

GLOBAL
ENVIRONMENT
FACILITY

STAP RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR SELECTIVE REVIEW OF PROJECTS
(Prepared by STAP)

GEF Council Meeting
Washington, D.C.
July 18 - 20, 1995

GEF/C.5/7
June 27, 1995

RECOMMENDED DRAFT COUNCIL DECISION

The Council reviewed and approved the proposed criteria for the selective review of projects prepared by STAP (document GEF/C.5/7, *STAP Recommendations for Selective Review of Projects*).

1. The STAP is to play three related roles in the GEF: provide strategic advice on scientific and technical issues; conduct selective review of projects; and, manage the roster of experts. Regarding STAP's role in the project cycle, the Council decided that STAP through its roster of experts shall provide objective technical and scientific reviews of project proposals; STAP will also brief the Council on the work program in every meeting.
2. The Council discussion on the project cycle, in the meeting held on November 1-3, 1994, included STAP's role. The Council, in its third meeting in February, 1995, and fourth meeting in May, 1995, recalled its earlier request to STAP to prepare for Council approval criteria to guide the selective review of projects by STAP. The Council, in its fourth meeting in May, 1995, recognized that STAP has an important role to play with regard to scientific and technical evaluation.
3. STAP, in its meetings held on April 12-13, 1995, and June, 19 - 20, 1995, considered this issue in the light of the paper on the 'GEF Project Cycle' (GEF/C.4/7) which states that the criteria to guide the selective review of projects by STAP would be incorporated in the GEF Project Cycle; decisions in the Council and the Independent Evaluation of the Pilot Phase. STAP recommends for the consideration of the Council a framework as an integral part of on-going processes, (eg. Operational Strategies for the Project Cycle and Monitoring and Evaluation), rather than stand alone activities in order to be cost effective, as well as avoid duplication and delay.
4. The main elements of the framework proposed for selective review of projects by STAP include the stages in the project cycle when STAP would intervene, the role of STAP, the major outputs provided by STAP and the types of projects which could be reviewed by STAP itself.

PRINCIPLES

5. The framework for selective review of projects is based on the following principles:
 - (a) STAP would focus on its task to provide strategic advice to the Council related to the scientific and technical aspects of policies, strategies and programmes;
 - (b) STAP would primarily assess the scientific and technical aspects of the programme rather than the design of individual projects;
 - (c) STAP reviews of the scientific and technical soundness of projects would be integrated into the project cycle, be conducted in close cooperation with the Implementing Agencies and the GEF Secretariat and the roster of experts will be an important tool in this process;
 - (d) STAP would itself review projects only in exceptional circumstances, either on request or on its own initiative.

PROJECT CYCLE

6. STAP would provide strategic scientific and technical advice to the Council, GEF Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies in each phase of the project cycle. The interventions would be in

certain circumstances and at specific points in the project cycle, as given in the Terms of Reference of STAP. A summary of the major outputs is given below.

Report to Council on the work program

7. Project concepts discussed between Implementing Agency representatives and STAP members during the regular meetings of STAP and in the GEFOP would be an extremely cost effective method to generate and comment on new project ideas from a scientific and technical point of view. Significant issues/concerns in these deliberations would be reported to Council.

Report to Council on the development of the project portfolio

8. The report of the STAP to each meeting of the Council would provide an assessment of the scientific and technical reviews of projects by experts on the roster and the technical review processes of the Agencies, highlight innovative aspects, point to approaches and technologies that hold promise, provide recommendations for the further development of projects that cover more than one focal area and integration of national and global benefits in GEF interventions. The STAP report would provide an independent assessment to Council of the scientific and technical aspects of programs and projects.

Report to Council on program implementation and evaluation

9. STAP has an important role in advising the Council, Secretariat, and the Implementing Agencies on the methodology for evaluation, the objectives of special evaluation studies, indicators for assessing the global environmental impact of projects, programmes and strategies and their contribution to long term cost effectiveness of GEF activities. STAP is also available to provide scientific and technical guidance to the annual implementation review as well as studies, methodologies and indicators for the evaluation process, review their findings and provide a report to Council. The STAP report would provide independent strategic advice to Council on the environmental impact of the operational strategies.

Report to Council on the selective review of projects

10. STAP will report to each meeting of the Council the progress of its project review, including targeted research projects. The report would provide the opportunity for Council to share concerns related to these, or other projects, with STAP.

PROJECT REVIEW

Situations in which projects would be reviewed

11. STAP would itself review projects in exceptional circumstances:

- (a) projects specifically referred to it by the Council;

- (b) projects agreed to between the GEF Chief Executive Officer and the Chairperson of STAP; and
- (c) projects in which STAP itself decided to initiate the review.

Types of projects which could be reviewed

12. STAP could review certain types of projects, such as:

- (a) targeted research projects to improve GEF programmes and projects;
- (b) projects which are highly innovative in terms of science, technology and institutions or with significant elements of risk;
- (c) projects that cover more than one focal area, eg. projects that embrace climate, biodiversity and/or international waters; and
- (d) projects the Council or STAP believes have serious scientific and technical problems.

13. It is expected that such reviews by STAP would be of the order of 5% - 10% of all the projects.

14. STAP may seek the assistance of the external reviewer of the project (from the roster of experts) in its own selective review, particularly in continuing review of selected projects in Phase II and III of the Project Cycle.