GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

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General Project Information

Project Title	
Watershed Action for Restoring Ecosystems in the South Corridor of St. Vincent	
Region	GEF Project ID
Latin America and the Caribbean	11541
Country(ies)	Type of Project
St. Vincent and Grenadines	FSP
GEF Agency(ies):	GEF Agency ID
UNEP	01731
Executing Partner	Executing Partner Type
The Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean (BCRC-Caribbean)	Others
GEF Focal Area (s)	Submission Date
Land Degradation	3/20/2024
Project Sector (CCM Only)	
Taxonomy	
Focal Areas, Threatened Species, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Productive Landscapes, Conservation Finance, Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Influencing models, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Type of Engagement, Information Dissemination, Consultation, Participation, Partnership, Communications, Awareness Raising, Public Campaigns, Behavior change, Education, Beneficiaries, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Academia, Local Communities, Private Sector, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Gender Equality, Gender results areas, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Capacity Development, Gender Mainstreaming, Women groups, Gender-sensitive indicators, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Indicators to measure change, Theory of change, Knowledge Generation, Targeted Research, Knowledge Exchange, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Ecosystem Approach, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Livelihoods, Income Generating Activities, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Cover and Land cover change, Carbon stocks above or below ground, Land Productivity	
Type of Trust Fund	Project Duration (Months)
GET	60
GEF Project Grant: (a)	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)
6,142,237.00	0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d)
583,513.00	0.00

Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	Total Co-financing
6,725,750.00	14,540,000.00
PPG Amount: (e)	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f)
150,000.00	14,250.00
PPG total amount: (e+f)	Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f)
164,250.00	6,890,000.00
Project Tags	
CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No Competitive Window: No	

Project Summary

Provide a brief summary description of the project, including: (i) what is the problem and issues to be addressed? (ii) what are the project objectives, and if the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved? iii), how will this be achieved (approach to deliver on objectives), and (iv) what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits, and other key expected results. The purpose of the summary is to provide a short, coherent summary for readers. The explanation and justification of the project should be in section B "project description".(max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is addressing land degradation that negatively impacts agriculture, tourism, and commercial sectors. Unchecked unsustainable land use and impacts of climate change will accelerate land degradation. Maintaining healthy and productive ecosystems are crucial to sustaining social and economic development, yet there has been limited success in motivating stakeholders to adopt more sustainable land management practice. The manifestation of land degradation is particularly severe in the southwest region of mainland St. Vincent, primarily due to expansion and intense pressures on the land resources in that area from agricultural, urban and commercial development. The impacts of land productivity loss and ecosystem impairment in that area have become a major concern for the country - similar trends are evident elsewhere in the country. GEF funding will help remove barriers that impede adoption of sustainable land management (SLM) practice toward eventual attainment of degradation neutrality (LDN), with the co-benefit of land-based pollution mitigation, thereby improving the health of terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems. The project's goal is to foster accelerated adoption of nature-based solutions toward more sustainable land management to safeguard ecosystems and their socio-economic services through appropriate enabling policy and regulatory reforms, financial incentives and technical demonstration within the agri-food, tourism, and other commercial sectors, supported by robust public, private sector and community buy-in.

This goal will be attained through realization of **six interconnected outcomes** that will lead to desired intermediate states namely; **(1)** an enhanced policy, legal and institutional framework with effective capacity that will foster integrated landscape management to restore and rehabilitate degraded landscapes and contribute positively to effective ecosystem functioning; **(2)** a viable sustainable financing mechanism demonstrated to support accelerated uptake of nature-based (NbS) solutions in addressing land degradation; **(3)** strengthened national capacity to assess ecosystem impacts that better guide targeted actions in mitigating land degradation; **(4)** expanded uptake of effective nature-based solutions (NbS) that mitigate land degradation and restore ecosystems that are replicable at the national level; **(5)** a coherent knowledge management programme on land degradation is realized and **(6)** increased awareness among stakeholders that fosters the adoption of sustainable practices related to mitigation of land degradation.

