

# 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 09, 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:	9575
PROJECT DURATION:	3
COUNTRIES:	Sudan
PROJECT TITLE:	Sudan Sustainable Natural Resources Management Project- Additional Financing
GEF AGENCIES:	World Bank
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Physical Development (MoENRPD)
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 acknowledges the project entitled "Additional Financing Sudan Sustainable Natural Resources Management Projects" submitted by the World Bank. The project objective is to increase the adoption of sustainable land and water management (SLWM) practices in targeted landscapes of selected States of Sudan. The document provides a strong and detailed background, covering the country, sectoral, and institutional context. Following this, the project rationale begins well, addressing sustainability of land and water management through a community-based approach. However, the way in which this will actually be accomplished is never explained, even though the document states that all levels of government are "overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of the problems confronting production and conservation landscapes".

Therefore, while STAP feels that the project objective is laudable and background information is comprehensive, in the absence of clearly explained outputs, outcomes and indicators, it is not possible to determine if this project is actually feasible. As it currently stands, the project consists largely of a long list of potential technical (and institutional?) interventions, but lacks a theory of change, lacks clear identification of risks, and fails to define the Global Environmental Benefits or the scientific or technical basis of the many proposed interventions. Essentially, the project states that the task is over-whelming, yet fails to describe a clear approach to addressing the task.

In addition to these general comments, STAP has the following specific observations and questions:

1. There is no scientific justification provided for any of the proposed interventions. They are simply listed in very general terms. Climate adaptive activities. Drought resistant seed varieties. Poultry. Fish varieties. Water harvesting/spreading techniques. Diversified crop and livestock breeds, Energy conservation technologies, Food processing and preservation and on and on. What is the evidence base for what works, by how much, under what conditions, etc.? Also, desertification in savannas and drylands is largely a result

of damage to the grass layer and subsequent deterioration of rainfall retention and plant-available-moisture. Grass is never discussed, with the focus being largely on trees. Is this sensible in drylands?

2. The risks outlined for this project are not listed. Instead, the document merely states that "implementation risks are minimized overall due to the existing well-established institutional arrangements and capacities built under the SSNRMP." This is not supported by facts, metrics, lessons learned, or any technical information.

3. Related, conflict is described as a major issue in the context sections of this project including current competition over ownership and access to natural resources, between pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and settled farmers contributing to a "localized, conflict-prone environment where violence easily erupts in the context of weak institutions. (p. 2)" 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. Given the prevalence of tension described in the project and past large-scale conflicts such as Darfur, it would be more prudent to explicitly address conflict and environmental security as key threats which are integrated more directly into the components in order to increase the likelihood of success. 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>). Or see the World Bank Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF): Identifying Conflict-Related Obstacles to Development (Shardesai, 2002).

4. In terms of knowledge management STAP feels that despite claims that this project learns from previous projects, no technical evidence of successes is provided, nor lessons learned.

In sum, STAP feels that as written, it is unlikely that the outputs listed in this project will contribute to the outcome. The project proposes \$1 m for policy/institutions, \$3.57 m for a list of activities related to community based sustainable management of rangelands, forests and land degradation and \$0.93 m for project management, monitoring and evaluation. However, no theory of change is provided, just a list of about twenty technical interventions. The most promising of these is "strengthened ownership" for communities, but this only occurs through participation in tree planting.

#### References:

Shardesai, S. and P. Wam (2002). The Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF): Identifying Conflict-Related Obstacles to Development. Social Development Notes; No. 5. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/11335> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

<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 full project brief for CEO endorsement.</p>
<b>3. Major issues</b>	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major

<p><b>to be considered during project design</b></p>	<p>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>
--	--