

# 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: November 07, 2017  
Screener: Virginia Gorsevski  
Panel member validation by: Brian Child  
Consultant(s):

### I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*

| FULL-SIZED PROJECT        | GEF TRUST FUND   |
|---------------------------|--|
| GEF PROJECT ID:           | 9764   |
| PROJECT DURATION:         | 6  |
| COUNTRIES:                | Burkina Faso   |
| PROJECT TITLE:            | Integrated and Sustainable Management of PONASI Protected Area Landscape   |
| GEF AGENCIES:             | UNDP   |
| OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: | Permanent Secretariat for the Environment and Sustainable Development (SP CONEDD) under the Ministère de l'Environnement de l'Economie Verte et du Changement Climatique |
| 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 issues to be considered during project design**

### III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes this project from UNDP entitled "Integrated and Sustainable Management of PONASI Protected Area Landscape." STAP appreciates the inclusion of maps to help orient the reader. The objective of this project is to safeguard critical wildlife habitat, biodiversity and ecosystem services in PONASI Protected Area Complex (952,000ha; 314,434 ha parks). There are important remnant populations of wildlife with high existence and opportunity values in this area, making this project timely and relevant. The major threats identified by this project include rapid increases in human population (30,000 people in 70 villages), livestock (expanding at over 4% annually), severe over-grazing, low yield slash-and-burn agriculture, poaching, firewood harvesting to major cities, bushmeat and uncontrolled bushfires.

STAP feels that in general terms the outcomes listed for this project which include 1) integrated landscape management (\$420,000), 2) improved park management (\$3.2m), 3) sustainable land management (\$1.12m) and 4) gender mainstreaming and knowledge management (\$188,000), are consistent with the problem described in the project description.

Having said that, STAP believes that the technical generalities of most of the outcomes described, and the magnitude of the challenges, leave limited confidence that the project will succeed. A significant number of generalities are provided with little or no explanation of what will actually be done, nor any reference to any scientific or technical support on the effectiveness and costs of these approaches. For example:

- What are "target capacity development interventions"?
- What does a "wildlife corridor governance management regime established and operationalized" look like?

- What does the phrase "operationalizing a landscape approach" mean, and where has this worked (or failed) before? Landscape Management Boards seldom work. Why would this area be different? Where is the community buy-in and participation?

Under Component 3 regarding Sustainable Land Management (SLM), a large number of interventions are mentioned, including the following: improving agricultural productivity and resilience, climate smart agriculture, sustainable harvesting of wood and biomass energy, forest restoration, fire management-assisted natural regeneration, assisted natural regeneration and water management. However, no technical case is made for any of these interventions, nor is the viability of undertaking this large range of activities with 30,000 people and \$200,000 a year discussed.

The introduction of hunting, especially safari hunting, is very sensible and possibly one of the few viable tourism activities. But tourism is not an entry level business for communities, and most community-based tourism initiatives fail unless linked to successful private sector tourism businesses. STAP recommends that project proponents consider investing in tourism activities to provide jobs, regardless of whether this is community-based tourism or not.

In addition, a major gap in the project relates to the understanding of community land tenure and governance. In the absence of a resolution of what looks like an open access problem, the current tragedy of the commons is likely to continue. More than 80% of the population depends on working the land for food and other needs. How will land tenure and land governance issues affect implementation of this project? What is the situation in Burkina Faso and in this area in particular?

In terms of the implementation mechanism, STAP is somewhat skeptical that a planning tool alone will solve the problems, especially given little or no description of how this tool works. The application of the Environmental Land-Use Planning (ELUP) tool for spatial planning and decision-making based on an assessment of trade-offs is a strong initial step in terms of generating buy-in from stakeholders and for setting the stage for implementing actions including improved management. However, it is not clear from the PIF why this particular model was selected and how it compares to the multitude of tools and methods currently available (Bagstad et al., 2013). And this tool seeks to accomplish many complex objectives including carbon mapping, what type of capacity is needed to use the tool effectively? Will there be training to ensure that capacity is developed in-country to ensure future utilization once the project is complete? Is this included in Output 2.1 related to institutional capacity of the PA Agency?

It might assist in solving problems if the tool is tied to a well-managed stakeholder planning process that involves the relevant authorities at meso-level, and the local communities at micro-level. Tools that include such processes are the Logical Framework Approach and the RAPTA Guidelines (See <http://www.stapgef.org/rapta-guidelines>) (O'Connell et al., 2016).

In addition, the project is hoping to develop a wildlife-based economy based on tourism. However, some travel sites warn tourists against traveling to Burkina Faso due to "regional insecurity and social unrest." If this is a legitimate risk, it should be noted in the risk section including an associated mitigation strategy. And building a tourism-based economy will rely not only on the existence of elephants but also on tourism-based infrastructure such as dedicated roads, housing, guides, etc. It is not clear what the potential for tourism is in this part of Burkina Faso. One possible tool that can be used to assess potential benefits of tourism is the Tourism Economic Model for Protected Areas (TEMPA) under development by STAP, perhaps in Nazinga, where some level of tourism has already been established, but which is increasingly under threat from illegal logging and agriculture expansion (Diombe et al., 2017).

The project lists many existing projects and past GEF projects that will be consulted and coordinated with. GEF/UNDP project 4221 (Protected Area Buffer Zone Management in Burkina Faso) received several unsatisfactory ratings, so there are probably lessons to be learned that can be applied to this proposed project.

In conclusion, STAP feels that this project has the potential to be successful, if the issues described above are resolved during PPG phase. Turning around a challenging situation like this is clearly very difficult (or it would have been done before) and there is far too little technical realism built into the many suggestions. While they sound great on paper, technical evidence of what they actually do, who and how they will be implemented, and how effective they are should be included prior to implementation.

References:

Bagstad, K.J., D.J. Semmens, S. Waage and R. Winthrop (2013). A comparative assessment of decision-support tools for ecosystem services quantification and valuation. *Ecosystem Services* 5: e27 – e39.

Dimobe, K., D. Goetze, A. Ouédraogo, G. Forkuor, K. Wala, S. Porembski, and A. Thiombiano (2017). Spatio-temporal dynamics in land use and habitat fragmentation within a protected area dedicated to tourism in a Sudanian savanna of West Africa. *Journal of Landscape Ecology* 10(1): 75 – 95.

O'Connell, D., Abel, N., Grigg, N., Maru, Y., Butler, J., Cowie, A., Stone-Jovicich, S., Walker, B., Wise, R., Ruhweza, A., Pearson, L., Ryan, P., Stafford Smith, M. (2016). "Designing projects in a rapidly changing world: Guidelines for embedding resilience, adaptation and transformation into sustainable development projects. (Version 1.0)". Global Environment Facility, Washington, D.C.

| <i>STAP advisory response</i>                                 | <i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>  |
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| <b>1. Concur</b>  | In cases where STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal, a simple “Concur” response will be provided; the STAP may flag specific issues that should be pursued rigorously as the proposal is developed into a full project document. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design prior to submission for CEO endorsement.   |
| <b>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</b> | STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:<br><br>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised.<br>(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.<br><br>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.  |
| <b>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</b> | STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:<br><br>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required.<br><br>The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP’s concerns.<br><br>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. |