

# 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 08, 2012

Screener: Thomas Hammond

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

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

**FULL SIZE PROJECT**    **GEF TRUST FUND**

**GEF PROJECT ID:** 4841

**PROJECT DURATION :** 4

**COUNTRIES :** Uruguay

**PROJECT TITLE:** Strengthening the Effectiveness of the National Protected Area System by Including a Landscape Approach to Management

**GEF AGENCIES:** UNDP

**OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:** National Environment Directorate (DINAMA)

**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 acknowledges this very timely and important project intended to radically shift the way in which protected areas in the country are planned and managed so as to move them from their increasing ecological and functional isolation to a situation in which there are improved linkages and integration with the surrounding landscape and where the management of both is harmonized. It is timely since the PA network is still relatively young, the pressures on the few existing PAs are increasing and some baseline processes are developing in a conducive manner due to the recent advent of spatial planning legislation.

Without a doubt, this project is complex and challenging on multiple fronts. In some ways, however, it is also a hybrid between BD 1 and BD2. It seems that this has been recognized during PIF preparation and the proponent has chosen to include it in BD1 but focus on the growing PA - surrounding landscape disconnect. The presented reasoning behind this is that mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes and sectors is beyond the scope of this project's financial and time parameters. This is considered to represent the most cost effective and realistic way of building upon existing baseline actions. This, however, sets up some tension within the project.

The project's title suggests that the project's primary focus is the strengthening of the effectiveness of the national PA system. The project's objective is for the national PA system to incorporate a landscape approach to management in order to strengthen the effectiveness of PAs as cores for the conservation of globally important species and ecosystems. While this is desirable (and understandable), the emphasis of the project appears to be on improving the management of the surrounding landscape so that it is more biodiversity friendly and the PAs will be the beneficiaries of this approach. Whether this project is a BD1 project, therefore, is a question. This is further underlined by the statement that the project will provide specific impacts and full costs and requirements needed for up-scaling in future sectoral action within the country. Thus, it appears that the focus is really on land uses and sectors outside of the PAs and their improvement to the benefit of the PAs. Improvements in PA management effectiveness are hoped for by-products for the most part, rather than the focus. Thus, it does not appear to be either a clear cut BD1 or BD2 project. This needs clarification.

Moreover, and perhaps it is just a wording issue, but it would appear the stress is on harmonizing the management of the PAs with adjacent land uses. In theory this is good. But given the relatively few existing PAs, that clearly they are weak in terms of management capacity, and that the pressures from surrounding lands are increasing rather rapidly and hence the divide, "harmonization" with surrounding land uses is somewhat questionable. It suggests compromise and seeking a lowest common denominator as an approach in a difficult situation. It may be realistic and practical under the

circumstances but it may not necessarily be the best route for conserving globally significant biodiversity that is already under considerable threat, especially since most of the PAs are IUCN Category V.

Concerning the project's financial sustainability, the scenario is built on generalities and assumptions i.e. risks. It is stated that the project will include actions to diversify the funds available for PA management including landscape related mechanisms. This is to be supported by cost savings from the development of fiscal, market-based and other economic instruments that will provide incentives for land managers to adopt BD-friendly land management practices.

It is recommended that the foregoing issues be clarified so that the project is clearer in its focus and approach.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
<b>1. Consent</b>	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.
<b>2. Minor revision required.</b>	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"> <li>(i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues</li> <li>(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</li> </ul> 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.
<b>3. Major revision required</b>	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. <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>