

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 07, 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:	9802
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Congo DR
PROJECT TITLE:	Promoting the Effective Management of Salonga National Park through Creation of Community Forests and Improving the Well-being of Local Communities
GEF AGENCIES:	UNEP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development with support from Rainforest Alliance and Action d'Aide Sanitaire et de Développement aux plus Démunis (AASD)
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 this project from UN Environment entitled "Promoting the effective management of Salonga National Park through creation of community forests and improving well-being of local communities." STAP feels that this is an exciting, well-written project, with a deep background. It is highly workable, especially if some simple, potentially profound improvements, are included. STAP appreciates the inclusion of maps to help orient the reader. Therefore, STAP has only a few minor comments; however, which we believe will improve overall likelihood of success if addressed during PPG Phase.

Overall, STAP recommends that consideration is given to: (subtle) devolution of rights; face-to-face participatory governance; and deeper thought regarding economic models and choices.

In particular, STAP proposes that Output 1.1.1 should focus on developing community-based rights and governance at the right scale (i.e. not committee-based management) as the foundation for the whole program. As noted by leading academics, CBNRM and common property regimes work at a face-to-face scale (Murphree 2009) (Ostrom 1990, Child and Wojcik 2014), with Dunbar (Dunbar 1993) showing that human groups can maintain internal relationships only up to a number somewhere between 150-220 decision makers. As currently structured, the proposed project seems to work through representational governance (not participatory governance) which makes it highly vulnerable to elite capture, and exclusion of women and marginalized groups from participation and benefit sharing. Related to this, a key ingredient mentioned in the text is missing from the outputs: proprietorship, or the rights to access, use, manage, sell and exclude others (Schlager and Ostrom 1992). Rights-based CBNRM is effective; without rights, the likelihood of success is low or non-existent.

In addition, the project needs to think more carefully about the economics of wildlife. Learning from CBNRM in Namibia, the project should ensure that wild species living in intact habitats are; (1) valuable to communities so that they husband them; and (2) more valuable than alternatives that tend to replace them. There are considerable dangers in the present emphasis on low value wild commodities and, even more so, on promoting the replacement of wild species with domestic species. Surely, the most sustainable livelihoods in forests are high-value legal use of wild plants and animals. This project should not shy away from trophy hunting. This earns some 20-60 times the income as subsistence hunting. In other words, trophy hunting can provide 20-60 times the livelihood from the same offtake of animals. Moreover, carefully selected hunting outfitters are usually strong wildlife stewards, especially when they work hand-in-hand with local communities.

Following Murphree (Murphree 2000), it might be better to secure land tenure at the scale of a village (e.g. 200 – 300 households), with villages then combining to build larger landscapes. Note that the tradeoff of larger scale (which is good for biodiversity and economies of scale) is that governance is more difficult. Thus, Murphree argues that CBNRM should be first scaled down, then scaled up through the process of delegated aggregation. Without rights to benefit, manage and exclude, training may not be effective; capacity-building is based on experiential learning (supported by training), and is far more than training.

Regarding specific Components, STAP has the following comments:

First, Outcome 1 is excellent; however, there are no specific outputs aimed at formalizing land tenure or setting up proper governance structures. These presumably should match Ostrom's eight principles, especially principles 1 – 6. Moreover, rights and well-governed communities provide the platform for planning, training, pilots and so on. A useful strategy for implementing CBNRM is:

1. Assess feasibility of each site in terms of (1) potential for participatory governance, and (2) economic options. If neither work, walk away
2. Undertake a baseline of each community. This normally comprises a simple PRA and mapping, a livelihood survey, and a governance assessment
3. Implement the program. This has three components
 - 3.1 Establish participatory governance including rules. Also establish a system for assessing compliance with the rules of CBNRM
 - 3.2 Develop the economy:
 - 3.2.1 Think carefully about the wildlife economy in the long term, and how you will make wildlife pay more than alternatives (to which the land will be converted)
 - 3.2.2 In the short term, improve livelihoods through many of the measures stated - conservation agriculture, improved fish management, etc.
 - 3.2.3 Put village scouts/community game guards in place, and introduce resource protection, monitoring (e.g. Namibia MOMS system)
4. Back up the system with
 - 4.1 Strategic financing
 - 4.2 Monitoring compliance of governance
 - 4.3 Monitoring of production, NRM, etc.
 - 4.4 Capacity-building, comprising long term, light touch facilitation and some training

Second, STAP feels that the risks are well thought-through. Elite capture, however, should be included as a critical risk to be managed. And, is the devolution of rights assured, or is it a risk?

Third, judging from research done in forest communities in the Republic of Congo (Mavah 2015), communities are well aware that bushmeat is critical to their livelihoods, bushmeat is running out, and the causes are new markets, technologies, open-access resource regimes, etc. When communities were asked why they were not solving a problem with big consequences to them, they suggested that since the wildlife belonged to the government, it was the government's problem to solve. In other words, the key missing ingredient was the resurrection of historical exclusive use areas. However, this research also revealed that social and association capital in these communities was low (caused by a long history of trauma) and would need to be carefully re-built through collective action and trust-building measures (e.g. participation, transparency, data, etc.).

Finally, STAP feels that while it's clear that the project proponents obviously have some knowledge of other projects, the project would be greatly strengthened by a greater understanding of the science of collective action (e.g. Ostrom, Murphree), and also by learning from cases like CBNRM in Namibia.

References:

Child, B. and D. Wojcik (2014). *Developing Capacity for Community Governance of Natural Resources: Theory & Practice*. Bloomington, AuthorHouse.

Dunbar, R. I. M. (1993). "Coevolution of neocortical size, group size and language in humans." *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 16(4): 681-735.

Mavah, G. A. (2015). *Integrating Rural People Into Natural Resources And Wildlife Management In The Republic Of The Congo*. PhD, University of Florida

Murphree, M. (2000). *Constituting the Commons: Crafting Sustainable Commons in the New Millennium. Multiple Boundaries, Borders and Scale*" at the Eighth Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP). Bloomington, Indiana, U.S.A.

Murphree, M. W. (2009). "The strategic pillars of communal natural resource management: benefit, empowerment and conservation." *Biodiversity and Conservation* 18: 2551-2562.

Ostrom, E. (1990). *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Cambridge University Press.

Schlager, E. and E. Ostrom (1992). "Property-Rights Regimes and Natural Resources: A Conceptual Analysis." *Land Economics* 68(3): 249-262.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Concur	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.
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	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.
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	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: (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. The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP's concerns. 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.