

# 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 16, 2016  
Screener: Lev Neretin  
Panel member validation by: Jakob Granit  
Consultant(s): Stephen Olsen

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9250
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Seychelles
PROJECT TITLE:	Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3)
GEF AGENCIES:	World Bank
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Finance Trade
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

1. The project is led by the World Bank and aims to improve management of fisheries at regional and national levels and the fish handling processes at targeted handling sites in the Seychelles. It is the third in the series of the World Bank projects targeting WIO fisheries. Project includes four components aimed at supporting regional cooperation, expansion of MPAs, strengthened governance and reduction of IUU fishing, and support for targeted local value added businesses in the fisheries supply chain.
2. The WB Concept Note makes the case that large national investments by the countries in the SWIO region in ports, fishing fleets, or processing plants, has created a situation in which the countries are competing against each other for shared fishery resources (chiefly tuna and shrimp). Regional coordination is therefore needed to avoid conflicts and sub-optimal sectoral investments, and to promote equitable distribution of wealth. There are a number of organizations already involved in promoting such regional collaboration but this proposal does not attempt to provide a synthesis of what they have accomplished, what is working, what isn't and why. The Concept Note calls for continued investment in ongoing activities and mechanisms but does not offer strategies for overcoming weaknesses and building on successes in the current governance system. Therefore, a baseline governance analysis is strongly recommended during further project development.
3. The Concept Note endorses the plans put forward by the government of the Seychelles that would increase competition within the region for its share of tuna processing but does not address how this next phase of investment will contribute to the greater regional collaboration highlighted in the Introduction. The proposed project is "in line with" the Seychelles 2017 Strategy and the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020. The former states that "the fisheries strategy of the Government of Seychelles is to increase the yield, value of the yield and the financial benefit of fisheries to Seychelles by maximizing domestic processing, promoting export and increasing Seychelles stake holding in the industry. The ultimate objective is to turn Seychelles from a mainly fisheries transshipment hub to the primary seafood processing center of the Indian Ocean. To achieve this, the Government will facilitate increased local and international participation and investment in the sector and enact measures to enhance its competitiveness".

It is less than clear how support for competitiveness and further investment is the several SWIO regional bodies concerned with fisheries management will be combined into an internally coherent strategy.

4. The proposal is rich on background on the condition of fisheries in the southwest Indian Ocean and the importance of fisheries to the economy of the Seychelles. It proposes to sustain GEF investment in a regional program that had been underway for a decade or more. It would be very useful if this proposal, as with other multi-generational programs supported by the GEF, included a timeline that traced through how conditions in the WIOC fisheries have changed over time and how GEF investments have contributed – or not contributed - to more effective management over time. The actions put forward for this third phase of investment do not refer to what had been learned and what has been accomplished by the former two programs. The proposal would be stronger if it placed this third investment in the context of what has been achieved and targeted where the weakness lie in existing fisheries governance system.

5. While the project makes reference to ongoing efforts of national government to develop national marine spatial plan, no further information on linkages to this initiative is provided. Project activities would benefit from closer coordination with these ongoing efforts. Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) initiatives supported by a number of projects, including UNDP/GEF-led three projects "Strengthening Seychelles PA system through NGO management modalities", "Mainstreaming biodiversity management into production sector activities", and "Expansion and strengthening of the PA subsystem of the outer islands of Seychelles and its integration in the broader land and seascape", but also SEYMMAP project by TNC supporting climate adaptation activities. The MSP Initiative will be implemented for the next four years. It has already established a wider MSP consortium at the national level including MSP Ministerial Group. STAP recommends that WB proponents addressing fisheries issues build complementarities and coordinate closely with the Seychelles MSP Initiative to assure project's sustainability and the impact at scale.

6. The use of drifting fish aggregate devices (FADs) became a dominant practice in tropical tuna purse seine fishing. Seychelles represents the main regional hub for purse seine fleet in WIO. The use of FADs has been associated with several negative ecosystems impacts and has to be actively managed. Their managed use is an important consideration to assure the future sustainability of tuna purse seine fishing in the WIO (e.g., T. Davis, C.C. Mees, and E.J. Milner-Gulland, 2014. The past, present and future use of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) in the Indian Ocean. Mar. Policy 45: 163-170). Project proponents are advised to consider these issues in the joint work with the IOTC.

7. Limited scientific evidence suggests that none of the key commercial fish stocks in the WIO are overfished or subject to overfishing with the possible exception of albacore and striped marlin (DG MARE, 2014. Review of tuna fisheries in the western Indian Ocean, [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/tuna-western-indian-ocean/report-tuna-fisheries-western-indian-ocean\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/tuna-western-indian-ocean/report-tuna-fisheries-western-indian-ocean_en.pdf)). However the data on species, particularly those not targeted by IOTC are scarce and urgently needed. Similar to the conclusions of the above report, STAP also recommends that project proponents support stock assessment efforts for poorly studied commercial fisheries as a part of this project. Closer partnerships with regional scientific and technical communities are necessary to address these data and knowledge gaps. Project could built upon existing networks of the ongoing UNDP/GEF SAPPHERE project aimed WIO LMEs SAP policy harmonization and institutional reform.

8. The proposal of a target of 3,000,000 ha for improved management of seascapes as a result of the project interventions needs further explanation. The number seems to be overestimated and represents about 200% of the existing MPA coverage.

<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>	<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.</p> <p>(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</p>

	full project brief for CEO endorsement.
<b>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</b>	<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>