

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 31, 2017
Screener: Douglas Taylor
Panel member validation by: Ferenc Toth
Consultant(s): Blake Ratner

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

FULL-SIZED PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9766
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Chile
PROJECT TITLE:	Mainstreaming Conservation of Coastal Wetlands of Chile's South Center Biodiversity Hotspot through Adaptive Management of Coastal Area Ecosystems
GEF AGENCIES:	UNEP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Ministry of the Environment EM
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

1. STAP is generally supportive of this project, and especially of the concept of mainstreaming. This project, which is very challenging regarding barriers to policy reform and inter-sectoral coordination, is a useful and relevant addition to the suite of GEF projects currently under implementation in Chile. Past projects, including from the GEF, have shown that single sector interventions have limited chances of sustaining their investment, partly due to fragmented policy and regulation of the environment and partly with respect to weak ownership by key stakeholders. Although supportive, STAP has reservations about the title and objectives of the project, both of which lead to some doubt about the focus and the theory of change being presented; accordingly, by CEO endorsement stage, please respond to the following discussion and advice.
2. Logically, coastal area ecosystems should be managed with respect to their position within a whole catchment, and require integrated land and water management from source to sea, given that the coastal environment is affected by both upstream and maritime policies, decisions and management. Chile's entire national territory of coast to the west and mountains to the east faces the same challenges of achieving source to sea management, and the present project fits into this context with a suggested focus on wetlands at the coast.
3. The title of the project is considered by STAP to be misleading because it unduly focuses on wetlands as the primary target, while the project objective as presented in the PIF is much closer to the intent of the project. Therefore the proponents should consider an alternative title, for example: 'Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable landscape management within Chile's South Center Biodiversity Hotspot, through reformed coastal planning frameworks'.

4. The challenges, barriers and proposed solutions presented in the PIF are certainly valid arguments for work to reform all of the sectors involved in land and water management. However, regarding Component 3 dealing with demonstrator sites, STAP questions whether the outcomes proposed are achievable. As a demonstrator of how to reform current practices and to test the implementation of integrated socioeconomic and environmental development in important regions, the pilot sites need be capable of generating relevant evidence to show, in terms of recovery of biodiversity and selected ecosystem services, that the holistic approach suggested actually works. Crucially, the evidence base to be selected needs to be clearly policy-relevant, and that has not been demonstrated in the PIF. In the CEO endorsement proposal, clear targets regarding the actual sites chosen need to be declared and indicators proposed.

5. Given the very wide range of ministries involved in various aspects of coastal landscape policy setting and management, is the newly created Service for Biodiversity and Protected Areas (SBAP) going to have the convening power to catalyze change across the governance agencies at all scales? Clearly the actions proposed under Component 2 are the most important in this regard and STAP is not convinced that buy-in to the Wetland Action Plan will deliver the wider coastal impact sought. While the SBAP could thematically be the best coordinator for a project focusing on coastal wetlands, it may be too weak for this project as planned for two reasons: its focus and mandate is too narrow to coordinate the broad range of activities, and it is likely to experience growing pains in its initial years trying to establish itself in the institutional landscape and hierarchy. At a national level it is hard to see how, without pre-agreed terms of reference for an inter-ministerial committee, that a wetland focused case study will trigger far-reaching changes across line ministries. Please elaborate on how Component 2 will facilitate the necessary traction required, and revise the approach as necessary.

6. The fundamental need to arrive at a form of 'source to sea' planning and management system for Chile is at the root of the project. Accordingly the proponents are strongly advised to review the recent GEF/STAP advisory report 'A Conceptual Framework for Governing and Managing Key Flows in a Source-to-Sea Continuum', see <http://www.stapgef.org/conceptual-framework-governing-and-managing-key-flows-source-sea-continuum>, which offers a clear path from conceptualization to implementation, include attention to a theory of change. The present proposal needs a much clearer and more tightly focused strategy; without it, much effort will have been expended with the risk, in STAP's opinion, of failing to achieve lasting impact.

7. STAP recognizes the good baseline research that has been conducted towards project preparation and the coordination proposed with relevant projects and lessons to be learnt. Coordination would also be desirable with the newly developed project application to the GEF by FAO: 'Strengthening management and governance for the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity in coastal marine ecosystems in Chile'. This project would work in a complementary and partly overlapping coastal landscape, seeking support from local government, and has potentially useful synergies involving environmental management processes to offer regarding the present proposal.

8. STAP finds the knowledge management plan to be rather underdeveloped. First, the flow of existing and newly generated information between the wide range of participating institutions across levels from local to national is key, and the related mechanisms need to be carefully designed. Second, a project possibly producing a lot of new knowledge in various domains that is likely to be usable elsewhere would need clear plans for disseminating it to various audiences. Given the intent to draw upon pilot landscape experiences to influence broader institutional and policy reform, it will be important to specify how different actors not directly involved in pilot site implementation will be engaged in these learning processes.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Concur	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.
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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, and possibly agreeing to terms of

	<p>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>
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	<p>STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major 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>