



# Global Environment Facility

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## STAP SUMMARY REPORT

**(Prepared by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel)**

# Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, administered by UNEP, advises the Global Environment Facility



## STAP Summary Report

1. This Report summarizes the work of the Science Panel during the period May 2008 to October 2008, and supports the presentation of the Chairperson of the Panel to the GEF Council meeting of November 11-13, 2008.

### Consolidation of changes to the Panel and its Secretariat

2. The Science Panel completed its recent cycle of approved reforms when the panel appointments took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008, resulting in a full Panel of six members, including the new Chairperson, Dr Thomas E. Lovejoy, which fully covers the advisory needs of the GEF when taking into account the increased support from the newly strengthened STAP Secretariat and also the revised modalities for obtaining additional expertise.
3. In accordance with the agreed reforms, the STAP Secretariat has now reached its full strength of four professional technical staff, based in UNEP's Regional Office for North America, Washington, DC, supported by one administrative support staff member co-located in Washington and a second, based in UNEP Nairobi, Kenya.

### STAP expertise, networks and the Roster

4. The reforms to the constitution of the Science Panel and the Secretariat having been completed, the next area to receive attention is the expertise base of the GEF. The STAP Roster database comprises a wide range of experts, CVs of whom were peer reviewed by the Panel before selection and inclusion within the Roster. The Roster, however, was created to support project reviews in the previous Project Cycle and GEF Agencies were expected to use a Roster expert to peer review Full-Size Projects prior to Council approval. In the new Project Cycle, early stage screening of project concepts direct by Panel Members has almost completely replaced late stage reviews, thus the Roster in its present form is deemed to be redundant.
5. The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel's experience of more than one complete year of operation of the new Project Cycle, which included a total of 7 Work Programs comprising Panel screening of 195 Full-Size Projects or Programmatic Approaches, has demonstrated that the current 'STAP Screening' of project and programmatic concepts is working well, with the advantage that the Council's appointed scientific advisors are directly involved in advising on the portfolios of projects, instead of indirectly, via the Roster, as was previously the case. In cases where the expertise of one or more Panel members requires augmentation, the Panel and STAP Secretariat have succeeded in locating suitable additional expertise, but only in a small minority of cases drawn from the existing Roster.
6. Accordingly in the September 2008 Science Panel meeting, the Panel, in discussion with the STAP Secretariat and GEF Agencies present, resolved to close down the Roster and to replace this source of expertise with one much more directly connected to external networks, including clusters of experts under the direction of Panel Members. This conforms to the model approved as part of STAP reforms, and increases the accountability of the Panel to the Council, and should also make more visible the sources of expertise available to the GEF as a whole, including name made public in the interests of transparency.
7. The STAP Secretariat will inform members of the Roster that their services will no longer be required, while invitations will be extended to selected Roster members whose skills and experience are suited to the changing role of STAP, and who may be eligible to include in a new experts and networks database.
8. Regarding the use of external expertise networks, the September meeting of the Panel also agreed to more systematically connect with the scientific subsidiary bodies of the GEF-related conventions and accepted an offer from UNEP to attend a meeting of secretariats of these bodies to agree specific

arrangements for future working.

#### Science Vision for GEF-5

9. As reported more fully in the Report<sup>1</sup> of the April 2008 Meeting of the Science Panel (previously provided to the Council), the Panel responded to an invitation from the CEO to contribute a Science Vision towards the development of strategic directions for GEF-5. The Panel convened working groups including sessions on a GEF science stock-take, achievements and current challenges within GEF-4 and science drivers of a vision for GEF-5. These sessions were informed by focal area and cross-cutting papers contributed by Panel Members who have produced a Science Vision for GEF-5, which is intended to provide a baseline for further work by Panel members within the Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) proposed by the GEF Secretariat<sup>2</sup>, and which is presented as an Information Paper to the November Council meeting.
10. In addition to the Science Vision for GEF-5, more detailed papers are available on the STAP website which provided insight into the evidence that the Panel have taken into account, including the use of 'mini-surveys' to capture a wide spread of scientific opinion from the networks maintained by the Panel.
11. At the September 2008 Panel Meeting, the draft Science Vision for the chemicals focal areas was reviewed by Panel Member Bo Wahlström and therefore this concludes this initial stage of the work of the Panel, prior to the convening of the TAGs by the GEF Secretariat in the near future. Further work is planned by each Panel Member to build a more detailed suite of input papers for use in TAGs combining demand-driven contributions with the Panel's own analysis of priorities for consideration.

#### STAP Work Program 2008-9

12. Also reviewed and updated at the September meeting of the Panel was its agreed Work Program (2008-2009), within which each proposed task had been peer reviewed within the GEF Focal Area Task Forces, with the exception of POPS/ozone that was later included following the September Panel meeting. All categories of the Panel's approved work are summarized in the Work Program, including the 'corporate' work on PIF screening and other work to support the project cycle.
13. A substantial part of the work in progress of the Panel concerns the development of advice to the GEF on the feasibility of resource allocation indicators for the four remaining non-RAF focal areas, as summarized in Information Paper GEF/C.34/Inf.5.
14. Other examples of work in progress include a Guidance paper on Payments for Ecosystems Services and a study of the evidence base for Community Forest Management. In the climate change focal area work is focused on examination of existing strategic objectives and the evidence base for change, on mitigation potential of land use and forest sectors and on the need for regional approaches.
15. More details can be found in the Work Program which is provided to the November Council meeting as an Information Paper.

#### Project cycle and the Panel's advisory work

16. The new project cycle has now been in operation since July 2007 and the Science Panel's experience is that on the whole that the main tool used to streamline project approvals, the Project Identification Form (PIF) is an adequate format for the GEF Agencies to identify proposed projects as concepts, outline the problem to be addressed, the proposed intervention and the GEBs to be delivered. The Panel has provided its views on the GEF Secretariat's paper 'Operation of the GEF Project Cycle Management Procedure: A Review' (GEF/C.34/Inf.4), however, there are a number of topics concerning the content of PIFs and fitness for purpose and expectations of the GEF bodies concerned that the paper does not cover.
17. Regarding the scientific and technical standards reached by GEF Agencies within PIFs, generally an adequate standard is reached, but many exceptions remain. Additionally in the period after CEO approval the development of project concepts from PIF form leading into submission of the full project

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<sup>1</sup> See: [http://stapgef.unep.org/docs/Activities/Meetings/April2008/Report\\_Apr2008.pdf](http://stapgef.unep.org/docs/Activities/Meetings/April2008/Report_Apr2008.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Focal Area Strategies and Proposed Strategic Programs for GEF-5: Process Proposal (GEF/C.33/Inf.7)

brief for CEO endorsement remains an undeveloped area for analysis. The Panel has compiled a set of topics for feedback to the GEF and this will be presented as a report to the GEF, which will also propose that design points including the relationship between project and programmatic design is considered for later reporting to the Council.

18. The next meeting of the Science Panel will be hosted in Rome by the FAO (April 29-30, 2009) and will be an opportunity, not only to finalize the Panel's proposed work for the following GEF financial year but also to review LULUCF and REDD topics, convene a network meeting for GEF-related expertise and review the progress made on the Panel's advice to the work of TAGs developing strategies for GEF-5. It will also be an opportunity to review strategic considerations and gaps e.g. the imbalances in the nitrogen cycle.