

STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response
GEF ID	10538
Project Title	Oasis Landscape Sustainable Management project
Date of Screening	26 May 2020
STAP member screener	Graciela Metternicht
STAP secretariat screener	Guadalupe Duron
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	<p>Minor issues to be considered during project design</p> <p>STAP acknowledges the World Bank’s project “Oasis Landscape Sustainable Management”. STAP welcomes the project’s vision of restoring degraded lands (using sustainable and management practices), safeguarding biodiversity of the oasis of Tunisia, and recognizing that Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) interventions can catalyze the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).</p> <p>STAP also welcomes the strong focus on gender responsive interventions, on communication and knowledge management, and the ‘systems’ vision that improving the environmental and economic management of oasis landscapes, will strengthen gender equality. To this end, STAP strongly recommends the project team to adopt the LDN Scientific Conceptual Framework and the LDN guidelines for GEF projects (references are provided at the end of this document). Given that this will be the first project to be implemented in Tunisia to translate LDN targets (being set up) into concrete actions on the ground, STAP recommends the use of the LDN guidelines recently published by STAP, as well as UNCCD-SPI reports on lessons and knowledge of applying LDN (provided at the end of this document).</p> <p>STAP strongly recommends the inclusion of the three LDN core indicators (related also to SDG indicator 15.3.1) along with complementary national and subnational data (quantitative and qualitative) to aid with interpretation and</p>

	<p>fill gaps on ecosystem services not fully tracked by the core indicators. to assist with monitoring. The current project development objective indicators, and intermediate results indicators are not enough to track success in the implementation of LDN at the country level.</p> <p>Below, STAP describes its guidance.</p>	
Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary	What STAP looks for	Response
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	<p>Achieving Tunisia’s voluntary Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets that are being defined by Tunisia through a focus on increasing the area of oases landscapes under improved practices (sustainable land management).</p> <p>Yes, the objective is defined clearly, and consistently linked to the problem statement.</p>
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project’s objectives?	<p>Yes, the activities support the project objective. The three components named are: Improve the environmental and economic management of oasis landscapes, strengthening gender equality; Promote gender-responsive sustainable investment in oasis landscapes; Gender-responsive project, communication and knowledge management.</p>
Outcomes	<p>A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention.</p> <p>Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits?</p>	<p>The PIF lacks specificity on how the global environmental benefits have been estimated. The narrative provided makes the correct link between achieving LDN at country level while also addressing biodiversity loss through the adoption of LDN based intervention. The PIF then reflects on the interlinkages between LDN achievement and the Aichi Targets (CBD), the Paris Agreement and the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030</p> <p>The Outcomes of page 4 could be used in developing a Theory of Change for this project where the project team maps outcomes, against</p>

		planned outputs, activities and processes and in doing so, also identify stakeholders that need to be engaged in the process to be ‘truly’ participatory. STAP recommends using the ToC Premier (see list of bibliography at the end of this document).
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes, with careful monitoring.
Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Yes, outputs are likely to contribute to outcomes with careful monitoring.
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project’s logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
1. Project description. Briefly describe: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes, the problem is defined. The problems include “...over-exploitation of water resources and the creation of new irrigated palm groves, often with consequent waterlogging of the irrigation networks, resulting in increased soil salinization; loss of soil fertility; invasion of land and habitat by sand; and loss of biodiversity (agro and wild)”. In addition, climate hazards have contributed to oases communities’ marginalization, and the “emergence of commercial traffic with the transport of illicit goods (cigarettes, weapons, smuggled cars, drugs and counterfeit medicines, and illegal migrants) has further contributed to making oasis communities more fragile”.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, the PIF describes the barriers. STAP recommends analyzing the barriers, and enablers, to achieving short-term outcomes, and validating these barriers/enablers in a theory of change. STAP’s theory of change primer may be helpful: https://www.stapgef.org/theory-change-primer
	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysis identify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	Yes.

