

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: May 04, 2012

Screeener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Michael Anthony Stocking
Consultant(s):

I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*

FULL SIZE PROJECT **GEF TRUST FUND**

GEF PROJECT ID: 4774

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Ecuador

PROJECT TITLE: Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, Forests, Soil and Water to Achieve the Good Living (Buen Vivir / Sumac Kasay) in the Napo Province

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Napo Province Government (NPG); Ministry of Environment Regional

GEF FOCAL AREA: Multi Focal Area

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

Based on this PIF screening, STAP's advisory response to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency(ies): **Consent**

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes the FAO's proposal "Sustainable use of biodiversity, forests, soil and water to achieve the good living" in Ecuador. In particular, STAP supports the extensive description of the problem statement and the data used to describe the baseline scenario for biodiversity, deforestation, and soil degradation. Furthermore, STAP values the main premise of the proposal to address biodiversity conservation and integrated natural resource management through a landscape approach, embedding socio-economic and cultural principles of the Sumaco Biosphere Reserve population. STAP also welcomes the explicit mention of the importance of gender in the design of special incentives for women in the pilot areas – these should be rigorously monitored for effectiveness and targeting.

To strengthen the project design and its scientific basis, STAP recommends addressing the following elements during the proposal development.

1. The project framework captures well the various interventions described in the proposal narrative. However, STAP recommends a careful revision of the outputs, and their indicators. Several of the –outputs' appear to be –activities' rather than major changes brought about by the project. So, in some instances, the outputs do not appear to define what product, or service, will result from the proposed intervention. For example, component 2.1 defines the output as "120 livestock farmers have adopted sustainable livestock practices". In STAP's view, what would constitute a product, or a service, would be the natural resource management practices to be adopted by the farmers (as an example). Its indicator would describe what will be measured (# of practices developed and implemented) – and not what is to be achieved (120 livestock farmers adopting sustainable livestock practices).

2. Currently, the project proposal does not appear to recognize or acknowledge the important work already undertaken – some as GEF-funded; e.g. the GIAHS project of FAO – on agrobiodiversity of small-farm agricultural systems in Ecuador and other countries. The Sumaco Biosphere Reserve, for example, features as a case study in IUCN's 2008 series on Values of Protected Landscapes and Seascapes, Section 1: Protected Landscapes and Agrobiodiversity Values. One aspect brought out in previous studies is the importance of promoting practices that are economically rational to the land user, rather than land uses that are technically efficient. Incentive schemes as mentioned in the proposal have their dangers, including that of unsustainability. Economics – or even simple financial accounting – needs to be included, along with other lessons from the literature. In the full proposal, these should be fully referenced and the SLM/SFM practices be fully analyzed for their potential to deliver co-benefits for the environment and for local livelihoods.

3. Furthermore, STAP recommends defining specifically the livestock and agricultural practices and the agroforestry systems to be developed under component 2. Currently, the proposal lacks this information. These practices also need to be specified in the project framework as stated above.

4. STAP welcomes the proposal's explicitness in stating that it will define ex-ante baselines on forest carbon during the proposal development (Component 2 description). In doing so, STAP encourages the project developers to define clearly the methodology that will be used to estimate forest carbon stocks. This is because the proposal is currently unclear whether the Ministry of the Environment's (MEA) methodology will be used in combination with FAO's EX-ACT methodology, or whether only one of these methods will be used.

5. For the design of forest, agriculture and livestock certification schemes (components 2 and 3), STAP recommends that the project developers consult STAP's advisory document "Environmental Certification and the Global Environment Facility". The advisory document summarizes the evidence base on the effectiveness of certification programs in generating global and local benefits. The document also identifies four main threats to eco-certification awareness (including coffee and timber products) that STAP recommends for the design of GEF certification projects, or GEF project components. The document can be downloaded at www.unep.org/stap

6. STAP recommends reviewing the global environmental benefits section. Currently, some of the proposed global environmental benefits are not framed as benefits. For example, the following cannot be considered as benefits but as an activity that may ultimately generate global environmental benefits: (ii) integrated natural resource management has been introduced in buffer zones; (iii) reduced pressures in buffer zones have been achieved; (iv) carbon emissions have been reduced by controlling deforestation rates; (v) sustainable water management practices have been introduced; and (vi) sustainable land management practices have been implemented in degraded lands. Furthermore, because of the multitude of benefits the project intends to generate, it may be useful to illustrate in a table the various benefits, their indicators, and methods for measuring and monitoring these indicators. A table format also will exemplify the global environmental benefits associated with each focal area supporting the proposal. In this regard, the benefits derived from sustainable land management are not as apparent as those obtained from biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management. Sustainable land management benefits are briefly mentioned only at the end of the incremental reasoning section.

7. STAP suggests describing further the proposed sustainable tourism pilot activity, including how the revenues will be distributed equally between the various stakeholders. It also would be valuable to cite references (published or rigorous unpublished documents) supporting the links between tourism, biodiversity conservation and livelihoods. One possible reference synthesizing this literature is as follows: Coria, J., Calfuncura, E. Ecotourism and the development of indigenous communities: the good, the bad, and the ugly *Ecological Economics* 73 (2012) 47-55. The project developers may wish to refer to this document (and other sources cited in this paper) to strengthen further the scientific rationale and design of the pilot intervention on sustainable tourism.

8. The proposal suggests climate change affects the fragile ecosystems of the Sumaco Biosphere Reserve, and that component 1 will address this challenge through adaptive capacity. To strengthen the scientific reasoning of the implicit adaptive capacity measures, STAP suggests indicating what are the climate change projections, or trends, in the region, as well as defining explicitly the adaptation capacity interventions that will be mainstreamed into the ecosystem land-use planning and management measures. For this data, as well as adaptation measures that could be mainstreamed across the various interventions, the project developers may wish to consult the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal- <http://sdwebx.worldbank.org/climateportal/index.cfm>

<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 emphasizing 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: (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	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

required	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.
-----------------	--