

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: 19 March 2008

Screener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Michael Stocking

I. PIF Information

GEFSEC PROJECT ID: 2794

GEF AGENCY PROJECT ID: P090789

COUNTRY(IES): Ethiopia

PROJECT TITLE: Sustainable Land Management Program

GEF AGENCY(IES): World Bank

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNER(S):

GEF FOCAL AREA (S): Land degradation

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAM(S): LD-SP1 and LD-SP2

NAME OF PARENT PROGRAM/UMBRELLA PROJECT: Strategic Investment Program for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa (SIP)

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):
Consent

III. Further guidance from STAP

2. STAP supports this programmatic effort on sustainable land management in Ethiopia that focuses on mainstreaming SLM issues into local institutions, setting up land information and registration systems and ensuring suitable coordination. Ethiopia has had a long history of multi-lateral and bilateral support to the control of land degradation, especially in the areas of soil conservation, erosion research and sustainable rural development, much of it piece-meal and uncoordinated. STAP would like to be certain that this large new investment will build upon the substantial experience to date, as the PIF rightly notes that there has been no widespread implementation "to address the land management challenge". How is this SIP approach for Ethiopia going to be recognisably different from its predecessors? The PIF notes that most previous efforts have focussed on agricultural production and poverty issues, and that this new effort will instead adopt an ecological approach. But why should an ecological approach be any more successful than efforts that target human development? There are a number of good review papers in the scientific literature that give overview guidance in the topics that this project will be addressing: for example, Gebremedhin, B and Swinton, SM 2003 Investment in soil conservation in northern Ethiopia: the role of land tenure security and public programs. *Agric Econ* 29:69-84. There are also agencies such as SOS Sahel International [some of which are mentioned in passing in Section IE] that have substantial bodies of experience on what works and what does not in Ethiopia. STAP would like to see in project documents as they are further developed, analysis of the lessons learned to date and the evidence-base for the justification and design of the approach to be adopted.
3. Further, STAP has a number of suggestions it believes can help strengthen the project in the context of GEF funding and the requirements to show global environmental benefits (GEBs) and impacts in the form of sustainable change.
 - 1- STAP notes that the GEBs are defined in Section II. However, the proposal should be strengthened by stating how each global benefit will be measured and its progress tracked - prevention and/or reversal of land degradation, conservation of biodiversity, and reduction of carbon emissions (carbon sequestration). Furthermore, the methodological challenges of measuring accurately soil carbon could be taken into account in the proposal, as well as the various challenges (and sometimes impossibility to achieve) of increasing carbon in degraded soils.
 - 2 - Making knowledge available on best management practices is recognized as an objective. In the proposal, however, it is not clear why making this knowledge available, and the ways it is to be made

available (flyers, websites, manuals, workshops, etc.), would contribute to sustainable land management practices. Thus, it would be helpful to elaborate further on the evidence as to why the absence of knowledge on best practices is a barrier to adopting sustainable land management in the project area.

3 - Also, what is meant by "...packaging of incentives to facilitate scaling up of best management practices"? The proposal could detail further what are these incentives, as many incentive mechanisms have been tried in Ethiopia such as direct payments and food-for-work. The experience of some incentive systems has been to create dependency culture and lack of respect for the actual technical measures being supported. The culture of 'farming subsidies' rather than farming land is deeply rooted.

<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.