

# 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 31, 2017  
Screener: Douglas Taylor  
Panel member validation by: Ferenc Toth  
Consultant(s):

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

<b>FULL-SIZED PROJECT</b>	<b>GEF TRUST FUND</b>
<b>GEF PROJECT ID:</b>	9770
<b>PROJECT DURATION:</b>	4
<b>COUNTRIES:</b>	Regional (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, Venezuela)
<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme to Ensure Integrated and Sustainable Management of the Transboundary Water Resources of the Amazon River Basin Considering Climate Variability and Change
<b>GEF AGENCIES:</b>	UNEP
<b>OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:</b>	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General of Boundaries and Borders (Bolivia); National Water Agency, ANA (Brazil); Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Colombia); Secretariat of Water, SENAGUA (Ecuador); Ministry of Public Works and Communication (Guyana); National Water Authority, ANA (Peru); Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Suriname); Ministry of People's Power for Eco-socialism and Water (Venezuela)
<b>GEF FOCAL AREA:</b>	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):  
**Concur**

### III. Further guidance from STAP

1. STAP supports this globally significant project, driven by the findings of the foundation project (GEF ID 2364) that delivered a TDA and SAP for the Amazon River basin. The proposed integration across environmental components and related focal areas makes a lot of sense for several reasons, such as synergies in governance and management, harmonized management of various environmental components, gains from the harmonized environmental monitoring and ensuing data base, etc. Some minor clarifications would be helpful when developing the project for CEO endorsement, as discussed below.

2. In an otherwise very well-written and referenced PIF, the barriers presented in the section on Root Causes are hard to understand as drafted. Barrier 1 appears to be about lack of awareness, capacities and inter-sectoral/regional cooperation, which comprise at least three barriers. Barrier 2 highlights lack of capacities again. Barrier 3 alludes to a barrier about a lack of awareness again, plus lack of monitoring capacity. Barrier 4 is actually a series of threats not barriers. STAP suggests that this section be re-

formulated, so that when reading the Alternative Scenarios section there is a consistent mapping between the barriers cited and the three key strategic actions proposed.

3. It is encouraging that a Source-to-Sea approach is being followed in the implementation of the SAP. But within both the SAP and the present project the treatment of monitoring, policy and management response and of dynamic aspects of flows appears a little weak. In addition to the very useful theory of change supplied in Annex D of the PIF, STAP recommends also considering how the theory of change would reflect a geospatial view across the Source-to-Sea management units from upstream to downstream units. For example, for issues dealt with under Component 2. Because many, often highly local, environmental challenges, within the very large scale of the Amazon River Basin, will respond to the proposed actions at different rates, e.g. urban pollution hotspots, mercury/mining discharges, and outcomes will need to be evaluated within their local catchment context. Please see more recommendations at <http://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/S2SBrief.pdf>

4. Groundwater governance, or lack thereof, is clearly at the root of many of the water quality issues detected. The project should be able to take full advantage of the guidance provided by the FAO/GEF project Groundwater Governance: A Global Framework for Country Action (GEF ID 3726), and products in the series Groundwater Governance, Global Framework for Action (available from <http://www.groundwatergovernance.org/>). This includes its diagnostics recommendations that call for very long periods of monitoring due to slow (decadal) reactions in groundwater levels, and water quality responding to changes in conjunctive water management, especially within such a large river basin. Please reflect the use of this FAO/GEF project's products and related expert network (accessed through the IW:LEARN Community of Practice) in the project brief at CEO endorsement stage.

5. Many activities in various components of this project involve knowledge management to serve stakeholders participating in its implementation. The KM plan under point 7 usefully summarizes these activities. However, considering the ambitious and promising objectives and plans in this project, which is a pioneer effort in several respects (first attempt to implement holistic integrated management, basin-wide comprehensive environmental monitoring, etc.), it would be very valuable to design KM tools and channels (beyond the undoubtedly important GEF IW:LEARN type website) for disseminating lessons that could be useful for similar efforts in other transboundary river basins in Latin America and beyond.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
<b>1. Concur</b>	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.
<b>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</b>	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised.</li> <li>(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.</li> </ul> <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>
<b>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</b>	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;</li> <li>(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required.</li> </ul> <p>The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal</p>

	<p>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>
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