

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: January 23, 2012

Screener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Michael Anthony Stocking
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT **GEF TRUST FUND**

GEF PROJECT ID: 4754

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Pakistan

PROJECT TITLE: Sustainable Land Management Programme to Combat Desertification in Pakistan

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: 1. Ministry of Disaster Management
2. Provincial Planning & Development Departments

GEF FOCAL AREA: Land Degradation

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): **Consent**

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes UNDP's proposal on "Sustainable Land Management Programme to Combat Desertification in Pakistan". The proposal integrates a number of recommendations made in the project's pilot phase final evaluation (PIF, Annex 1). These will strengthen the project's interventions on sustainable land management (SLM) and climate change resilience. Nonetheless, there are several aspects of the proposal that could be strengthened further during the full development of the project. STAP notes these points below.

1. The project framework is clear and the project's scope and activities can be adequately understood by a summary reading of the framework. There are, however, two problems with the framework that will need to be addressed:

a. There is an apparent confusion between what constitutes an expected output and what constitutes an expected outcome. This is readily apparent in Component 2 where the expected output #2.1.1 is effectively the same as the expected outcome #2.1. The first should be a tangible project deliverable that will be achieved by the end of the project. The second should be a project contribution to a much larger downstream change. So in the case of the project's delivery of a decision-support system for SLM, the expected outcome should be what that support system might achieve after the project is completed – for example, better decisions that build a climate resilient approach to SLM in 4 provinces. Similarly, in Component 1, "SLM applied to 800,000 ha" is an output, not an outcome. STAP strongly urges a careful re-examination of all the outputs and outcomes in order to aid the logic of the project approach, as well as better to track the impact of the project.

b. There is an inconsistency between the framework and the proposal text. The latter lacks some of the specificity of the project framework. For example, the incremental activities are not specific (e.g. SLM activities in component 1); thereby, it is difficult to assess the scientific and technical rationale underlining these activities as well as their expected contribution to global environmental benefits. STAP, therefore, recommends that UNDP first restructured the project framework to conform with a clear logical progression from activities to outputs to outcomes, and then ensures that the landscape/climate change resilient interventions, along with their incremental reasoning, be reflected (and be consistent with the project framework) in the full proposal.

2. STAP suggests including a general description of the recent trends and projections for climate change in Pakistan. This information can be found in the climate change profile for Pakistan, which UNDP houses readily in its website – <http://country-profiles.geog.ox.ac.uk/>. Reference to and utilization of the climate data information funded by UNDP itself would contribute a scientifically-valid evidence-base to the claims of the project to contribute to climate

resilience. Further, this information is useful to define and support the project interventions. As such, STAP recommends making more explicit how each land management intervention seeks to address climate change resilience based on climatic trends/projection data. Furthermore, STAP suggests to specify the interventions by region (Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber) if their climate trend/projects are distinctively different than the mean climate trends/projections.

3. STAP appreciates the barrier analysis in Section B1 but questions the justification for economic incentives to be necessary for the adoption of SLM (barrier 2 and component 2). In the same paragraph, the proposal talks of sustainable practices, economically and socially. If incentives are to be provided, then sustainability will be dependent on the continued provision of these incentives - an unlikely scenario and one which has proven to be based on a false premise in many South Asian projects. This rationale requires a more thorough justification, since it is unclear why economic incentives are needed to implement SLM. Also, it will be good to detail what are the proposed incentives, who will provide them, as well as their potential limitations.

4. STAP urges UNDP to specify in the full proposal how the global environmental benefits (GEBs) will be measured and monitored. The table in the PIF mentions several credible indicators such as RUE, C-sequestration and biodiversity intactness. First, the list of indicators should be reviewed by UNDP in order to ensure compatibility and consistency with the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategy and, if possible, the new UNCCD impact indicators. Secondly, the methods of measurement and monitoring, currently absent in the proposal, will need to be specified, along with who is to accomplish the monitoring. STAP is unfortunately unable scientifically to validate the global environmental benefits without these two items of information. An array of possible measurements could be drawn from the land degradation tracking tools (www.thegef.org). In addition, any project with claims to build climate resilience must monitor changes in total system carbon, which itself can be a proxy for many other beneficial environmental impacts ranging from enhanced productivity to improved biodiversity

5. On non-timber forest products (NTFPs), STAP recommends for the full proposal to specify what NTFPs will be commercialized and the criteria that will be used to decide which products to commercialize. For example, will a market analysis be done to evaluate the market feasibility for forest products? Furthermore, given there is a high risk of over-exploitation of NTFPs (This point was raised in the table following the GEB section.), what measures will be put in place to address this risk?

6. STAP recommends for UNDP to refer to STAP's Advisory Document "Environmental Certification and the Global Environment Facility". Although the report only covers agricultural commodities, fish and timber, the report could assist UNDP as it thinks through the design of certified NTFPs (Component 1). STAP's Advisory Document on Certification can be found at www.unep.org/stap

7. The proposal states that women will benefit from the socio-economic benefits. However, the proposal is weak on designing interventions based on gender needs. For example, NTFP project activities are more likely to yield socio-economic benefits for women if they are designed according to gender needs (Shackleton, S. F. Paumgarten, H. Kassa, M. Husselman, M. Zida (2011). Opportunities for enhancing poor women's socioeconomic empowerment in the value chains of three African non-timber forest products (NTFPs). *International Forestry Review*, 13 (2), 136-151).

<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: (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.

