

## STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE

GEF ID	11390
Project title	CSIDS SOILCARE Phase 2 - Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) multi-country soil management initiative for integrated Landscape Restoration and climate-resilient food systems
Date of screen	June 7, 2024
STAP Panel Member	Graciela Metternicht
STAP Secretariat	Guadalupe Duron

### 1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

STAP welcomes the Caribbean SIDS project Soilcare Phase 2. The project is well-conceived, and aims to build on knowledge generated from Phase 1. Ample learning opportunities are present on how LDN can lead to GEBs with the support of innovative financing. STAP recommends defining explicitly these learning needs, or assumptions, along the theory of change.

As the project proponents state, the Caribbean SIDS are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and to other unwanted stressors, such as a slowdown in regional and global markets. STAP strongly encourages the proponents to plan for plausible futures by developing simple narratives that strengthen the project's resilience. In addition, the project mentions that traditional knowledge and indigenous technologies will be considered. STAP recommends that the PPG clearly map the components and interventions that plan to include this knowledge and technologies.

Below, STAP provides details of its screening to help improve the project design.

*Note to STAP screeners: a summary of STAP's view of the project (not of the project itself), covering both strengths and weaknesses.*

#### STAP's assessment\*

- Concur - STAP acknowledges that the concept has scientific and technical merit
- X Minor - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points to be addressed in project design
- Major - STAP has identified significant concerns to be addressed in project design

Please contact the STAP Secretariat if you would like to discuss.

### 2. Project rationale, and project description – are they sound?

See annex on STAP's screening guidelines.

STAP appreciates the description of land degradation in the Caribbean SIDS. Several factors influence soil and land degradation in the region, including floods, drought, and other extreme events. These drivers are touched on in the PIF, although more detailed information about their effects on land management will likely be necessary for the design of each country project. Considering other drivers, such as population and market changes, will also be helpful to understand their potential impacts on the project interventions. Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) is proposed as an integrated approach to tackle the multiple causes affecting degradation. As written, it is evident the project proponents understand LDN and its potential as an integrated approach.

The theory of change presents the project's medium to long-term change outcomes, which STAP appreciates. Further attention to resilient outcomes is highly recommended given the Caribbean

SIDS's vulnerabilities to climate change and to economic shocks and stresses. As the project is developed, greater attention to the barriers and assumptions will be necessary.

STAP appreciates the project's ambition to scale best practices on sustainable land management via innovative financing. Attention to strong levers of change (e.g., change of mindsets) will likely be needed, along with learning that results from testing/validating assumptions associated with innovative financing and sustainable land management. Thus, a theory of change (narrative and figure) is needed that demonstrates the connections between an enabling environment, innovative finance, sustainable land management, and knowledge management and learning.

Below, STAP provides advice on how to improve the project during its design.

*Note: provide a general appraisal, asking whether relevant screening guideline questions have been addressed adequately – not all the questions will be relevant to all proposals; no need to comment on every question, only those needing more attention, noting any done very well, but ensure that all are considered. Comments should be helpful, evaluative, and qualitative, rather than yes/no.*

### **3. Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions**

STAP recommends addressing the following points during the project design to strengthen it:

1. STAP recommends paying close attention to resilient, positive outcomes that are enduring. To achieve this, STAP highly recommends developing simple future narratives. This process will assess how the future may unfold and propose ways to make the interventions robust to uncertainty. Given the vulnerabilities faced by Caribbean SIDS to climate change and other shocks, this future planning is a necessity. The application of [STAP's advice on future narratives](#) is strongly encouraged. In addition, STAP recommends that risks such as political instability in countries like Haiti be included in the risk assessment. The International Rescue Committee identifies Haiti as one of the countries most at risk of experiencing a worsening humanitarian crisis in 2024. These factors can impact the ground implementation, including the durability of outputs under components 2 and 4.
2. The project rationale and description begin to detail the climate change stresses faced by Caribbean SIDS. Suggest adding explicit climate change data to inform future narratives and the interventions. If available, use downscaled climate information. A description of national-level climate trends is available in the [World Bank Climate Knowledge Portal](#) in case this information is useful. Project proponents could also consider using the [World Bank's climate and disaster risk screening](#) tool during the project design.
3. The project will rely on knowledge and learning generated from SOILCARE I, which STAP is pleased to know. Several learning gaps, or assumptions, are identified in the proposal on LDN, SLM (as an approach to address climate vulnerability and overall resilience), and transformative finance (components 2-4). STAP recommends explicitly defining these as assumptions that underpin the outcomes for components 2-4, and testing the assumptions to generate knowledge. This knowledge should also inform component 5.
4. STAP supports the LDN focus of the project and, for this reason, encourages the project proponents to implement integrated land use planning (ILUP). This approach can assist countries in determining the counterbalancing actions to address unavoidable land degradation, particularly countries that are further ahead with their LDN application from

SOILCARE I. Additionally, careful attention to assessing the potential of the land will also be necessary. [STAP's LDN guidelines](#), [UNCCD's ILUP](#) and [LDN framework](#) are useful resources to guide the design of ILUP, and an assessment of land potential.