Under **Component 1**, the project will develop legal and regulatory tools to enhance current policy and regulatory instruments to foster adoption of integrated landscape management approaches that address land degradation and advance toward land degradation neutrality (LDN) with the co-benefit of mitigating land-based pollution. This includes creating sector-specific guidelines, training materials, and capacity-building initiatives for public and private sector stakeholders in the main productive sectors; agriculture, tourism/commercial, urban sectors. Under **Component 2**, the project will test sustainable financing methods, such as payments for ecosystem services (PES), green bonds, and guarantees, to expand fiscal space for investments in nature-based solutions (NbS) for SLM uptake in agricultural and other business enterprises to mitigate land degradation. Financing agreements with farmers and enterprises to adopt

sustainable practices will be established under Component 3. **Component 3** will implement demonstrative nature-based solutions to combat land degradation in an integrated landscape approach focusing on the project target area; the Arnos Vale, Calliaqua, and Diamond watersheds of southwestern mainland St. Vincent, covering 3,300 hectares, with the aim of nationwide scalability. This will include development of an environmental quality information module to track land degradation, upgrading national lab facilities for improved monitoring, and launching a watershed stewardship program with schools, youth groups, farmer associations, and women-led organizations to encourage restoration through heightened awareness. **Component 4** will create a gender-sensitive communications strategy and knowledge management plan that will underpin project interventions and contribute to sustained long-term action by stakeholders in a programmatic approach in harnessing knowledge and maintaining awareness needed to address land degradation, aligning with national UNCCD commitments.

The **project aligns principally with the GEF-8 Land Degradation Focal Area strategy**, specifically Objective 1, to avoid and reduce land degradation through sustainable land management, Objective 2, to reverse land degradation through landscape restoration and Objective 4 to improve the enabling policy and institutional framework for LDN.

The **global environment benefits (GEBs)** the project will contribute to include: **(1)** strengthened policy, regulatory, and institutional frameworks to support the adoption of an improved integrated landscape approach, helping to mitigate land degradation, and reduce negative impacts on ecosystems; **(2)** restoration of at least 200 hectares of productive landscapes, resulting in reduced vulnerability to land degradation and reduced downstream ecosystem impairment with 3,300 ha under improved management planning; **(3)** mitigation of 114,564 tonnes CO_2eq greenhouse gas emissions; **(4)** increased socio-economic gains from improved land productivity and maintenance of ecosystem services.

UNEP's support in the country's access to the GEF8 STAR allocation falls within the framework of the UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) for 2022-2026 which includes Outcome 6 'Caribbean countries manage natural resources & ecosystems strengthening their resilience & enhancing the resilience & prosperity of the people and communities that depend on them'.

Indicative Project Overview

Project Objective

To advance sustainable land management across St Vincent's southwest corridor watersheds with LBS pollution mitigation co-benefits, through policy reform, incentivization, technical demonstration and uptake, in the agriculture, tourism, and commercial sectors.

Project Components

Component 1: Enhancing legal and regulatory frameworks for integrated landscape management to mitigate land degradation

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
584,975.00	1,178,750.00

Outcome:

Outcome 1.1 Enhanced policy, legal and institutional framework with effective capacity that will foster integrated landscape management to mitigate land degradation, contributing positively to ecosystem functioning

Indicators: *(i) number of adopted policy instruments that address LDN (ii) number of agencies engaged/adopt policy changes (iii) number of persons trained on application of policy/regulatory tools on sustainable land management (disaggregated by gender)*

Output:

1.1.1 **Policy and regulatory framework recommendations** to foster an integrated landscape management approach to mitigate land degradation with co-benefit of reducing related land-based pollution

1.1.2 **Institutional alignment recommendations and collaborative inter-agency mechanism**(s) for improved coordination among regulatory agencies for enhancing sustainable land management

1.1.3 **Resources/tools and capacity-building events** on regulatory aspects of sustainable land management in key sectors (agriculture, tourism, and urban development) targeted at regulators, inspectors, private sector

Component 2: Toward sustainable financing solutions to de-risk transition to sustainable practices for improved land management

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
292,488.00	449,750.00

Outcome:

