

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

Screeener: 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: 4720

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Angola

PROJECT TITLE: Land Rehabilitation and Rangelands Management in Small Holders Agropastoral Production Systems in Soutwestern Angola

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Minist rio do Ambiente (MA), Minist rio da Agricultura e do Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas (MINANDER),
Governo provincial do Namibe, Governo provincial do Huila, Governo provincial de Benguela

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 FAO's proposal "Land rehabilitation and rangelands management in small-holders agropastoral productivity in southwestern Angola". The project framework is clear, the outputs are specific and the outcomes capture important global environmental benefits to which the project should contribute.

1. While several of the expected global environmental benefits are defined clearly, which is welcomed, STAP would suggest that others need to be framed more closely in terms of both UNCCD impact indicators and the GEF-5 Land Degradation Strategy. The problem statement accurately raises the complexity surrounding multiple land uses (rangeland management and agriculture management) amidst land degradation and socioeconomic challenges (food security, access to rural markets) in south-western Angola. The proposal identifies quite well the different ways it will build upon existing knowledge generated by previous and on-going projects in the region. It also has a commendable focus on farmer field schools and local participation. However, STAP believes the proposal "as it progresses to a full project document - could be strengthened by addressing the points below.

2. Component 2 on rangeland rehabilitation through best management practices for small-scale agro-pastoralists' practice presents considerable challenges that cannot be met solely by a technical approach and promotion of specific techniques. The record of failure in southern Africa of technical fixes in rangeland management is legendary. Much of this record is the lack of recognition of non-equilibrium dynamics in rangeland use and practice, as well as the lack of understanding of pastoralist strategies (see the review by Scoones, I. 1999. *New ecology and the social sciences: what prospects for a fruitful engagement?* *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.* 28:479-507). The proponents are urged to build their approach carefully on the new thinking on range ecology that emerged in the 1990s "see example from Botswana at <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/9529IIED.pdf> - paying particular attention to threats posed by privatising "the commons". STAP is pleased to see the explicit intention to include the issues of customary collective rights and the dangers of fencing off rangeland.

3. Component 4 is critical in this proposal in that it will provide the monitoring for the impact of the project on global environmental benefits, as well as associated developmental benefits. It will need to be specified in terms of impact indicators used by both the UNCCD and the GEF-5 focal area strategy, and in terms of the methodologies that will be used for monitoring. It would also be good to include the incremental reasoning for component 4 in the full proposal. At the moment, it is missing in the proposal.

4. Based on experiences from East Africa, the literature suggests the evidence base for success in using the farmer field schools (FFS) model is somewhat limited, particularly on the impact on agricultural production and income (see Davis, K., Nkonya, E., Kato, E., Mekonnen, D.A., Odendo, M. Miro, R., Nkuba, J. (2011). Impact of Farmer Field Schools on Agricultural Productivity and Poverty in East Africa. *World Development*, 40, 402-413). STAP urges the proponents to adopt a more experimental and learning-centred approach to FFS to identify the model that best suits Angolan socio-economic and environmental conditions (see also point 4 below).

5. The proposal could be strengthened technically if FAO will provide literature references that support how "...FFS and APFS approach have proven to increase farmers' sustainable adoption of knowledge demanding technologies and practices such as SLM and herd management."

6. FAO also may wish to consider building experimental design into the proposal, given their significant experience with FFSs in Africa. By doing so, FAO would help strengthen evidence on the impact of FFSs on agricultural and rangeland management, and the socioeconomic conditions of small-herders and farmers. For further consultation on how to include experimental design in GEF projects, FAO may wish to consult STAP's advisory document "Experimental Project Designs in the Global Environment Facility" "Designing projects to create evidence and catalyze investments to secure global environmental benefits, 2011".

7. The project aims to target women (25% of FFS recipients " project framework). To better reflect this output, STAP suggests strengthening the gender dimensions in the proposal (specifically in section B.3). The reference cited above (Davis, K et al), also provides compelling evidence on the impact of FFS on female-headed households ("At the project level, per capita agricultural (crop and livestock) income of female headed households increased by 187 %..."). Thus, STAP highly encourages FAO to further delineate the proposed FFS interventions by gender.

8. On Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs), STAP recommends a careful elaboration of this section in the full proposal. First, the four cited GEBs in Section B2 are not, as currently worded, global benefits. It would be preferable to identify the global component of these hoped-for beneficial impacts. Secondly, it will be necessary to specify how the expected GEBs will be measured, and their progress tracked (see comment above on Component 4). For example, the proposal could indicate a measurement for land degradation and rangeland management. There has been very considerable experience in southern Africa on measuring soil erosion, for example. NDVI measures for land cover are also commonplace and would be very acceptable as impact measures of better land management. No mention is made in the proposal of increases in soil organic carbon (and hence C-sequestration), which should be expected on both rangeland and agricultural land. Protection of dryland biodiversity is mentioned ("33,000 local varieties of native species") in the rationale to the project, but no claims or methods are made to track the project's contribution. Other claimed benefits are in terms of ecosystem goods and service provision " again, there are measures that can track these, including agricultural production/productivity increase. In this regard, it would be useful if the participatory monitoring system for rangeland biodiversity and vegetation cover (output 2.1.4) could contribute to monitoring GEBs. The land degradation tracking tool also offers a number of possible measurements for GEBs that could be defined as the project is designed in its entirety.

<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.

