

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: May 10, 2013

Screeener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Anand Patwardhan; Brian Huntley
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT MULTI TRUST FUNDS

GEF PROJECT ID: 5380

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Haiti

PROJECT TITLE: Increasing Resilience of Ecosystems and Vulnerable Communities to CC and Anthropic Threats Through a Ridge to Reef Approach to BD Conservation and Watershed Management

GEF AGENCIES: UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Ministry of Environment

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 revision required**

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP acknowledges the UNDP's proposal "Increasing resilience of ecosystems and vulnerable communities to climate change and anthropic threats through a ridge to reef approach to biodiversity conservation and watershed management". The project objective is defined clearly, and the proposed interventions appear to consistently support it. The expected outcomes and outputs are realistic and the focus on three target landscapes is likely to allow up-scaling to other sites once methods and their application have been tested. The Panel is also pleased to see the thorough project description (including climate change projections in Haiti and the socio-economic characteristics of the target population), and the detailed analysis of the threats to biodiversity conservation and climate change resilience. In general, the proposal appears to address these threats through integrated approaches, including ecosystem based adaptation, that aim to generate multiple benefits – adaptation and global environmental benefits. However the ecosystem based adaptation (EbA) approach and additional cost reasoning is not as focused on adaptation as it could be, such that the EbA approach seems to be more about integrated land water resource management, and less so on how EBA could be used as a tool for reducing climate vulnerability. It is important to see the delineation and linkages between ecosystem resilience and socio-economic vulnerability to climate change. There will also need to be relevant indicator development. To strengthen further the proposal, STAP recommends addressing the following points during the proposal development –

1. The STAP encourages the project developers to rely on the following STAP advisory documents to support further the threat analysis on marine coastal zones – "Marine Debris as a Global Environmental Problem, Introducing a solutions based framework focused on plastic". 2011. STAP. The document is available at – <http://www.stapgef.org/international-waters>
2. The proposal recognizes the tremendous challenges to restoring ecosystem function and biodiversity in landscapes that have a long history of degradation, and within some of the poorest communities of the western hemisphere. Of particular importance is the interaction of climate and non-climate stresses, and the manner in which these linkages may change in the future. As mentioned earlier, the underlying socio-economic determinants of vulnerability need to be addressed in a manner that utilizes, and is supportive of ecosystem-based approaches. The human capacity challenges match the environmental constraints and thus the focused approach is strongly supported. STAP welcomes the emphasis on spatial planning and refers the project to the CBD/STAP document - Marine Spatial Planning in the Context of the Convention on Biological Diversity: A study carried out in response to CBD COP 10 decision X/29, Montreal, Technical Series No. 68, 44 pages.

3. Furthermore, STAP encourages UNDP to specify further its ecosystem based adaptation approach based on the spatial attributes of ecosystem services. This could potentially strengthen the design of the components in a way that better accounts for complementarities and trade-offs resulting from ecosystem processes. In particular, the spatial attributes of ecosystem services (where the services are generated and who benefits) could be useful in strengthening the interventions, and outcomes on ecosystem based adaptation. This framework may be useful, given the competing and multiple uses in the targeted watersheds and coastal zones. For further information on an approach targeting landscape services, the project developers may wish to consult the following resource – Syrbe, R. et al. "Spatial indicators for the assessment of ecosystem services: providing, benefiting and connecting areas and landscape metrics". Ecological indicators 21 (2012) 80-88.
4. Continuing on the element of ecosystem-based adaptation, it is important to clearly delineate two different situations – one where the primary objective is the enhancement / maintenance of ecosystem services (and thereby generate GEB's such as biodiversity conservation) in the face of climate change (i.e. "climate-proofing" of BD conservation measures) from a situation where ecosystem services are used to enhance the resilience of communities and socio-economic systems to climate change. Of course, in the latter situation, GEB's appear as a co-benefit, with climate change adaptation as the primary benefit.
5. The STAP cautions that regardless of the excellence of a project description, its success on the ground will be dependent on the capacity of local communities to respond effectively to the proposals presented. Capacity refers not only to technical capacity and political will, but also to absorptive capacity for the many interventions proposed. STAP therefore recommends that during PPG, careful assessment of all capacities within local communities be evaluated, and where possible – 'participation fatigue' be avoided by adopting a slow and incremental approach to implementation.
6. The STAP suggests detailing what target areas each component will focus on. Currently, the proposal appears to be more explicit in this regard for component 1 and its link to "The Tree Bays", and less so for component 2 and the remaining target areas.
7. The STAP appreciates the efforts made to define the reasoning for the additional cost, and identify the adaptation benefits. In particular, it is pleased to see the proposal aims to contribute to improve "the indices of ecosystem health and environmental services in key areas of ecosystems of importance for ecosystem based adaptation..." In this regard, STAP encourages UNDP to establish explicit links between how ecosystem health (restoration/conservation) has supported the provision of ecosystem services and reduced climate change vulnerability among the target populations. Doing so will contribute to strengthening the additional cost reasoning, and build the evidence on the effectiveness of ecosystem based adaptation.
8. Furthermore, STAP encourages the project developers to identify indicators to estimate and monitor adaptation benefits. Currently, how the adaptation benefits will be measured and tracked appears absent in the proposal. The identification and use of appropriate indicators assumes even more importance in the light of the aforementioned delineation between ecosystems resilience and socio-economic vulnerability to climate change. It is not sufficient to state that simply enhancing ecosystem resilience automatically reduces the socio-economic vulnerability. The causal mechanism needs to be fully spelt out, together with the right metrics to establish the linkages.
9. Similarly, STAP recommends defining indicators for the expected global environmental benefits on biodiversity conservation. The STAP welcomes the reference to the biodiversity tracking tool as a way to monitor the performance of the project. Nonetheless, it encourages UNDP to identify explicitly impact indicators in the project framework. This will assist in monitoring the effects of the interventions on the biodiversity global environmental outcomes.
10. In terms of climate risks, it is important to clearly distinguish between the risks in upland and mountain systems and risks in the coastal zone. While conceptually it seems to be a good idea to consider the entire chain from the upland to the coastal and on to the nearshore; more careful consideration of the different types of climate change risks (for example sea level rise vs. increased precipitation intensity and flooding) is important. At the same time, the socio-economic factors determining exposure and vulnerability are also quite different along the "ridge-to-reef". It would have been helpful if the PIF had reflected more clearly this differential vulnerability – on pages 7 – 9, for example.
11. Finally, the PIF suggests (page 13) that the baseline interventions will emphasize infrastructural interventions as compared to ecosystem-based approaches. However, if the baseline interventions are examined more fully, there appear to be many elements that are complementary or similar to the ideas in the proposed project. In such a situation, it may be better to position the current intervention as a modification of the baseline to generate multiple benefits, rather than a stand-alone set of interventions.

<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.