

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: March 08, 2013

Screener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Annette Cowie
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT **GEF TRUST FUND**

GEF PROJECT ID: 5123

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Myanmar

PROJECT TITLE: Sustainable Cropland and Forest Management in Priority Agro-ecosystems of Myanmar

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation;
Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry

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): **Minor revision required**

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes FAO's proposal "Sustainable cropland and forest management in priority agro-ecosystems of Myanmar". The proposal describes thoroughly the current challenges that Myanmar faces as it seeks to strengthen its social and economic development while maintaining, or enhancing, its forests and biodiversity. The proposed interventions seem appropriate for supporting Myanmar's transition, particularly on strengthening communities' and small-land holders' capabilities for land management and forest management. Furthermore, the components along with the comprehensive problem statement explicitly, and consistently, support the project objective; thereby, the proposal is logically presented.

To strengthen the proposal further, however, STAP recommends addressing the points below during full proposal development.

1. When detailing further the project framework, STAP suggests clearly defining output and outcome indicators. This task entails defining what will be measured (e.g. percentage of targeted population that have adopted climate smart agriculture practices adopted by targeted population) and not what will be achieved (e.g. 40,000 hectares of rice under improved cropland – 2.1 in the project framework). A more useful indicator would be percentage of rice area.

2. It seems the target (pilot) areas are not defined in the proposal for component 2 and 3. STAP recommends doing so. Additionally, it would be useful to define further the agro-ecosystems and forest ecosystems for each pilot, or target, area. Currently, the proposal appears only to include a general description of the agricultural practices in Myanmar in section B.1. (baseline initiatives and barriers). More detailed information will strengthen further the rationale for component 2 and 3.

3. The proposal includes good information on the potential drivers of forest degradation, and deforestation. When the target (pilot) areas are defined further, STAP encourages, however, that FAO defines further the factors influencing forest degradation and deforestation at this level. Doing so, may further refine and make more effective the interventions based on these underlying factors. The project developers may wish to consider the following Myanmar case study on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation – Mon, M. et al. "Factors affecting deforestation and forest degradation in selectively logged production forest: A case study in Myanmar". Forest Ecology and Management 267 (2012).

4. Additionally, STAP recommends detailing further what tree species will be part of component 2 (scenario 3: land use change to perennials) and component 3 (scenario 4: community forest plantations). If the species are non-native species, STAP also suggests conducting a risk assessment of invasive species.
5. The suggested sequestration rates seem surprisingly high for agroforestry systems, particularly if they are being harvested for fodder or other products. STAP recommends providing a clear description of the agroforestry systems to explain the estimate sequestration rate.
6. STAP wonders whether an element on food security/livelihoods could be strengthened in component 2 and 3 (for example - productivity of agro-ecosystems in component 1 and energy for food security in component 2) From the material presented, it is difficult to understand what could be farmers' rationales, for adopting the proposed soil fertility management practices and water conservation technologies in component 2, and, therefore, the likely extent of adoption. Also, it could be argued that communities will face challenges in adopting sustainable forest management plans, silvicultural techniques, and other activities that reduce pressure on the forests unless the interventions are properly designed to provide for food and energy (fuelwood). Therefore, STAP suggests considering an ecosystem approach in component 2 and 3, targeting food and energy production while strengthening adaptive capacities and reducing greenhouse gas emissions via sustainable forest management and sustainable land use. FAO may wish to refer to the resource for an integrated approach to food and energy production - Bogdanski A, Dubois O, Jaimieson C, Krell R: Making Integrated Food and Energy Systems Work for People and Climate. FAO, Rome; 2010.
7. The table in section B.5 is useful. A minor suggestion by STAP is to add a column that specifies the role of the stakeholder in relation to the project component.
8. STAP acknowledges that non-timber forest products (NTFPs) have the potential to impact local livelihoods in ways that may contribute to the sustainability of protected areas (component 3). Sustainable harvesting and marketing of NTFPs does, indeed, have potential to bring local benefits to people while protecting the larger ecosystem. Nonetheless, it is important to consider the comprehensive context of NTFPs to fully assess their viability, potential contributions to livelihoods and protected areas, as well as the constraints associated with harvesting and marketing NTFPs. Thus, STAP recommends for the FAO to specify further whether the project will conduct a market chain analysis of NTFPs, and, if so, to detail this analysis in the full proposal. STAP also encourages the FAO to specify whether it will offer NTFPs training, as well as additional support (e.g. how to seek micro-finance) to assist project recipients get started with NTFP harvesting and commercialization activities. Additionally, STAP recommends defining explicitly the risks affiliated with NTFPs, and the mitigation responses (e.g. overharvesting of NTFPs; hence, affecting the status of local biodiversity and livelihoods). Climate change also may impact the long term viability of NTFP activities - this should be recognized explicitly in project development.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	<p>STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasizing any issues where the project could be improved.</p> <p>Follow up: The GEF Agency is invited to approach STAP for advice during the development of the project prior to submission of the final document for CEO endorsement.</p>
2. Minor revision required.	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development.</p> <p>Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) GEF Agency should discuss the issues with STAP to clarify them and possible solutions. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the GEF Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP's recommended actions.
3. Major revision required	<p>STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design.</p> <p>Follow-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The Agency should request that the project undergo a STAP review prior to CEO endorsement, at a point in time when the particular scientific or technical issue is sufficiently developed to be reviewed, or as agreed between the Agency and STAP. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP concerns.