

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: 11 March 2008

Screener: Douglas Taylor, STAP Secretary

Screening and Panel member validation by:

Michael Stocking

I. PIF Information *(Paste here from the PIF)*

GEFSEC PROJECT ID: 2369

GEF AGENCY PROJECT ID: TBD

COUNTRY(IES): People's Republic of China

PROJECT TITLE: An IEM Approach to the Conservation of Biodiversity in Dryland Ecosystems

GEF AGENCY(IES): IFAD

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: MINISTRY OF FINANCE (MOF) AND SHANXI, NINGXIA AND GANSU PROVINCES

GEF FOCAL AREA (S): Biodiversity, Land Degradation

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAM(S): Biodiversity SO1/SO2 & SP3/SP4; LD (SO2 & SP1, SP2)

NAME OF PARENT PROGRAM/UMBRELLA PROJECT: PRC-GEF Partnership on Land Degradation in Dryland Ecosystems

Full size project **GEF Trust Fund**

II. STAP Advisory Response *(see table below for explanation)*

1. 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

2. As the PIF notes, China has invested considerable effort in addressing both biodiversity conservation and land degradation control, but much of this effort has been sectoral and has failed to address the synergies between biodiversity and land degradation. STAP has a number of fundamental concerns in this proposal because it is not apparent how the components of the project – primarily No.2 (community-based ecological planning) and No. 3 (strengthening protected areas) – can or will be linked. IEM is raised as the possible means whereby such linking might occur. However, STAP is concerned that the project will simply reinforce sectoral divisions, unless there are greater efforts to bring together the components in a unified and integrated way. STAP requests further consideration of:
 - (1) the concept of IEM and how this, in the China context, can provide a unified approach, including the institutions that will promote IEM. This will need to build on the existing investments in the PRC-GEF Partnership, and the project should show how this will happen. There is very little mention of IEM in the PIF, other than in the project title.
 - (2) The link between community-based ecological planning and adjacent protected areas. Many efforts have been undertaken in Africa especially on linking conservation goals and community development, with varying degrees of success. How does the project propose (a) to make the linkages explicit (e.g. perhaps community-outreach by PAs or ecotourism and shared revenues) and (b) to reduce the potential boundary conflicts between the PAs and local land use, and (c) to build true integration whereby the local people respect the PA and the park authorities respect the local people.
 - (3) Component 2 – Community-based Ecological Planning and Restoration & Alternative Livelihoods. This is an ambitious component, requiring not only good skills in participatory planning but also the analysis of livelihoods and the development of appropriate technologies. STAP is unsure how this complex mix will actually be delivered and who will do it.
 - (4) Component 5 – M&E. It is not clear how the M&E will work in an integrated way, what indicators will be used, and how the results will feed-back to project design and upscaling. Indeed, this Component consists of a very ambitious mix of both monitoring within the project and the use of the information to benefit other areas.

STAP would like to see the project develop through an open dialogue with similar attempts to combine biodiversity conservation and human development of adjacent people, both within China and elsewhere. There are several reviews concerning the challenge of trying to integrate potentially conflicting objectives, and STAP would be happy to refer the project proponents to the lessons that have been drawn and the literature that should be consulted.

<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.	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 <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>
3. Major revision required	<p>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> <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>