsistencies should also be addressed. Whereas the focus of the first component is on establishing an effective and appropriate governance framework, it is also mentioned that the existing governance framework is effective (par. 17). Likewise, whereas one aspect of the proposal targets the development of additional revenue streams for the protected areas so as to ensure their improved management and sustainability, it is also mentioned that protected areas are well funded (par. 10).

The assessment of socio-economic benefits (B.3) is expressed more at an industry level than at the level of people and communities (see also following comment on handling the effects on fishing communities). No gender analysis is indicated in the preparation of the PIF or in the diagnostics to be attempted in full proposal preparation.

The definition of risks is accurate enough but the management actions could be more specific in some instances. For example, the loss of fishing rights within proposed marine areas will certainly be a contentious issue. Could compensation options or other mechanisms be considered in this regard? Considerable faith is placed on the

development of alternative sources of funding, with reliance on ecotourism. Before following this path much further it would be advisable to include a feasibility study in the project's development.

Project monitoring and evaluation activities are not described in the PIF and must be developed in the full project proposal. The Project Framework indicates that explicit targets for performance are being set, but no further information is provided in B.2 to explain how progress against the targets will be measured and over what period.

While the potential impact of climate change is mentioned in a very general manner, its specific nature and threats to the marine biodiversity and the project's outcomes and objective are unclear. More attention should be devoted to the nature and severity of the risk in further project development.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
<b>1. Consent</b>	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.
<b>2. Minor revision required.</b>	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"> <li>(i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues</li> <li>(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</li> </ul> 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.
<b>3. Major revision required</b>	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.