Outcome 2.1 Viable sustainable financing mechanism demonstrated to support accelerated uptake of nature-based (NbS) solutions in addressing land degradation

Indicators: *(i) financing mechanism operational; (ii) number of beneficiaries trained disaggregated by gender; (iii) number of financing agreements established with enterprise beneficiaries; (iv) value in US$ of direct support provided to agro and other enterprise beneficiaries (disaggregated by gender)*

Output:

2.1.1 **Feasibility study for establishment of a financing mechanism** based on ecosystem service valuation to support the uptake of sustainable and green business practices by entrepreneurs

2.1.2 **Operational financing mechanism** hosted by a financing entity to support uptake of sustainable and greener business practices by entrepreneurs

2.1.3 **Financing agreements with at least twenty (20) agro- and other enterprises** for sustainable practices (under Comp. 3)

2.1.4 **Capacity building events** on effective management of financing for sustainable agriculture and green businesses for financial institutions and environmental agencies

Component 3: Demonstrating effective nature-based solutions for improved land management and ecosystem health

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	**Co-financing ($)**
4,094,825.00	9,886,750.00

Outcome:

Outcome 3.1 Strengthened national capacity to assess ecosystem impacts that better guide targeted actions in mitigating land degradation

Indicators: *(i) functional land degradation/water quality information system accessible to users; (ii) number of system reports published; (iii) number of upgraded labs; (iv) number of persons trained on use and application of tools (disaggregated by gender) (iv) number of participants (disaggregated by gender) engaged in the stewardship programme*

Outcome 3.2 Expanded uptake of effective nature-based solutions (NbS) that mitigate land degradation and restore ecosystems that are replicable at the national level

Indicators: *(i) number of restoration plans endorsed; (ii) number of hectares restored; (iii) number of farming and other enterprise beneficiaries adopting good practices (disaggregated by gender); (v) number of persons trained*

Output:

3.1.1 **Environmental quality information module** to support assessment and tracking land degradation and related land-based pollution within the NEDIP integrating watershed and coastal monitoring data, accessible to government, academia and communities.

3.1.2 **Upgraded national laboratories** with equipment and capacity for monitoring land degradation/water quality parameters.

3.1.3 **Watershed stewardship programme** in restoration and monitoring activities to support awareness and behaviour change with schools, stakeholder groups

3.2.1 **Watershed-based landscape restoration plans** informed by land degradation and pollution profiles to address land degradation (and associated point-source and non-point source pollution) within the Arnos Vale, Calliaqua and Diamond watersheds (3,300-ha combined watershed area)

3.2.2 **Nature-based solutions for SLM and pollution abatement installed and demonstrated** within at least twenty (20) enterprises across the target watersheds restoring at least 200 ha of degraded landscapes (linked to sustainable financing pilot under Comp. 2)

3.2.3 **On-field capacity building events** for farming and other enterprise beneficiaries on NbS installations (SLM, pollution mitigation, IPM, low-chemical, chemical use efficiency)

Component 4: Enhancing knowledge exchange and awareness toward greater adoption of sustainable practices for mitigating land degradation

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
697,462.00	1,907,750.00

Outcome:

Outcome 4.1 A coherent knowledge management programme on land degradation is operationalized

Indicators: *(i) Increase in level of awareness among target beneficiaries and extent of replication of tools and approaches (measured through survey)*

Outcome 4.2 Increased awareness among stakeholders fosters the adoption of sustainable practices related to mitigation of land degradation

Indicators: *(i) number participants (disaggregated by gender) engaged in project outreach activities; (ii) number of educational resources produced; (iii) number of knowledge sharing events hosted*

Output:

4.1.1 **Baseline and endline Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Surveys** conducted to track changes in awareness and behaviors.

4.1.2 **Gender-sensitive communications strategy and knowledge management plan** to support project interventions and guide long-term action in mitigating land degradation among stakeholders

4.2.1 **Suite of gender-responsive public education resources** (videos, infographics, radio spots, social media campaign) developed and distributed nationally.

