

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

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

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

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 9094

PROJECT DURATION : 4

COUNTRIES : Regional (Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan)

PROJECT TITLE: Integrated Natural Resources Management in Drought-prone and Salt-affected Agricultural Production Systems in Central Asia and Turkey (CACILM2)

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:

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):
Concur

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP welcomes FAO's proposal "Integrated natural resources management in drought-prone and salt-affected agricultural production landscapes in Central Asia and Turkey (CACILM2)". The proposal is logically designed and the different sections on the problem statement, objective, components, global environmental benefits, and the incremental cost reasoning are coherently linked. Additionally, the baseline activities are described thoroughly, and provide valuable details on how the proposed activities will build upon the CACILM1, FAO's knowledge products and tools (e.g. climate smart agriculture sourcebook), and link to FAO's partnerships with the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies, the Global Soils Partnership, among other initiatives. STAP appreciates the strong baseline including networks, information, tools and legislation, and the collaborative nature of the proposal. In the project preparation, STAP encourages the proponent to provide more detailed descriptions of the drivers of land degradation, the specific land degradation issues faced, and the institutional constraints.

STAP appreciates the measures proposed. In assessing the value of ecosystem services STAP encourages the proponents to include consideration of the non-monetary values (e.g. cultural values). The project proponents may wish to refer to: Bateman, I.J. et al. "Economic Analysis for Ecosystem Services Assessments" (2011). *Environ Resource Econ* (2011) 48:177-218.

For component 3, STAP encourages FAO to strengthen the knowledge base of conservation agriculture in Central Asia by contributing to what practices work, under what conditions and for whom. The literature suggests that further learning is needed to understand conservation agriculture in the target region, given the challenges and opportunities that exist to further disseminate this practice in the region. (Refer to: Kienzler, K.M. et al. "Conservation agriculture in Central Asia – What do we know and where do we go from here?" (2012) *Field Crops Research* 132 (2012) 95-105.) Additionally, the project developers may wish to consult the following book detailing measurement and monitoring methods for water and land management in Central Asia to complement its tools and knowledge base: Mueller, L. et al. "Novel measurement and assessment tools for monitoring and management of land and water resources in agricultural landscapes in central Asia", 2014.

STAP is pleased to see the intention to learn from experiences in other regions suffering similar challenges, such as Australia. However, it is not clear how this knowledge exchange will occur. Effective knowledge transfer will require a budgeted program of interaction between experts including field visits. STAP suggests that the publications of the (now completed) Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation Futures

(<http://www.irrigationfutures.org.au/>) could be a useful source of information on innovative irrigation technologies.

Lastly, STAP welcomes FAO's proposal to apply the Resilience, Adaptation Transformation Assessment (RATA) Framework developed by the STAP and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) (The full documentation on the resilience framework can be found at: <http://www.stagef.org/the-resilience-adaptation-and-transformation-assessment-framework/>). STAP encourages the proponent to view the RATA approach as a key element to commence early in project design and development, and to recognize the findings as relevant across the whole project. Learnings from application of the RATA approach could inform all other project elements, particularly the identification of controlling variables and vulnerabilities, and thus the most effective interventions, and appropriate indicators for M&A. A minor point, STAP notes that the definition of resilience given in footnote 9 differs from that used in the RATA framework. It will be important to clarify terminology applied in assessing and managing resilience. At any time during the design of the project, STAP is pleased to provide further advice on the application of the resilience framework, and on other aspects of the proposal.

<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	<p>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:</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>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.</p>
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	<p>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:</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>The GEF Secretariat may, based on this screening outcome, delay the proposal and refer the proposal back to the proponents with STAP’s concerns.</p> <p>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.</p>