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**REPORT OF THE OCTOBER 2009 SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL
ADVISORY PANEL (STAP) MEETING**

Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, administered by UNEP, advises the Global Environment Facility
26 October 2009



Report of the October STAP Meeting

October 13, 2009, Washington DC

Introduction

1. The meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel was held on October 13, 2009 at the World Bank with participants from GEF Agencies (UNEP, UNDP, World Bank), the GEF Secretariat and the UNCCD Secretariat. Closed sessions for the Panel were held on October 12 and 14.
2. The Draft Report of the STAP Meeting, April 28-30, 2009 (GEF/C.35/ Inf.9), was confirmed and adopted as final.

Progress Report

3. In response to general concerns raised about the use and uptake of STAP's guidance to the GEF summarized in the STAP progress report, and noting that STAP's advice to the GEF is not being adequately recognized, it was agreed that barriers need to be removed.
4. Actions considered include improved and more accountable links with GEF Agency focal points regarding uptake of advice commissioned from STAP, more effective use of websites and other means for dissemination. It was also decided that some selected STAP guidance products delivered through STAP's Work Program should in future be provided to Council for their approval as 'decision papers' instead of as information papers, with the goal of strengthening STAP's advisory impact.

4. Review of STAP's recent advisory work and its impact

5. In discussion about categories of projects encouraged and discouraged for GEF support, UNEP urged STAP to concentrate on advising on technological options for the use of the GEF Agencies and the GEF Council.
6. In the climate change focal area, regarding biofuels, UNEP asked STAP to respond to the need to provide clear advice on safeguards and STAP agreed to emphasize them in its forthcoming cross-focal area advisory report on biofuels (XC#1, relationship between biofuels, climate change mitigation and biodiversity). More generally it was agreed that in Climate Change, guidance on risks and threats is required, including recommendations on which type of projects will be supported by the GEF. STAP agreed to explore the possibility of developing environmental safeguards and promoting sustainable biofuel production systems. STAP would like to pursue this matter by holding a round table on sustainable biofuel production to develop a screening tool for ensuring safeguards.
7. Within the Chemicals-POPs focal area, STAP's work was noted. The Panel confirmed that in recent work on energy efficiency (XC#5, interlinkages between energy efficiency interventions and releases of unintentionally produced POPs) co-benefits have been demonstrated. STAP has prioritized the focus on emerging POPs, and is considering the niche for GEF, including an emphasis on source reduction and UNEP suggests that substitution could also be considered, GEF could be an actor for informing the market.
8. Under Land Degradation the new Panel Member briefed the meeting on the outcomes of the UNCCD CoP9 and CST science conference meetings and agreed to further develop the land degradation section of STAP's Work Program for review by partners.

9. In the Biodiversity focal area the most recent product delivered was the 'Analysis of the potential points of entry for the GEF in Payments for Environmental Services (PES) programs' (BD#1), which GEF Secretariat confirmed is being used to inform their reviews of proposals for GEF support for PES. Two further products are due for delivery (BD#2, community forest management impacts on global environmental benefits and BD#3 on marine protected areas), which are also expected to be used actively by the GEF.
10. More generally, Panel Members cited their contribution to drafting focal area strategies as their most significant and impactful contribution to the GEF since the last STAP meeting. However, concerns were raised about the extent to which the GEF Secretariat had enabled the strategies to be tested against each other at a higher level to examine trade-offs and the potential for co-benefits. More advisory work is recommended on the Sustainable Forest Management strategy.
11. The Panel's work on the resource allocation system (RAF and STAR) used considerable STAP resources. However, the impact of science on the final design of the STAR is regarded by the Panel as relatively weak, although in the proposed Land Degradation and Chemicals allocation systems the Panel's work has significantly contributed.

5. STAP advice to the 2010 GEF Assembly

12. The agenda item considered possible strategic messages for STAP to transmit to the GEF Assembly in May 2010. The Panel requested GEF Agency and other partners' views, based around a required presentation (STAP 'Quadrennial Report') supported by a possible side event.
13. For the presentation the consensus of the meeting was that STAP should be aware of the political audience for its message and emphasise cross-focal integration, gap analysis and emerging issues with reference to sustainable livelihoods when identifying opportunities for the GEF and scenarios for the future. STAP should provide insights in coping with uncertainty. STAP should also consider some possible directions to consider emerging issues.
14. Specific topics could address REDD, LULUCF and an emphasis on the evidence-based approach to guiding GEF's investments.
15. For a side event STAP was advised to be topical, brief, well focused and consider:
 - Showcasing its guidance and its relevance, e.g. climate related;
 - Illustrating Global Environment Benefits and sustainable development;
 - GEF as a learning community ("Do GEBs provide National Benefits");
 - Global change, geo-engineering and the GEF.

