

# 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: April 19, 2012

Screener: Douglas Taylor

Panel member validation by: Meryl Williams  
Consultant(s):

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

**FULL SIZE PROJECT    GEF TRUST FUND**

**GEF PROJECT ID:** 4856

**PROJECT DURATION :** 5

**COUNTRIES :** Global

**PROJECT TITLE:** ABNJ Oceans Finance Facility to Finance Effective Management and Transitional Reform of Oceanic Fisheries

**GEF AGENCIES:** World Bank

**OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:** Conservation International, Government/regional organizations in pilot sites

**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): **Major revision required**

### III. Further guidance from STAP

1. STAP welcomes the concept of the creation of a finance facility to provide incentives to innovate and to test different approaches to achieving effective management of biodiversity exploitation and mitigate impacts to biodiversity from exploitation of the oceans. STAP notes that this project is one of four linked by the Program (GEF ID 4580) Global Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). STAP's screening report on the Program noted the need to address the lack of a documented model of how ABNJ fisheries governance, including Rights Based Management (RBM), is expected to work at different levels (regional, national and sub national) from both the economic and political economy perspectives. The present PIF is similarly weak in this respect, and in addition contains considerably different goals compared to the version presented in the Program document.
2. STAP cannot support the project in its present form and advises the proponents, for the reasons given below, that major revision is necessary before the project could be supported for CEO endorsement.
3. The parent Program for this project does not advance a coherent argument for the harnessing of a finance facility with policy, legal and area planning pilots in areas beyond national jurisdiction to be implemented through the other sub projects under the Program. Instead within the present PIF the finance facility is stated to be strongly linked as an instrument supporting the new Global Oceans Partnership, it is less clear how the facility will integrate within the overall GEF Program and respond to priorities developed through scientific and related analyses within the other sub projects. These aspects require much greater clarity in the full project brief and the proposed Global Steering Committee for the ABNJ Program is encouraged to take up this challenge to maximize the mutually reinforcing interventions as called for in the Program document.
4. The present PIF diverges considerably from that originally identified with the Program which identified an Ocean Partnership Fund as a component Project, while the present PIF has a different title and considerably altered goals compared to that outlined in the Program document. In particular the original concept was for a focus on support for biodiversity conservation in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs) and vulnerable marine areas (VMEs), such as seamounts and developing a consensus around governance issues. The present PIF focuses on leveraging rights-based fisheries approaches in pilot areas, not just with RFMOs as partners but directly with fishing interests. According to a recent report from the World Conservation Monitoring Center to the CBD, only 1.6% of the oceans are protected against a CBD 2010 commitment for a 2020 target of 10%. Conservation targets are considered unlikely to be met without further assistance. This project does not appear to address these needs.

5. STAP notes that the current PIF lacks clarity about what is proposed in the 6 pilots and the basis/criteria on which the pilots will be chosen. It gives only one indication of where and with whom the pilots will be conducted (the first will be with the Parties to the Nauru Agreement and will extend, in an unspecified way, on the vessel day scheme. No justification is given for choosing this pilot and this form of RBFM, except that it already exists). It does not propose an outline for establishing rigorous conditions for selection of the grants, including lacking any information on how GEF will gain experience/insights/lessons learned from the pilots.

6. In the PIF, the supporting material on fisheries issues, values, etc. suggest that the proponents are not clear about ABNJ and other fisheries, lumping all marine fisheries data into the mix to justify the value of the industry, and its importance to food security, rather than providing clear information on what could justifiably be counted as oceanic fisheries and how these are exploited by developing and developed country fleets. Furthermore, the PIF makes use of the most general references, mainly from FAO, and in a superficial way. It does not look into major issues such as by-catch of important species of conservation concern (in fact it makes very superficial passing reference to by-catch and yet purports to be interested in protecting biodiversity as well as sustaining fish stocks). In addition, the PIF suggests it will address gender issues but does not seem to fully contemplate the complexity of potential gender issues and opportunities. Some justifications are garbled (confusing developed and developing country positions and assuming that developing countries are not presently participating in maritime management “ when they indeed are). Having criticized the lack of success with existing practices and institutions, such as RFMOs management, the project proposes that its pilots will ramp up quickly by building on (in unspecified ways) the existing arrangements.

7. STAP notes that the central hypothesis to be tested by the project is that Rights Based Management (RBM) can be an effective tool to bring ABNJ fisheries into sustainable use status. The proposal does not specify what the RBFM options might be that can be tested/supported through the GEF funds, and how any RBFM system could be established and over what time period “ almost certainly any RBFM scheme will take much longer than 3 years to design, obtain agreement to and to implement. The hypothesis that RBFM can be implemented and will work for conservation and food security rests on several important assumptions including that rights allocation can be equitably achieved and that enforcement of allocated rights can be made to work. However, and as the PIF mentions, very few fisheries have successfully adopted this approach, and it is essential that the responsibilities that are allocated as a condition of rights issues are sufficiently driven by the market and preferably linked to certification. These are complex pre-conditions for success and are further complicated by a relative lack of up take of fisheries certification by developing countries, which are the main beneficiaries of the GEF and which are the major stakeholders in RFMOs and similar bodies. The proponents also do not appear to have developed industry, RFMO and government agency links, nor yet appear to know whose these are/could be. STAP agrees with the FAO view that RFMOs would be the main vehicles for creating RBFM.

8. Additional concerns:

- This project appears to propose setting up an entirely parallel fisheries management initiative separate from the FAO ABNJ program, although it says it will collaborate with it;
- STAP urges that this initiative be well integrated with the other ABNJ program elements to ensure a coherent and complementary ABNJ program;
- Barriers to participation by developing countries and their fishing communities need to be addressed more directly;
- RFMOs and allied bodies need to be the primary conduit for channeling "challenge" funds to encourage the private sector to develop a consensus around RFMO catalyzed area management and RBM negotiations in order to strengthen RFMO credibility and inter-state collaboration.

9. Recommended next steps:

This project as currently presented is a shell with only vague details of how it will function, and is supported by muddled generalizations on the fisheries situations it purports to address; it is not based on a sound knowledge of tuna fisheries - given what is included in this document. At present, it criticizes the performance of the RFMOs and then proposes to work with a sub-set of an RFMO arrangement (no basis given). To justify GEF funding, STAP urges revision based on the above and after consultation with the lead agencies in the GEF ABNJ program, along with key stakeholders in tuna fisheries governance, research and industry. Working with better contextual knowledge, the project proponents would be in a much better position to develop options for RBFM they wished to support, what indicators and criteria would be used to assess the success or otherwise of the interventions funded by GEF and project co-funders.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. <b>Consent</b>	STAP acknowledges that on scientific/technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasising any issues that could be improved and the proponent is

	invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
<b>2. Minor revision required.</b>	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific/technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. One or more options that remain open to STAP include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues</li> <li>(ii) Setting a review point during early stage project development and agreeing 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 revision required</b>	<p>STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical omissions in the concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. Normally, a STAP approved review will be mandatory prior to submission of the project brief for CEO endorsement.</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>