

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: October 16, 2012

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: 4922

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Global (Global, Argentina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bangladesh, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Lesotho, Morocco, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uzbekistan)

PROJECT TITLE: Decision Support for Mainstreaming and Scaling up of Sustainable Land Management

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: CDE / World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) Secretariat,

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): **Minor revision required**

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes the FAO's proposal "Decision support for mainstreaming and scaling up of sustainable land management" in 15 countries. The initiative addresses the needs within the UNCCD and the GEF to harmonize the assessment, and monitoring, of land degradation at the national and global level while contributing substantially to knowledge management on sustainable land management practices. As the proposal spells-out, there also are a number of contributions it could make to strengthen the land degradation strategy and its future development, which STAP supports and looks forward to following as a member of the task force and its likely role in assisting the GEF with the development of the GEF-6 land degradation strategy. STAP also is pleased the proposal builds on the results of the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) and the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT), as well as on FAO's and the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) expertise on sustainable land management and knowledge management systems.

Currently, STAP rates the proposal as "Minor revision required" as it wishes to receive further clarity on the points indicated below that aim to strengthen further the scientific rationale and technical basis of the proposal.

1. STAP recommends distinguishing further the innovativeness of the proposal in relation to LADA's and WOCAT's outcomes. In particular, this clarification would be useful in making component 1 and component 3 more explicit regarding their value-added. Perhaps, it may be useful to present this information in a table format in B.2 "differentiating between LADA's and WOCAT's objectives and outcomes (baseline description) and the proposal's added value, exemplifying its expected contributions to global environmental outcomes.

2. Given the expected contributions towards the current, and future, GEF land degradation strategy, along with the likely scientific input to the UNCCD 10 year Strategy and to the National Action Programs, and the expected contribution to deliver data for reporting on indicators to meet the Convention's reporting needs, STAP wishes to form part of the project's steering committee. STAP would be in a position to provide a cohesive link to the GEF's scientific community on sustainable land management and cross-cutting initiatives on integrated ecosystem management; thereby contributing to the expected outcome on establishing a decision-support platform on desertification, land degradation and drought/sustainable land management inclusive of co-benefits in biodiversity and climate change (mitigation and adaptation).

3. It would be useful to define consistently the project objective. For example, the title and objective focus on sustainable land management (SLM) implementation, but the outcomes include an assessment on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD). As a result, the outcomes appear unclear, and possibly go beyond the scope indicated in the title and the objective. Thus, it is unclear to what extent the project is about assessing the extent/severity of DLDD in addition to enhancing capacity to scale up SLM. "DLDD and SLM assessment" is mentioned several times as an intended activity and output. If the intended focus is promotion of SLM, as stated in the objective, then it would be preferable to delete mention of DLDD in these instances.

4. In relation to SLM, it also is not clear whether the focus is on promoting/ assessing implementation of SLM, or if it also includes assessing efficacy of alternative SLM practices. For example, does SLM assessment mean assessing adoption or effectiveness of SLM practices in output 1.1.1? Additionally, there are several mentions of output 1.2.2 but this is not listed in Table B.

5. For each country baseline, it would be useful to describe further the following issues – 1) what is the scale of the problem; 2) the barriers for adopting/up-scaling SLM; and, 3) the specific activities to be undertaken. Currently, these issues are not defined consistently in the country baselines, and do not include the same level of detail to understand comprehensively why land degradation is a significant problem in the country. STAP further encourages the project proponent to reference data, and literature wherever possible.

6. Likewise in the country descriptions, STAP suggests adding climate change projections. This information can be readily used to support the interventions on climate resilient practices. One source for this information can be found at - <http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/research/climate/projects/undp-cp/> Furthermore, it would be useful to describe the climate change module of WOCAT's database under WOCAT's baseline description. Similarly, STAP is pleased to see the mention of resilience to climate change (and integrated watershed management). Nonetheless, STAP recommends emphasizing these two aspects further in the proposal.

7. It would be helpful to define further the LADA/WOCAT tools the project intends to use for land degradation assessments, and sustainable land management (SLM) decision-making/ upscaling. For example, it is unclear what tools will be used from the several methods and tools described on the WOCAT website.

8. For sustainable forest management techniques, STAP recommends that prediction of forest growth rates, and estimation of sustainable harvest rates are fundamental components that should be mentioned in the description of this activity.

9. It is not clear how the term "SLM best practices" fits into the WOCAT's terminology of technologies and approaches. Is it synonymous with technology? If so, STAP recommends using one term consistently. If there are substantive differences between the terms, it would be helpful to explain the distinction.

10. STAP appreciates the monitoring system for global environmental benefits will be determined at a later stage by the country teams. Nonetheless, STAP encourages the project developers and the country-teams to think through specific global environmental benefits that can be measured, and to define indicators for each global environmental benefit. If the countries intend to contribute towards carbon sequestration via land management activities, one possible methodology that could be used to estimate and monitor carbon stock changes is the UNEP/GEF Carbon Benefits Project (for more information see - <http://www.unep.org/climatechange/carbon-benefits/>). The GEF Secretariat can advise further on the use of the methodology.

11. STAP is pleased that gender sensitive approaches will be used to identify sustainable land management practices. Nonetheless, STAP wonders how the target number of 30% women (B.3) was defined. A more detailed justification of this number would be helpful and welcomed by STAP.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	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. 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.
2. Minor revision required.	STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development. Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency:

	<p>(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>
<p>3. Major revision required</p>	<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:</p> <p>(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>