

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: May 13, 2016
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I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*

FULL SIZE PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9408
PROJECT DURATION:	3
COUNTRIES:	Regional (Antigua And Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts And Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenadines)
PROJECT TITLE:	Preventing COSTS of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in Barbados and the OECS Countries
GEF AGENCIES:	UNEP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Antigua and Barbuda Ministry of Health and the Environment, Barbados Ministry of Agriculture, Food Fisheries and Water Resource Management; St Kitts and Nevis Ministry of Sustainable Development; and CABI
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

2. STAP welcomes this proposed project that is designed to build on a number of predecessor projects and current actions across the Caribbean targeting invasive alien species (IAS). This is an important project that addresses the impact of alien invasive species on highly endemic and at risk biodiversity on small islands in the eastern Caribbean. There is a strong justification for GEBs, especially the high level of endemism on these islands, and the high level of threat posed to them by AIS. Prevention, early detection, control and eradication are the recognized strategies for addressing the threat of IAS, however, the subject area is technically and socially very complex and the project concept proposes a balanced national/regional approach to IAS recognizing the wide cultural and language variations across the region. The proposed project has taken the evaluation lessons learned through its immediate predecessor, "Mitigating the Treats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean' (MTIASIC, GEF ID 3183), into account during the design of this project which is commendable.

3. The baseline situation in each country participating has been well-summarized, but surprisingly this listing has not been subject to a gap (or needs) analysis or lessons learned that map against the proposed Components of the PIF. The PIF lacks focus, and does not provide clear guidance for the PPG phase, with the indicators given mostly not relating directly to the outcomes under which they are listed. The logic behind the project is potentially workable in terms of linking field activities to developing an enabling environment, but the sequencing and synergies between these activities needs to be worked out far more carefully; how do the AIS activities in Antigua and Barbados feed into components 1 and 3 of the project, and vice versa? Is the project sensible in spending 75%+ of the budget on the enabling environment and only 20% of field activities? The incremental reasoning is not made, as the links between the many listed

activities related to AIS in the Eastern Caribbean and how exactly this project builds on these is not convincing.

4. Several improvements to the project design should be considered mainly to rationalize the many actions proposed into a more logical grouping based on related scientific and technical needs. Also 36 months is a very short time to achieve the very large catalogue of proposed outputs described, which is a substantive risk not addressed.

5. Component 1.

The Critical Situational Analyses Identification proposed mentions the Threatened Island Database as an example of a key source this, however, only covers threats from vertebrate IAS. Therefore at PPG stage more information should be provided about other taxa and the sources of expertise used to compile CSAs and recommend priorities for action together with the peer review mechanism to be used. There needs to be greater specificity about what it means by "IAS management framework and cross sectoral arrangements".

The indicators do not clarify or measure this achievement, but refer to higher level (project goals). Also consider expertise from outside the region and lessons learnt from e.g. the Pacific Invasives Initiative:

<http://rce.pacificinvasivesinitiative.org/>

Public awareness and capacity building campaigns are mentioned several times under section c) of this component but Component 3 B "Capacity Building and Awareness" would appear to be a more appropriate home for these activities, linked to the web portal and apps discussed elsewhere.

6. Component 2. The pilot actions suggested for Antigua and Barbados are especially welcomed; these are well summarized and structured but there are no references or evidence provided as to whether these types of interventions have succeeded or failed in the past. However, if adequately documented (including a literature search) the pilots should be a useful source of knowledge that at PPG stage needs to be integrated into the plans for KM described elsewhere in the PIF. The pilot actions would likely be more effective as demonstrators if regional participation from local scientists/practitioners could be designed into the pilots rather than simply disseminating the results.

7. Component 3. This presents a comprehensive set of actions some of which are going to be very expensive and probably requiring trade-offs between them. For example the ambition to survey and map all of the IAS on all of the islands (all countries or just the islands of the pilots - not clear), is going to take considerable resources, and might be best undertaken using the CSA for species as well as pathways described in Component 1 to prioritize this work. Is a suitable common mapping tool and database in place already, and if not what is proposed? Amongst the rest of the proposed actions in this Component the PIF is not clear on what amongst the actions are top priorities and the PIF describes several (at least 4) potential outputs as "efforts" rather than firm outputs to be committed to.

8. Overall there are 19 outputs, which may be too many to allow the project to focus. A large number of very general outputs are listed, but with little technical description of exactly what they mean, or reference to where these have been done elsewhere and experience learned. Moreover, there are many un-defined terms "such as "critical situation analyses", "national invasive species strategies", "cross sectoral arrangements", "legal frameworks", "regulatory guidance and protocols", "awareness and capacity building programs", "procedures, codes of conduct and incentive systems", "national cost recovery financial mechanisms". A list of very broad sounding activities, with limited or no technical description of how this will actually be done, provides little confidence to the reader that the project has a clear pathway to delivery.

9. One area that can be substantially improved since the previous GEF project is online (live) knowledge management. The website developed during the MTIASIC project CIASNET.ORG, has been cited by the proponent as the preferred online tool, including for use as a data repository. STAP's review of this website indicates that the project has created a useful resource, but that the site's potential (currently limited to English only), for hosting or connecting to monitoring data, early warning information or acting as a clearing house for soliciting action at national or regional level, remains to be developed; the last update appears to be at least two years ago. The proponent should further detail how the long term sustainability of this KM platform may be funded and staffed and what incentives or obligations are being agreed between countries in the region to ensure that this proposed IAS clearing house is effective, including relevant indicators. STAP encourages proponents to use existing databases and information management tools wherever possible before building unique datasets, and consider appropriate interoperability standards. Within the KM section of the full proposal these aspects should be set out clearly and referenced within the body of the proposal.

<i>response</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	<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. (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 full project brief for CEO endorsement.</p>
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	<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>