

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, 2015

Screeener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Annette Cowie
Consultant(s):

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 8005

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Armenia

PROJECT TITLE: Sustainable Land Management for Increased Productivity

GEF AGENCIES: IFAD

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Rural Areas Economic Development Programme

GEF FOCAL AREA: Land Degradation

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):
Concur

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes IFAD's proposal on "Sustainable land management for increased productivity in Armenia". The project aims to improve farmers' livelihoods through investments in sustainable land management practices and technologies while addressing the impacts of climate change on agricultural production. STAP is pleased to see cross-cutting links between sustainable land management and climate change adaptation funded by the land degradation strategy, demonstrating potential for integrated approaches in single focal area projects.

To strengthen the proposal further, STAP recommends addressing the following points during the development of the proposal:

1. STAP welcomes the references provided in section 1 describing the socio-economic and climatic conditions in the project area. It would be useful for IFAD to provide references for the data cited throughout the proposal. For example, what is the source for "60% of arable land needs improvement and 50% of loss of soil organic carbon and top soil" and other similar statements in the proposal.

2. Define further how gender will be embedded in the definition of soil and water conservation technologies described in outcome 1.1. This includes describing strategies for targeting female-headed households so their needs to strengthen land management practices are targeted better and their socio-economic needs addressed. IFAD might wish to draw further from its gender policy to describe how gender will be addressed in the proposal: <http://www.ifad.org/gender/approach/index.htm>

3. Currently, the proposal does not state what indicators will be used to estimate and track global environmental benefits. STAP recommends defining what indicators will be used for each global environmental benefit the project intends to generate. Specifying these indicators is an important aspect of monitoring the project's contributions to the global environment.

4. In component 1, the proposal might benefit from a description of the role of water user associations in the targeted areas, and how the project might strengthen their capacity to manage water resources for agricultural production. If water user associations are not important in the targeted area, it will be equally useful to specify this information in the proposal. IFAD might wish to consult the following source for a more detailed description of water user associations in Armenia: "Toward Integrated Water Resource Management in Armenia. 2015. World Bank.

5. STAP recommends including a map of the project region that includes rivers, lakes and basin management organizations which are important stakeholders in the basin planning and management in Armenia.

6. It also will be useful for IFAD to consider how the project can contribute to the integrated management of basins linking different sectors that influence the quantity and quality of water in Armenia, such as agriculture and energy (e.g. hydropower).

7. For component 3, the project developers may wish to consult the following paper discussing trend analyses of crop production and climate parameters in Armenia. The paper presents points that might be useful as the project considers how to strengthen farmers' capacity to cope with climate risks. (See Melkonyan, A. "Environmental and socio-economic vulnerability of agricultural sector in Armenia". 2015. Science of the Total Environment 488â€“489 (2014) 333â€“342.)

8. Additionally in component 3, STAP encourages IFAD to detail further how multi-stakeholder consultations will be conducted, and how the robustness and transparency of these consultations will be ensured. These factors will be important for ensuring the quality of the dialogues and discussions that generate knowledge for sustainable land management and climate change adaptation practices.

9. STAP encourages IFAD to consider carefully the restoration techniques to be applied. It is not clear what is meant by "bio-engineering". Effort should be made to balance effectiveness in slope stabilization and erosion management, with contribution to biodiversity conservation, considering weed risk if non-native species are used.

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Concur	In cases where STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal, a simple "Concur" response will be provided; the STAP may flag specific issues that should be pursued rigorously as the proposal is developed into a full project document. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to: (i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised. (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to 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 issues to be considered during project design	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to: (i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required. The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP's concerns. 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.