

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: @@@@ @@, @@@@
Screener: Sarah Lebel
Panel member validation by: Ralph E. Sims
Consultant(s):

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

| FULL SIZE PROJECT | GEF TRUST FUND |
|---------------------------|---|
| GEF PROJECT ID: | 9089 |
| PROJECT DURATION: | 3 |
| COUNTRIES: | Serbia |
| PROJECT TITLE: | Contribution of Sustainable Forest Management to a Low Emission and Resilient Development |
| GEF AGENCIES: | FAO |
| OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: | Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Directorate of Forests |

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 FAO proposal "Contribution of Sustainable Forest Management to a Low Emission and Resilient Development". The project sets to build on a number of existing projects to increase the resilience of productive forest landscapes in Serbia, by introducing sustainable forest management strategies to conserve biodiversity and manage forest carbon. It will not only implement data collection and monitoring systems, implement a range of forest protection measures. STAP believes the PIF is relatively well-developed scientifically and technically, yet requires minor revisions.

In order to further strengthen the project, STAP makes the following recommendations:

1. On p. 6, the paragraph on agriculture and energy sector should be revised and strengthened to provide clearer understanding. While bioenergy opportunities are mentioned, using the forest biomass to displace fossil fuels, it also states:

"The available forest resources exceeds the potential demand."

"Reforestation and restoration needs to be promoted in order to ensure locally sufficient supply for energy needs, for wood-based industries and the bio-economy in general."

These statements seem to contradict each other, so the position is not clear. However, it seems biomass could have good potential to displace gas/coal for heating and maybe power generation or combined heat and power. Yet these options are not included in the carbon assessment.

2. The GIZ co-financing looks at improved biomass supply and utilisation in households, but it is not clear if currently the firewood combustion is in open fires or more efficient enclosed stoves, including pellet stoves, that can be > 80% efficient (see for example <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/air/home-heating-and-authorised-wood-burners/burners>)

3 Serbia's INDC gave little indication of how it would meet the 9.8% reduction below 1990 levels by 2030, (http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Serbia/1/Republic_of_Serbia.pdf) but the PIF shows there is potential from reforestation and use of bioenergy.

4 In the carbon accounting (page 10) soil carbon is not included, nor the use of biomass for energy to displace fossil fuels. The 65t C/ha stored in Serbian forests is when mature, but there is no indication of the time for the 4000 ha of forest to reach maturity after "restoration" . Hence the annual mitigation potential is not known.

By UNFCCC definition, Kyoto forests are post-1989 planted into non-forested land. Is this the case here? What is the land cover of the 4000 ha now?

Also how will the mature forests be retained in perpetuity? If they are to be harvested and replanted, the C stock will need to be averaged over several harvesting cycles. In simple terms, the C stock on pasture, crop or scrubland starts at around zero and reaches around 65 t C/ha on maturity after a certain time period (e.g. 50 or 100 years). If the biomass is then harvested, the carbon stock drops back to close to zero and if replanted returns slowly to 65tC/ha again as the trees re-grow.

5 If wood products are used as materials, some of the C is locked up in buildings for some years. This seems to have been ignored.

6 Lack of capacity in forest carbon management and inadequate inventory data (as outlined in Serbia's 1st National Communication to the UNFCCC) (page 12) are the knowledge gaps to be addressed, but exactly how this will be achieved is not stated.

7 On p. 5 it is stated that all forest regeneration is natural, yet on p.6 lack of natural regeneration is listed as a key issue for Serbian forests.

| <i>STAP advisory response</i> | <i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i> |
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| 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 | 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: (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. 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 issues to be considered during project design | 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: (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. The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP’s concerns. 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. |