

## STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE

GEF ID	11436
Project title	Championing Local Adaptation for Productive Ecosystems and Enhanced Resilience (CLAP for Resilience)
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### 1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

STAP welcomes Malawi's project, "CLAP for Resilience". The project is technically solid in its design having provided a robust rationale and good project description. The rationale and components are logically structured and support the project's objective to increase resilience of local communities to future changes caused by climate change. STAP commends the project team for developing a strong proposal, and encourages them to continue developing the project with the same rigor.

As the project is designed, STAP makes several recommendations below to strengthen it. For example, although the project emphasizes that climate information gathered during the project design will be used for the project development, STAP recommends applying a comprehensive, assessment of climate risks, such as the World Bank's climate risk screening tool. Applying this type of tool can help organize the climate information and structure the risk assessment, thereby better informing the design of the project so that 'strategic' climate and environmental risks are embedded at the outset of the project.

Additionally, monitoring change with appropriate outcome measurements is also highly encouraged by STAP. Scaling, embracing innovation, and transforming to maintain resilience, will be necessary and reliant on monitoring and learning.

Lastly, the PIF Word version contains relevant information to the project, which should be included in the final project document. This information includes downscaled climate data for the project sites, and a description of the methodology used to identify restoration sites.

Below, STAP rates its assessment and 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
- 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 is pleased with the clarity of the project rationale. The problem is well defined, and thorough information is provided describing the context which is challenging climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the Bua river ecosystem. Detailed information on climate trends and projects in Malawi, along with downscaled data for

temperature and rainfall in the upper catchment sites is very helpful and will be useful in informing project interventions so they remain robust to climate risks. STAP would strongly prefer for this downscaled data to be part of the main project document (as annex), instead of being submitted in a different document. (This downscaled information was only available in the PIF Word version, page 80, and not in the PIF submitted to the Council.) STAP also appreciates the descriptions of the root causes of vulnerability, which highlight climate change as the leading driver of change. Population pressure is also a potential driver of change that could be recognized further in the project logic. The baseline description is also good, and STAP appreciates the succinct descriptions of how this initiative will build on baseline projects to strengthen value chains, conserve and restore landscapes, while reducing degradation, biodiversity loss, and increasing incomes.

The project description is, equally, written clearly and is thorough. The project emphasizes in several places that climate information will be used to inform the design of the components. STAP is pleased with this strategy, and for this reason, encourages the project team to embed climate information throughout the project logic, including the downscaled data mentioned above. Due to the variability posed by climate change as well as from other drivers of change, such as market fluctuations, substantial attention to monitoring and learning will be necessary to achieve outcomes from component 2 and 3.

Below, STAP details further its advice.

*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**

To strengthen the project during its design, STAP recommends addressing the following points:

- Besides climate change, STAP recommends considering other drivers of change, such as population growth and market fluctuations. Thinking broadly about the current and future effects, and the interrelationships, of these drivers on agricultural productivity, biodiversity, forests, and ecotourism, will inform how to pursue, and maintain resilience. This analysis forms part of developing simple future narratives, which STAP strongly recommends are embedded in the project design to make outcomes resilient to unwanted changes. STAP's simple future narrative advice can be accessed here: <https://stapgef.org/index.php/resources/advisory-documents/simple-future-narratives-brief-and-primer>
- STAP is pleased that the interventions will be informed by climate information as emphasized throughout the PIF. To this effect, STAP highly encourages for the final project document to reflect a thorough analysis of climate risks in the project sites. The project can benefit from a systematic assessment of climate risks using a tool, such as the World Bank's climate risk screening tool: <https://climatescreeningtools.worldbank.org/> STAP would expect for the results of the screening to form part of the project logic, and component design.
- Another resource the project could benefit from is the World Bank's resilience methodology: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/701011613082635276/pdf/Summary.pdf> This resource outlines steps to: i) build resilience of the project (e.g., the design of agricultural value chains account for increased severity resulting from climate risks, for example, increased water scarcity); as well as, ii) resilience through the project (e.g., outcomes seek to strengthen resilience – for instance, the project aims to strengthen market access through component 3 to increase communities' resilience to climate). With this view of designing with resilience in mind, the climate, environmental and social risks outlined in the risk section are 'strategic' risks and should be embedded in the project (e.g. theory of change), as well as in the future narratives recommended above.
- STAP appreciates the watershed approach, or ridge to valley, the project will apply to achieve integrated landscape restoration. To balance between cultural and social needs, as well as economic

and environmental needs, STAP recommends assessing and managing for trade-offs. The project is aiming to achieve multiple benefits (land restoration, improved biodiversity, increased agricultural productivity and incomes, and improved forest management) that different needs between stakeholders are likely to arise.