4.2.2 **Dossier of case studies and lessons learnt** from restoration and demonstration investments disseminated at both national and regional events (contributed to GEF Blue & Green Islands IP)

4.2.3 **Knowledge sharing and awareness sessions** on policy and technical themes related to SLM, LDN and land-based pollution control for regulators, inspectors, private sector, other beneficiary groups (connected to GEF Blue & Green Islands IP)

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
180,000.00	427,000.00

Outcome:

Effective project governance and decision-making by Project Steering Committee (PSC) based on deployment of project monitoring and evaluation framework.

Output:

Project monitoring and evaluation system operating providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcomes, outputs and targets

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
Component 1: Enhancing legal and regulatory frameworks for integrated landscape management to mitigate land degradation	584,975.00	1,178,750.00
Component 2: Toward sustainable financing solutions to de-risk transition to sustainable practices for improved land management	292,488.00	449,750.00
Component 3: Demonstrating effective nature-based solutions for improved land management and ecosystem health	4,094,825.00	9,886,750.00
Component 4: Enhancing knowledge exchange and awareness toward greater adoption of sustainable practices for mitigating land degradation	697,462.00	1,907,750.00
M&E	180,000.00	427,000.00
Subtotal	**5,849,750.00**	**13,850,000.00**
Project Management Cost	292,487.00	690,000.00
Total Project Cost ($)	**6,142,237.00**	**14,540,000.00**

Please provide justification

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

Briefly describe the current situation: the global environmental problems and/or climate vulnerabilities that the project will address, the key elements of the system, and underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, including conflicts, or technological changes. Describe the objective of the project, and the justification for it. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

Background: Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is located in the Caribbean Sea and comprises some 32 islands and cays that includes the main island of St. Vincent in the north, the national territory stretching southward over 72 kilometers encompassing the smaller Grenadine islands. The total country landmass is 389 km^2 where the main island of Saint Vincent constitutes 344.6 km^2. The population of the country stands at 110,4181 (2022)[1][1] of which some 93% live on mainland Saint Vincent, the remainder inhabiting eight of the smaller Grenadine islands.

The islands are of volcanic origin characterized by relatively rugged terrain for the most part, with the exception of the smaller cays in Grenadines, where the highest peak, the active La Soufrière Volcano rises to 1,234 meters in the north of mainland Saint Vincent. The country is covered by approximately 12,000 hectares of natural forest types where on mainland Saint Vincent is characterized by elfin woodland, montane forest, palm brake and seasonal evergreen forest (rainforest) at the higher elevations. At lower elevations and on the Grenadine islands, this transitions to lowland tropical

dry forests and mangroves. Coral reef ecosystems are not expansive around the mainland due to the recent volcanic landform development; however, reefs are more extensive in the Grenadines that are dominated by shallow bathymetry. The soils of the country are considered to be fertile, and in most areas, highly permeable but are susceptible to erosion.

The biodiversity that has evolved on St. Vincent and the Grenadines is typical for the southern Eastern Caribbean and is represented by several island-endemic and regional endemic species that are of high global conservation significance. According to the 4th National Report to the UNCBD, it indicated that there are 1,150 species of flowering plants, 163 species of ferns, 4 species of amphibians (1 endemic), 16 species of reptiles (7 endemic), 111 species of birds (2 endemic), and 15 species of mammals (2 endemic). Of critical importance, is the national bird, the St. Vincent Amazon (*Amazona guildingii*) which is protected through the designation of a parrot reserve - an area close to 4,452 ha in the upper watersheds of the Buccament, Colonarie, Richmond, and Cumberland Rivers in the central mountains. The country's biodiversity is vulnerable to the impacts of invasive species.

