

# 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: November 20, 2017  
Screener: Virginia Gorsevski  
Panel member validation by: Brian Child  
Consultant(s):

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

FULL-SIZED PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9735
PROJECT DURATION:	6
COUNTRIES:	Angola
PROJECT TITLE:	Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade and Human Wildlife Conflict
GEF AGENCIES:	UNDP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Environment (MINAMB)
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 issues to be considered during project design**

### III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes the project from UNDP entitled "Combining Illegal Wildlife Trade and Human Wildlife Conflict in Angola." STAP would appreciate the inclusion of maps to help orient the reader. STAP notes that the area highlighted by this project is one of Africa's last great wildernesses, and as such has the potential to generate billions of dollars and many thousands of jobs annually while making an important contribution to the conservation of biodiversity. However, realizing this potential will require significantly more investment than planned for this individual project, and a more comprehensive and cogent theory of change. Accordingly, STAP raises a number of issues to be addressed during the PPG phase and prior to CEO Endorsement.

First, in terms of its overall composition, STAP believes that this project is over-ambitious (i.e. 3.1m hectares in very remote areas, as well as national responsibilities) and has too many outputs (23 for a budget of only \$4.1 million and 72 months for implementation). While the co-financing of \$12 million (all in cash) is significant, the scope of the challenge is likely to exceed the capacity of the project to deliver the proposed outcomes. STAP would like to see a reduction in the outputs to ensure impact on the ground. Suggestions on how to do that are provided throughout the remaining points.

Second, the project's theory of change is somewhat dated and rudimentary by indicating that more law enforcement means less poaching, without taking into account critical underlying variable such as the need to increase engagement with local communities (Cooney, Roe et al. 2017, D. Roe, R. Cooney et al. 2017), and improving management effectiveness and financial sustainability of the protected areas. Also, the underlying socio-economic impacts related to post-conflict economic policies (favoring a select portion of the population while the majority lives in poverty), as well as the relationship between local people and land tenure and wildlife are not explained or well-integrated into the theory of change.

In addition, STAP believes that the project is not supported by strong evidence and may only provide limited results in the short term. For example, there is little evidence of how enforcement and preventing IWT

benefits communities and prevents the long-term extinction of species in the absence of some form of community ownership, benefit and participation. The relationship between direct and indirect benefits to the communities from wildlife conservation needs to be recognized and stated in the project. While monitoring and enforcement are important – and in particular the creation of a community-led IWT monitoring network (Component 2, page 2) is useful, much of the evidence suggests that these efforts may not suffice – especially in countries beset by poverty and especially where corruption and weak governance exist throughout the system (Challender and MacMillan, 2014).

The emphasis on anti-poaching may be appropriate to prevent the current short-term crisis in IWT and bushmeat poaching. However, the cause of this crisis is the very ingredients missing in this project – especially effective community based wildlife management, investment in protected areas as rural economic engines, and development of sustainable models of wildlife management. These models are readily available (Lindsey, Havemann et al. 2011, NACSO 2016). In other words, STAP feels that this is a short-term band-aid project, with no cogent theory of change leading to sustainable solutions. Also, the efficacy of a national monitoring system for IWT requires justification from a technical and financial point of view.

Therefore, while STAP supports strong law enforcement to prevent rampant IWT and bushmeat production, this support would need to be conditional on (1) effective strategies to address the underlying causes of poaching (e.g. CBNRM, effective parks, integrated rural development in which the wildlife economy plays a significant role) and (2) guarantees against green militarization and human rights abuses. STAP feels that given the low population densities of the areas in question, and the thin but viable wildlife base, a system based on private-community partnerships (e.g. tourism and/or hunting concessions) could well be highly effective, releasing project budget to be focused on high priority areas rather than spread so thin. Based on the above, STAP recommends focusing investments in fewer protected areas. This will have a cascade effect on the number of provincial Wildlife Crime Units (WCUs) to be served by the projects. This adjustment should be done during PPG phase and be ready in time for CEO Endorsement. Note, also, that the underlying conditions are similar to that in Namibia immediately after Namibian Independence – vast areas, depleted wildlife populations, low human density. Namibia provides a global case study of how to turn a situation of decline, into one where wildlife is recovering and important to communities, and STAP recommends that the PPF familiarize themselves with this approach (Jones and Weaver 2009, Owen-Smith 2010, NACSO 2015, Robin Naidoo, Chris Weaver et al. 2016).

