

Enabling Activities for Implementing UNCCD COP Drought Decisions

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10671

Countries

Global

Project Name

Enabling Activities for Implementing UNCCD COP Drought Decisions

Agencies

FAO

Date received by PM

9/18/2020

Review completed by PM

11/23/2020

Program Manager

Ulrich Apel

Focal Area

Land Degradation

Project Type

EA

Expedited Enabling Activity req (CEO)

Part 1: Project Information

Focal area elements

Is the enabling activity aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as indicated in Table A and as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: Not fully.

While the EA is correctly aligned with LD-EA in table A, we have the following clarification questions / comments that need to be addressed in Part I: Project Information and Part II: Enabling Activity Justification:

- Part I: Please enter information in all fields. Type of report, submission date, implementation/completion dates, submission to Convention, etc. this is all required information and cannot be left blank. Please select the most appropriate from the available drop down menus.

- Part II: The major question that we have is the linkage of the work on drought with the LDN process. How will drought aspects be incorporated into the LDN concept (globally as well as nationally)? Will drought mitigation measures/activities be able to be incorporated into national LDN targets? How will, in general, the implementation of LDN targets globally and nationally affect drought and vice-versa? Is there a linkage?

- In this context, please also explain if a linkage has been considered with Trends.Earth with regard to the drought information and tools that will be provided to parties?

Further on the justification, please make specific reference that the project is justified by the relevant COP14 decision "inviting the GEF, within its mandate, to support the implementation of relevant aspects of the national drought plans and other drought-related activities within the scope of the Convention".

To further enhance the justification section, please check if all elements of the document ICCD/COP(14)/L.22 are included, which asked to:

- Take stock of and review the existing policy, implementation and institutional coordination frameworks, including partnerships, on drought preparedness and response and to consider options for appropriate policy, advocacy, and implementation measures at all levels for addressing drought effectively under the Convention;

- Comprise parties, international organizations, the SPI, CSOs, and key stakeholders, as appropriate; and

- Consist of a maximum of three party representatives from each regional implementation annex of the Convention.

Further, please provide some scientific references on drought as global phenomenon aggravated by human activities (planet boundaries):

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-020-0821-1>; <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/human-fingerprinting-drought-rainfall-africa-asia-america/>.

On the baseline description in section A, this is very comprehensive. Please describe this in a shorter and concise way without giving the impression that specific countries are singled out as targets of the project's activities and/or that specific countries are providing the baseline (or co-finance) to this Enabling activity.

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

Thank you for the questions and comments.

Part I: dully filled.

Part II:

LDN linkages:

Drought is widely recognized as a major driver of insecurity and migration around the world. SLM offers opportunities to avoid drought before it happens and mitigate the effects after it occurs. Thus, drought and land management are intricately linked in a nexus through social/human systems and ecosystem services and further exacerbated by the effects of climate change. While improved understanding of the relationship between land management and drought mitigation is urgently needed in order to improve the targeting and monitoring of interventions and policies, UNCCD-SPI outlined the scientific evidence for understanding the strong linkages between land use and drought and how management of both is connected through water use. It further introduced a new concept of Drought-Smart Land Management (D-SLM) and organized relevant approaches and practices across four major classes of land use.

At global level, the UNCCD Global Mechanism is leading an LDN support program focused on the development the LDN targets and assisting countries in their subsequent implementation. The UNCCD Secretariat and Global Mechanism are currently leading the formulation of a global GEF Enabling Activity type project jointly with the IUCN. FAO is committed to work closely with the UNCCD Secretariat and Global Mechanism and the IUCN to establish practical linkages on LDN-drought at the global scale. Where applicable and appropriate, Trend-Earth products will be used to provide improved methods and tools for assessing drought and land degradation and understanding the socio-economic conditions of vulnerable communities in affected areas through the integration of free and open platforms to support country level implementation and drought reporting to the UNCCD. In particular, global land cover data at high-spatial resolution, remotely sensed data and algorithms for assessing changes in land productivity will be beneficial and useful tools for appraising drought exposure and vulnerability aspects of the toolbox.

