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## REVISED PROCEDURES FOR THE STAP ROSTER REVIEW

(Prepared by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel)



# United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署  
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE  
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

## REVISED PROCEDURES FOR THE STAP ROSTER REVIEW

### I. Background

1. At the November 2005 GEF Council meeting, “The Council confirmed the high priority it assigns to the implementation of a plan to ensure the independence and transparency of the STAP roster and the experts’ reviews of projects as soon as possible. The Chair of STAP agreed to report to the Council meeting in June 2006 on the first results in improving the STAP roster.” (Joint Summary of the Chairs, GEF Council Meeting, November 8 – 10, 2005.)
2. In response to the Council’s request, the STAP Chair convened a meeting with the Executive Coordinators of the Implementing Agencies (IAs), the Director of the Evaluation Office (EO), the GEF Secretariat, and the STAP Secretariat on 30 January 2006 at UNEP’s Office in Washington, D.C.
3. The meeting agreed to the broad principles of an independent and transparent review process, where STAP, instead of the IAs, selects the roster reviewers for project reviews. The meeting was also in agreement that an independent review process (i) should not cause delay in the project cycle; (ii) should not require that new or additional project documentation has to be prepared; and (iii) that STAP has to allocate resources to ensure the effectiveness of the process, including time resources of the STAP Secretariat.
4. Following the meeting on 30 January, procedures for an independent selection of project reviewers from the STAP roster were prepared by STAP, for review at the STAP meeting on 4-6 April 2006, in Washington, D.C. The new review procedures, set out below were agreed and adopted by STAP, the Implementing Agencies and the GEF Secretariat at the STAP meeting in Washington, D.C.

### II. An independent and transparent STAP roster review: revised procedures

5. The revised procedures for an independent and transparent STAP roster review are as follows:
  - a. The selection of reviewers by STAP will occur at the approved concept stage.
  - b. The GEF Secretariat will send the list of approved concepts and concept documents to the STAP Secretariat as soon as the project pipeline is published.

- c. The STAP Secretariat will conduct an initial search of the roster for suitable reviewers on the basis of this documentation. Consequently, the STAP Secretariat will forward the search results and the concept documentation to the appropriate STAP members in a timely and effective manner, within one week from receiving the project pipeline and approved concepts.
- d. STAP members will select three roster reviewers for each concept, within two weeks of receiving the concepts, and inform the STAP Secretariat of the selection.
- e. If no suitable experts can be found in the roster, STAP members will search for and identify experts outside the roster, by tapping into their scientific networks. STAP will consider and decide whether to add the “approved outside expert” to the roster on a case-by-case basis.
- f. The STAP Secretariat will inform the Implementing Agencies of the selection of reviewers for each project proposal within three weeks from the time of receiving the list of approved concepts.
- g. STAP may also recommend the use of two, instead of one reviewer, if it deems that one reviewer cannot cover all the elements of the project with equal competence. In this case, STAP will identify two groups of three reviewers, with complementary expertise. STAP will develop clear criteria for each review.
- h. The IA will keep on file the reviewers’ names identified by STAP, and contact the reviewer(s) at the time the review is required.
- i. The IA will send a completed standard evaluation form for the review to the STAP Secretariat within two weeks of completion of the review.
- j. In the event that an IA disagrees with the selection of reviewers by STAP, the IA will propose, in writing, alternative reviewer(s) to the STAP Chair, and justify the preference for the alternative reviewers. The timeframe for submitting requests for alternative reviewers will be treated on a case-by-case basis by the STAP Chair. STAP will make the final decision on the selection of reviewers.
- k. The GEF Secretariat remains responsible for ensuring the roster review comments are addressed prior to CEO endorsement.
- l. STAP also agreed that for projects which are fast-tracked, and in case none of the recommended reviewers are available, solutions for the effective selection of reviewers would be created on a need basis.

### **III. Timing and focus of the roster review**

6. The role, focus, and timing of the review were also discussed at the STAP meeting (The STAP Secretariat prepared a “Note on role, focus, and timing of the STAP roster review” as a basis for discussion.). The distinction was noted between a review of a project prior to work program inclusion and early in the project development stage. There was broad agreement that the former is the role of the roster, and can be viewed as a technical quality stamp by STAP, while the latter has an advisory, and quality enhancing function. The latter could be fulfilled by the Panel, through the selective review mechanism. Separate Terms of Reference (TORs) would be required for an early review by the Panel. STAP agreed to develop criteria and modalities for early project reviews, in consultation with the GEF Secretariat, and the Implementing Agencies.
7. Furthermore, STAP and its partners agreed that further examination and discussion was needed on modifying the timing of the review from Work Program inclusion to an earlier phase in the project cycle. The GEF Secretariat and the Evaluation Office suggested this issue would be better addressed in the context of the EO-led Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities.
8. Therefore, STAP, the GEF Secretariat, and the EO agreed that the timing of the STAP roster review would remain the same – prior to Work Program inclusion. A STAP roster review prior to Work Program inclusion would continue to provide STAP’s technical quality stamp on projects.
9. STAP and its partners also agreed that the role and objective of the review should be reconsidered, taking into account the findings from the Joint Evaluation, with the view to revising the TORs for the STAP roster reviews. It was agreed that the current TORs, which date from 1995 and overlap to an extent with the technical review by the GEF Secretariat, need revision and re-focusing. Refocused TORs for the STAP roster review will be prepared by the STAP Secretariat in consultation with the Panel, the GEF Secretariat, the Implementing Agencies, and the Evaluation Office, in advance of the next meeting of STAP.