

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 14, 2014

Screeners: Douglas Taylor

Panel member validation by: Annette Cowie; Sandra Diaz
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 5208

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Palau

PROJECT TITLE: R2R: Advancing Sustainable Resources Management to Improve Livelihoods and Protect Biodiversity in Palau

GEF AGENCIES: UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Government of Palau (Office of Environmental Response and Coordination)

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

1. STAP welcomes this project that aims to fully operationalize the connection between the Protected Areas Network (PAN) and Sustainable Land Management (SLM) programs of Palau and which follows up the investment provided by the GEF MSP (5579) that targets capacity building and currently assists Palau to consolidate technical linkages to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme and the University of the South Pacific. The inclusion of quantified project targets related to the CBD Aichi Targets is also welcomed.
2. STAP also welcomes the project target to add new protected areas to the existing network and to foster community participation in their designation and management.
3. The baseline is clear and comprehensive. The global environmental benefits are stated clearly as well.
4. The challenges of competing objectives are recognised and examples are provided. STAP suggests that the proponents develop a specific strategy to deal with such situations, in order to minimise negative outcomes where trade-offs are inevitable.
5. STAP notes that the GEF MSP (3501) 'Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management for Mitigation of Land' supported capacity strengthening, information systems and regulations for SLM was intended to result in improved coordination between agencies involved in land management. This previous attempt to set up functional coordination and information systems appeared to have suffered from significant institutional barriers. While, at least from the PIF, STAP cannot determine to what extent the present project proposal is able or needs to build on the previous SLM project to achieve impact on the ground, the full project brief should include objective indicators that demonstrate for Output 3.2 that OERC has indeed achieved effective coordination of PAN and SLM (with SFM).
6. In project preparation STAP recommends that a critical review of the outcomes of the predecessor project be performed and detail be provided of the SLM approaches to be implemented, including basis for identification of these practices, and measures to encourage adoption.
7. The need for development of measures to assess the effectiveness of the project in integrating the PAN/SLM/ Ridge to reef initiatives is articulated, but it is not clear how the proponents intend to address this

gap. STAP recognises that reporting on outcome indicators will be challenging, particularly as impacts will take time to emerge. Assessment in terms of action-based indicators may be more enlightening in the short term.

8. The assumed connections between improved ecosystem function and improved quality of life for society and particular sectors within society (e.g. women) (page 18) are somewhat over simplistic. It would be advisable to set up mechanisms to monitor if indeed an improved status of ecosystems and diversity bring about improved well-being for local communities.

9. While STAP largely welcomes the linkage of the project to the parent Program (GEF ID 5395) and its regional support project (GEF ID 5404) the Ridge to Reef concept may need to be carefully integrated with the relatively well-developed PAN and particularly SLM initiatives of Palau to add value and to avoid the obvious danger of distracting effort away from the community-supported PAN and SLM initiatives towards another initiative with its own capacity building and conceptual needs. As part of the regional learning effort the contribution of the PAN and SLM initiatives and exchanges of best practice to regional Ridge to Reef thinking and approaches could be included in Component 3.

10. In the screening reports on the parent Program and support projects (GEF IDs 5395 and 5404) STAP made strategic recommendations regarding regional support for capacity building and learning exchanges as well as the potential for the CBD-supported Marine Spatial Planning (MSP). In this regard the existing PAN Initiative of Palau involving near shore marine areas and immediate catchments would be compatible with the more holistic contextual approach offered by MSP, therefore the full project brief should consider STAP's advice in this regard.

11. The proponents seem to be well aware of the threats posed by global environmental change, including those related to specifically with coastal ecosystems and coral reefs. Intriguingly, however, those threats are not included in the table of risks and should be addressed in the full project brief.

<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: (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.</p>
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: (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.</p>