As 36% of the world's population is currently living in water-scarce regions, many countries have already recognized the linkages between land degradation, drought, and LDN in their LDN target-setting reports. Where the countries put forward proactive LDN projects using GEF resources, drought issues are strategically mainstreamed through either relevant national coordination mechanisms or LDN decision-support systems. Examples include several projects formulated and implemented with the support of FAO in Turkey, Uzbekistan, Jordan, and other countries. Moreover, LDN provides a supporting framework to manage land and water resources sustainably at the landscape level, address the challenge of water insecurity and drought and provide opportunities for policy and operational synergies within the land-water nexus.

Trends Earth:

Where applicable and appropriate, Trends.Earth products will be used to provide improved methods and tools for assessing drought and land degradation and understanding the socio-economic conditions of vulnerable communities in affected areas through the integration of free and open platforms to support country

level implementation and drought reporting to the UNCCD. In particular, global land cover data at high-spatial resolution, remotely sensed data and algorithms for assessing changes in land productivity will be beneficial and useful tools for appraising drought exposure and vulnerability aspects of the toolbox.

The UNCCD COP references:

Further references to COP decisions have been added.

WEF citation:

The original article as well as WEF citations are now added in the opening section of the draft.

Baseline description in Section A:

Baseline description has now been made succinct and to reflect that the countries will not be providing co-financing.

Project description summary

Is the project structure/ design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: Not fully.

While the Result frameworks in Table B is overall adequate, we have the following revision requests and clarification questions:

- Project objective: It is questionable to what extent this Enabling Activity can contribute to the "implementation" of national drought plans. Realistically, and more in the mandate of an EA, is that that parties use the information to develop national drought plans and implementation strategies according to the principles of integrated drought management.

- Components: The logic of the components title and arrangement is not fully clear.

(a) Please add "Supporting" to the IWG (comp 1), and "enhancing" to the tool box (comp 2).

(b) If the project objective states that the development of the plans is part of the objective, it is not fully clear to us which component(s) contribute to the objective? It is especially unclear why the component 4 is titled "drought vulnerability assessment and preparedness for mitigation measures" - would that not be part of national drought plans? And if this is part of national drought plans would component 4 not be more appropriately be an outcome of component 3?

(c) It is also not fully clear why output 4.1.4 M&E is listed under component 4?

- Component 3: Please set a target for the "number of national drought plans aligned (developed?)" - this target will need to taken into account in the budget considerations.

- Please clarify if the project will deliver tools and guidance on formulation of drought plans and strategies and if will be up to the countries to use or apply them or if it will become a standard that will be required.

- Output 4.1.2: Are we really expecting national databases to be developed within the scope of this project?

- Output 4.1.3: Capacity building. Please use another formulation or an indicator to reflect better what we invest in in this output: i.e. will training courses be organized? How many? Online or on site?

Please address above points in Table B and section B consistently.

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

Thank you for the comments and questions.

Project objective and the logframe have been dully revised to reflect the comments. The targets are now provided in the logframe. The project will provide guidance, tools and recommendations to countries in order to encourage and advise them on the formulation of drought plans and strategies building on and complementing the work of the IWG. No national databases to be developed within the scope of this project.

Co-financing

Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified [and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?]

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: Not fully.

Please note that co-financing is welcomed, however, it is not required for an EA. If co-financing is listed here, please take into account that commitment letters will be required to confirm the amounts. In line with the comment on the baseline situation (see above), please avoid the impression / any mention of individual countries contribute to the co-financing.

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

The co-financing (investment mobilized) will come in a form of projects implemented by FAO and the UNCCD. The relevant section has been revised to reflect that no co-financing from the countries is expected.

GEF Resource Availability

Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 10/13/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

No response required.