2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, the baseline is sufficiently robust at this stage.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Partly, see comments on LDN indicators.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	See above
	For multiple focal area projects:	
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	Yes, benefits are specified on land restoration, biodiversity conservation. Indicators for each benefit are identified. STAP suggest the adoption of the 3 core global indicators of the LDN framework AND the design and implementation of complementary national and subnational indicators, for locally-relevant ecosystem services that are not covered by SOC, NPP or landcover change (see the LDN Scientific Conceptual Framework, pgs 100-101 cited at the end of this document).
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Yes, the proposal identifies lessons from other initiatives, including GEF projects.
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	This is described in Section F.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	The vision of the ToC is that "By improving the governance of oases landscapes, the project aims to create new dynamics through initiatives that enhance their ecosystem functions and services, while improving the incomes of the beneficiaries. This creates a win-win situation, protecting the heritage of oasis landscapes, while meeting the needs for diversification of the rural economy and job creation through the promotion of promising agricultural, craft and ecotourism products". The proponents argue that that the three synergistic components designed for the implementation of the project will contribute to overcoming the root and direct causes, also the barriers identified to SLM and biodiversity conservation in the oases of Tunisia. The ToC puts all the components of the

		oasis landscape at the same level of importance and then applies participatory, good environmental and economic governance to the identified problems to ensure sustainable and integrated oases landscapes management.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	Yes, Figure 6 in page 47 provides illustrates the sequence of events.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	<p>The project is structured around three mutually interrelated components that address the identified oases development constraints in selected governorates. Component 1 focuses on strengthening environmental and economic governance of oasis landscapes, which are the main backbones of the development of these landscapes. Component 2 focuses on promoting sustainable investment in oasis landscapes, firstly to restore their environmental and social functions and services, and secondly to increase the access of their products to domestic, national and international markets through approaches aimed at the development of productive alliances and value chains. Activities explicitly address climate-smart and sustainable agricultural practices; water saving, and mastering irrigation techniques; land degradation neutrality (LDN); and soil biodiversity conservation. Component 3 focuses on the project and communication management to reach out local populations and key stakeholders.</p> <p>The project describes in detail activities related to this component, which in an integrated and synergistic manner are expected to address the project objectives.</p>
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Yes. Page 48 describes the underlying assumption: The increasing social and economic marginalization of oasis communities, the severe vulnerability of oasis landscapes to climate change, the degradation of the natural resource base and local biodiversity and consistent disparities between women and men are the critical and

		underlying assumptions of the project approach, which will determine its success
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Yes, the table of risks recognizes adaptations that may be needed.
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	Yes.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	Yes, and STAP recommends that monitoring indicators include the LDN 3 global indicators and sub-national indicators that the project proponents will need to define once LDN intervention activities are decided.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	Yes, and see STAP recommendations for additional indicators above.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	The project will strengthen the adaptive capacity of Tunisian oases enabling them to better resist drought, variable rainfall, extreme heat, wildfires, and other climate-induced impacts. Improved land and water management practices in components one and two will increase water availability and water quality. Participatory local planning, national heritage site inscription, and ecosystem restoration in components 1.2, 1.1, and 2.1 will create a natural buffer against extreme weather. Livelihood diversification in component 2.2 will make vulnerable communities more resilient to climate change. Salubrious oases supply robust ecosystem

		services, including food and water security, that alleviate climate-health impacts, protect communities from natural disasters, and provide economic opportunity. The operation will also promote the use of solar and wind power when available
7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up	Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?	Of note is that one innovative aspect (if properly implemented) is the use of LDN plans and interventions to in tandem address land degradation and safeguard/enhance biodiversity of the Oasis.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	A mix of incremental adaptation and transformational change are required to achieve long term sustainability (e.g. strengthening the governance frameworks of Tunisia, involvement of the private sector). The proponents acknowledge that project activities will fill strategic financing and technical gaps and build on and complement other investments, including support by certain development partners (MCC, International Fund for Agricultural Development/IFAD, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/IBRD, German Agency for International Cooperation/GIZ, and French Cooperation Agency/AFD).
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Several maps with location of oasis are provided.
2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	The document states that this project supports the engagement of stakeholders and beneficiaries through consultative processes, engagement in local-level planning, and feedback mechanisms to elaborate and adjust the integrated water and land management approach, as well as access to

