

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, 2013

Screeener: Christine Wellington-Moore

Panel member validation by: Brian Huntley; Annette Cowie
Consultant(s): Douglas Taylor

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT **GEF TRUST FUND**

GEF PROJECT ID: 5381

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Nauru

PROJECT TITLE: R2R- Implementing a "Ridge to Reef" Approach to Protecting Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functions in Nauru (R2R Nauru)

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Pacific Islands Ridge to Reef National Priorities - Integrated Water, Land, Forest & Coastal Management to Preserve Ecosystem Services, Store Carbon, Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods

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

1. The PIF makes clear that Nauru's environmental sustainability and viability depends upon the full support of its people and sufficient economic return from a diminishing resource base, resulting in a stable balance. STAP accepts that the actions proposed are probably in the right direction, given the past lost opportunities from the former mining wealth of Nauru. STAP agrees that the island's marine resources possess the greatest potential for more favorable management simply because they are larger in area and extend further from human settlement than terrestrial habitat and more likely to be replenished if some areas are declared no-take zones for conservation reasons.
2. STAP's advisory response to this PIF, although shown as 'Minor Revision', should be additionally interpreted as 'opinion reserved' at this time for the reason that, as discussed below, STAP regards the evidence presented in the PIF for delivery of GEBs and local sustainable benefits as very weak. The project brief should present the problem statements and proposed interventions in less speculative terms, and provide greater confidence that GEF investment will deliver lasting benefits.
3. STAP accepts that, ideally with community support that ensures transparent and equitable access to conserved resources coupled with directed effort at land rehabilitation, the outcome could be a reduction in species loss and an increase in their abundance. However, the PIF does not cite evidence for the sustainability, in socio-economic terms, of the protected area conservation actions. STAP understands that the GEF-supported upstream actions to promote sustainable land and water management are essential to underpin the biodiversity focused marine-located approaches. Nevertheless, the availability of incentives for the community to set aside land at the coast, or immediately offshore, are not clear from reading the PIF.
4. From a scientific standpoint STAP sees no evidence presented that the actions proposed will likely result in sustainability. Neither is there information about how the marine sites will be selected on biological/ecological criteria, or references to existing baseline information e.g. IUCN Red List.
5. For the above reasons STAP is unable to assess the likelihood of the generation of global environmental benefits resulting from the project, and the project brief should therefore document adequately what steps will be taken to obtain a sound baseline, present selection criteria and evaluate incentives for sustaining the network of locally managed marine areas.

Integration and sustainability

6. At a regional scale, the project would require scientific and technical support during and after the project period; accordingly the project brief should specify what will be provided by the parent Program. At present and from the Program perspective the PIF is silent about the regional support expected by the project. For example, regarding capacity building and expertise sharing, STAP advised that the parent Program has the opportunity, at least for the cluster of 14 countries represented with the Program, to strengthen the scientific and technical linkages between the PICs, building upon the SOPAC mechanism. The Science, Technology and Resources Network (STAR) of SOPAC could build capacity to make operational a regional multidisciplinary network similar to the SIDSTAP concept, augmented with SOPAC-STAR support and in coordination with the University of the South Pacific.

7. STAP recommended in its screening of the regional support project (GEF ID 5404) that it should include support for a multi-focal "PaciW:LEARN" for the region, which could act to sustain a peer to peer scientific and technical network for in-service training. This would satisfy the long standing demand under the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, at least in this Pacific SIDS area. This advice was provided for the reason that, given the complex multidisciplinary threats and barriers shared by many of the PICs, and especially Nauru, to be overcome, the sharing of expertise between PICs would strengthen sustainability of individual projects within the Program, but also across the other GEF and non-GEF projects delivering against allied environmental targets. In this connection the inclusion of knowledge management (Component 4) is welcomed and STAP advises that beyond fulfilling IW:LEARN obligations, that the project should connect more formally to the proposed regional network as discussed above. Additionally, the baseline PaciWRM project's successful delivery of distance learning and twinning for IWRM capacity development is an excellent basis to build on regionally and nationally.

<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.