

# 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: October 17, 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:	9772
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Gambia
PROJECT TITLE:	Landscape Planning and Restoration to Improve Ecosystem Services, and Livelihoods, Expand and Effectively Manage Protected Areas
GEF AGENCIES:	UNEP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	National Environment Authority (NEA)
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 this multi-focal (LD & BD) proposal with its emphasis on creating an enabling environment to reform land use and marine spatial planning policies to conserve ecosystem services in both production landscapes and protected land/seascapes. This is an ambitious project objective that has been tried before over the years, albeit in a somewhat piecemeal fashion, without success. It is important that this project takes on board the lessons learned from past attempts at land use planning.

As the project enters into its PPG phase, STAP would like to highlight a number of scientific and technical issues that require specific attention in order to overcome the significant barriers to change in the enabling environment for land use planning and protected land/seascapes:

1. **Poverty.** The Gambia is one of the poorest countries globally. Poverty is deeper and more widespread among households in the agricultural and fisheries sectors, and there is a pronounced spatial dimension, with the poverty head count for rural households being twice as high as for urban households. The chosen Local Government Area, Kuntaur. Kuntaur LGA is one of eight LGAs in The Gambia: it is significantly the poorest and least developed LGA, with the highest poverty rate (92.3%) by far in the country, according to the IMF in 2003. This is both an opportunity to address poverty issues as a co-benefit, but it is also a challenge. Instituting, for example, Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICAs) will be extremely difficult where local people are merely subsisting.

2. **Gender.** The Gambia has amongst the lowest scores in Gender Development Index and Gender Inequality Index for 2015, ranking 148th out of 159 countries. There is a national lack of awareness of the gender dimensions of poverty in The Gambia, which may well be accentuated in the Kuntar LGA. Gender is a cross-cutting development concern and needs to be tackled in a cross-disciplinary manner. There is a substantial body of evidence to show that because of systematic socio-cultural practices of discrimination

against women, there is an intrinsic tendency for some sectoral interventions – agriculture, land use and conservation are notable examples – to fail to promote gender equity in delivery of services and benefits from projects. Experience from PRSP interventions in The Gambia shows that mainstreaming gender into the national development process is still lacking. It will be important for the training outputs (1.3 and 2.5) to build adequate capacity and apply gender analysis skills to the policy-making process.

3. Capacity-building. The PIF rightly brings out the lack of institutional, professional and local capacity to undertake the actions intended in integrated natural resource management. As the project framework currently stands, training sessions for government and local professionals as well as for local people are planned in order to build the necessary human capacity. STAP advises that such training by itself cannot achieve the aim of improving capacity in a sustainable fashion. Additional measures are both desirable and necessary. Capacity assets and needs must be assessed first, after which UNDP identifies four core issues: institutional arrangements; leadership; knowledge; and accountability. Each issue is complex and multi-faceted, but each contributes to an enabling environment that can address real change, rather than simply a trained cadre of people trying to improve the environmental situation in an institutional setting that is resistant to change.

4. Land tenure and land governance. The PIF mentions only briefly the difficulties of instituting improvements in land use because of problems of land tenure and land governance. Yet these are well-known barriers in The Gambia. Customary land tenure is by far the most common form of tenure. Incentives to improve land in such a situation are notoriously problematic. The project must address such issues and undertake a stakeholder assessment of how far changes in land use are realistic and sustainable under customary tenure.

5. Knowledge Management. STAP notes the intention, albeit in only five lines of text, for the lessons of the project to be scaled up to other areas of the country. There is no mention in either the project framework or in the text of a concerted effort to institute a Knowledge Management system that will provide the basis for learning and for tracking successful options. Section 7 of the PIF headed Knowledge Management mentions only a strategic environmental assessment and a decision-support system, neither of which are an explicit KM system from which the current and future projects will learn from activities and outputs of this project. Given the renewed emphasis in the GEF on KM, this is a serious omission from the current proposal. STAP urges the project proponents to seek advice on appropriate KM systems that will integrate the wide array of experiences and lessons of this project to make them usable for the future.

<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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised.</li> <li>(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.</li> </ul> <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>
<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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;</li> <li>(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required.</li> </ul>

	<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>
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