

# 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: February 25, 2011

Screeener: Lev Neretin

Panel member validation by: Nijavalli H. Ravindranath  
Consultant(s):

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

**FULL SIZE PROJECT    GEF TRUST FUND**

**GEF PROJECT ID:** 4383

**PROJECT DURATION :** 5

**COUNTRIES :** India

**PROJECT TITLE:** Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in India

**GEF AGENCIES:** UNDP

**OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:** 1. Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF)

2. Centre for the Environment Education (CEE)

**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): **Consent**

### III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes this proposal, and is broadly supportive of the small grants program (SGP) overall. The SGP is uniquely placed to test innovative actions which address multi-focal area (MFA) challenges in a local setting, and to combine the delivery of GEBs with actions to reduce poverty and promote local livelihoods. The underlying philosophy of 'think globally, act locally' is admirable and the focus on community based organizations, with strong emphasis on capacity building through 'learning by doing' is commendable.

STAP notes that SGPs tend to be highly innovative, and not 'risk averse'. As such it tests approaches in low-capacity countries and within communities with limited experience in the management of complex projects, but through this exposure develops pertinent experience and shares this with larger scale, more costly projects. The fact that the SGP has worked and will continue to work with some of the poorest and most disadvantaged sectors of society that at the same time have the greatest reliance on their natural resources makes the whole proposal very compelling and worthy of continued support. STAP broadly supports the selection of objectives from the GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies, as these are designed to bring global and local benefits into alignment.

For all UNDP-SGP projects, STAP has the following general recommendations:

Attention to the GEF Focal Area 'learning objectives' is highly relevant to the selection of individual small grant projects. In particular, this allows for additional opportunities to further evaluate common approaches such as certification, payments for ecosystem services, and community forest management.

STAP understands that the SGP tends to be treated very much as a stand-alone project in each UNDP Country Office, often weakly integrated with other national and local-level multi-focal area initiatives. As such, STAP recommends attention as to how the SGP will be integrated institutionally in-country so that the SGP's outputs support multiple objectives, influence other activities, and where possible are sustained over the long term.

Finally, STAP would recommend that the contribution of these projects to the development of human and institutional capital and improved knowledge management at national level be further elaborated wherever possible. The contribution to GEF learning objectives, noted above, is one such step. However, these projects are uniquely placed to improve learning and knowledge management at the national level, and contribute directly to sustainable development.

STAP advisory response explanation:

1. Consent.

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.

2. Minor revision required.

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:

- (i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues
- (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. 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.

3. Major revision required.

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. 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.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
<b>1. 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>	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: (i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues (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 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 revision required</b>	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. 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.