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STAP: ROSTER OF EXPERTS

(Prepared by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel)

STAP: roster of experts

1. Under its terms of reference, STAP is responsible for establishing and maintaining a roster of experts whose job it is to assess the scientific and technological soundness of all projects above \$1 million, and enabling activities above \$450,000, prior to submission to the GEF Council.
2. This paper reports on:
 - i. the establishment of a new STAP roster of experts; and,
 - ii. an evaluation of reviews undertaken by STAP roster experts.

New roster

3. The Second Overall Performance Study recommended inter alia that “the STAP roster needs major pruning and upgrading”. STAP in close consultation with the GEF Secretariat and Implementing Agencies, undertook a comprehensive exercise to improve the quality of expertise on the roster, and to ensure that experts were available in the new programme areas – POPs and land degradation, and the emerging priority of biosafety.
4. The Panel reviewed the expertise of the 388 experts on the roster experts to assess how well an expert’s scientific and technical capabilities fitted what GEF projects required. It was decided to delete 94 experts (24%), and to re-invite the remainder: 50% of those re-invited experts (147) did not reply, and some experts declined to be reappointed for reasons of lack of time, and under-utilization of their expertise.
5. A new roster was established on 1 November: it contains 252 names (102 new). This provides a sufficient number of experts (40% represent new blood) in all areas, except land degradation (5 nominations under review) where more nominations are needed.
6. The current distribution of expertise is as follows (see Annex 1): 25% climate change; 23% biodiversity; 21% international waters; 13% POPs; 9% in the multiple focal area; 6% in biosafety; and 3% in land degradation. 40% of experts are from developing countries. By focal area, experts from developing countries represent: 49% climate change; 40% international waters; 35% POPs; 36% biodiversity; 27% multiple focal area; and 14% land degradation. In biosafety, 56% of experts are from developing countries. (see Annex 2).¹

¹ Classification for developing and developed countries is based on the United Nations System. Developed regions and countries are defined as Europe, Japan, United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Source for classification criteria: http://millenniumindicators.un.org/unsd/mifre/mi_worldregn.asp

7. A comprehensive review of the roster be undertaken after the next GEF replenishment. In the meantime, Panel members, Implementing Agencies, and the GEF Secretariat can bring forward nominations for consideration by the Panel at any time.

Evaluation

8. Under STAP's operational guidelines for the roster, an evaluation of the quality of reviews is undertaken each year.
9. Task Managers were requested to complete a questionnaire for each project which asked, in particular, about: the contribution a review made to strengthening the scientific and technical elements of a project; a grading for each review; and issues addressed well or poorly. The questionnaire also asked Task Managers about the suitability of experts for the roster, and how to strengthen reviews, and improve the quality of the roster.
10. The results were as follows:
 - 65 of the projects submitted to the Council at its October 2002 and May 2003 meetings were subjected to a review by a STAP roster expert.
 - UNDP (32 projects), World Bank (21), UNEP (9), ADB (1), EBRD (1), and UNIDO (1) – see Annex 3. (No evaluations were received for 3 projects.)
 - Three-quarters of the projects were either for biodiversity or climate change. (Biodiversity (40%); Climate Change and Ozone Depletion (35%); Multiple Focal Area (12%); International Waters (7%); and, POPs (4%)².)
 - In total, 61 experts were used, less than the number of projects because some reviewers were used more than once; and some projects used more than one reviewer. (One climate change reviewer was used six times by the World Bank and UNDP.)
 - Some 81% of the reviewers for projects were from developed countries – see Annex 4: biodiversity (70%), climate change (90%), POPs (66%) and international waters (100%).
 - But 57% of multiple focal area projects were reviewed by experts from developing countries.
11. Task Managers were asked to rate reviews:
 - Excellent: 9%. (Reviewers were attributed with sharpening the scientific and technical soundness of the project by providing a comprehensive, critical, and constructive review. In particular, the

² Figures do not total 100% due to rounding off.

reviewers' analytical skills, depth of knowledge in the focal area, and in the project's geographical region was recognized.)