Are they within the resources available from:

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

No response required.

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request 10/13/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

No response required.

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

No response required.

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

No response required.

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request **10/13/2020: Yes.**

Agency Response

No response required.

Is the financing presented adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: Not fully.

The presented budget is not fully self-explanatory. We have the following questions, please respond. We may need have another round of discussion (or conference call) for clearing the presented budget, depending on the responses.

- As the project will partly be executed by FAO, which is at the same time the Implementing Agency, we require ToR of professional and staff that will be managed by FAO.
- It is not clear why the drought specialist is charged to PMC if it is a technical expert? The ToR for this position are required (please see note above).
- It is not clear why project inception and completion workshop are charged to M&E budget? Are these workshops primarily concerned with M&E or instead with project management?
- Please provide more information on the contracts, especially the large contracts for \$300,000 for the drought tool box and the drought assessment/mitigation. What are the activities and how were costs derived at? Especially as the drought toolbox is already existing, is this amount needed to enhance the tool box? Further, what will the contract with the IWG for \$110,000 entail?
- Why are there only 12 national plans to be integrated? Why not 'developed'. And why are only international experts required for this work? We would hope that more parties can benefit. Depending on the target set in the project framework, we would also expect an adequate support for the formulation and alignment for the national drought plans, however, this may need to be provided through national consultants or by a mix of international/national expertise (i.e. consultant firm) that will be able to cover a larger number of countries.
- There are footnotes in the budget that seem to refer to a different project context, such as "oblasts", "OPIM", etc.

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

Thank you for the comments and questions.

Budget:

The Drought specialist is a technical position for the project manager which will be a P-3 position, two thirds of which will be co-financed by FAO. TORs for the Drought Specialist/Project Manager are provided.

The project inception workshop has been removed from the budget as it will not take place online due to the pandemic. The project completion workshop budget has been slightly reduced.

Information on the contracts is further provided in the footnotes in the budget.

Integration of the plans:

The target – now specified in the logframe - was developed considering the time required to ingrate the plans while working simultaneously working with six regions. The budget includes one international consultant and 12 national consultants.

Footnotes in the budget:

Apologies for this oversight when using a template. The old footnotes have been deleted and replaced with project-specific clarifications.

Part 2: Enabling Activity Justification

Background and Context.

Are the achievements of previously implemented enabling activities cited since the country(ies) became a party to the Convention?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: N/A - this is a global EA.

Please refer to comments on the justification for this EA made above (box 1).

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

No response required.

Goals, Objectives, and Activities.

Is the project framework sufficiently described?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: Not fully.

Please refer to comments on table B made above (box 2) and also address consistently in the text of the respective section in the EA template.

Please also provide a short assessment of how countries currently use / apply the FAO drought tool box, what the needs/gaps are and how specifically the tool box will contribute to the project objective, i.e. drought plan development and the facilitation of their implementation.

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

FAO Drought Portal provides a platform to collect, map and share relevant experiences, products, and tools. The FAO Drought Portal is an open platform that provides information to FAO member countries on FAO actions and strategies in the fight against drought. It supports countries in the process of defining their national drought strategies by collating and giving access to FAO-tested tools and methodologies, as well as best practices from different disciplines, with the aim

to support informed decision making and promote integrated drought management in agriculture. The different types of resources are organized along four pillars: (i) drought monitoring and early warning systems; (ii) vulnerability and risk assessment; (iii) drought risk mitigation measures; and (iv) emergency response and relief measures. The portal needs to be expanded for more inclusiveness beyond FAO's work to the partners' work as per each respective pillar, with improved accessibility enhancement to allow users to easily search and find the most appropriate drought management options on the basis of several criteria, including geography, and feeding into their plans. Thus, it can serve as exchange tool for sharing experiences among countries with similar issues and opportunities. In addition, direct access from the portal to FAO's early warning systems (e.g. GIEWS and ASIS) will provide countries with reference to early warning-early action options to help further define their national drought plans. The establishment of an interactive linkage between the Drought Initiative Toolbox and the FAO Drought Portal in both directions is also aimed to increase opportunities to reach out a wider audience.

