

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: February 20, 2014

Screeener: Paul Grigoriev

Panel member validation by: Sandra Diaz

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 5657

PROJECT DURATION :

COUNTRIES : Turkey

PROJECT TITLE: Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Steppe Ecosystems

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: - Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (MFWA); General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks

-Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MFAL); General Directorate of Plant Production

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

2. STAP welcomes the submission of this concept for a project intended to conserve steppe ecosystems and improve their management through the establishment of protected areas and the inclusion of steppe conservation into the use of productive landscapes. The project is indeed timely since up to 44% of existing steppe habitats are still in a natural state and facing growing threats.

The following comments pertain to the overall proposed project framework.

Overall, the structure is reflective of and consistent with the defined problem. The objective is clear although it could be simplified to "improve the conservation of steppe ecosystems through effective protected area management and mainstreaming steppe biodiversity conservation into production landscapes". Certain elements of the framework, however, may require re-consideration. For example, some of the Outcome indicators are the same as the Outputs. Indicators should also state what is to be measured and not what is hopefully to be achieved. The targets are not required for the Outcome indicators. Some of the proposed indicators, as they are presented, will be difficult to measure (e.g. improved capacity of staff and farmers). Some of the Outputs should also be rephrased so that they do not sound like activities but rather as results (e.g. Outputs 1.2, 2.2, 2.4, 3.2). The term "streamlining" steppe biodiversity conservation should be replaced by "mainstreaming" as this term is more broadly understood in the GEF context. Regarding Output 3.3, is the capacity building only for protected area planning and management or also for mainstreaming steppe conservation into production landscapes? If it is the former, then the Output would belong under Component 1 but likely it should cover both. For Component 4, there will be more to be done under monitoring and evaluation than just a final project review. Finally, it is likely that three years may not be long enough for the project to realize its objective and lengthening it by a year should likely be considered during the PPG stage.

The following comments concern the presentation of the project.

The problem and threats are described in a general manner but are well presented overall. It is good to see the discussion of cumulative impacts of the threats.

Regarding the definition and presentation of the barriers, the headings of the barriers are really a description of the current situation (e.g. Insufficient representation of Turkey's steppe ecosystems within the PA system;

Limited operational implementation of individual Steppe Protected Area (SPA) management practices on the ground.) What is described in the text under the headings for barriers are really more representative of the actual barriers that should be addressed by the project. In this regard, it is advisable during the PPG stage to assess and define the barriers more precisely and then reassess the components, outcomes and outputs.

The baseline activities and associated co-financing are well presented.

On p.12, "evaluating steppe ecosystems with METT" should be more precisely defined. On the same page, under Component 2, second paragraph, it seems that "decelerate" really should be "accelerate".

The GEBs are presented adequately and the table of GEBs is appreciated. Not all of what are presented as GEBs on p.12, however, are really GEBs. For example, community-based conservation models and tools are just that, instruments for conservation and realization of GEBs.

The innovative aspects are as described, being innovative for Turkey.

The sustainability section does not clearly address what will make the outcomes sustainable and will require more attention in subsequent project design.

The definition of stakeholders is adequate but on p.16 the inclusion of the words "especially women, youth and old people" stands out as perhaps tokenism. The rationale and mechanisms for their active and meaningful inclusion should be clearly articulated.

The risks are defined and assessed adequately. However, the risk of climate change impacts is perhaps underestimated. In terms of proposed mitigation measures, the ones proposed for potential loss of income for local people are unconvincing, except for one, the national CATAK programme.

More specific information on coordination with other projects is desirable, as well as a description of the anticipated coordination mechanism(s).

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	<p>STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasizing any issues where the project could be improved.</p> <p>Follow up: The GEF Agency is invited to approach STAP for advice during the development of the project prior to submission of the final document for CEO endorsement.</p>
2. Minor revision required.	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development.</p> <p>Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) GEF Agency should discuss the issues with STAP to clarify them and possible solutions. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the GEF Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP's recommended actions.
3. Major revision required	<p>STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design.</p> <p>Follow-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The Agency should request that the project undergo a STAP review prior to CEO endorsement, at a point in time when the particular scientific or technical issue is sufficiently developed to be reviewed, or as agreed between the Agency and STAP. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP concerns.