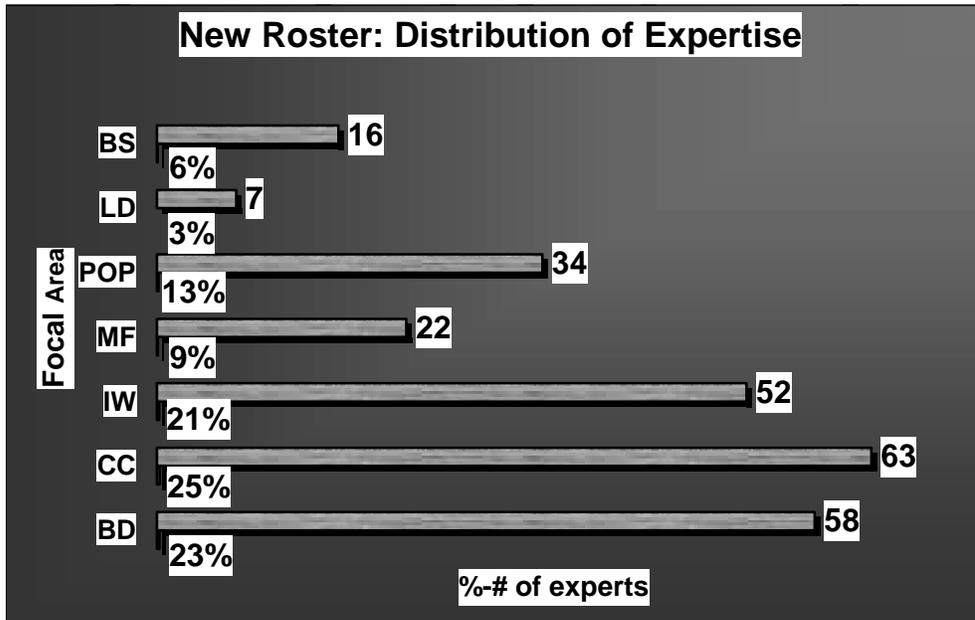
- Very Good: 52%. (Reviewers were commended for strengthening the scientific and technical qualities of the project, and encouraging greater specificity on incremental costs. The reviewers' input was considered critical in clarifying the project concept, and its feasibility.)
- Good 26 %
- Adequate 8%
- Poor 4%³. (There were three poor reviews: one involved an expert, not on the roster, who failed to review a UNDP biodiversity project; in the second, a reviewer of a World Bank multiple focal area project, appeared to lack knowledge of drylands in the project's geographical area; and in a third the expert was reviewed poorly due to lack of knowledge of the GEF.)

12. In summary, 86% of projects were rated as good (or better), and 69% of projects Task Managers said that reviews had strengthened the scientific and technical quality of the project; this was especially so for climate change and biodiversity projects. (Even so 15% of reviews are regarded as less than good, and a third of the reviews were not regarded as having strengthened S&T quality.)
13. Some experts, particularly new ones, were reported to be weak on linking projects to GEF requirements, e.g., on global environmental benefits, and on incremental costs. There were also comments about some reviewers lacking knowledge about the region.
14. Many reviews contained relatively little about science and technology, because no particular issues were raised, or they were familiar – by contrast, there was plenty of comments on stakeholder capacity, incremental costs, and socio-economic aspects.
15. There is widespread agreement that reviews come too late in the project process to have other than a marginal effect. OPS2 was concerned that the function was seen as an obligatory, if sometimes meaningless check-off. OPS2 therefore suggested that experts could contribute more if their role were more participatory and consultative than judgmental, and if the S&T perspective were provided at an early, conceptual stage of project design, (rather than just before submission to the Council for approval) with continuing feedback (as needed) through the project cycle.
16. In the light of this evaluation, the Panel decided at its October meeting that new operational guidelines should be drawn up which:

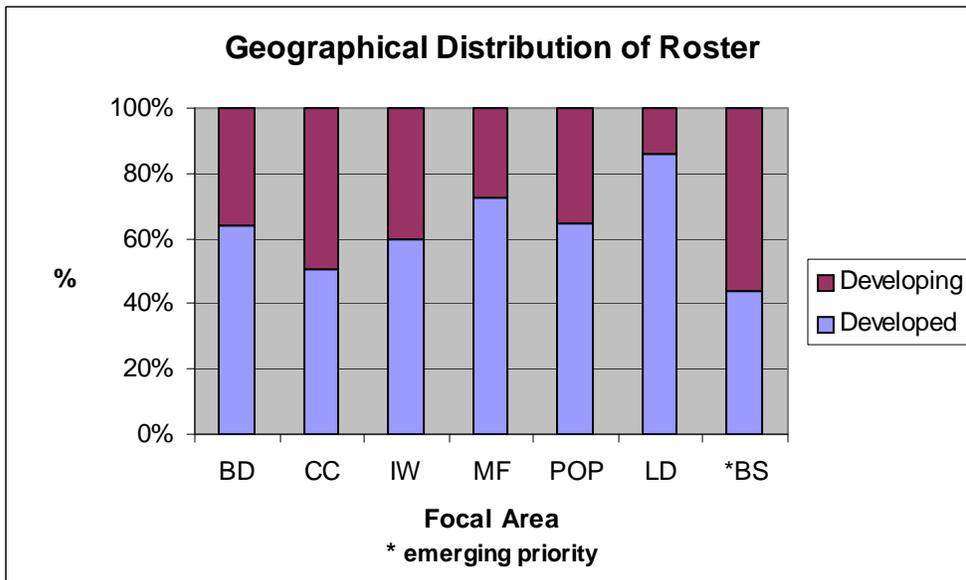
³ Ibid.

