

# 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 05, 2013

Screeener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Annette Cowie  
Consultant(s):

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

**FULL SIZE PROJECT    GEF TRUST FUND**

**GEF PROJECT ID:** 5276

**PROJECT DURATION :** 4

**COUNTRIES :** Brazil

**PROJECT TITLE:** Sustainable Land Use Management in the Semi-arid Region of North-east Brazil (Sergipe)

**GEF AGENCIES:** UNDP

**OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:** Secretary for Extraction and Sustainable Rural Development Ministry of Environment and State Secretary of Environment and Water Resources (SEMARH)

**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 "Sustainable land use management in the semi-arid region of north-east Brazil". The problem statement is thorough and supported with detailed description of the biophysical and socioeconomic characteristics of the project region. The proposal also includes a detailed description of the main drivers of land degradation in the targeted region, accompanied by useful data. STAP believes the proposal is scientifically and technically sound, and therefore suggests a "consent" rating. STAP describes below several areas that could be expanded during project development.

1. The current project framework raises a number of questions. For example, how many officers will be trained on land-use oversight processes (1.3); what proportion of the area classified as accentuated by soil land degradation will benefit from the soil and water techniques (2.1); among other expected outcomes.
2. Component 1 briefly describes that it will partly focus on knowledge management and information dissemination on best practices. It would be useful if this activity could be described further in the full proposal, and detail how it will contribute to the training extension programs on sustainable land management practices (Component 2).
3. In component 2, the project developers may wish to consider the use of cover crops in a crop rotation system with corn under no-tillage. According to field trials in north-eastern Brazil, the use of cover crops in a rotation system can improve, or recover, soil carbon and enhance soil organic matter (Pedrotti, A. "Behavior of the organic matter as indicators of the soil quality under soil management systems, Northeastern Brazil, in experiment long-term. Agro Environ, Wageningen. 2012.)
4. The global environment benefits table (page 11) is useful in presenting the baseline situation, the proposed interventions, and the expected benefits. In the full proposal, STAP recommends to develop this table, or section, further by defining clearly what indicators and methods will be used to measure and track the project's delivery of global environment benefits.
5. Under risks, it would be useful if the proposal could take into account the possibility that the proposed interventions will not successfully address land degradation due to its severity, and other factors that could affect the success of strengthening the governance frameworks on sustainable land management. For example, competing land use demands from multiple stakeholders may partly depend on economic policies (and agricultural prices) that may influence the sustained adoption of a particular sustainable land management best practice.

6. The potential impacts of climate change and the mitigation measures to address it are described briefly in section B.3. and B.4. Nonetheless, STAP recommends for these issues to be imbedded further in the proposal. In this regard, STAP recommends describing the region's socioeconomic vulnerabilities to climate change in the problem statement. Data on climate change also could be added. Furthermore, climate change adaptive strategies could feature more prominently in the components “ both as adaptive measures and how the project could seek to strengthen adaptive strategies into sustainable land management frameworks. For example, UNDP could rely on its broad and extensive knowledge on adaptation ([http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/strategic\\_themes/climate\\_change/focus\\_areas/adapting\\_to\\_climatechange/](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/strategic_themes/climate_change/focus_areas/adapting_to_climatechange/)) to strengthen capacity and policy development. Additionally, UNDP could rely, and build on, its experience on strengthening small-farmers' adaptive capacity in north-east Brazil (Simoes, A. et al. "Enhancing adaptive capacity to climate change: The case of smallholders farmers in the Brazilian semi-arid region". Environmental Science & Policy. 2010)

7. The table in B.5 is useful to illustrate the various stakeholders and their roles. One minor suggestion is to add a third column that specifies the stakeholders' roles in relation to the project component(s) and comparative advantage(s).

8. STAP suggests for the project developers to define the acronyms when they are first stated in the proposal. This would enhance readability.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
<b>1. Consent</b>	<p>STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasizing any issues where the project could be improved.</p> <p>Follow up: The GEF Agency is invited to approach STAP for advice during the development of the project prior to submission of the final document for CEO endorsement.</p>
<b>2. Minor revision required.</b>	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development.</p> <p>Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency:            (i) GEF Agency should discuss the issues with STAP to clarify them and possible solutions.            (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the GEF Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP's recommended actions.</p>
<b>3. Major revision required</b>	<p>STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design.</p> <p>Follow-up:            (i) The Agency should request that the project undergo a STAP review prior to CEO endorsement, at a point in time when the particular scientific or technical issue is sufficiently developed to be reviewed, or as agreed between the Agency and STAP.            (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP concerns.</p>