

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: February 17, 2014

Screeners: 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: 5532

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Regional (Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe)

PROJECT TITLE: Disposal of PCB Oils Contained in Transformers and Disposal of Capacitors Containing PCB in Southern Africa

GEF AGENCIES: UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Africa Institute (Basel Convention and Stockholm Convention regional centre) in cooperation with UNEP/DTIE

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 objective is stated as: "To reduce environmental and human health risks from PCB releases through the demonstration of a regional approach to the introduction of cost-effective and socially acceptable environmentally sound management (ESM) of PCB oils, equipment and wastes held by electrical utilities and other PCB owners in participating countries."

The PIF is in support of the development of a project that will help Southern Africa countries to meet the Stockholm Convention 2028 deadline for the environmentally sound final disposal of PCBs. The project is innovative for a number of reasons. First, it seeks a harmonised regional effort to centralize dismantling, draining and accumulation of PCB oils/equipment for disposal. However it is also valorizing reclaimable materials to offset treatment costs, critical due to the economies of scale of the operation. It also will be endeavouring to keep as many of the steps of the disposal process in the region to build capacity and provide employment, as well as keep the costs of service lower. As such, the project will not only be evaluating the efficacy and effectiveness of tools and intervention strategies, but also ways to minimise cost for ESM in low volume countries/regions.

STAP's comments:

a) There should be some assessment of climate and geography-related risks, particularly for the island countries involved. Unless they have hydro-electricity, they may likely be using oil to generate electricity, and so electrical facilities are near the shore with storage of PCB equipment near waterways and the near shore, making coastal flooding events a greater risk, for example. Table A.3 should have this item added.

b) Could there perhaps be risks associated with the final central site to aggregate the waste? How is the site to be selected? Is it to be donated by one government or other? Are there parameters to ensure that the site does not put key aquifers at risk in the event of accidental releases? Or perhaps human settlements or conservation areas?

c) Admittedly outside of the usual science and technology remit, there are some marked text inconsistencies. The last 3 paragraphs of the Cost-effectiveness and Gender dimensions section as seen on page 8, are repeated on page 10. In addition, on page 9 ("Sustainability"), there is a floating sentence as the second paragraph. Also, as M&E does feed into ensuring that there can be tracking of technical achievements and impacts from the project, it would be good to see where it would be supported by the budget. M&E is mentioned in the text, but a small point is that it is not costed in Table B of the PIF, though gathering of lessons does arise in Component 4.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
2. Minor revision required.	<p>STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development.</p> <p>Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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	<p>STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design.</p> <p>Follow-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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.