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: February 27, 2013 Screener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Brian Huntley
Consultant(s): Douglas Taylor

I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*
FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID: 4847
PROJECT DURATION : 4
COUNTRIES : Bahamas
PROJECT TITLE: Pine Islands - Forest/Mangrove Innovation and Integration (Grand Bahama, New Providence, Abaco and Andros)
GEF AGENCIES: UNEP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: BEST, Department of Forestry, Department of Physical Planning, Department of Lands and Surveys, Bahamas National GIS (BNGIS), Bahamas National Trust (BNT)
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): **Minor revision required**

III. Further guidance from STAP

1. STAP welcomes this concept for support to strengthen the management of pine island forest ecosystems of the Bahamas. However, further development of the project should take into account the following recommendations for improvement.

2. STAP notes that in the Project Overview section the PIF cites natural resource descriptions and baseline information taken from the NBSAP dated 1999, i.e. at least 13 years out of date, without cautioning about the reliability of the baseline description. There is also very little contextual information presented in the PIF regarding biodiversity and forest resources. Please update the descriptions accordingly or identify means to develop a more recent baseline.

3. Component 1 focuses upon capacity building and strengthening, there is also in the narrative text mention of calculating blue carbon using biomass data. This sub-component is not mentioned in the project framework. STAP considers that this work could be difficult to deliver beyond superficial estimates of above ground carbon mass vs. mangrove coverage. However, the proponents are aware that the majority of blue carbon is sediment based and although associated with mangrove cover (and seagrasses, etc.) which may be estimated using remote sensing / aerial photography, is not necessarily spatially coincident. The PIF already cites the UNEP GEF project "Standardized Methodologies for Carbon Accounting and Ecosystem Services Valuation of Blue Forests" (GEFID 4452), advice from which should be built into any proposed survey action.

4. In Component 2 regarding the re-establishment of the Little Abaco Mangrove Ecosystem and its use as a generic demonstrator site, there are a number of variables that need to be taken into account unique to that site. According to the PIF the site has been cut off from tidal movement and presumably also sediment flows for a number of years. Merely restoring tidal movement would be expected to lead eventually to mangrove recolonization, but the value of the site as a demonstrator would be limited to those other sites that had been similarly cut off from tidal flows. Choice of site as a replanting demonstrator should aim to reduce the number of variables impacting the substrate; therefore STAP regards the choice of the Little Abaco site as unrepresentative, and advises that an alternative more typical site which has been subject to deforestation be selected.

5. Also in Component 2 improved management effectiveness is an expected outcome of the project, however the PIF does not outline how this will be measured. STAP suggests that clear targets and appropriate indicators are detailed in

the full project brief together with an explanation of whether the GEF's existing Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) is being used.

6. Component 3 proposes a range of models to divert exploitation pressure away from conserved forests, implying that the incentives to be applied are both sufficient and sustainable. Selection criteria advanced in the PIF include:
a) potential to prevent the generation of carbon through reduced deforestation or rehabilitation (e.g. mangroves);
b) potential for measurably improved ecosystem services generated through the intervention; and
c) feasibility based on a social and economic analysis
STAP cautions that suitable and robust indicators would need to be selected to enable particularly b) and c) to be tested, at present the PIF is vague about sources of expertise regarding selection, and particularly about the role of the â€˜champions' cited for each of the four model options, in advising on selection. Regarding ecosystem services, is it the intention of the project to directly measure change in nutrient and water flows, as appears to be implied in the section on global environmental benefits? If so then the project document should detail how this would be done including over what period and its sustainability. Alternatively what other proxies for assessing delivery of ecosystem services are being proposed?

7. Finally, during preparation of the application for a Project Preparation Grant, clearly defined outputs with measurable indicators and timelines should be presented.

STAP advisory response	*Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed*
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: (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.
3. Major revision required	STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design. 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.