In addition to these main points related to the high level of complexity, STAP has several specific comments:

It is clear from the problems described that people depend on wildlife and forests for their livelihoods. Project Component 3 seeks to reduce IWT, poaching and HWC at the site level; however, the description of how alternative livelihoods will contribute to achieving this is weak. This is something that needs to be addressed in full during the PPG phase. There is some mention of a potential tourism economy but no plan to explore this or describe how communities will directly benefit as discussed above. The obvious solution is to replace illegal and unsustainable wildlife use, with controlled, sustainable, high-value wildlife utilization. As noted, there is a strong evidence base from the region that this works when done properly (Naidoo et al, 2016). Consideration should be given to Conservation farming, currently being implemented successful across the border in Zambia. Also – how does one foster and regenerate a "culture of tolerance between people and wildlife?" (p. 9).

STAP feels the risks described in this project don't address the underlying issues of poverty and land tenure in a post-conflict environment. While addressing these root causes of environmental degradation may be beyond the scope of this project, if not well understood or incorporated into the project may undermine performance. There is also a significant risk of concentrating enforcement in measures like the establishing provincial "Wildlife Crime Units," the judiciary, and park rangers, thereby missing the opportunity to assist in the forward thinking of a sensible plan to develop parks as economic engines for local communities, or measures to integrate legal, sustainable wildlife management into local livelihoods. The project should seriously consider emphasizing the development of a sustainable financing plan in ecosystems and with species that are relatively easy to make self-supporting with pragmatic approaches. This step could be taken at the Protected Area level when preparing/revising individual management plans.

In terms of coordination, STAP notes that proposed project 9798 (FAO) seeks to address land management issues in southwestern Angola and there may be overlap with areas such as Mupa National Park. UNDP is advised to coordinate with FAO during PPG phase to promote synergies and avoid potential duplication and confusion. Also, this project should consult with the GEF Global Wildlife Program (GWP), which recently held a workshop in Gabon on Human-Wildlife Conflict.

In sum, while the activities described by this project might suffice in the short term as an emergency measure to combat IWT and bushmeat poaching, STAP firmly believes that key elements of sustainability such as tourism development (in this case, high end safari hunting with high revenues from very low offtakes) and community based natural resource management (CBNRM) need to be addressed at least by providing a framework for investments for conservation and development in the mid- and long-term. These gaps are difficult to fathom given their high rate of success across the border in Namibia. Focusing on fewer protected areas and provincial crime units should open the time and funding to elaborate on these issues. STAP will be available for consultation during the PPG phase.

References:

Challender, D.W.S. and D.C. MacMillan (2014). Poaching is more than an Enforcement Problem. Conservation Letters 7(5): 484 – 494.

Cooney, R., D. Roe, H. Dublin, J. Phelps, D. Wilkie, A. Keane, H. Travers, D. Skinner, D. W. S. Challender, J. R. Allan and D. Biggs (2017). "From Poachers to Protectors: Engaging Local Communities in Solutions to Illegal Wildlife Trade." Conservation Letters 10(3): 367-374.

Jones, B. and C. Weaver (2009). CBNRM in Namibia: Growth, Trends, Lessons and Constraints. Evolution & Innovation in Wildlife Conservation. H. Suich and B. Child. London, Earthscan: 223-242.

Lindsey, P., Havemann, C. P., Lines, R. M., Price, A. E., Retief, T. A., Rhebergen, T., Waal, C. V. D. and Romanach, S. S. (2011). Benefits of wildlife-based land uses on private lands in Namibia and limitations affecting their development. Oryx, 47, 41-53.

NACSO (2015). The state of community conservation in Namibia - a review of communal conservancies, community forests and other CBNRM initiatives (2015 Annual Report). Windhoek, Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO).

NACSO 2016. The State of Community Conservation in Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia, Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations.

Naidoo, R., C. Weaver, R.W. Diggle, G. Matongo, G. Stuart-Hill and C. Thouless (2016). "Complementary benefits of tourism and hunting to communal conservancies in Namibia." Conservation Biology 30(3): 628-638.

Owen-Smith, G. (2010). An arid Eden: a personal account of conservation in the Kaokoveld. Johannesburg, Jonathan Ball Publishers

Roe, D., R. Cooney, H. Dublin, D. Challender, D. Biggs, D. Skinner, M. Abensperg-Traun, N. Ahlers, R. Melisch and M. Murphree (2017). "First line of defence: engaging communities in tackling wildlife crime." Unasylva 68.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
<b>1. Concur</b>	In cases where STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal, a simple “Concur” response will be provided; the STAP may flag specific issues that should be pursued rigorously as the proposal is developed into a full project document. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
<b>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</b>	STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:  (i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised. (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to 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.
<b>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</b>	<p>STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:</p> <p>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required.</p> <p>The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP's concerns.</p> <p>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.</p>