<p>communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities.</p> <p>If none of the above, please explain why.</p> <p>In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.</p>		<p>economic opportunities, thus contributing to achieving project outcomes and sustainability.</p> <p>STAP recommends the team to tailor participatory methods to the social and cultural context of the project area, and to use tools and processes that suit that context. STAP encourages that feedback and suggestions of stakeholders are included in the design and execution of activities and that the full ladder of public participation is applied.</p>
	<p>What are the stakeholders' roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?</p>	<p>The project document covers in different sections the initial thinking about stakeholders' roles. It is expected that the final project document reflects a more integrated vision on how the combined roles of these stakeholders will contribute to achieving the global environmental outcomes, and to sharing the new knowledge and lessons to be gained through this project implementation.</p>
<p>3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.</p> <p>Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes/no/tbd.</p> <p>If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender</p>	<p>Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?</p>	<p>The project has a strong emphasis on women empowerment, though such successful outcome requires well planned processes and activities that the PIF does not describe. STAP strongly recommends the team to familiarize with recent literature (see end of this document) on gender and the implementation of LDN interventions.</p> <p>UN WOMEN, GLOBAL MECHANISM OF THE UNCCD AND IUCN (2019). A Manual for Gender-Responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Transformative Projects and Programmes http://catalogue.unccd.int/1223_Gender_Manual.pdf</p> <p>Global Mechanism of the UNCCD. 2019. Land Degradation Neutrality Interventions to Foster Gender Equality. Bonn, Germany</p>

<p>equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision-making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no /td</p>		<p>http://catalogue.unccd.int/1222_UNCCD_gender_briefing_note.pdf</p>
	<p>Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?</p>	<p>Explained in the table of risks and other sections of the document</p>
<p>5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design</p>	<p>Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project?</p> <p>For climate risk, and climate resilience measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the project's objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? • Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed? • Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? • What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures? 	<p>The section of risks is very thorough and valid (pg 72). STAP appreciates that when developing the final project attention is given to the feasibility, effectiveness, tradeoffs, and co-benefits of the proposed climate risk management options, and its alignment with project objectives and expected outcomes.</p> <p>Furthermore, the team is encouraged to evaluate the possibility that the proposed interventions increase vulnerability to climate risks or lead to maladaptation. Measures for preventing these outcomes are encouraged.</p> <p>STAP also recommends that those risks highlighted as substantial (political risk and governance, sector strategy and policy, decentralization, civil society, environment, climate change and fiduciary) be considered in developing the Theory of Change (how will they impact the project outcomes).</p> <p>Of concern to STAP is the proper addressing of Project Affected People (PAPs) in terms of physical relocation, land acquisition or economic displacement (i.e., income, livelihoods or</p>

		businesses). The documents ascertain that ‘forms of physical displacement are unlikely, but some forms of economic displacement cannot be excluded (with loss of land, assets or more or less temporary access to these assets, which notably would give rise to a loss of income or other means of subsistence). STAP recommends that LDN interventions are developed avoiding these risks.
6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives	Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?	Page 89 describes the project coordination and management. Paragraph 90 recognizes how prior learnings are to be used.
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Yes, section F provides this information.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	Yes
	How have these lessons informed the project’s formulation?	Yes, section F specifies this.
	Is there an adequate mechanism to feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into future projects?	Section F describes how lessons learned have feed into project design.
8. Knowledge management. Outline the “Knowledge Management Approach” for the project, and how it will contribute to the project’s overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	The project aims to develop a gender-responsive communication and knowledge management Some metrics are vaguely included (e.g. Gender-responsive communication and knowledge management system on LD). STAP recommends suitable metrics be developed for the final project.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	STAP could not find specific plans on HOW results, lessons and experiences will be shared. STAP strongly encourages to share lessons and results with the UNCCD Knowledge Hub on LDN and Drought.