- i. Allow for reviews to be undertaken earlier in the project cycle at the pipeline entry stage for projects with scientific and technical elements that are particularly broad or cross-focal in scope, complex, innovative, or that address an area that is new to the GEF (e.g., POPs, Biosafety, OP12, OP15) to strengthen the scientific and technical quality of the project. Roster reviews at the concept stage should be considered more as advisory than as quality control.
- ii. Allow for the use of two Roster reviewers for projects with scientific and technical elements that are particularly broad or cross-focal in scope, complex, or innovative.
- iii. Ensure that new roster experts are briefed about the GEF and its operations before undertaking reviews.
- iv. Advise Implementing Agencies that if they wish to use an expert who is not on the roster, for example to tap into a particular sort of expertise, then they should seek agreement from the Panel before doing so.

Annex 1: Distribution of Expertise



Annex 2: Geographical Distribution of the Roster



Annex 3: Number of projects and number of experts used per Implementing Agency

UNDP	Number of Projects	Number of Experts
Biodiversity	13 (2)	13
**Climate Change	13	11
***Ozone Depletion	1	4
International Waters	2	2
****Multiple focal area	2	1
POPs	1	1
Total	32	32

Differences between number of projects and number of experts due to the following:

**Climate Change: 1 reviewer used 3 times.

***Ozone Depletion: Project reviewed by 4 (different) experts.

****Multiple focal area: 1 reviewer used twice.

() Projects jointly submitted with the World Bank and UNEP. Projects and STAP review counted under World Bank and UNEP.

Source: Questionnaire data.

World Bank	Number of Projects	Number of Experts
*Biodiversity	8	7
**Climate Change	8 (2)	5
International Waters	0(2)	0
Multiple focal area	4	4
POPs	1(1)	1
Total	21	17

Differences between number of projects and number of experts due to the following:

*Biodiversity: 1 reviewer used twice.

**Climate Change: 1 reviewer used 3 times (same reviewer used three times by UNDP), and a different reviewer used twice.

() Projects jointly submitted with UNDP, EBRD and UNIDO. Projects and STAP review counted under UNDP, EBRD and UNIDO.

Source: Questionnaire data.

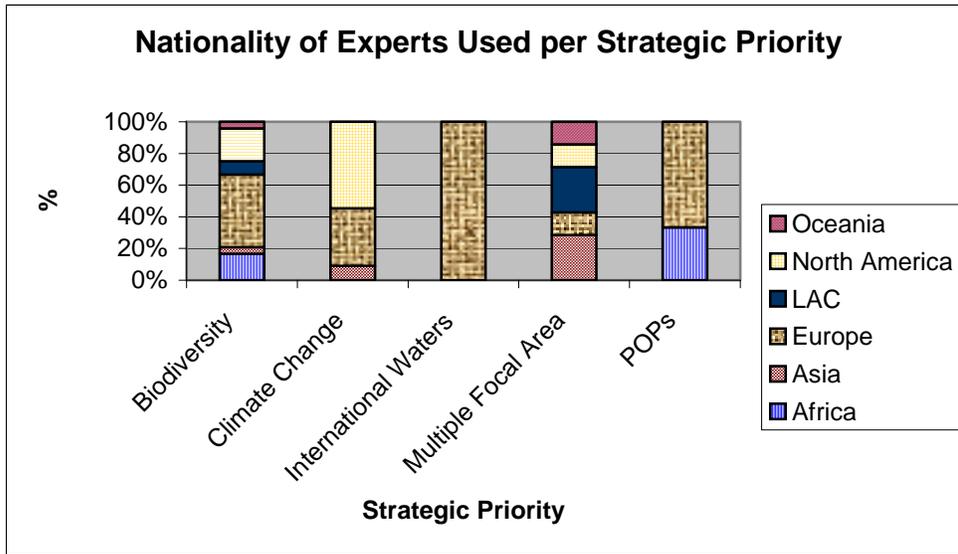
UNEP	Number of Projects	Number of Experts
Biodiversity	5	5
Climate Change	1	1
Ozone Depletion	0(1)	0
International Waters	2	2
Multiple focal area	1	1
POPs	0	0
Total	9	9

() Project jointly submitted with UNDP. Project and STAP review counted under UNDP.

Source: Questionnaire data.

Executing Agencies	Number of projects	Number of experts
ADB Total: Multiple Focal Area	1	1
EBRD Total: International Waters	1	1
UNIDO Total: POPs	1	1
Total	3	3

***Annex 4: Nationality of experts used per strategic priority**



*Asia: Excludes nationals from Japan.
 Source: Questionnaire data.