5. The project seeks to identify alternative livelihood options for the community. Suggest drawing from [STAP's note on alternative livelihoods](#) to design component 4. In addition, STAP's advice on [agrivoltaics](#) can helpfully reinforce activities aimed at reducing deforestation from land conversion. Evidence suggests that agrivoltaics can reduce deforestation while providing benefits across the food–energy–water nexus as suggested by Barron-Gafford et al., 2019). (Full reference: Barron-Gafford, G. A., Pavao-Zuckerman, M. A., Minor, R. L., Sutter, L. F., Barnett-Moreno, I., Blackett, D. T., ... & Macknick, J. E. (2019). Agrivoltaics provide mutual benefits across the food–energy–water nexus in drylands. *Nature Sustainability*, 2(9), 848-855.)

*Note: number key points clearly and provide useful information or suggestions, including key literature where relevant. Completed screens should be no more than two or three pages in length.*

\*categories under review, subject to future revision

## Project rationale

1. How well does the proposal explain the problem and issues to be addressed in the context of the **system** within which the problem sits and its drivers (e.g. population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, and technological changes), including how the various components of the system interact?
2. Does the project indicate how **uncertain futures** could unfold (e.g. using simple **narratives**), based on an understanding of the trends and interactions between the key elements of the system and its drivers?
3. Does the project describe the **baseline** problem and how it may evolve in the future in the absence of the project; and then identify the outcomes that the project seeks to achieve, how these outcomes will change the baseline, and what the key **barriers** and **enablers** are to achieving those outcomes?
4. Are the project's **objectives** well formulated and justified in relation to this system context? Is there a convincing explanation as to **why this particular project** has been selected in preference to other options, in the light of how the future may unfold?
5. How well does the **theory of change** provide an "explicit account of how and why the proposed interventions would achieve their intended outcomes and goal, based on outlining a set of key causal pathways arising from the activities and outputs of the interventions and the assumptions underlying these causal connections".
  - Does the project logic show how the project would ensure that expected outcomes are **enduring** and resilient to possible future changes identified in question 2 above, and to the effects of any conflicting policies (see question 9 below).
  - Is the theory of change grounded on a solid scientific foundation, and is it aligned with current scientific knowledge?
  - Does it explicitly consider how any necessary **institutional and behavioral** changes are to be achieved?
  - Does the theory of change diagram convincingly show the overall project logic, including causal pathways and outcomes?
6. Are the project **components** (interventions and activities) identified in the theory of change each described in sufficient detail to discern the main thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they address the problem, their justification as a robust solution, and the critical assumptions and risks to achieving them?

7. How likely is the project to generate global environmental benefits which would not have accrued without the GEF project (**additionality**)?
8. Does the project convincingly identify the relevant **stakeholders**, and their anticipated roles and responsibilities? Is there an adequate explanation of how stakeholders will contribute to the development and implementation of the project, and how they will benefit from the project to ensure enduring global environmental benefits, e.g. through co-benefits?
9. Does the description adequately explain:
  - how the project will build on prior investments and complement current investments, both GEF and non-GEF,
  - how the project incorporates **lessons learned** from previous projects in the country and region, and more widely from projects addressing similar issues elsewhere; and
  - how country policies that are contradictory to the intended outcomes of the project (identified in section C) will be addressed (**policy coherence**)?
10. How adequate is the project's approach to generating, managing and exchanging **knowledge**, and how will lessons learned be captured for adaptive management and for the benefit of future projects?
- 11. Innovation and transformation:**
  - If the project is intended to be **innovative**: to what degree is it innovative, how will this ambition be achieved, how will barriers and enablers be addressed, and how might scaling be achieved?
  - If the project is intended to be **transformative**: how well do the project's objectives contribute to transformative change, and are they sufficient to contribute to enduring, transformational change at a sufficient scale to deliver a step improvement in one or more GEBs? Is the proposed logic to achieve the goal credible, addressing necessary changes in institutions, social or cultural norms? Are barriers and enablers to scaling be addressed? And how will enduring scaling be achieved?
12. Have **risks** to the project design and implementation been identified appropriately in the risk table in section B, and have suitable mitigation measures been incorporated? (NB: risks to the durability of project outcomes from future changes in drivers should have been reflected in the theory of change and in project design, not in this table.)