

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: April 14, 2014

Screener: Thomas Hammond

Panel member validation by: Sandra Diaz
Consultant(s): Paul Grigoriev

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 5730

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Global

PROJECT TITLE: Mainstreaming Biodiversity Information into the Heart of Government Decision Making

GEF AGENCIES: UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: WCMC 3 Ministries of Environment

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 the submission of this concept for an ambitious and innovative project intending to remove identified barriers to acquiring and using biodiversity information so as to influence national development decision-making in at least three demonstration countries (to be identified " although indicative countries have been noted).

The structure of the project framework is logical and coherent and clearly demonstrates the links between the identified problem, barriers, and planned Outcomes and Outputs required. Indicators at the Outcome level will obviously require further definition and refinement moving forward. Designing meaningful and actually measurable indicators for the three Outcomes will undoubtedly be challenging particularly because they will invariably be difficult to quantify and also due to the general incompatibility between the timeframe of the proposed project (4 years) and the considerably longer time it will take to potentially see the effects of the interventions. Another key assumption and challenge that the project is making is that better information will result in better decision-making from the perspective of biodiversity. Evidence of changes in outcomes for biodiversity is essential in order to determine long term success and value for money. It would be useful to ensure a follow up assessment of the project's impact 5-10 years following its final evaluation.

The following comments pertain to the description of the project. The overall problem, the root causes and barriers are well defined and are presented clearly " including the baseline scenario. The incremental cost reasoning is outlined very clearly by individual component. The GEBs, although somewhat overambitious are also presented in an effective and clearly outlined format using the table. The project is innovative and builds on current experience in leading countries and much can be learned through it. The sustainability of the project's anticipated results is being promoted and supported through the project's design with the focus of Component 3 being precisely that. The scaling-up potential of the results and lessons is well presented and is also high. The principal stakeholders are well defined for this stage, as are their anticipated roles in the project.

Further refinement of the stakeholders will of course be required once the pilot countries are selected. The risks are identified in a generic manner which is adequate at this stage, but will also require revisiting later on in the project's development. Their assessment and proposed mitigation measures are realistic and appropriate. Considerable coordination with other initiatives and processes will be a challenge and thus the specific nature of the mechanism(s) and processes to be employed to ensure effective coordination will require considerable attention " as noted in the document.

Finally, the proposal notes the importance of open, transparent access to biodiversity data and information as a prerequisite to development decision making that takes fully into account impacts to biodiversity. However, the proposal does not make explicit the importance of ensuring that any new biodiversity data and/or information assets generated through this effort are themselves available to other actors and potential users beyond government “ in order to improve decision making in other domains such as the civil society and private sectors as well as to build on and add value to these assets wherever possible. STAP strongly proposes that a clear open access commitment on the part of eventual government partners be made an obligation of funding, and also that clear commitments are made by these partners to ensure stable, openly accessible data repositories beyond the life of the project.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	<p>STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasizing any issues where the project could be improved.</p> <p>Follow up: The GEF Agency is invited to approach STAP for advice during the development of the project prior to submission of the final document for CEO endorsement.</p>
2. Minor revision required.	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development.</p> <p>Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency: (i) GEF Agency should discuss the issues with STAP to clarify them and possible solutions. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the GEF Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP’s recommended actions.</p>
3. Major revision required	<p>STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design.</p> <p>Follow-up: (i) The Agency should request that the project undergo a STAP review prior to CEO endorsement, at a point in time when the particular scientific or technical issue is sufficiently developed to be reviewed, or as agreed between the Agency and STAP. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP concerns.</p>