

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: 7 October 2009

Screener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Mary Seely

I. PIF Information

Country/Region: Tunisia

Project Title: Tunisia: Ecotourism and Conservation of Desert Biodiversity

GEFSEC Project ID: 4035

GEF Agency Project ID: GEF Agency: World Bank

GEF Focal Area (s): Multi Focal Area

GEF-4 Strategic Program (s): BD-1; BD-2;LD-1

Full size project GEF Trust Fund

II. STAP Advisory Response (see table below for explanation)

1. Based on this PIF screening, STAP's advisory response to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency(ies):
Consent

III. Further guidance from STAP

2. STAP welcomes the World Bank's proposal on "Ecotourism and Conservation of Desert Biodiversity" in Tunisia. STAP's observations are as follows:
 - a. STAP's main observation is that the "main issues/constraints" are not detailed explicitly. Further information on each constraint would help understand better the reasoning for each project intervention. For example, the proposal contains little detail of the problems to be addressed, including extent and type of land degradation, status and challenges with respect to biodiversity and protected areas. Furthermore, no baseline is provided against which implied cross-cutting interventions can be measured. The programmatic framework does not provide details at the country level; thus, it reinforces the notion that during the next steps of project development the main challenges on sustainable ecotourism and desert biodiversity conservation in Tunisia should be articulated.
 - b. The PIF also seems to provide an ambitious list of global environment benefits without specifying how these benefits will be measured and tracked. For example, one of the expected global environment benefits is soil and water conservation (SWC), but no details are provided on what SWC technologies will be used, or what methods will be used to estimate the expected increase in soil carbon stocks. Similarly, the project aims to conserve the globally significant desert biodiversity in Tunisia, but few details about the ecosystem (status of the desert biodiversity) are presented in the proposal.
 - c. It is unclear what sustainable land management practices (SLM) and water efficiency measures will be promoted through extension services. More details on these practices would be useful, including how local knowledge will form part of the SLM + water extension services, and how extension services can be gender disaggregated so that SLM innovations from women farmers are recognized.
 - d. Monitoring and evaluation, with clear problem baselines and associated outputs, need to be further elaborated beyond standard evaluations offered.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	STAP acknowledges that on scientific/technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasising any issues that could be improved and the proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time

	during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
2. Minor revision required.	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific/technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. One or more options that remain open to STAP include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues (ii) Setting a review point during early stage project development and agreeing terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review <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 revision required	<p>STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical omissions in the concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. Normally, a STAP approved review will be mandatory prior to submission of the project brief for CEO endorsement.</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>