

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: March 14, 2016
Screener: Thomas Hammond
Panel member validation by: Brian Child
Consultant(s): Douglas Taylor

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT	GEF TRUST FUND
GEF PROJECT ID:	9233
PROJECT DURATION:	5
COUNTRIES:	Turkey
PROJECT TITLE:	Addressing Invasive Alien Species Threats at Key Marine Biodiversity Areas
GEF AGENCIES:	UNDP
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Turkish Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs/General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks
GEF FOCAL AREA:	Biodiversity

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

STAP welcomes this proposed initiative, which is a well-structured project, targeting marine invasive alien species (IAS) in Turkey's globally important marine ecosystems. Considerable effort has been expended researching baseline data on the ecological context and relevance of IAS within this PIF. The overall problem statements and strategy to address barriers is well-described. Accordingly the PIF is a good basis for design of the proposed project that aims to reduce the impact of IAS.

While the project framework appears logical, however, there is not a single reference or evidence provided as to whether these interventions have succeeded/failed in the past. It is impossible to judge if the approaches suggested are speculative or tried and tested. Therefore the full project proposal should review and refer to similar actions that have been implemented elsewhere, particularly drawing from the growing number of completed and ongoing GEF projects that address IAS, associated regulations and management measures.

As detailed in the text below, the PPG/ProDoc needs to specifically address key issues such as what "2.3 engagement with the shipping industry" and "2.4 increased knowledge and awareness" really mean in operational terms as it does so well with 2.1 and 2.2. Similarly, the PPG needs to address risk more carefully, and also the question of sustainability and scaling, as a \$3.3 project aimed at the challenge of over 450 alien invasive species on over 8,592km of coastline is optimistic. Finally, better and more specific indicators are needed in the Project Description than merely mentioning GEF tracking tools. Thus realistic output and outcome targets for intervention action need to be more narrowly defined within the work proposed. STAP welcomes the tighter focus on fewer areas within the revised PIF, but the full project proposal should consider carefully a theory of change informed by relevant experience from similar initiatives.

The best IAS surveillance and control measures, of course, can be undermined by lack of national and transboundary information sharing and lack of use of early warning systems. The project design should consider not only how it will draw upon existing experience and knowledgebases (such as the global invasive species database, already mentioned in the PIF, EASIN and DAISIE – see References) but also contribute to these in order to maximize the potential for scaling up and impact. For example, within the Mediterranean region the MedPAN offers well-researched tools (e.g. see Otero, et al, 2013) and collaboration mechanisms regarding IAS prevention and management in protected areas. STAP encourages proponents to use existing databases and information management tools wherever possible before building unique datasets, and consider appropriate interoperability standards. Within the KM section of the full proposal these aspects should be set out clearly and referenced within the body of the proposal.

With this said, this is a strategically important and well conceptualized project that begins to address the serious problem of IAS in Turkey. It will reveal important lessons, and will need to be managed adaptively. It also cannot on its own complete the job and will need to be followed up with additional activities that hopefully can be based on experience developed through this highly worthwhile investment.

References:

DAISIE European Invasive Alien Species Gateway. <http://www.europe-aliens.org>

European Alien Species Information Network. <http://easin.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

Otero, M., Cebrian, E., Francour, P., Galil, B., Savini, D. 2013. Monitoring Marine Invasive Species in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs): A strategy and practical guide for managers. Malaga, Spain: IUCN https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/guide_on_monitoring_invasive_species_in_amp.pdf

<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: (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 reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review. 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.
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	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: (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. The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP’s concerns. 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.

