

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 10, 2017
Screener: Guadalupe Duron
Panel member validation by: Michael Anthony Stocking
Consultant(s):

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

FULL-SIZED PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9781
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Cambodia
PROJECT TITLE:	Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) in the Productive, Natural and Forested Landscape of Northern Region of Cambodia
GEF AGENCIES:	UNDP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Environment
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):
Concur

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes UNDP's proposal "Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) in the productive, natural and forested landscape of Northern Region of Cambodia". To address the multiple drivers of degradation and deforestation in Northern Cambodia, the project will apply a landscape approach. In doing so, the project aims to strengthen the regulatory and institutional frameworks underpinning integrated efforts across sectors and organizations. The project will also mainstream biodiversity and sustainable land management in pilot conservation areas near established protected areas. Replication and scaling-up is addressed through a third component on knowledge management.

STAP is pleased with the description on the interlinkages between biodiversity, land and forest management. The document provides thorough information on how biodiversity and forest ecosystem services are intricately linked to the sustainability of agriculture and fisheries in Cambodia – and to the socioeconomic development of the local population. STAP welcomes that the project is closely aligned with Cambodia's National Protected Areas Strategic Management Plan. STAP values the maps of the protected areas, proposed pilot conservation sites, and watersheds as they assist in contextualizing and visualizing the locations of the project sites.

STAP encourages UNDP to design the proposal with the same rigor as it developed the project concept. To strengthen the scientific and technical underpinnings during the project design, STAP offers below recommendations:

1. The importance of working across sectors and institutions is emphasized across the components. STAP encourages the project proponents to give more consideration to the design, monitoring and assessment of landscape interventions. Doing so will increase the evidence of applying spatial planning approaches at the landscape level. It also will increase understanding of how outcomes can be improved when integrating agricultural production, biodiversity conservation, and forest management. The following papers may be

useful to consider when designing the project: 1) Sunderland, T., et al. (2017). "A methodological approach for assessing cross-site landscape change: Understanding socio-ecological system". *Forest Policy and Economics* 84 (2017) 83–91. 2) Reed, J. et al. (2016). "Integrated landscape approaches to managing social and environmental issues in the tropics: learning from the past to guide the future their progress is measured and to support indicators, so they capture measurements". *Global Change Biology* (2016) 22, 2540–2554, doi: 10.1111/gcb.13284

2. STAP encourages UNDP and Cambodia to define the methodology used to analyze the georeferenced data in the Environmental Information Management System (EIMS). In addition, STAP recommends describing how the remote sensing data will be validated through ground-truth methods. It also is not clear what capacity stakeholders (e.g. Ministry of Environment) have to use, manage, and maintain the EIMS. It is important to outline plans on how UNDP and Cambodia envision hosting and maintaining the platform, particularly once the project ends. It would be valuable for UNDP to discuss with Conservation International the implementation of a GEF project that uses remote sensing to monitor and assess land degradation, and ways to operationalize the platform, train GEF stakeholders, and maintenance/hosting of the platform after the project ends. More information about CI's project can be found at: <https://www.conservation.org/gef/projects/Pages/NDVI.aspx>

3. STAP recognizes that multiple key stakeholders will be part of the project. To make effective their participation, STAP recommends developing a strategy for engaging with stakeholders, and developing governance project arrangements. This would include differentiating between the stakeholders' different roles and responsibilities during specific points in the project design and implementation: that is, asking who to engage (what unit in the Ministry of the Environment); when to engage them (e.g. for designing the theory of change); and, who should be involved in the decision-making and implementing each component. STAP is somewhat concerned that a rigorous stakeholder analysis does not appear to be included in the activities for Component 2, Outcome 03 where this understanding of the power relationships between stakeholders will be essential. Initial guidance can be found in, for example, World Bank documentation such as <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/anticorrupt/PoliticalEconomy/PDFVersion.pdf> Useful stakeholder analysis templates are available free or commercially at modest cost.

4. For component 1.2, it is unclear whether remote sensing will be used for the landscape level analysis of ecosystems, and to obtain information on the state of forests and land degradation. STAP welcomes the use of remote sensing for this purpose in combination with ground-truth methods. For the assessment of ecosystem services, STAP recommends using the "System of Environmental-Economic Accounting" developed by the United Nations: <https://seea.un.org/>

5. STAP is pleased that component 4 on knowledge management will serve multiple purposes at the project level, and also contribute to Cambodia's monitoring of its land degradation neutrality targets. STAP recommends linking the EIMS platform to UNCCD's global database on land management approaches and technologies, the World Overview of Conservation Technologies (WOCAT): <https://www.wocat.net/> Furthermore, STAP suggests applying the UNCCD's Scientific Conceptual Framework on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) to assist with implementing a strategy to address land degradation and achieve LDN. The framework can be valuable for the implementation of component 2.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Concur	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.
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	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: (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, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.

	<p>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.</p>
<p>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</p>	<p>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:</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP's concerns.</p> <p>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.</p>