List of bibliography STAP recommends to be considered in the design of the project:

Gender and LDN:

UN WOMEN, GLOBAL MECHANISM OF THE UNCCD AND IUCN (2019). A Manual for Gender-Responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Transformative Projects and Programmes http://catalogue.unccd.int/1223_Gender_Manual.pdf

Global Mechanism of the UNCCD. 2019. Land Degradation Neutrality Interventions to Foster Gender Equality. Bonn, Germany http://catalogue.unccd.int/1222_UNCCD_gender_briefing_note.pdf

Collantes, Verona, Karina Kloos, Paulette Henry, Atieno Mboya, Tzili Mor, and Graciela Metternicht. "Moving towards a twin-agenda: Gender equality and land degradation neutrality." *Environmental science & policy* 89 (2018): 247-253.

LDN Guidelines, LDN scientific conceptual framework and recent lessons on LDN:

Cowie (2019) Guidelines for Land Degradation Neutrality A report prepared for the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility. https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/LDN%20Technical%20Report_web%20version.pdf

UNCCD-SPI. Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality. A report of the Science-Policy Interface. <https://www.unccd.int/publications/scientific-conceptual-framework-land-degradation-neutrality-report-science-policy>

Cowie, A.L., Orr, B.J., Sanchez, V.M.C., Chasek, P., Crossman, N.D., Erlewein, A., Louwagie, G., Maron, M., Metternicht, G.I., Minelli, S. and Tengberg, A.E., 2018. Land in balance: The scientific conceptual framework for Land Degradation Neutrality. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 79, pp.25-35.

Global Mechanism of the UNCCD. 2019. Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting: Initial findings and lessons learned. Bonn, Germany. http://catalogue.unccd.int/1217_newLDN_TSP_Initial_Findings_191108.pdf

P.H. Verburg, G. Metternicht, C. Allen, N. Debonne, M. Akhtar-Schuster, M. Inácio da Cunha, Z. Karim, A. Pilon, O. Raja, M. Sánchez Santivañez, and A. Şenyaz. 2019. *Creating an Enabling Environment for Land Degradation Neutrality and its Potential Contribution to Enhancing Well-being, Livelihoods and the Environment*. A Report of the Science-Policy Interface. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Bonn, Germany. http://catalogue.unccd.int/1210_UNCCD_SPI_2019_Report_1.2.pdf

A. Reichhuber, N. Gerber, A. Mirzabaev, M. Svoboda, A. López Santos, V. Graw, R. Stefanski, J. Davies, A. Vuković, M.A. Fernández García, C. Fiati and X. Jia. 2019. The Land-Drought Nexus: Enhancing the Role of Land-Based Interventions in Drought Mitigation and Risk Management. A Report of the Science-Policy Interface. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Bonn, Germany. http://catalogue.unccd.int/1211_03EP_UNCCD_SPI_2019_Report_2.pdf

GEF-STAP (2016) Designing Projects In A Rapidly Changing World Guidelines for embedding resilience, adaptation and transformation into sustainable development projects (Version 1.0) <https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/RAPTA%20Guidelines%20-%20Low%20Resolution.pdf>

Theory of Change and scaling for sustainability

STAP's theory of change primer: <https://www.stapgef.org/theory-change-primer>
Scaling: <https://www.stapgef.org/achieving-enduring-outcomes-gef-investment>;

Climate change risk screening:

STAP's screening guidelines: <https://www.stapgef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF%20AGENCY%20RETREAT%20Mar-Apr%202020.pdf>

U.S. Agency for International Development Climate Risk Screening and Management Tools: <https://www.climatelinks.org/resources/climate-risk-screening-management-tool>

Design of activities and processes that are participatory and inclusive:

David, Soniia, and Christopher Asamoah. "Video as a tool for agricultural extension in Africa: a case study from Ghana." *International Journal of Education and Development using ICT* 7, no. 1 (2011): 26-41.

