

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: February 19, 2014

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Panel member validation by: Sandra Diaz

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 5352

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Madagascar

PROJECT TITLE: Conservation of Key Threatened Endemic and Economically Valuable Species in Madagascar

GEF AGENCIES: UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: General Directorate of Environment of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Madagascar

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 revision required

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes the submission of this concept for a project intended to improve the conservation status of yet to be definitively confirmed 21 threatened, endemic and economically important species in Madagascar and to integrate species-based conservation efforts with those that are ecosystem-based. This is certainly an important undertaking.

The following comments pertain to the overall project framework.

The project objective could be reworded to make it more consistent with the title and to highlight the global significance of the species being targeted. It could perhaps also be made more specific since 20 of the 21 targeted species are tree species found in humid forest ecosystems in eastern Madagascar.

It appears that some project elements, or at least how they are presented, may require some re-consideration. For example, Component 1, developing a participatory species-based approach to conserve biodiversity, really represents a process to achieve an end or outcome. Perhaps the component really ought to be reworded to something along the lines of strengthening a species-based approach to conservation (and its integration with the dominant ecosystem based approach). The outcomes and related indicators would then also have to be adjusted accordingly. Looking at proposed Outputs, such as 1.1.1 for example (a review of lessons learned) and 1.1.4 (review of economic and value chain analyses), some come across as activities rather than specific concrete outputs. These should be revisited and stated as specific anticipated outputs or results rather than activities. Regarding the indicators presented, it is questionable how some of them could actually be measured. For example, how can level of commitment be measured? Reviewing and adjusting the components would lead to a more coherent and logically sound framework.

The following observations relate to the description and presentation of the project concept.

Overall, it must be noted that the project description leaves the reviewer with the impression that the PIF was prepared quickly without the necessary degree of thoroughness one would expect. This is characterized, for instance, by the many typos and/or spelling and grammar mistakes. Perhaps this is the result of translation issues. In addition, we note that few references to the relevant scientific literature in heavily studied Madagascar (in this context) is provided. But more significantly, the project presentation is somewhat confusing and its description in places appears to contain some inherent contradictions in logic

and justification. This specifically relates to the relationship between a species based approach which the project is promoting versus an ecosystem based approach. The argument is made that this is not a protected area project. Whether this project falls under BD1, therefore, is questionable, to a degree. On p.17 the reasons for including it under BD1 are provided.

The problems and their root causes are listed however poorly described. More detail on the root causes could be provided. The baseline description is basic and rather weak in terms of presenting the baseline data.

While it is understood that GEBs will be realized, this is more implicit than explicit. More specific information on the GEBs would be appropriate. On p.11, it is stated that 21 species whose global significance is well known and which are also economically and socially important will be targeted. However, on p.8 the PIF also states that while many key species are known, very little is in fact known about their biology, physiology, geography and possible economic uses. This begs the questions of how these species were/are to be selected and why 21? The incremental cost rationale is essentially glossed over and should be presented in more detail. In addition, the expected socio-economic co-benefits are also unclear at this point.

The potential sustainability of the project's outcomes is not addressed in a convincing manner. Only three activities to be undertaken at the national level are mentioned on p.13. The same applies to how scaling up potential is presented.

The definition of stakeholders is comprehensive but more specific information could be provided on how local communities will become active partners. In addition, no mention is made of gender specific considerations and how these (if any) will be addressed moving forward.

Concerning risk 1 related to climate change, if project sites are chosen to lessen potential cyclone damage, then the sites will not be entirely representative of a range of conditions, thereby lessening the lessons learned potential. Overall, climate risk assessment in this projects needs much more consideration going forward.

The description of coordination with other activities and initiatives is adequate at this point in time. STAP would propose that contribution to Aichi targets 1, 2, 5, 7, 11, 14, 16 and 20 should be presented at least in summary form.

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