Socio-economic context relevant to land degradation: Agriculture, compromising of mixed crop production systems dominated by banana, arrowroot, root crops, along with livestock and fisheries, constitutes the principal sector of St. Vincent and the Grenadines' economy (GoSVG, 2024). Although arrowroot and banana are not as widely cultivated as they were in previous decades, they still play an important role in generating foreign exchange for the nation. Root crops continue to be among the country's main agricultural production commodities. Livestock production is dominated by cattle, sheep, pigs, and goats. Despite domestic food and nutrition security and other policy concerns, the country has a reasonable intraregional trade market for its fresh produce, primarily roots and tubers. The country boasts a strong agro-processing industry, especially for its starches such as cassava and arrowroot (IICA, n.d.[2][2]). The agricultural sector contributed an average 9.11% to GDP (inclusive of 2% for fisheries) from 2016 to 2020 that largely consists of subsistence farming, mostly on mainland St. Vincent with some farming practices on the larger Grenadine islets. In 2020 some 10.5% of the country's labour force was employed in the agricultural sector. (IICA, n.d). As is typical in many of the Caribbean countries, the sector in St. Vincent and the Grenadines faces persistent challenges, including limited arable land, aging farming populations, low mechanization, and vulnerability to droughts, pests, and extreme weather events (FAO, PISLM, 2025[3][3]).

The services sector, with a primary focus on the expanding tourism industry, also plays a significant role. Hotels and related tourism services are concentrated in the Grenadines and in the southern corridor of mainland St Vincent. While tourism and related services have exhibited moderate growth in recent years, government initiatives have successfully facilitated the development of new industries. Recent economic expansion has been driven by robust activity in the construction sector and improvements within tourism. Additionally, the country maintains a modest manufacturing industry and an offshore financial services sector (GoSVG, 2024).

Land use practices, settlement distribution, and economic activities on mainland St. Vincent have been predominantly shaped by topographical factors, alongside historical influences. During the early 19th century, agricultural estates primarily occupied the lowlands while forested areas remained mainly intact within the central interior. Subsequent development patterns saw villages expansion adjacent to these estates. This pattern persisted into modern times whereby agriculture and construction (including residential buildings, roads, etc.) currently represent the principal land use activities in St. Vincent. The majority of agricultural lands are privately owned, granting owners autonomy to sell, subdivide, or alter land use at their discretion. The growth and concentration of industrial and service-related activities within coastal urban centers have resulted in increased pressure on both land resources and biodiversity. In recent decades, the intensification of monoculture, particularly associated with banana cultivation and the application of inorganic fertilizers and harmful pesticides have contributed to soil fertility decline in productive landscapes. As the banana industry became more profitable, demand for production expansion led to the conversion of forested and marginal sloped lands for agricultural use. This trend saw the discontinuation of sustainable agricultural methods (bench terraces, contour drains, crop rotation, and fallowing), thereby undermining long-term soil integrity. These changes have resulted in reduced soil fertility, erosion, loss of flora and fauna, and altered soil structure (St. Vincent & the Grenadines National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Land Degradation and Drought, 2015-2020, 2014).

Land degradation is therefore a significant and growing concern in St Vincent and the Grenadines, impacting vital ecosystems. Intensive agriculture without proper soil and water conservation is accelerating erosion, causing topsoil loss, with increased sediment in waterways, and smothering of coral reefs. Overuse and misuse of agrochemicals is harming soil health, reducing productivity, and rendering soils more susceptible to further degradation. Related, excess chemical application mobilized in surface runoff also contaminates freshwater and coastal ecosystems. Urban, commercial, and industrial activities are significant contributors to land degradation. Direct forms of degradation linked to these activities often occur through land clearing and scarification, leaving soils exposed to erosion in the absence of appropriate land conservation measures. These activities also cause degradation by releasing contaminants onto land and into watercourses. Ultimately land degradation is threatening terrestrial ecosystem integrity that in turn compromises the health of terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity, threatens land productivity for agriculture and food security, and renders landscapes more prone to accelerated degradation due to extreme weather phenomenon driven by climate change. All of this heightens the vulnerability of communities and economies dependent on the quality of land and ecosystem services.

