

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: April 23, 2012

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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: 4839

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Afghanistan

PROJECT TITLE: Establishing Integrated Models for Protected Areas and their Co-management

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: National Environment Protection Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock

GEF FOCAL AREA: Multi Focal Area

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 supports the proposal "Establishing integrated models for protected areas and their co-management in Afghanistan" submitted by UNDP. The proposal is rooted clearly in addressing pressing biodiversity and land management threats in Afghanistan, as made evident in the project objective and supporting interventions outlined in the project framework. STAP also supports the explicit mention of the expected multiple global environmental benefits, as well as the indicators that will be used to measure and track their achievement. To strengthen further the proposal, STAP recommends addressing the following points "â€œ

1. The project baseline comprehensively describes the problem and the current threats to biodiversity and sustainable land management in Afghanistan. STAP encourages, however, better articulation of these threats at the project level. For example, the baseline could be strengthened by providing the following specific information relevant both to the project and its locality - current biodiversity status, geophysical conditions of the project site (elevation, annual precipitation, slope), and rangeland status to the extent possible given the data limitation as stated in the proposal. For this MFA project, combining biodiversity with land degradation, the explicit choice of a set of four to six impact indicators is advisable, and these then would form the focus of baseline description. This will enhance the tracking and monitoring of subsequent impact as the project proceeds.

2. STAP also recommends including climate projection/trends data as well as the potential impacts of climate change on land uses, given the intended emphasis on climate resilient land management interventions. Paying closer attention to climate change and its potential effects on land use will strengthen the proposed climate resilience approach "â€œ currently, weak in the proposal. Thus, the project developers may wish to refer to UNDP's Climate Change Country Profiles, or the World Bank Climate Change Portal to strengthen the baseline as well as the suggested climate resilience/land management interventions "â€œ

<http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/research/climate/projects/undp-cp/>

http://sdwebx.worldbank.org/climateportal/index.cfm?page=country_historical_climate&ThisRegion=Asia&ThisCcode=AFG

3. The project framework makes a brief reference to non-timber forest products (NTFPs), but this activity is not defined further in the proposal "â€œ for example under component 2. It would be useful to detail further this activity in the full proposal, as well as other alternative livelihood strategies the project will focus on. STAP also recommends referencing case studies (published, or carefully document unpublished resources) on how NTFPs, and other proposed alternative activities, contribute to livelihoods.

4. Furthermore, STAP acknowledges that NTFPs have the potential to impact local livelihoods in ways that may contribute to the sustainability of protected areas. Sustainable harvesting and marketing of NTFPs does, indeed, have a potential to bring local benefits to people while protecting the larger ecosystem. Nonetheless, it is important to consider the comprehensive context of NTFPs to fully assess their viability, potential contributions to livelihoods and protected areas, as well as the constraints associated with harvesting and marketing NTFPs. Thus, STAP recommends for the project developers to specify further whether the project will conduct a market chain analysis of NTFPs, and, if so, to detail this analysis in the full proposal. STAP also encourages UNDP to specify whether it will offer NTFPs training, as well as additional support (e.g. how to seek micro-finance) to assist project recipients get started with NTFP harvesting and commercialization activities. Additionally, STAP recommends defining explicitly the risks affiliated with NTFPs, and the mitigation responses (e.g. overharvesting of NTFPs; hence, affecting the status of local biodiversity and livelihoods). Also, STAP encourages the project developers to consider how climate change may impact the density of the species of interest for NTFP activities.

5. STAP supports the intention to co-manage the PAs with local communities. It is unclear, however, whether farmers are an important stakeholder group in the targeted sites and whether they will have effective decision-making, and whether they will derive significant benefits. If so, STAP encourages UNDP to consider how the (frequent) competing demands between farmers and herders will be accounted for in the proposed interventions. It would also be appropriate to undertake some simple cost-benefit analysis to ensure that land management activities are financially rational for land users to undertake. It is often problematic that local professionals promote land management practices that incur substantial burdens on local farmers, causing those practices to be abandoned after the project has ceased.

6. STAP suggests describing further the proposed fuel-efficient stoves – for example, what type of stoves will be introduced; will the project include training on how to use the stoves; and, how the training will be gender-sensitive? Also, it would be useful to provide evidence of sustained adoption of the proposed fuel-efficient stoves if they are currently in use in the targeted region, or elsewhere in Afghanistan. This could be in the form of rigorous unpublished documents.

<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: <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 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.