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: @@@@ @@, @@@@ Screener: Thomas Hammond

Panel member validation by: Thomas Lovejoy
Consultant(s): Rolph Payet

I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*
FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID: 4717
PROJECT DURATION : 5
COUNTRIES : Seychelles
PROJECT TITLE: Expansion and Strengthening of the Protected Area Subsystem of the Outer Islands of Seychelles and its Integration into the Broader Land and Seascape
GEF AGENCIES: UNDP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Department of Environment, in collaboration with NGOs and private sector companies
GEF FOCAL AREA: Multi Focal Area

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 contribution to expanding and strengthening the protected area estate in Seychelles. Overall this a reasonably well considered PIF, although STAP believes consideration of the following in the project design phase would further improve the overall robustness of the project.

1. The PIF notes the proposed use of Integrated Land Management models. Additional elaboration on the island specific approach/methodology proposed is required, rather than simply making reference to generic models that will no doubt require modification in this context.

2. The root cause of pressures is not clearly indicated, although threats are noted â€“ both direct and indirect (global change/climate change). The threats from the oil/cargo shipping lanes (along the western part â€“ Amirantes and Aldabra group) , oil exploration and marine debris (a significant issue) is not elaborated. It should be noted that energy sources on the outer islands have traditionally been firewood â€“ leading to land conversion â€“ are there any co-benefits arising from establishment of PA's in this context?

3. There is mention of the impacts of climate change but there is no reference to any published works on the climate variability/change in the target areas. Outcomes of future projections of climate change are not presented. Vulnerability assessments and risk evaluations do not appear to be taken into consideration. Recovery of coral reefs from coral bleaching is an important benchmark in evaluating resilience and also priority areas for conservation.

4. On the issue of protected areas â€“ the rationale for choosing these islands/island groups is not clearly presented. Numerous gap analyses and research/mapping exercises have been undertaken on the outer islands which are not referred to. Improving adaptation measures through migration corridors are not mentioned.

5. While outside of the domain of STAP, the Panel wishes to point out that capacity building and institutional constraints are highlighted as barriers but not addressed in the risk matrix.

References:

Re point #1: SMARTPARKS project website: http://www.projectosmartparks.com/ . Recent scientific paper highlights the methodology and cautions against use of generic frameworks: Gil A., Calado H., Costa L.T., Bentz J., Fonseca C.,

Lobo A., Vergilio M. and Benedicto J., 2011. A Methodological Proposal for the Development of Natura 2000 Sites Management Plans. Journal of Coastal Research, 64: 1326-1330.

Point #2: See Cicin-Sain B. & Belfiore, S. (2006) Linking marine protected areas to integrated coastal and ocean management: a review of theory and practice. Ocean & coastal Management, 48:847-868
Also - Please refer to the GEF Western Indian Ocean Marine Highway Project & the GEF Western Indian Ocean Islands Oil Spill Contingency Planning Project.

Point #3: See GEF â€“ Seychelles Enabling Activities for UNFCCC- Climate Change Scenario's, etc. Also see Sheppard, C.R.C., 2003: Predicted recurrences of mass coral mortality in the Indian Ocean. Nature 425, 294-297.

Point #4. For example see a collection of papers at: Spencer T., Laughton, AS., Flemming, NC. (2005) (Special Issue) Atmosphere-ocean-ecology dynamics in the Western Indian Ocean, Philosophical Transactions of the Royal society A, 363 (1826):3-307.

Climate Risk Analysis

1. The area is subject to climate risk and the climate change risk is HIGH. STAP suggests that the PIF has not adequately considered climate risks in the development of this initiative - for instance vulnerability or development scenarios. There is relatively little consideration of climate variability and projected ocean variability. Research gaps in areas such as ocean acidification, risks to future coral bleaching, algal/toxic blooms, fish migrations should be highlighted.

2. All of the GEF project components targeted are prone to climate risks. The project interventions will contribute to reducing vulnerability, but there is scope to mainstream adaptation rather than treated as a by-product of the intervention. PA expansion can possibly lead to mal-adaptation, if the PA is not representative, there are no migration corridors and buffers, or restoration efforts are not effective.

3. The PIF has not considered resilience enhancement practices or technologies, or adaptation responses. There is however reference to generic models of intervention, but there is knowledge on specific adaptation practices and technologies that could be referred to.

Additional references:

Point 1 - See GEF Project: Integrating Climate Change Risks into resilient island planning in the Maldives.

Point 2 - See for example: Lipsett-Moore, G., et al. (2010). Interim National Terrestrial Conservation Assessment for Papua New Guinea: Protecting Biodiversity in a Changing Climate: Pacific Island Countries Report No. 1/2010.

Point 3 - Hittle, J. 2011 Integrated Planning for Resilient Communities: A Technical Guide to Integrating Hazard, Ecosystem and Land Use Planning. EBM Tools Network. www.ebmtools.org

STAP advisory response	*Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed*
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: (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.