The **National Action Programme to Combat Land Degradation and Drought in St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2015-2020** (2014) identified the underlying factors for land degradation in the country; this included poverty, a weak legislative and regulatory framework and limited public education and awareness programmes. According to the 2023 final country report of the **Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN TSP)[4]**[4], land degradation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is mainly triggered by deforestation and long-term loss of natural vegetation, unsustainable agricultural practices resulting in the deterioration of the physical, chemical, biological and/or economic properties of soil, recurring wildfires on shrub/grass-covered slopes, soil erosion caused by wind and water, unsustainable economic development, and the adverse effects of global climate change. This report highlighted that while there has been an increase in tree cover overall in the preceding 15-year period, areas classed as degraded accounted for approximately 11% of the total land area. The key indicators recommended for tracking progress towards LDN are trends in vegetative land cover, trends in land productivity and soil organic carbon (SOC) stock. According to the 2023 LDN TSP Report, the land productivity dynamics indicator suggested that almost 49% of the total land area has degraded productivity while the soil organic carbon indicator indicated that some 10% of the total land area is classed as having degraded soil organic carbon. The persistent environmental threats facing the country as a result of land degradation require urgent action to implement more sustainable land management practices, and strengthen pollution controls, as continued degradation of watersheds and marine ecosystems threatens not only the country's unique biodiversity and endemic species but also the economic sectors of fisheries and tourism that sustain local communities.

Addressing land degradation – the southwest corridor of St. Vincent: While land degradation affects the country in general, it is most pronounced across the eastern corridor of Charlotte Parish and the southwest corridor of St. George Parish of mainland St. Vincent. The latter area is designated the geographical focus of this project given the intensity of development and importance as the main economic development hub of the country. According to the 2023 LDN TSP Report, the vast majority of the lands within the southwest corridor of St. George Parish has been mapped as 'degraded' (Annex C). The project target geography is the combined 3,300-hectare Arnos Vale, Calliaqua and Diamond watersheds that are part of the wider Kingstown Watershed. They are similarly dominated by intensively developed landscapes across the lower to mid-reaches of the watersheds, with upper elevations of the Arnos Vale watershed in excess of 700 metres, under forest cover within the Kingstown Forest Reserve. Over recent decades as the area has become increasingly urbanized, also with the expansion of cultivation, this has led to loss of biodiversity and the compromise of ecosystem provision services in terms of soil fertility, erosion control and runoff attenuation.

The southwest corridor is a key national agricultural production area and considered the main sweet potato cultivation belt on mainland St Vincent. Major growing regions are at Stubbs, Argyle, Fenton, Queens Drive, Dorsetshire Hill, Welcome, Georgie Gutter, Calder, and Bonhomme. An estimated 2,000 to 3,500 farmers operate within the area, producing sweet potatoes, various vegetables, peanuts, eddoes, ginger, and yams. The main producer groups in the region include the South Windward Action Producer Cooperative, Nurtured by Nature, Innovative Food Alliance, and the Orion Cooperative Group. Two large greenhouse production systems operate within the area. Although there are no organized livestock producer groups, several livestock producers belong to the small national ruminant society. A few independent poultry

(egg) producers operate within the area, alongside a small group of pig farmers. Additionally, there are a few apiculture units, with their producers affiliated with the national beekeeper's association.

In this area land degradation is mainly associated with intensive cultivation in the steep, higher elevations, particularly in areas where slopes exceed 45%. In the Arnos Vale watershed, which is characterized by clay soils susceptible to landslides and slippage, where agricultural activities require the implementation of soil stabilization measures and agroforestry practice, such conservation practices are generally not being implemented. Soil degradation is evidenced in lower elevation areas, especially under drier conditions in the more eastern 'windward 'regions where topsoil exposure due to limited tree cover and consequent desiccation increases vulnerability to wind erosion. Although this issue currently remains less severe than water erosion in other parts of the target area, it is becoming increasingly relevant due to altered moisture regimes related to climate change and warrants close monitoring. Intensive livestock production, particularly involving pigs, poses serious concerns where rearing facilities are situated in close proximity to watercourses due to the high potential for pollution. Additionally, the unrestrained grazing of large ruminants, mainly cattle, on steep upland areas often leads to accelerated erosion through trampling along herding paths that triggers channelization of runoff and gullying, given the fragility of the soils. In addition to degradation in agricultural landscapes, there are numerous scattered degradation hotspots across the target area linked to a range of activities typically associated with land clearing for other purposes; building construction, road access, quarrying, often carried out without implementing soil and water conservation measures. This is particularly evident within the Arnos Vale watershed with density of urbanization.

