

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 04, 2012

Screeener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Michael Anthony Stocking
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT **GEF TRUST FUND**

GEF PROJECT ID: 4860

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Paraguay

PROJECT TITLE: Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Land Management into Production Practices in all Bioregions and Biomes

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Secretariat for Environment (SEAM)

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

Given the importance and critical status of the Atlantic Forest in Paraguay and adjacent countries, STAP welcomes this proposal. While Paraguay's Forest Conversion Moratorium begun in 2004 has indeed reduced the rate of deforestation, compliance with current laws is inadequate and requires new ways of addressing conservation in multiple use landscapes, as proposed in this project. Given also that the Atlantic Forest in Eastern Paraguay coincides with most of the country's agriculture, industry and population, it is essential that stakeholders nationally, regionally and locally "especially current land owners" be intimately involved.

To further strengthen the proposal, STAP recommends addressing the following points:

1. STAP is surprised that the project title appears more ambitious in geographical scope than the project itself. While it is a legitimate ambition ultimately to use good conservation practice from the Atlantic Forest eco-region as a model for all biomes in the country, the primary objective is to secure this critical bio-region with its specific and complex pressures. STAP suggests that the project title be amended to reflect the actual scope of the project objective rather than the GoP's "long-term vision" (cf para. 4).

2. STAP appreciates the detail included in the Project Framework that gives a good overview of the different activities to be undertaken in securing the remaining forest and also tackling the increasing fragmentation of what remains. The Framework does, however, need to be reviewed. In Component 3 especially, Expected Outcomes and Outputs appear to be transposed. In several places, both Outputs and Outcomes seem to be reflecting project activities rather than project accomplishments. A restructuring of the Project Framework will be essential to guide the executors of the project to the delivery of global environmental benefits (GEBs) rather than standard measures of project activity. In this connection, STAP advises to have focal area impact indicators included in the Project Framework. A selection from the current GEF FA Strategies for BD, SLM and SFM/REDD would be appropriate. Measures of land cover, for example, could be considered. These impact indicators might be chosen based upon the variables that will be used in the local-level monitoring and tracking of GEBs mentioned at Component 2. They might also reflect the impact indicators for national reporting under the UNCCD.

3. The Barrier Analysis at the end of the section on the Project Baseline is thorough and a useful tool to focus on the principal issues that need to be addressed. One element missing here and in the proposal more generally is what has become to be known as the "gender asset gap". "Gender inequality in land ownership [in Latin America] is related to male preference in inheritance, male privilege in marriage, male bias in community and state programs of land

distribution as well as gender bias in the land market, with women less likely than men to be successful buyers." (Deere, C.D. 2003. World Development 37(6): 925-947). Gendered differences need to be explicitly included in the proposal.

4. At Para 34, STAP suggests that the table "while useful in comparing current practices with the alternative to be put in place by the project" be redrawn to give a clearer picture of the global benefits (third column). One of the items appears contradictory ("Avoided forest habitat conservation"); others are not 'global' as recognized by the GEF focal area Strategies. STAP suggests that both global environmental and national developmental benefits be included here to reflect how the project will/should build co-benefits for both the environment and for local livelihoods.

5. In Component 2, STAP notes the focus on developing partnerships with financial institutions for credit services. Micro-credit is indeed a powerful tool for rural development, but increasingly there have been published warnings of its limitations and potential distortions in local society, sometimes with perverse outcomes (e.g. Mishra and Nayak, 2004 - <http://129.3.20.41/eps/get/papers/0509/0509021.doc>). Evidence of having taken note of such lessons in the design of credit systems for land holders to change their practices would be appreciated.

6. In the same Component (2), mention is made in the PIF of monitoring systems run by municipalities to track global benefits. First, STAP recommends an early analysis of the variables that will be monitored and their inclusion as an integral part of project monitoring, with appropriate indicators in the Project Framework. Secondly, STAP advises that one way to engage local people is to ensure that they are part of monitoring "in this case of forest cover and associated biodiversity. Participatory resource monitoring now features widely and successfully in a number of projects" a Chinese example is reported by Van Rijsfort and Jineng, 2005 in Biodiversity and Conservation 14:2543-2573. STAP encourages this project to seek similar engagement with local people.

7. Component 3 will be critical to the success of this project; yet it is only minimally described in the PIF. STAP encourages a prior rigorous assessment of the Land Set-Aside System, including socio-economic impacts. In addition, careful thought needs to be included on choice of sustainable production practices. One possibility is to engage with database initiatives of good practice, such as WOCAT. The link to other biomes mentioned in paragraph 55 needs more critical thought, if it is to be realised in any practical sense. Transfer of Technology initiatives even within one country have often failed because of simplistic applications of practices to quite different conditions.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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.