

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: November 08, 2017
Screener: Virginia Gorsevski
Panel member validation by: Brian Child
Consultant(s):

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

FULL-SIZED PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9425
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Sudan
PROJECT TITLE:	Strengthened Protected Areas System and Integrated Ecosystem Management in Sudan
GEF AGENCIES:	UNDP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	HCENR Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources
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 proposal by UNDP entitled "Strengthened Protected Areas Systems and Integrated Ecosystem Management in Sudan." Post-conflict Sudan faces numerous environmental and human challenges that will require investment from GEF and other organizations to help overcome. However, given the post-conflict situation and massive loss of wildlife in Sudan, including multiple species from key parks, STAP recommends that careful consideration be given to the scale of the project. It is important to strengthen the current parks, expand the parks estate, and improve management effectiveness, but STAP is somewhat skeptical that this can all this be done with only \$4.1 m.

This proposed project focuses on protected areas and their surrounds, and seeks to address several threats to the country's biodiversity and ecosystems by focusing on creating an enabling environment for a national PA system, improved management of selected terrestrial and marine PAs, and integrated natural resource management (NRM) around parks to support livelihoods which are largely dependent on natural resources such as land, forests, wildlife, fish, etc. for their survival. The proposal would be considerably strengthened by the inclusion of maps to orient the reader and a reduction in the amount of acronyms, which detract significantly from the readability of the document.

STAP is encouraged to see that this is a straightforward protected area rehabilitation and extension project with laudable goals and project outlines. However, the actual design of the project is quite disordered. The wording of Outcomes and (especially) Outputs needs to be greatly shortened and simplified and the statements in the Project Description Summary need to be revised as they are unclear, long, and easily misinterpreted. The project logic is also confused, with weak prioritization of several Outputs, and some Outputs appearing under the wrong Components.

Under Component 1 (regarding enabling environment at the National level), STAP suggests that the Project Outcomes would be clearer as follows:

- 1.1 Protected Area Act and associated policies and statutory instruments completed.
- 1.2 Protected Area Expansion Plan developed and adopted.
- 1.3 Park plans and performance compared to plans reviewed (using METT and other instruments).
- 1.4 Park financing requirements established and financing plan developed.
- 1.5 Staff capacity developed experientially by implementing the above, with high quality mentoring and monitoring of performance indicators.

While METT is a useful tool for monitoring at the global level, and should be used, it is not a good tool for national level management. National systems need to be more goal-oriented and sophisticated. Further, METT only measures ecosystem and socio-economic goals in a cursory manner, and much better local monitoring of habitat condition, wildlife numbers and trends, tourism income and satisfaction, and community well-being will be necessary for this project. The document is correct that effective financing is essential, but it is not convincing on how this will be achieved. This is likely to be challenging until there is significant recapitalization of Sudan's parks and a market and brand are developed, both of which are well beyond the scope of a single project.

STAP further questions the logic of Component 2. The Objective is improved management effectiveness of selected parks, but the Outputs refer to 2.1 participatory management (which is sensible, but not primary), 2.2 adjacent communities (which is Component 3), 2.3 multiple tools and 2.4 (which should also be Component 3.)

Output 2.3 is far too complicated and unprioritized. Surely it is better for each park to have a standardized park plan, perhaps in the form of a log-frame with five Components and associated indicators. For example:

1. Park protection and habitat/wildlife monitoring
2. Tourism and finance
3. Infrastructure and equipment
4. Communities and buffer zones
5. Management effectiveness (including staffing)

With regards to Component 3, STAP notes that it is weak and resorts to platitudes such as SLM and INRM with little or no technical basis. The demographic and institutional challenges to sustainable land management are substantial and will not be solved by tree-planting nurseries or 500 hectares of community range reserves, rotational grazing, or food baling. The underlying problem is tenure, and if this project is to be successful, STAP recommends addressing this issue directly if possible through one or two small pilots that are designed to fit Ostrom's eight principles for sustainable common property regimes.

In general, STAP notes that many of the problems described by this project are underpinned by a lack of security and the looming threat of conflict between various groups such as herders and farmers. The GEF does not specifically address the issue of environmental security; however it is clear from this project that achieving global (and local) environmental benefits is predicated on the secure access to food, water, and land by various competing groups. Conflict is listed in two of four potential project risks in Section 4 with preventive measures focused on avoiding certain areas and creating committees. However, given the prevalence of tension described in the project and past large-scale conflicts such as Darfur, it would be more prudent to address conflict and environmental security explicitly as key threats which are integrated more directly into the components in order to increase the likelihood of success. For example, the project could make use of existing tools geared toward projects occurring in conflict-prone areas. See USAID conflict assessment and analysis tools, etc. (<https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications>). UNDP also has developed methods for analysis for projects with conflict dimensions (<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/conducting-a-conflict-and-development-analysis.html>). Also, in terms of climate change risk, the preventative measures listed are vague (tap into NAPA and NAP projects?)

In terms of stakeholders, many are listed. However, a major omission is the owners of large, rain-fed mechanized agriculture, which has a significant impact on the landscape and has been the source of conflict with other groups such as small farmers and pastoralists (Trigg et al., 2012).

In sum, STAP strongly supports the intent of this project, including a legal environment for parks, park expansion plans, park management, and buffer zone communities. However, STAP considers that the likelihood of success will be greatly improved by simplifying and clarifying the Project Summary and therefore recommends that it is carefully rewritten so that statements are unambiguous, and the project logic is consistent and logical.

References:

Trigg, S. Dempewolf, J., Elgamri, M., Justice, C. and V. Gorsevski (2012) Fire and land use change heighten tensions between pastoral nomads and mechanized farmers in Kordofan and White Nile States, Sudan, *Journal of Land Use Science*, 7:3, 275 – 288.

<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>