

Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel



The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, administered by UNEP, advises the Global Environment Facility (Version 5)

STAP Scientific and Technical screening of the Project Identification Form (PIF)

Date of screening: 15 Oct 2009

Panel Member Screener: Meryl Williams

Panel member support by: Douglas Taylor

I. PIF Information

Full size project **GEF Trust Fund**

GEF PROJECT ID: 3900

PROJECT DURATION: 37 months

GEF AGENCY PROJECT ID: 4219

COUNTRY(IES): Global

PROJECT TITLE: GEF IW:LEARN: "Strengthening IW Portfolio Delivery and Impact.

GEF AGENCY(IES): UNDP, UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNER(S): UNOPS, UNESCO, GWP-MED

GEF FOCAL AREA (S)¹: International Waters

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAM(S): Cross-cutting IW SP 1, 2, 3, 4

NAME OF PARENT PROGRAM/UMBRELLA PROJECT (if applicable):N/A

II. STAP Advisory Response (*see table below for explanation*)

1. Based on this PIF screening, STAP's advisory response to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency(ies):
Major revision required

III. Further guidance from STAP

2. STAP accepts the logic that KM and synthesis work needs to be resourced and the IW Learn approach has been useful in this regard, especially in the absence of a GEF-wide KM strategy and approach that leaves each focal area to develop its own learning mechanisms.
3. The logic that a successful previous phase compels consideration of a follow on project is not correct. The follow-on should be needs driven and future directed. In this regard, STAP is concerned that the PIF does not address a needs assessment that should have been carried out among the GEF agencies, the IWTF and the IW projects, among others. Although the recent review of earlier phases of IW Learn did, to some extent, canvass user needs, this is not the equivalent of conducting a proper needs assessment which would have the additional benefit of creating greater community ownership and direction to the workplans. Should the project go ahead, an alternative approach is to ensure that such a user needs assessment is conducted as the first component of this phase of IW Learn.
4. Consequent on this IW Learn proposal being developed somewhat at arms length from the agencies and projects, the risk descriptions and mitigating actions miss the point that ownership and user direction would overcome many of the risks of lack of uptake of the tools and approaches being developed. The project sees itself as marketing its work to the agencies and projects, rather than responding to their needs and requests.
5. Component 1 contains some good ideas for KM and sharing within the IW focal area portfolio of projects (e.g., visualization tools) and with some other water related networks such as UN Water but does not refer to networking with the other GEF focal areas, such as BD, and CC.
6. Component 3 (global and regional GEF IW learning and dialog) proposes, among other activities, to undertake a gap analysis to guide new project idea for GEF IW. STAP questions whether this is the appropriate place in the GEF processes for such an analysis as it tends to give the IW Learn project a priority setting responsibilities also. The mandate for the gap analysis and the partners or commissioning agents in this gap analysis may need clarification.
7. Component 4 – surface and groundwater integration: STAP supports looking into this issue but cautions that the project should make clear that the Communities of Practice being mooted must include substantial scientific and technical input as well as governance, social and economic expertise.

¹ Select only those focal areas from which GEF financing is requested.

8. Component 5, innovative approaches, refers to climate change adaptation and IW. STAP notes that, at the request of the IW Task Force, it will also be undertaking reviews into how GEF IW projects of different types and in different regions can respond to climate change and variability and signals that it would wish to work closely with IW Learn on this work.
9. The global environmental benefits described are proximate rather than actual benefits, although STAP acknowledges that enhanced governance should lead to enhanced water quality, aquatic biodiversity etc benefits.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	STAP acknowledges that on scientific/technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasising any issues that could be improved and the proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
2. Minor revision required.	STAP has identified specific scientific/technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. One or more options that remain open to STAP include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Opening a dialogue between STAP and the proponent to clarify issues (ii) Setting a review point during early stage project development and agreeing terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.
3. Major revision required	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical omissions in the concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. Normally, a STAP approved review will be mandatory prior to submission of the project brief for CEO endorsement. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.