

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: 20 May 2009

Screener: David Cunningham

Panel member validation by: Paul Ferraro

I. PIF Information

GEF PROJECT ID: 3801 **PROJECT DURATION:** 36 months

GEF AGENCY PROJECT ID:

COUNTRY: India

PROJECT TITLE: Strengthening the implementation of the Biological Diversity Act and Rules with focus on its Access and Benefit Sharing Provisions

GEF AGENCY: UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNER(S): Ministry of Environment and Forests – Government of India, National Biodiversity Authority, State Biodiversity Boards, UNEP-Division for Environmental Law and Conventions, United Nations University – Institute of Advanced Studies.

GEF FOCAL AREA: Biodiversity

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAM: SP8

NAME OF PARENT PROGRAM/UMBRELLA PROJECT (if applicable):

II. STAP Advisory Response *(see table below for explanation)*

1. Based on this PIF screening, STAP's advisory response to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency:
Consent

III. Further guidance from STAP

2. STAP welcomes and strongly supports this proposal for the GEF to support the development of genetic resources access and benefit sharing in India, noting that very few GEF projects have addressed ABS to date.
3. The PIF notes that while a legislative framework for ABS exists in India, commercial use is limited by a lack of information on economic potential to support the development of benefit sharing agreements. The PIF emphasises that improved understanding and awareness of the economic potential of biodiversity is expected to create incentives for conservation. Economic valuation methodologies vary and the executing partners have experience in their development.
4. As with the UNEP proposal to develop ABS frameworks in Africa (GEFID 2820), STAP encourages the proponents to consider both monetary benefits and non-monetary benefits, which are also important for both national and global environmental benefits. Potential non-monetary benefits that may be achieved include "Access to scientific information relevant to conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, including biological inventories and taxonomic studies."¹ The Bonn Guidelines note that "Taxonomic research, as specified in the Global Taxonomy Initiative, should not be prevented, and providers should facilitate acquisition of material for systematic use and users should make available all information associated with the specimens thus obtained."²
5. STAP encourages UNEP to include in the full project brief an explanation of how lessons learnt could be made available to other countries developing ABS frameworks, including through the CBD's Clearing House Mechanism and databases on ABS Capacity Building and ABS Measures.

¹ See Appendix II of the Bonn Guidelines, <https://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=7198>

² Bonn Guidelines, paragraph 11, l.

<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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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.