

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: May 09, 2012

Screeners: Douglas Taylor

Panel member validation by: Meryl Williams
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT **GEF TRUST FUND**

GEF PROJECT ID: 4770

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Ecuador

PROJECT TITLE: Integrated Management of Marine and Coastal Areas of High Value for Biodiversity in Continental Ecuador

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Ministry of the Environment (MAE), Conservation International Foundation (CI) will act as an Implementation Partner

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

STAP welcomes this well researched project to address the present deficit in integrated coastal management in Ecuador through initiating fisheries management and other marine biodiversity conservation actions in protected area systems, including the established mangrove concessions. The project identifies four new conservation areas selected against priorities for marine biodiversity and STAP notes that pollution from land based sources will also be taken into consideration. STAP also welcomes the linkages with other project in the country and region which can offer useful experience transfer, however technical linkages with projects elsewhere could strengthen the project further.

The PIF is fundamentally sound, although very ambitious, and contains a relatively well developed discussion of risks and their mitigation; however, STAP advises that the full project brief would benefit from further elaboration of some issues as discussed below.

Component 1.

(i) The PIF indicates that the four areas chosen may optionally be declared protected national areas, it is not clear what the risk would be if they were not so declared. The total area suggested of the new conservation areas is 15,000ha, while the existing mangrove area under concession is stated to be 37,000ha, but it is not clear what proportion if any of the mangrove area will be contained in the new conservation area. This might be an important distinction to those with existing concessions that may enter a new protected area.

(ii) The PIF, in component 1.2.3, states that a financial mechanism will be designed to expedite support for mangrove concessionaires and implies that their conservation services will be rewarded. Would these services include support to marine biodiversity outside the mangroves, i.e. flow of services such as maintenance of aquatic nurseries, or restricted to the reward for maintenance of mangrove per se?

(iii) The PIF identifies several government bodies which along with local communities are expected to collaborate in a new and integrated land-use planning and management initiative promoted by the project. To some extent Component 3 addresses the next questions, which is how will the various agencies cited sustain a coordinated approach after project closure, even if new regulations are indeed mandated? Unless a single coordinating point is agreed, long term ownership of the initiative will likely fail.

(iv) Awareness raising about and presumably also action to reduce pollution from local sources is described briefly, but indirect sources documented in earlier reports regarding mining (e.g. mercury) or other pollutants from distant sources are not mentioned.

Component 2. STAP especially welcomes this component supporting the development of a fisheries management system (FMS), based on stock assessment, participation and rights-based approaches, especially given the present lack of these systems. However, starting from such a low level, and against such strong challenges from existing unsustainable practices inside and outside the fisheries sector, time will be required to bring in such a major development. Fisheries management plans are often not successful unless this form of governance and its implementation are normal practice which is likely not the case. Further, It is not clear what form of co-management is envisaged and with whom. The experience gained from the start-up of the Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Conservation project (GEF ID 3548) should prove useful, particularly with regard to the study which was carried out to assess attitudes to the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Two communities involved in the study (6 de Julio and San Francisco del Cabo) were considered to have benefited from fisheries co-management schemes. The views of participants from coastal communities (including a control site) were collected through interviews, focal groups and workshops, against eight indicators: a) local ecological knowledge; b) dependence on the use of natural resources; c) poverty; d) occupational diversity; e) occupational mobility; f) community infrastructure; g) social capital; and h) capacity of the communities to anticipate change. A similar protocol could be considered to assess attitudes to the proposed fisheries management system and its linkage to MPAs. The introduction of a FMS implies considerable opportunity costs for those excluded from fishing or subject to reduced quotas. Social science research on cockle concessions have already shown the need to heed the effects of fishing outside the concessions by those who do not have access to the concessions (Bietel 2011). How does the project intend to address these effects and costs?

Socio-economic benefits (B.3) are reasonably well described although more from the technical perspective. This perception is reinforced in the vague reference to stakeholder groups in the communities, e.g., lacking details on ethnic or social status groups. Given the complex social issues that underlie many of the interventions planned, strong extension and social mobilization field skills will be needed in the project teams.

In terms of Global Environmental Benefits, the protection of mangroves and of sea turtle nesting sites are particularly important.

Finally, similar approaches to the suggested project approach to integrated coastal management have been implemented elsewhere in the GEF portfolio (e.g. GEF IDs: 4810-Philippines; 4637-Brazil) and the proponents would benefit from exchange of information with those projects and also by contributing to the GEF knowledgebase on this topic, for example through the IW:LEARN facility. STAP assumes that, since CI is a leading partner in this project, the policy documents from the CI Marine Management Area Science will also be used for guidance, as well as FAO ICM and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries guidance.

References

Beitl, Christine M. 2011. Cockles in custody: the role of common property arrangements in the ecological sustainability of mangrove fisheries on the Ecuadorian coast. *International Journal of the Commons*, Vol 5, No 2 17 pp.

<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

