

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: April 29, 2012

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 4795

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Russian Federation

PROJECT TITLE: ARCTIC Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) for Major Siberian Arctic Rivers to Achieving Comprehensive Benefits

GEF AGENCIES: UNEP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Partnership on Sustainable Environmental Management in the Arctic ("Arctic Agenda 2020")

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

READY FOR REVIEW AND POSTING

STAP welcomes this PIF which describes a project which aims to develop observational systems and plans to better understand and develop options for integrated water resource management (IWRM) and integrated river basin management (IRBM) for the Russian Arctic rivers, Lena and Pasvik, including forming river basin commissions. STAP understands that the principal scientific and technical foundation for the project is the Strategic Action Programme for the Protection of the Russian Arctic Environment (SAP-Arctic, 2009) and this PIF is one of six projects that address the overall Program (GEF ID 4664) objective of adopting and implementing governance reforms for sustainable development of the Arctic within the Russian Federation.

In the Russian Federation, the governing system is based on three authority levels – federal, regional, and local. The relationships between these levels concerning marine activity problems in many respects remain uncertain [1]. Furthermore, terrestrial resource decisions have been found to need restructuring in order to make trade-offs clear, to reduce uncertainty and correctly address complexity [2]. The role of local government is essential in the implementation of the policies and action plans forwarded by the central government. STAP recommends description of the capacity of the local government to implement the project forwarded by the central government. In addition, it would be beneficial to discuss how local stakeholders can be more fully engaged with the project.

STAP notes that the project title specifically mentions that project actions are to achieve multiple global environmental benefits. It is suggested that this GEB goal is also mentioned in the project objective in order to focus project actions on the ultimate reason for GEF-finance. Furthermore, STAP also wishes to request more quantitative and qualitative information in the baseline analysis and component text on global environmental benefits for biodiversity components of the proposal. The proposal consists of three components with little information on the biodiversity values to be protected. The proposal identified the baseline for biodiversity benefits and mentioned that the project builds strongly on the lessons learnt during the implementation of ECORA: Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Approach to Conserve Biodiversity and Minimize Habitat Fragmentation in the Russian Arctic.

The Project Framework contains considerable detail on actions intended to be undertaken by the project. However, the Framework does need to be revisited and restructured. Under Expected Outputs STAP would like to see the actual project deliverables, rather than a list of project activities. Under Expected Outcomes, STAP would expect to see the major changes to which the project will contribute, including the delivery of GEBs. STAP advises that it is important to

align the Framework with the project objectives and, therefore, the specific mention of impact indicators, their tracking and measurement and target values should be included. In addition, the PIF should give some idea as to the methods that will be used to monitor and track impact indicators.

The proposed actions within the three project components are consistent with those outlined the Program Document and will, if implemented as expected, deliver outputs that are consistent with the overall goal of the Program. STAP recommends that two issues be clarified in order to strengthen the project design as follows.

The proposal mentioned climate change benefits that the project could bring in several places. However, the climate change components are absent in the proposal. It is unclear from the project description what the GHG mitigation potential is. In addition, the proposal correctly mentions in several places that predicting climate change impacts on rivers, coastal areas and Large Marine Ecosystems is a highly complex activity. STAP wishes to request more detailed information on how the project is intending to account for the existing experiences and overcome the challenges.

STAP notes that IWRM and IRBM are used throughout the PIF somewhat inconsistently and it would be helpful if the full project brief (and the approved PPG work) could define better their use and then promote consistency. STAP notes that the term IWRM is now more usually employed. STAP, while noting the use of the term Integrated Coastal Area and River Basin Management (ICARM) in the Component 2 narrative, also notes that UNEP has separately implemented the Caribbean-based project Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management (IWCAM), and again STAP urges consistency in use of these labels.

The PIF states in the Focal Area Strategy Framework and in Component 3.2.2 that valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services will be conducted yet neither the Component 3 narrative nor the approved PPG mention this action. However, section B.3. of the PIF describes the importance of ecosystem services for the indigenous peoples of the North. STAP advises that ecosystem (or environmental) services valuation is a specialist area of work requiring collaboration between stakeholders at official and private levels, and depending upon the policy objectives, may also involve certification of products. STAP would be interested to know what is being proposed and the expected impact of valuation, therefore the full project brief should clearly address this concern.

STAP also draws attention to its screening report on the related project Improvement of environmental governance and knowledge management for SAP-Arctic Implementation (GEF ID 4796). STAP's report contains relevant advice regarding governance and climate change.

[1] V.V. Denisov and Yu.G. Mikhaylichenko. 2009. Management of the Russian Arctic Seas. Report Series No 129 (In Best Practices in Ecosystem-based Oceans Management in the Arctic, A. H. Hoel (ed.))

[2] Ye. Andreyeva, O. I. Larichev, N. E. Flanders & R. V. Brown. 1995. Complexity and uncertainty in arctic resource decisions: The example of the Yamal pipeline. Polar Geography 19:22-35

<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: <ul 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.