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IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STAP

DECISIONS BY STAP, THE GEF SECRETARIAT AND THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

(Prepared by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel)

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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The STAP was founded ten years ago, when the world, the role and expectations of the GEF, and Implementing Agencies' (IAs) scientific and technical needs and capabilities were very different than they are today. The GEF family has now committed to help reach the Millennium Development Goals by mobilizing international co-operation to protect the global environment in ways that promote sustainable development and create opportunities for the world's poor. In this situation it is not only critical for the GEF to achieve good projects on the ground with best science, but also to influence policies through those projects so that the value of GEF is not localised (through project outcomes) but institutionalised (through policy outcomes). As a result, today, more than ever, the GEF needs the best and most strategic scientific and technical advice possible to help optimise the use of scarce funds.

STAP, as it currently functions within the GEF system does not serve these needs as well as it could. The draft OPS 3 Report concludes that the STAP must be significantly refocused and improved. Meanwhile, the GEF4 Programming document indicates new directions and crystallises new challenges. The time is now right to make some changes to STAP to make it more relevant, efficient, responsive, and effective to meet GEF's pressing needs for scientific and technical advice.

Yolanda Kakabadse, who became the STAP Chair in January 2005, convened a retreat for STAP members, the GEF Secretariat and Implementing Agencies from 24 – 27 June 2005 in Papallacta, Ecuador to examine how better to deliver scientific and technical advice to the GEF. The retreat was characterized by honest, constructive deliberations, and openness to new ideas or options. There was also a resounding affirmation from the IAs about the urgent necessity for scientific and technical advice at varying levels and an expression of their willingness to adjust their operational processes necessary to enhance STAP's effectiveness. The retreat concluded that STAP, with a strong and empowered Secretariat, good linkages with the GEF Secretariat and the IAs, and a better managed implementation of the work programme could vastly improve its service delivery to the GEF.

Challenges and needs

- a) Providing strategic, forward looking advice on emerging issues of critical importance to the global environment, such as the interlinkages between focal areas, and linkages between environment and development issues including economic and social implications.
- b) Harnessing the broader expertise of the global scientific community to inform the GEF.
- c) Playing a more proactive role as an advisory body to suggest specific targeted research interventions based on country-driven perspectives.

- d) Ensuring that STAP's contribution to the project review process is flexible and responsive from the viewpoint of the IAs, but at the same time transparent, impartial and capable of reflecting state-of-the art scientific and technical knowledge.

Diagnosis

The STAP currently falls short both on developing and delivering the kind of strategic, forward-looking input needed, in part because of the lack of appropriate interaction, and also because of diverse expectations regarding what kind of strategic advice is needed at different levels (project, programme, general priorities). Although the Implementing Agencies and GEF Secretariat have staff with scientific and technical expertise, they are primarily focused on operational issues, and as a result there is still a gap with regard to GEF's needs for strategic and forward-looking inputs.

The Panel and its Secretariat needs to be well integrated into the world of the GEF if its products are to be useful and timely, and STAP is to be an effective part of the GEF system. This will require changes in the way STAP operates and also changes in the way in which the GEF Secretariat and Implementing Agencies relate to STAP.

Accordingly, STAP, the GEF Secretariat and Implementing Agencies have made the following decisions, consistent with the GEF Instrument and STAP's mandate:

DECISIONS BY STAP

- a. STAP will convene a periodic Science Forum to examine the broader context of Environment and Development and progress being made by the world on the issues reflected in the GEF focal areas. This Forum will be scheduled to enable STAP to advise on the broad orientation, priorities, strategies and cross-cutting issues for each subsequent GEF Programming Paper.
- b. STAP will evolve its work programme in the context of the GEF 4 Programming paper. It will give particular attention to the implications of the challenges and objectives presented therein and in the Plan of Implementation for the Millennium Development Goals and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and identify areas for targeted research.
- c. The challenges of the GEF 4 Programming Paper will require STAP members to work both within and across focal areas. STAP will continue to meet twice per year and will adopt working arrangements which are responsive to these challenges.
- d. In addition, STAP will convene ad hoc workshops, in addition to those relating specifically to the focal areas, to relate to the challenges of making linkages among the focal areas and achieving synergy in the implementation of the Conventions.
- e. The STAP will make a proposal to improve its scientific and technical inputs into the project review process for the June 2006 GEF Council meeting including the terms of reference for reviews, timing of reviews relative to the project cycle, composition and performance of the Roster of Experts.

DECISIONS BY GEF SECRETARIAT AND IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

- a. Selection of STAP members and composition of the Panel
 - i. STAP Chairperson will be included in the committee for selecting new members.
 - ii. STAP composition will reflect expertise in the natural and social sciences.. Its members will combine focal area expertise with a broad perspective on environment and development and will reflect regional and gender balance.
- b. STAP Secretariat
 - i. The STAP Secretariat will continue to be appointed and supported by UNEP.
 - ii. The Executive Director of UNEP will finalise arrangements for relocating its Washington based staff assigned to the STAP Secretariat, in the GEF Secretariat offices in the early part of 2006. The Executive Director of UNEP and the GEF CEO will work out an Agreement to make this possible.
 - iii. The STAP Scientific Coordinator (previously the STAP Secretary) will be a recognized scientist with a broad understanding of Environment and Development issues and administrative experience. UNEP will immediately prepare new TORs in consultation with the STAP Chair, GEF Secretariat, UNDP and the World Bank and make arrangements for the establishment of the position by early 2006.
 - iv. In programmatic matters, the Scientific Coordinator will report jointly to the STAP Chairperson and the Executive Co-ordinator of UNEP's Division for GEF. STAP Chairperson will also be consulted about the performance evaluation of the Scientific Coordinator.
- c. GEF Secretariat
 - i. The GEF Secretariat and the STAP Secretariat will continue to improve the arrangements for involving STAP members in its inter-agency Task Forces and for soliciting STAP inputs to GEF policies and projects.
 - ii. The GEF Secretariat will involve the STAP Scientific Coordinator and the scientific staff of the STAP Secretariat in relevant meetings.
- d. Implementing Agencies
 - i. Implementing Agencies will engage with the STAP through the inter-agency Task Forces and will establish other suitable mechanisms that provide for a closer working relationship and coordination.

STAP, the GEF Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies will begin implementation of these decisions immediately, and aim to have them substantially completed in early 2006.