

# 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 14, 2016  
Screener: Thomas Hammond  
Panel member validation by: Brian Child  
Consultant(s): Douglas Taylor

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

| FULL SIZE PROJECT         | GEF TRUST FUND  |
|---------------------------|---|
| GEF PROJECT ID:           | 9255  |
| PROJECT DURATION:         | 5   |
| COUNTRIES:                | South Africa  |
| PROJECT TITLE:            | Development of Value Chains for Products derived from Genetic Resources in Compliance with the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing and the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy |
| GEF AGENCIES:             | UNDP  |
| OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: | Department of Environmental Affairs<br>University of Pretoria<br>Council for Scientific and Industrial Research   |
| 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

STAP welcomes this initiative, which is an innovative project proposing a number of unique approaches. It is also timely, following as it does recent changes to legislation, formulation in 2015 of the Biodiversity Economy Strategy and the issuing of guidance to those wishing to develop and to market biodiversity-dependent products under the Nagoya ABS protocol in South Africa. The threat analysis and data in the table of plant species currently exploited is a good snapshot of the key issues, emphasizing the tension between exploitation and conservation and the need to assure the sustainability of the biodiversity base.

The project essentially proposes research into ten bio-products, and is strong in these explanations. A caution, however, is the timescale for the project at 60 months – which is likely to be too short for new products researched under this component to complete clinical trials, which can take more than a decade. In addition, STAP observes that while the legislative and regulatory context of implementation of the Nagoya ABS protocol in South Africa is comprehensive it is also complex. This in itself may be a major barrier to facilitation of local and indigenous communities' participation, although progress has been achieved since an earlier study of the topic (see Crouch et al, 2008).

There are numerous useful activities/outputs described, but the cause-effect logic suggested between outputs and outcomes is unclear (both within the Project Summary Table, and between the Table and the narrative). Unless more attention is given to clarifying the operational logic of the project the delivery of benefits rests more on hope than design. Several issues are not discussed or are discussed at a superficial level, including risks/assumptions, global environmental benefits, incremental reasoning, stakeholders, and relevant knowledge / learning from other projects / literature, including GEF.

The PIF is weak where it discusses how to develop value chains, implement field management plans, and ensure local benefit. Further effort to design inclusive and participatory processes and tools to benefit local and indigenous communities' participation in value chain development and also collection and management of the resource is required. For example, STAP suggests that under Component 3 a succinct guide distilled from the BMP for local and indigenous communities may bridge the gap between science and practice and serve as a model for future BMPs. The BMP will provide a useful overview of status and threat, however alone this will likely not serve as an accessible tool for raising awareness and guiding collection and use. In addition, if BMPs are to be regarded as useful tools to be piloted for effective conservation and use of biodiversity then STAP recommends an explicit link with the Biodiversity Economy Strategy. Finally, given that SANBI is the designated lead authority for development of these Plans, it should appear in the list of stakeholders.

The overall presentation of the PIF gives the impression that project conceptualization has been rushed with limited participation of stakeholders, and currently the project appears to be in the very early stages of conceptualization. Wilgood ideas that are workable, however STAP wishes to stress that much more care should be taken in designing the project logic, operationalization, and contribution to Global Environmental Benefits.

Finally, the Knowledge Management statement must be carefully considered. Currently it contains aspects of outreach, but omits mention of the proposed databases and training materials to be developed by the project. In the PPG stage leading to the full project proposal STAP recommends significantly strengthening this section to identify how the project KM can contribute towards transformational change, regional sharing and sustainability of the proposed Global Environmental Benefits.

#### References:

Department of Environmental Affairs. Biodiversity Management Plan for *Pelargonium sidoides*. 2013  
[http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/36411\\_gen433.pdf](http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/36411_gen433.pdf)

Department of Environmental Affairs. Biodiversity Economy Strategy. 2015  
[https://www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/gazetted\\_notices/nemba10of2004\\_biodiversityeconomystategy\\_gg39268.pdf](https://www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/gazetted_notices/nemba10of2004_biodiversityeconomystategy_gg39268.pdf)

Crouch, N.R., Douwes, E., Wolfson, M.W., Smith, G.F., and Edwards, T.J. 2008. South Africa's bioprospecting, access and benefit-sharing legislation: current realities, future complications, and a proposed alternative South African Journal of Science 104, 355-366. September/October 2008

| <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> | 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised.</li> <li>(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.</li> </ul> <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> |
| <b>3. Major issues to be considered during</b>                | 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:   |

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| <p><b>project design</b></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> |
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