

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 30, 2017
Screener: Douglas Taylor
Panel member validation by: Ferenc Toth
Consultant(s):

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

FULL-SIZED PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9906
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Regional (Benin, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo)
PROJECT TITLE:	Investments Towards Resilient Management of Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystems
GEF AGENCIES:	World Bank
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources (Togo) Ministry of Urban Planning, Habitat and Sanitation (Benin) Ministry of Public Works, Natural Resources and Environment (Sao Tome and Principe)
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):
Concur

III. Further guidance from STAP

1. This generally well-researched and referenced project is welcomed by STAP, in particular its overall approach of strengthening coastal resilience, and to 'unbundling' coastal development challenges. The demonstration of the complementary nature of this project to the WACA Resilience Investment Project in Annex IV is particularly helpful.
2. STAP has no issues with the project focus on the three approaches stated by the proposal: (i) scaling-up best practices on coastal adaptation across the region; (ii) restoring or preserving healthy and functioning ecosystems; and (iii) protecting the built environment. However, the Project Concept Note is hard to evaluate on the intervention logic relationships between activities that are aimed at strengthening urban and peri-urban related coastal defenses, and those proposed for rural coastal areas. In STAP's view the latter should prioritize, as far as possible, soft defenses, including managed retreat strategies that maximize ecosystem resilience, including conserving fish nursery areas.
3. It would be extremely helpful to recast the proposed coastal actions within a marine spatial planning framework; this would make clearer the relationships between population centers, development plans and coastal ecosystems, and also that the principles of 'ridge to reef' were reflected in the management of upstream development and mitigation.
4. STAP welcomes the attention given to mangrove restoration. Mangroves have in many countries been partly or fully replaced (sometimes as a result of excessive cutting for charcoal production or poles for construction) by coastal aquaculture to the detriment of inshore fisheries and leading to storm vulnerability. To alleviate this and related concerns, the full project brief needs to present a clear strategy regarding the

encouragement of aquaculture, which, if done, or sited, inappropriately can result in loss of biodiversity, escape of invasive species, and poor water quality.

5. STAP has concerns about the invasive alien species (IAS) control component of the project, due to the vague description, both of the challenge and the species concerned, and whether these are terrestrial and or/aquatic. IAS, while an entirely legitimate target to address, can be very complex, and usually involves a whole catchment approach and attention to the weakest links. STAP finds the strategy presented to be weak. In the full project brief this needs to be presented on a risk management basis, with long term sustainability as a key indicator. Sources of expertise on IAS should also be identified in the full project brief.

6. The PCN is correct to cite the high risk to stakeholders, especially local to the coast. However, mitigation via communication appears to be an inadequate response to the long term need to empower communities expected to safeguard the resilience of the coastal environment. Investing in and establishing sustainable alternative livelihoods that remove/ease anthropogenic pressures and make people better off is a key activity; and this might be a more effective enticement for accepting possibly inconvenient changes than communication campaigns. But decisions about these livelihood arrangements should involve a broad participation of local communities. The alternative implied in the PCN is top-down regulation of the stakeholders concerned to maintain sustainable livelihoods and to prevent further coastal degradation. Within what governance framework are coastal stakeholders to be participants?

<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>