

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: April 29, 2012

Screeners: Douglas Taylor

Panel member validation by: Meryl Williams; Sandra Diaz
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 4810

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Philippines

PROJECT TITLE: Strengthening the Marine Protected Area System to Conserve Marine Key Biodiversity Areas

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources- Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, Dept. of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries, National Fisheries Research and Dev't. Institute, Haribon Foundation, Kabang Kalikasan ng Pilipinas Foundation (WWF Philippines), Conservation International Philippines, Univ. of the Philippines Marine Sciences Institute, Fishbase Research and Information Group, RARE Philippines

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): **Consent**

III. Further guidance from STAP

1. STAP welcomes this well-researched and presented PIF for the strengthening of the Marine Protected Area system of the Philippines. Particularly welcome is the evidence of participatory development of the concept by conservation and development partners in collaboration with government and academic researchers located within the recipient country. STAP provides below suggestions for consideration as the project is being developed.
2. Component 1. Marine Protected Areas are a well established mechanism to address threats of marine biodiversity depletion and the PIF discusses the relative effectiveness of MPAs in terms of size, local support and ecological conservation. STAP agrees that the strategy proposed for targeting areas for new MPAs is likely to be effective in establishing the required refugia and connectivity. As with all MPAs, their conservation effectiveness remains to be tested through monitoring of biodiversity over time. Noting that this project will collaborate with related projects including the GEF projects within the Coral Triangle Initiative, STAP emphasizes the need to ensure that an ecosystem-based management approach is enabled to embed progressively all MPAs within a structured integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) system that results in reduced fishing pressure, pollution and coastal conversion. At present the PIF mentions many collaborating actors, government and non-government, and although the proposed interventions will result in designations of further MPAs and improvements in management of existing ones, to take one threat example, STAP recommends clarifying by what means fishing pressure will be reduced, e.g. by the national agency BFAR, in the non-MPA areas.
3. Component 2. The sustainability of the project interventions depend upon sustainable financing, as is recognized within the PIF, and this component appears to contain one of the greatest risks to sustained impact. The PIF outlines various possible mechanisms for sustaining finance; however, the PIF states that not until PPG phase will it be possible to identify revenue options, therefore should not the risk (Sustainability for MPANs) be increased from medium to high? Within this component, the proponents could draw upon the development of experience regarding use of payments for environmental services (PES) in other GEF projects, e.g. in Costa Rica (GEF ID 4836).
4. Component 3. STAP welcomes the inclusion of this component to address policy questions and recommends that proponents also consider actively how delivery of MPA/MPAN policies can be safeguarded by including attention to ICZM and its extension to marine spatial planning either through collaboration with other relevant existing projects or, by using gap analysis, to identify key actors with which to collaborate.

5. The PIF is focused on MPA selection and harmonization of policies and processes but does not include a component or sub-component dealing with monitoring for project impact regarding conservation of biodiversity in order to test the effectiveness of MPA site location and size. For the four MPA network locations, baseline information is presented regarding criteria for site selection. It would appear logical for the project proposal to include a component to test the hypotheses behind site selection. The indicators shown in the Project Framework cover MPA designation and management, but do not address the question ‘will the selection of MPA sites including their location and size within an MPA network result in measurable global environmental benefits against the criteria used for site selection?’

6. Given the impressive baseline of MPAs in the Philippines, and the experience of working with communities that this involves, the project has an opportunity to include greater depth in its socially based interventions as a means to sustain the efforts on the ground. B3, the socioeconomic benefits, is formulaic and does not indicate that gender and other social dimensions will be explored and used in any novel ways. The human dimensions are germane to how MPAs are managed, and why fisheries pressures are difficult to address, for reasons of the local economy, household resilience and the pull of distant markets. For example, generating alternative livelihoods that do not involve trade-offs such as placing more pressure on marine biodiversity can be very challenging in remote coastal areas.

<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.