Gumucio, Tatiana, James Hansen, Sophia Huyer, Tiff van Huysen, and Saroja Schwager. "Identifying pathways for more gender-sensitive communication channels in climate services." (2018).

Maredia, M. K., Reyes, B., Ba, M. N., Dabire, C. L., Pittendrigh, B., & Bello-Bravo, J. (2018). Can mobile phone-based animated videos induce learning and technology adoption among low-literate farmers? A field experiment in Burkina Faso. *Information Technology for Development*, 24(3), 429-460.

Medhi-Thies, Indrani, Pedro Ferreira, Nakull Gupta, Jacki O'Neill, and Edward Cutrell. "KrishiPustak: a social networking system for low-literate farmers." In *Proceedings of the 18th ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing*, pp. 1670-1681. 2015.

Ninsiima, D. (2015, May). "Buuza Omulimisa"(ask the extension officer) text messaging for low literate farming communities in rural Uganda. In *Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development* (pp. 1-4).

Shalander, Kumar, A. M. Whitbread, and K. P. C. Rao. "Innovation platforms as vehicle to strengthen stakeholders capacity to innovate for improved livelihoods in drylands in Asia and Sub Saharan Africa." (2017).

Stakeholder participation: IAP2 public participation spectrum. <https://i2s.anu.edu.au/resources/stakeholder-participation-iap2-public-participation-spectrum/>

Tesfamariam, Yordanos, and Margot Hurlbert. "Gendered adaptation of Eritrean dryland farmers." *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management* (2017).

Drought-smart interventions:

Davies, J., Ogali, C., Laban, P., & Metternicht, G. (2015). Homing in on the range: enabling investments for sustainable land management. Technical brief, 29(01), 2015.

UNCCD-SPI (2019). Drought Impact and Vulnerability Assessment: A Rapid Review of Practices and Policy Recommendations.

<https://www.unccd.int/publications/drought-impact-and-vulnerability-assessment-rapid-review-practices-and-policy>

UNCCD (2019) Drought Resilience, Adaptation and Management Policy Framework: Supporting Technical Guidelines.

<https://www.unccd.int/publications/drought-resilience-adaptation-and-management-policy-framework-supporting-technical>

GEF-STAP (2016). Designing Projects In A Rapidly Changing World. Guidelines for embedding resilience, adaptation and transformation into sustainable development projects (Version 1.0) A STAP Advisory Document. <https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/RAPTA%20Guidelines%20-%20Low%20Resolution.pdf>

Mapping and monitoring in Tunisia:

King, Caroline, and David SG Thomas. "Monitoring environmental change and degradation in the irrigated oases of the Northern Sahara." *Journal of arid environments* 103 (2014): 36-45.

Khalfallah, Cherine Ben, Dalel Ouerchefani, Khoulood Mazouzi, Eric Delaitre, and Faiza Khebour-Allouche. "Land Cover Change Detection in Tunisian Oases Through MODIS Data (Products: MOD13Q1)." In *Euro-Mediterranean Conference for Environmental Integration*, pp. 1767-1769. Springer, Cham, 2017.

GEF-STAP (2020). *Earth Observation & The Global Environment Facility Technical Guide*.
<https://stapgef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF%20EO%20Mainstreaming%20March2020%20Final%2020200331-v3.0.pdf>

Notes

STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
<p>1. Concur</p>	<p>STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. The proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.</p>
	<p>* In cases where the STAP acknowledges the project has merit on scientific and technical grounds, the STAP will recognize this in the screen by stating that <i>“STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal and encourages the proponent to develop it with same rigor. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design.”</i></p>
<p>2. Minor issues to be considered during project design</p>	<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;</p>
	<p>(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>

<p>3. Major issues to be considered during project design</p>	<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. 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>