

# 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: March 16, 2016  
Screener: Thomas Hammond  
Panel member validation by: Brian Child  
Consultant(s): Monika Thiele

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9215
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Djibouti
PROJECT TITLE:	Mitigating Key Sector Pressures on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Further Strengthening the National System of Marine Protected Areas in Djibouti
GEF AGENCIES:	UNDP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Environment (MHUPE); with Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Fish Resources (MAWFLFR), Ministry of Equipment and Transport (MET), Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA)
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):  
**Concur**

### III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes this well-structured proposal, which is supported by abundant information from past and ongoing activities. Proponents provided strong justification for ongoing pressures faced by the coastal and marine environment in Djibouti and developed a solid interventions framework that combines two major objectives of CBD: expansion and increased effectiveness of PA systems and BD mainstreaming into one project. The proposal focuses on the four major components: (1) increased institutional capacity to manage MPA system, (2) enhance financial sustainability of the MPA system, (3) improve management effectiveness, and finally (4) mainstream BD into maritime sector development

The weak area of this proposal is the lack of systemic approach to marine BD mainstreaming across MULTIPLE sectors. There is ongoing work on the development of the national ICZM Plan (supported by PERGSA [http://www.persga.org/Files/Common/ICZM/Djibouti\\_ICZM\\_plan.doc.pdf](http://www.persga.org/Files/Common/ICZM/Djibouti_ICZM_plan.doc.pdf)) as well as regional/local ICZM plans (as a part of the LDCF-UNEP project NAPA implementation) that this project could take further by integrating proposed BD related activities into these overarching coastal and marine development efforts. The most effective way to mainstream BD would be to start building national capacity for marine spatial planning, particularly considering enormous current and future impacts of the emerging Djibouti port infrastructure. Marine spatial planning (MSP) represents the most effective way to reconcile interests of multiple sectors and protect the environment (some references could be found in the most recent CBD recommendations - e.g., <https://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-20/official/sbstta-20-06-en.pdf> and STAP-CBD joint guidance on the issue - <https://www.thegef.org/gef/pubs/marine-spatial-planning-context-convention-biological-diversity-study-carried-out-response-cbd->).

STAP notes that one of the project areas – Seven Brothers Islands and Godorya - are proposed for designation by CBD SBSTTA 20 as EBSA. CMS migratory species of global importance are also located in this area (marine turtles, dugong, whale sharks, sharks, migratory birds etc) thus engagement of CMS tools might be appropriate. These two facts should attract further attention and offer potential additional resources for consideration into the project proposal.

STAP recommends that project proponents explore further the utility of MSP applications as part of the ongoing development of the port of Djibouti and the adjacent coastal areas. Significant foreign investments following on to port development could help to fill financial gaps in the application of MSP tools in Djibouti. In this context, the role of the existing (though inactive) National Commission for Sustainable Development or another alternative inter-ministerial coordination body at a similar level, should be explored as a coordination platform for MSP related consultations. The scale of the current and future development of Djibouti port necessitates coordination at the highest possible level to assure that environmental conservation issues receive appropriate attention.

STAP highly appreciates this projects attention to socio-economic issues of importance to local communities/fishermen. While the PIF correctly identified existing poverty and lack of alternative income options as main drivers of the local illegal fishing practices along the coastline, there are also external pressures caused by Somali and Yemenite fisherman. Exploring further opportunities for enhanced enforcement at the local level could curb such external influences. Useful lessons and complementarities could potentially be utilized with the ongoing LDCF-UNEP project on coastal resilience.

STAP commends the project focus on building the financial sustainability of the MPA system through possibly establishing or making operational a National Environmental Fund. There is abundant literature on the effectiveness of different financial mechanisms for marine conservation that should be carefully explored to understand whether the proposed centralized system would be the best financing option in Djibouti (some global and regional reviews are useful in this respect:

- [https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/emerton\\_et\\_al\\_2006.pdf](https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/emerton_et_al_2006.pdf),
- <https://www.openchannels.org/sites/default/files/literature/Sustainable%20financing%20of%20Marine%20Protected%20Areas%20in%20the%20Mediterranean.pdf>,
- <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.58799>,
- [http://ocean.panda.org/media/WWF\\_Marine\\_Protected\\_Areas\\_LR\\_SP.pdf](http://ocean.panda.org/media/WWF_Marine_Protected_Areas_LR_SP.pdf) and others).

STAP supports PERSGA recommendations to develop and implement Action Plans for iconic species such as turtles and migratory birds. Area-based management conservation tools (such as MPAs) may not be the only or the most effective management strategy for migratory species in particular. Holistic and multi-sectoral approaches as usually supported by species action plans could be highly effective in this regard. The Panel recommends that project proponents attempt to integrate such approaches into the project framework.

<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>	<p>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:</p> <p>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the</p>

	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>