

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 11, 2012

Screener: 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: 4870

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : China

PROJECT TITLE: Strengthening the Management Effectiveness of the Wetland Protected Area System in Hubei Province

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:

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): **Minor revision required**

III. Further guidance from STAP

1. STAP welcomes this PIF which is submitted under the Program (GEF ID 4646) CBPF-MSL Main Streams of Life & Wetland PA System Strengthening for Biodiversity Conservation. The project, focusing on the Hong Hu PA, is well-aligned to the Program. In particular STAP welcomes the basin level analysis and remedial actions proposed to strengthen the wetland Protected Area (PA) network management in a systematic manner to improve connectivity regarding hydrology and biodiversity and through mainstreaming of wetlands into sectoral policies.
2. The proposal, in addressing objective 1 of the BD Focal Area Strategy, focuses upon improving management effectiveness of existing and expanded protected areas within a network. This is a viable approach, which if consolidated within a more effective catchment-based framework should result in a more sustainable ecosystem. In order to improve the clarity and potential for impact of the project, STAP requests attention to the following issues, to be reflected in the full project brief.
3. In general the threats and barriers cited in the PIF are clearly described. However, while the Project Framework refers to some outcome level targets, others remain very vague and it is not clear how the proponents intend to define targets e.g. regarding enhanced provincial capacities for PA system management. The first part of the outcome statement in the Project Framework for Component 2 needs rewording to reflect the expected result rather than the processes concerned.
4. Regarding the identified threats for example, pollution, invasive species, etc. that are not followed up explicitly within the Component narratives, the full project brief should contain clear targets for threat reduction or state that the threats listed will not be addressed specifically by the project. At present it is not clear whether the project is mainly aiming at supporting enabling actions or will follow through to direct interventions on the ground leading to stress reduction. The full project should provide more detail also on how basin and intra-basin management will be improved given the competing interests of different sectoral bodies.
5. Component 2 actions are proposed to formulate an integrated basin management plan, which STAP welcomes as a logical basis for future PA management. STAP recommends that the proponents consult the practical and well-tested framework for water allocation published by the Convention on Wetlands to assist the reconciliation of the often conflicting interests within the basin approach (see Ramsar Convention Secretariat, 2010), based on a synthesis of relevant national experiences. In support of the planned implementation costs, the PIF proposes the use of cost-sharing mechanisms, such as payments for ecosystem (environmental) services, and as in the case with the other projects in the

Program, STAP advises that the proponents should consult the Panel or its GEF advisory document (STAP, 2010a) regarding GEF's application of Payments for Environmental Services (PES).

6. Component 3 explores the reduction of threats to the Hunghu Lake NR through application of incentives, and application of co-management principles to be considered by the coordination committee concerned. Consistent with its advice provided to related projects under the CBPF-MSL Program, STAP advises that the GEF advisory document (STAP, 2010b) regarding Community Forest Management should be consulted to ensure that best practice is applied and opportunities taken for sound experimental design regarding co-management proposals within this project.

7. The risk table at section B.4. does not reflect the risk of (i) inadequate finance flows, whether direct from government or from a PES marketplace to realize the objectives of the GEF supported plans, and (ii) impacts from invasive species, eradication problems and mitigation strategies. The first-mentioned risk (that mainstreaming PA management into sectoral policies will not succeed) may have a medium to high risk. This risk is compounded if the solutions suggested are not scientifically and technically effective but are rather chosen on a consensual basis if the different sectoral agencies will not compromise sufficiently.

References

STAP. 2010a. Payments for Environmental Services and the Global Environment Facility: A STAP advisory document. http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/STAP_PES_2010.pdf

STAP. 2010b. The Evidence Base for Community Forest Management as a Mechanism for Supplying Global Environmental Benefits and Improving Local Welfare: A STAP advisory document http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/STAP_CFM_2010.pdf

Ramsar Convention Secretariat, 2010. Water allocation and management: Guidelines for the allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands. Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands, 4th edition, vol. 10. Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Gland, Switzerland. (See also relevant water-related Handbooks 8, 9 and 11).

<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: (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.