Stakeholders.

Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase? Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: No.

While there is no provision in the portal for providing this information, please include an overview table on major stakeholders and their engagement (i.e. in the current IWG) in the project document.

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

A list of project stakeholders and their roles in the project has been inserted into the document.

Gender equality and women's empowerment.

Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request **10/13/2020: No.**

While there is no provision in the portal for providing this information, please include an overview paragraph on gender in the project document as appropriate.

11/23/2020: Addressed.

Cleared

Agency Response

An overview paragraph on gender has been inserted into the document. In addition, the logframe has been further enhanced to reflect the project's gender-responsive approach.

Monitoring and Evaluation.

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: Yes.

Agency Response

No response required.

Cost Effectiveness.

Is the project cost effective?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: To be discussed within the context of the budget proposal (see above).

11/23/2020: Has been discussed and is considered adequate.

Cleared

Agency Response

The cost-effectiveness has been discussed and the considerations have been reflected in the budget.

Cost Ranges

If there was a deviation in the cost range, was this explained?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request **10/13/2020: N/A.**

Agency Response

No response required.

Part III. Endorsement/ Approval by OFP

Country endorsement

Has the project been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a the EA project is global.

Agency Response

No response required.

Response to Comments

Are all the comments adequately responded to? (only as applicable)

GEF Secretariat Comment n/a

Agency Response

No response required.

Other Agencies comments?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a

Agency Response

No response required.

Council comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a - this is a MSP

Agency Response

No response required.

STAP Comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request n/a - this is a MSP

Agency Response

No response required.

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

No response required.

CSOs comments

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request none received

Agency Response

No response required.

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO Endorsement/approval recommended?

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

10/13/2020: No. Please address comments made in this review. (Please contact the first reviewer in case of questions).

11/23/2020: No. Please address the following:

Environmental and Social Safeguards: This enabling activity does not include any information/references to ESS. The new GEF project cycle guidelines (ESS Annex #15) stipulate that “The ESS Policy requires that, if an ESS assessment is required by Agency policy and procedures, then such assessment is provided at the time of submission of the EA for approval. If an assessment is not required by Agency policy and procedures, the Agency confirms this to the GEF Secretariat at the time of submission of the EA for approval.” In line with the guidelines, please confirm its procedures and incorporate information on this in the submission.

12/02/2020: Agency has uploaded ESS assessment into the document section of the portal. Cleared.

Yes. Program Manager recommends the project for CEO approval.

Review Dates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement

Response to Secretariat comments

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	10/13/2020	11/20/2020
Additional Review (as necessary)	11/23/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)	12/2/2020	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

This UNCCD Enabling activity will enable the UNCCD Parties to implement relevant decisions on drought and supports the countries use the information derived from the UNCCD to develop national drought plans for drought preparedness, regional advocacy, and capacity building in the framework of an intergovernmental working group (IWG) and Drought Initiative implementation, while emphasizing the importance of a holistic, integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and enhancing the resilience of communities to shocks and natural disasters (29/COP. 13; 23/COP.14). It will also help parties to report to UNCCD on the implementation of those plans as required.

The COP adopted decision 9/COP.14 “inviting the GEF, within its mandate, to support the implementation of relevant aspects of the national drought plans and other drought-related activities within the scope of the Convention”. The COP further decided (23/COP.14) to establish an intergovernmental working group (IWG) on effective policy and implementation for addressing drought under the UNCCD. Therefore, this Enabling Activity has been design as a part of the GEF response to UNCCD decisions.

Specifically, the project will provide guidance, tools and recommendations to countries in order to encourage and advise them on the formulation of drought plans, reporting and future strategies building on and complementing the work of the IWG.