- Furthermore, STAP recommends applying land use planning to identify what land use is best suited across the targeted landscape. As part of this planning, a land potential assessment is also recommended to determine the biophysical traits of the sites, and suitability of land use. Although the PIF has already identified crops and land uses, it is still valuable to carry out a land potential assessment to ensure the planned land uses (e.g. agricultural productivity, biodiversity conservation, agroforestry) are suitable for the land type. This land potential assessment can complement the proposed methodology (elaborated in the Word PIF document, pages 65-68), including the use of remotely sensed data to assess land types, and the criteria restoration site selection based on: “i) ecosystem services provided; ii) critical zones for water infiltration; iii) potential for overlapping of restoration opportunities; iv) ecosystem threat status; and v) protection level by protected area network.” STAP recommends the following resources to assist with integrated land use planning, inclusive of land potential assessment: <https://stapgef.org/index.php/resources/advisory-documents/guidelines-land-degradation-neutrality>  
<https://www.unccd.int/resources/reports/contribution-integrated-land-use-planning-and-integrated-landscape-management>
- As the project is designed, STAP highly encourages the development of comprehensive impact pathways for components 2 and 3. Doing so, will facilitate the identification of risks along the pathway that may undermine achieving the outcomes. Detailed pathways will also facilitate identifying and testing assumptions that undermine key outcomes. This learning can then be incorporated through adaptive management to maintain resilience. Outcome measurements of change are also highly encouraged for components 2 and 3. These include measures that assess social change, adaptability, complexity, among others. Monitoring and assessing the type of change that is occurring will facilitate scaling, innovation, and the transformative ambition of this project. STAP’s guidance on metrics for transformation can be accessed here: <https://stapgef.org/index.php/resources/advisory-documents/achieving-transformation-through-gef-investments>
- Furthermore, STAP encourages designing the project based on the social aspects (e.g. gender, norms, values, including contested values) that characterize the socioecological system. Designing the project based on what stakeholders’ value will contribute to understanding the system and help identify opportunities for adapting and transforming in ways that achieve durable outcomes. STAP recommends referring to its guidance on theory of change and behavioral change: <https://stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/theory-change-primer>  
<https://stapgef.org/resources/advisory-documents/why-behavioral-change-matters-gef-and-what-do-about-it>
- For component 2 that will support climate smart and nature-based solutions, STAP recommends the project team to access the Global Database on Sustainable Land Management (WOCAT) <https://qcat.wocat.net/en/wocat/> that offer a variety of best practice for land restoration and rehabilitation suitable for natural and production landscapes.
- Detailing risks (financial, environmental and social) and assumptions in component 3 on value chains, will be particularly important given the innovation, scaling and transformation that is expected from it to shift behavior (e.g., adoption of training/capacity building/technical assistance and receptive of risks to engage in ag value chains, ecotourism, briquette production). Figure 3 could be considered a preliminary theory of change for component 3, which could usefully be specified further along the lines proposed above for each type of value chain.
- For component 4, low cost technology and approaches exist to generate digital elevation models that enable landscape analysis, and extraction of hydrological features (output 4.1 ). Here are some resources that may be useful to the project team: Creating DEM for hydrology <https://gisgeography.com/dem-dsm-dtm-differences/>; Vertical Accuracy Assessment of Freely Available Digital Elevation Models: Implications for Low-Relief Landscapes

<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/9884896>; Uemaa, E., Ahi, S., Montibeller, B., Muru, M., & Kmoch, A. (2020). Vertical accuracy of freely available global digital elevation models (ASTER, AW3D30, MERIT, TanDEM-X, SRTM, and NASADEM). *Remote Sensing*, 12(21), 3482. Li et al., (2020) Digital Elevation Models for topographic characterisation and flood flow modelling along low-gradient, terminal dryland rivers

- STAP notes that less than 10% of the budget has been allocated to Knowledge management and learning. While the PIF mentions the aspiration of including traditional and local knowledge there is no indication on how (process) this will be done. This project could become a good pilot for learning best approaches to collect, organize (typology and taxonomy) traditional and local knowledge that can then be shared in multiple, relevant platforms (including of the GEF Secretariat).
- STAP recommends specifying how this project will learn from, and contribute to, other LDCF/Growth Accelerator Program projects, such as Liberia's project #11447.

*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.*

## ANNEX: STAP'S SCREENING GUIDELINES

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.)