

# 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: May 03, 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:	9441
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Colombia
PROJECT TITLE:	Contributing to the Integrated Management of Biodiversity of the Pacific Region of Colombia to Build Peace
GEF AGENCIES:	FAO and UNIDO
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS), (PNN), SIRAP Pacific (IIAP, CARs)
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

This is a well-structured and ambitious project. The combination of spatial biodiversity planning with participatory biodiversity management by local communities (ICCAs) is an excellent model of global importance as a pilot (South Africa has shown the value of spatial biodiversity planning and this experience should be consulted). The project objectives and expected outcomes are consistent with the main issues identified in the PIF. The global environmental benefits are well articulated in terms of species and ecosystem services (water, carbon, landslide prevention). The project draws on experience in the region and builds on some experience in this area.

Therefore, while STAP sees no minor or major deficiencies with this project, we have some observations which we believe should be taken into consideration during the PPG phase:

1. The promotion of bio-products as the key economic engine to provide incentives for sustainable land management is risky. While developing such products is important in the long term, and certainly to be encouraged, it puts this project at unnecessary risk. By taking on double challenges of community land governance, and of developing new products, the probability of success of the project will be much reduced. Therefore, the PPG should consider whether improved methods of agronomy or silviculture/agroforestry (e.g. "Conservation Agriculture") might not be a much more effective and much less risky (and less complex) way of providing critical short-term incentives to a project that is already ambitious. Because of the importance of getting Component 2 to work, STAP suggests that Component 3 should be much more conservative (even if less innovative) and rely on improved agronomy. The project could still open the door a little to new bio-products, but should not rely heavily on this.

This argument does not apply to ecotourism. Ecotourism is a reliable economic activity, with the caveat that it is not an entry-level activity for communities and will probably be most successful if it involves community-private partnerships, a destination business plan, marketing and scale (see below).

2. As noted, the focus on local community stewardship is extremely important. However, more consideration should be given to (1) exactly how participation is operationalized and (2) to internal community governance to avoid elite capture (which is near ubiquitous) and to protect the rights of women and marginal groups to information, benefits and participation in decision-making. Specifically, what will the project do to increase the probability that Ostrom's 8 principles for long lasting common property regimes are met?

3. The risks identified in this PIF are not comprehensive.

First, while the importance of local communities is central to this project, there needs to be more specific information of how "participation" will occur, and governance implications including issues of gender equity and marginalized groups within communities.

Second, as mentioned above, the development of new bio-products, value-chains and manufacturing plants is a complex issue, and is risky within the scope and budget of a 5-year project. Ecotourism has good markets. However, it is a complex business that depends on brand, marketing, scale and access (roads, airports). A few isolated community camps/ventures will probably fail. However, a business plan that develops a destination, and encourages community-private partnerships, has a much higher likelihood of success. Using this logic, the PIF might seek to develop a tourism business plan, which may well suggest that a certain number of leisure activities are necessary to cross a tourism-viability tipping point, rather than prescribing the development of two ventures.

Similarly, the social, technical and economic challenges of how to "recover degraded areas" and of "economic alternatives to improve livelihoods" are significant and challenging. As above, achieving them within the scope and budget of a 5-year project is risky, especially if the PIF/PPG does not include a specific social/technical/financial assessment of what these generic terms mean.

Finally, one of the explicitly stated objectives of this project is to support and build peace in post-war Colombia, with the underlying assumption in Component 3 that "providing alternative economic activities for returning populations will promote peace." While this may be true, current and past events indicate that the relationship is not at all simple or straightforward, e.g. South Sudan. Therefore, STAP recommends that project managers make an effort to learn lessons from post-conflict states and consult with expert organizations such as the Environmental Law Institute and UN Environment's Expert Group on Environment, Conflict and Peacebuilding, which has just signed an agreement to work in post-conflict Colombia. See <http://www.unep.org/newscentre/un-environment-will-support-environmental-recovery-and-peacebuilding-post-conflict-development>

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
<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:  (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.  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</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

<b>during project design</b>	<p>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>
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