

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 04, 2012

Screeners: Thomas Hammond

Panel member validation by: Thomas Lovejoy
Consultant(s): Paul Grigoriev

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 4777

PROJECT DURATION :

COUNTRIES : Ecuador

PROJECT TITLE: Mainstreaming of the Use and Conservation of Agrobiodiversity in Public Policies through Integrated Strategies and In situ Implementation in three Provinces in the Andean Highlands.

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: National Institute of Agricultural Research Ecuador (INIAP); Heifer Foundation Ecuador

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 proposal aimed at strengthening the policy and legal base for the use and conservation of agrobiodiversity, ex situ and in situ actions in support of agro-biodiversity, and raising awareness of the multiple values of native agro-biodiversity. The Panel suggests, however, that the following be taken into consideration in the development of the final project document.

There appears to be a slight disconnect between the title of the project and the project objective insofar as the focus of the project is concerned. It seems that the objective is too narrowly defined and thus misses the project's intended contributions to policy reforms at multiple levels.

While the logic behind the project is basically sound, the direct links between the threats to agro-biodiversity and their root causes and the proposed outcomes and outputs are not always clear. Thus, they appear to be more intuitive than substantiated by evidence or an array of facts in the logic chain. While the design defines some of the principal deficiencies or gaps, what is missing is the definition of barriers to mainstreaming the use and conservation of agrobiodiversity and this clearly is something that must be addressed in further project development. The focus of the outcomes and outputs should be indicative of efforts at barrier removal.

Global biodiversity benefits are still presented in a rather general manner. Local economic benefits are more easily evident and could be tracked. The incremental benefits and reasoning section has also been revised, but essentially restates the expected project outcomes. It is noted that in recent years related project activity has taken place in the areas covered by the project and thus the specific increment could be more sharply defined.

The definition of risks is generally adequate although there has been no reaction to the suggestion of ranking the risks as high, medium or low. Doing this remains advisable. Concerning the risks stemming from climate change, more consideration could be given to its implications in the Andean highlands that are markedly more susceptible to projected impacts. Selecting species that can survive in a climate modified environment, however, cannot be seen as a mitigation measure or one that builds ecosystem resilience. The potential for using incentives could also be considered under the mitigation measures addressing possible lack of motivation and commitment among local stakeholders.

Since a multitude of actors will be involved, it will be important to ensure efficient and effective coordination. A central management committee and local management committees are envisaged. This arrangement could potentially become rather cumbersome and unwieldy and thus this aspect should be assessed further addressing the mechanism,

procedural elements, as well as associated resource requirements. Coordination with other projects will also require sufficient effort and support.

<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.