

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: October 27, 2017
Screener: Sarah Lebel
Panel member validation by: Michael Anthony Stocking
Consultant(s):

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

| FULL-SIZED PROJECT | GEF TRUST FUND |
|---------------------------|---|
| GEF PROJECT ID: | 9589 |
| PROJECT DURATION: | 4 |
| COUNTRIES: | Panama |
| PROJECT TITLE: | Ecosystem-based Biodiversity Friendly Cattle Production Framework for the Darien Region of Panama |
| GEF AGENCIES: | CAF |
| OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: | Agricultural Development Bank (BDA) in cooperation with ANCON |
| 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 issues to be considered during project design

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes the CAF proposal "Ecosystem-based biodiversity friendly cattle production framework for the Darien Region of Panama". The project will apply integrated natural resource management and promote silvo-pastoral systems as an alternative to environmentally damaging traditional cattle ranching. STAP believes that the PIF is generally well developed both scientifically and technically. To further strengthen the project as it enters its next development stages, STAP makes the following recommendations:

1. STAP is pleased to note that the PIF builds extensively on both ongoing and past experience, demonstrating the ambition to carefully integrate lessons learned into the design of the project. This leads to a clear rationale for the proposed interventions.
2. The PIF ambitiously claims that as part of the delivery of global environmental benefits, the project will build a "new conservation model and development paradigm for the Darien". Silvo-pastoralism replacing cattle ranching to address deforestation is certainly not new; and silvopasture and biodiversity conservation are not necessarily mutually compatible without a good deal of research, careful choice of species and an understanding of soil qualities and management. There is little in the PIF that indicates that new land management practices and tree planting will be based upon sound science and empirical evidence. The soils of the Darien are largely unknown but will likely be highly-weathered, nutrient-poor and acidic, whereas the establishment of silvopasture requires good nutrient availability and responsive management. It is not at all certain that the intensity of management required will make rational economic sense for land users. Some pointers related to these issues may be found here: FAO (2010) Grassland carbon sequestration: management, policy and economics. Proceedings of the Workshop on the role of grassland carbon sequestration in the mitigation of climate change. Rome, April 2009 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1880e/i1880e00.htm> . The establishment of sound SPS practices in the Darien will require far more than "favourable institutional and policy changes in the agricultural and financing sector" (p.21). STAP urges the proponents to undertake further assessment of the quality of the natural resource base and the economics of conversion to SPS.

3. While the majority of the PIF is well developed and contains components of what may form a good knowledge management system, the formal knowledge management component remains weak. To help develop that essential aspect of the project, STAP recommends consulting its ongoing advice to the GEF at <http://www.stapgef.org/knowledge-management-gef> as well as some of the knowledge management tools that are currently recommended (e.g. <http://www.knowledge-management-tools.net/knowledge-management-systems.html>.)

4. The section on gender fails to adequately recognize and address gender perspectives. STAP recommends carefully taking into consideration gender issues for this project, and ensuring that women are considered as an integral part of the system to prevent any exacerbation of inequalities.

| <i>STAP advisory response</i> | <i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. Concur | In cases where STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal, a simple “Concur” response will be provided; the STAP may flag specific issues that should be pursued rigorously as the proposal is developed into a full project document. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design prior to submission for CEO endorsement. |
| 2. Minor issues to be considered during project design | <p>STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:</p> <p>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised. (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.</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> |
| 3. Major issues to be considered during project design | <p>STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:</p> <p>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required.</p> <p>The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP’s concerns.</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> |