6. Guidance to STAP from GEF Agencies on need for scientific and technical advice in GEF-5

16. STAP asked the Agencies and the GEF Secretariat to identify their key priorities for programmatic approaches, or to identify the strategy gaps, for GEF-5. These key issues will then be considered by STAP as it plans its work for GEF-5. Agencies present proposed the following topics within each focal area.
17. Biodiversity priorities included a biosafety program; flyways, migratory species, and ecological corridors; invasive alien species, and capacity building on access and benefit sharing. STAP could assist with identifying the global lessons of the biosafety programme, as well as with the regional harmonization of biosafety standards. STAP's advice is also needed to develop scientific criteria for site selection of ecological corridors.
18. In Climate Change, priorities include evaluating the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and the National Mitigation Action Programs and a review of the technology transfer window for mitigation. STAP could evaluate a suite of technologies that are at the demonstration phase, and rank these technologies, including solar power technology (e.g. consider their cost-effectiveness), and advise on knowledge management of the climate change portfolio.

19. For Land Degradation, STAP may wish to consider further scientific input on indicators. For example, there is a need for global indicators to be compatible at the national level, and for sustainable land management (not desertification) to be the focus of monitoring and evaluating land degradation.
20. In International Waters, GEF-5 priorities include enhancing the use of science in international waters projects; nutrient reduction from land-based pollution of coastal waters in large marine ecosystems, and; a water footprint, neutrality & efficiency program (WaFNE). STAP could enhance the use of science in international waters projects to improve project results; identify and recommend tools for reducing nutrient enrichment and oxygen depletion from land based pollution of coastal zones and large marine waters, and; identify and recommend methodologies to enhance water efficiency and water quality through the application of the refined water foot-printing and water neutrality methodologies with the support of related management tools, in water-stressed/scarce regions.
21. Under POPs, priorities include development of strategies for environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes; development of approaches and methodologies for risk assessment and management of harmful substances and hazardous waste, and; links between the environment and health. An emerging need for advice is on Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs).
22. At a cross-focal level, STAP's advice could focus on how to address adaptation risks in GEF projects. One way to address this is to build-on adaptation risks in the GEF PIF guidelines. That is, if STAP, at a later stage, considers providing guidance on how to develop better PIFs, and considers how better to work upstream with the GEF Agencies on PIF formulation.

7. Learning objectives and knowledge management needs of the GEF partnership

23. In the OPS4 (and OPS3) report, it was noted that a systematic and comprehensive approach to learning in the GEF partnership is lacking. This agenda item briefly considered STAP's role in the light of the OPS4 finding that STAP was only weakly contributing to GEF's learning objectives.
24. The GEF Secretariat briefed the meeting on its approach to learning objectives in the context of results based management, and asked for access to Knowledge Management products in all focal areas, using a pilot scheme approach.
25. STAP has contributed learning objectives to the GEF-5 strategies and considers that the GEF Secretariat does not have the skill set to investigate all learning objectives. In the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) focal area more work is required. In the absence of a SFM Task Force, GEF Secretariat invited STAP to identify learning objectives.
26. The GEF Secretariat went on to state that learning is needed at various levels: project, national, regional learning missions. However some GEF Agencies are concerned at lack of an overall strategy for the work. UNEP asked if a meta-analysis of the energy involved in developing learning objectives would be useful, but questioned whether STAP's performance might be improved as a result.
27. It was agreed that learning objectives should be pursued in parallel with STAP's encouragement of the Targeted Research modality, which can complement the work of the GEF on learning objectives.

8. OPS4 findings; discussion on options to take forward by STAP with partners

28. The objective of this session was to identify the steps STAP should consider to increase its advisory impact. The discussion, however, prompted a series of questions, mainly – What are the barriers in providing strategic advice? Or, is part of STAP's challenge making its impact more visible? And if so, how does STAP raise its visibility? Should STAP's advice be better aligned with the Conventions?
29. After a brief discussion on the questions above, the participants did not conclude specific recommendations for STAP to consider as next steps. Instead, the discussion outcomes concentrated on the desire for STAP's advice to focus on more strategic issues. The participants also repeatedly expressed for this advice to be more challenging, particularly to the GEF Council. This type of advice could be summarised as two or three key messages, clearly presented to the GEF Council.

9. AOB – Science “Conference”

30. Following STAP’s suggestion to the GEF Council’s June 2009 meeting to develop further a concept for a STAP Science Conference, the meeting considered the progress made, guided by UNEP’s Chief Scientist, towards a firm concept to be tested with the Council.
31. The goal was agreed to be a periodically synthesized science product for the GEF, achieved through a regular and focused process drawing upon well-established science bodies, for example the International Council on Science (ICSU). Options considered by the meeting included:
 - co-organizing with ICSU a session on newly identified challenges on global financing for global change;
 - using a Foresight process through the key steps of: 1. identifying a preliminary result; 2. using a Delphi approach to test the result (e.g. by 100 individual scientists), and; 3. holding a second workshop to test the summary report. This could yield an in-depth peer review, and buy in; or
 - employing a bigger Conference, to kick off a smaller workshop every 2 years.
32. STAP should think through with other bodies what should be its regular product e.g. over the horizon issues for GEF (synthesis product), and consider how can STAP help to integrate the work in different parts of the GEF? A consensus was reached that STAP should provide a state of the science document every two years, assisted by UNEP which could provide a systematic way of capturing emerging issues. STAP could conduct a benchmark review of GEF’s place in responding to science; further discussion should be conducted with ICSU to build a process to be brought back to the Council.