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: October 03, 2012 Screener: Christine Wellington-Moore

Panel member validation by: Hindrik Bouwman
Consultant(s):

I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*
FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID: 4886
PROJECT DURATION : 4
COUNTRIES : Regional (Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mali, Mauritius, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Congo DR)
PROJECT TITLE: Continuing Regional Support for the POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention in the Africa Region
GEF AGENCIES: UNEP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: UNEP/DTIE Chemicals Branch together with Environmental Toxicology and Quality Control Laboratory, Mali and University of Nairobi, Chemistry Department, Nairobi, Kenya
GEF FOCAL AREA: POPs

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): **Consent**

III. Further guidance from STAP

The project focuses on "strengthen(ing) capacity for implementation of the revised Global Monitoring Plan in the Africa region and create the conditions for sustainability of the networks", acting as a follow up to the first phase of the support to laboratories to enhance their skills and capacity to detect and monitor POPs in the environment.

Comments on the General Approach of the PIF/project

This PIF project framework is clear enough for the most part in explaining what the project hopes to achieve. However, when one moves into the text of the PIF (Section B.1), one has to sift through a lot of extraneous information to determine project baseline, and what was left undone/problematic in the last phase of the project. As a result, the incremental reasoning of Section B2 suffers, since it is difficult to clearly correlate the summarised baseline points with new intended mitigative action. Similarly, one could generate a more concise set of risks and risk mitigation strategies for section B4, and there would be more confidence overall that this phase of GMP support will not repeat past mistakes and that the new approach is sound. For some shortfalls one can easily correlate the new corrective action, but it is hard to pin point the response to each. The risks lack similar development. So for example will the 250% standard deviations associated with POPs data from true samples be addressed? How can it be ensured that there is a way to consistently identify those analytic challenges for the new POPs, recognising that in the previous phase, no West African countries were able to analyze dioxins and furans? Indeed the risks section states that the POPS laboratories overall have not been able to perform satisfactorily at the end of phase 1. In this case, are they ready for additional POPs monitoring under this project?

Therefore, in the eventual project document, it would be useful if the issues noted above could be addressed succinctly, with a crisp, systematic analysis of summarised baseline elements (including what was left undone/problems encountered in the first project), then a proposed set of incremental actions for each, followed by an analysis of related risks, and mitigation strategies.

Another element that is missing from the project is how conditions for sustainability of networks can be improved. Any government lab will require buy-in from decision-makers to understand the importance of the work being done, and how it can feed into national issues of development, human and environmental health. It is upon this basis that most labs (even some private ones that may rely on government based work) derive funding support. Regulatory/legislative demand generally drives the activity of environmental and other standards laboratories. The emphasis of the utility of

the POPs monitoring data in the PIF is solely to the Stockholm Convention. But Convention-realted activity alone will sustain a standards testing lab post project. Line Ministries at the centre of Health and (Economic) Development will have far more influence on providing ongoing support to the continued operation of labs and ensuring the capcity built during the project. Therefore, it would be useful if the Project Framework included an element that would help generate outreach and buy-in to key national players to demonstrate the importance of the POPs monitoring to national development (e.g. one could highlight the impact of POPs on food and feed safety, and how this translates to economic losses, trade etc.). If this is not done, the GMP could be seen as marinal and academic with little hope for long-term sustainability.

In order to address the lont-term sustainability issue comprehensively, consideration could be given to prioritizing analytes that should be done by laboratories in countries and regions that have shown levels of concern for certain POPs based on the 1st round. It seems that aldrin and endrin were below detection limits, and mirex and toxaphene were found at very low levels. HCB could be maintained given that sources still exist. The need to maintain adequacy for these â€˜low-concern' compounds (also considering that there is no known manufacture of aldrin, endrin, toxaphene, or mirex anymore) could therefore be evaluated by the region, and laboratory supported efforts concentrated on compounds that were identified as of concern from the first round. Adequate analytical resources remain available in the participating laboratories in Europe as a check on compounds that are difficult to analyse and/or present only at very low levels.

Similarly, the next round could also see a check on which of the newer POPs are of concern in the region. Air, sediments, and breast milk may not be the best matrixes to look for PFOS as they generally occur at very low levels (although some of the related compounds might be), and a careful deliberation may be needed on how to include PFOS as a compound. PBB might also need some consideration as there is no known production at this time.

Both these considerations will support sustainability, as countries and laboratories may not be willing to support unnecessary capacity for compounds not deemed a problem.

Specific Points to Aid Clarity

Page 6: There is no such thing as "fresh" p,p'-DDT (although the meaning is clear) â€“ best would be to use â€˜parent compound' we suggest.

Page 7: Para 6. Suggest reworking of first sentence which now reads: "In order to determine the "true" concentration of (here) POPs in a sample, a chemical laboratory must be able to prove that it is capable to (sic) identify and quantify chemicals (=analytes) of interest at concentrations of interest".

This is a necessary project, but an improved approach to mitigating past failures needs to be addressed through a more systematic approach to identifying baseline problems, incremental reasoning and risk analysis.

STAP advisory response	*Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed*
1. Consent	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasizing any issues where the project could be improved. Follow up: The GEF Agency is invited to approach STAP for advice during the development of the project prior to submission of the final document for CEO endorsement.
2. Minor revision required.	STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development. Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency: (i) GEF Agency should discuss the issues with STAP to clarify them and possible solutions. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the GEF Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP's recommended actions.
3. Major revision required	STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design. Follow-up: (i) The Agency should request that the project undergo a STAP review prior to CEO endorsement, at a point in time when the particular scientific or technical issue is sufficiently developed to be reviewed, or as agreed between the Agency and STAP. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP concerns.