Left unchecked land degradation will compromise long-term productivity of landscapes, and has already been resulting in increases in sedimentation and other pollution loads originating from point and non-point sources that have negative consequences in the adjacent coastal waters that includes the Southcoast Marine Conservation Area which is of high national conservation priority on account of its biodiversity and importance to the fisheries and tourism sectors (Annex C2). Within this area, the Kingstown Forest Reserve KBA that is part of the wider Central Forest Reserve KBA, and the King's Hill Forest Reserve KBA are potentially threatened by poor land practices in adjacent landscapes.

Land degradation-induced pollution has been a focus on recent investigation within the southwest corridor of St Vincent. The National Parks, Rivers and Beach Authority (2025)[5][5] notes in respect to the environmental quality of waters of the south coast, that research and observation have shown that over the last decade, the loss of biodiversity is significantly high (Baldwin 2014). Areas with rich coral reefs such as the Southcoast Marine Conservation Area, which is of high national conservation priority, are now highly impacted. The 2016 SVG National Coral Reef Report Card highlighted concerns related to sedimentation impacting coral reefs, land-based sources of pollution, and the declining condition of fish biomass in coastal areas. Key freshwater species that have been significantly impacted by pollution and poor water quality in heavily degraded watersheds in the southern corridor of the island include Palaemonid shrimp 'crayfish' (*Macrobrachium carcinus*) and Sirajo goby (*Sicydium plumieri*) known locally as 'tri-tri' (which is considered a local delicacy). In a case study presented in the Sixth National Report to the CBD (2019)[6][6], a 2012 national-level economic valuation study focusing on environmental services provided by marine habitats estimated that halting land-based pollution on the South coast of mainland St. Vincent could generate sustained ecosystem services benefits in the order of US$103,235 per annum.

The **long-term problem** is that productive landscapes and sensitive ecosystems in the southwestern corridor of St. Vincent, as with the rest of the country, will continue to experience degradation unless comprehensive measures are taken to address the drivers of land degradation amid ongoing economic development. The rate of degradation is expected to increase due to climate change, as shifts in the frequency and intensity of weather events and changes in temperature ranges affect the environment. GEF's incremental funding and co-financing resources will therefore be allocated to address barriers that currently hinder St. Vincent and the Grenadines from consistently implementing actions to reduce land degradation and mitigate the degradation of terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems and contribute to global environmental benefits. Given the acute challenges with land degradation in the southwest corridor of mainland St. Vincent and the national priority assigned to addressing this issue, the project will focus on advancing policy, financial

support, and technical approaches to promote the adoption of best practices within the target area. The aim is that these best practices will be replicated in other regions of the county, with sustainability for ongoing implementation, strengthened through policy mainstreaming.

The proposed initiative intends to contribute to the already-initiated (since 2019) process to aspire toward LDN, where proposals in the target setting process (TSP) suggest that national-level LDN is achieved by 2030 as compared to 2015, and that an additional 15% of degraded lands of the country are improved. The LDN-TSP proposed key targets of restoration of 10% of degraded land (1,873 hectares of cropland) and reducing soil erosion by 15% by 2030. This will be consistent with the UNCCD Strategic Objectives, defining features of LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes whereby the fundamental tenets of LDN are to be observed; addressing transformation at the landscape scale, contributing to LDN targets, delivering multiple benefits, promoting responsible and inclusive governance, promoting upscaling and replication, building national ownership and enhancing capacities, and leveraging innovative finance. The project intends to realize the co-benefit of mitigation of land-based pollution triggered by land degradation processes through gaining compliance with the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) under the Cartagena Convention. This Protocol addresses the reduction of harmful pollutants, wastewater discharges, sediment and nutrient loads from agricultural, commercial and industrial sources; the GoSVG is in the process of ratifying the Protocol. This alliance between LDN-TSP and the LBS Protocol is considered practical due to its reliance on similar technical approaches and for the most part, the same national regulatory and institutional management mechanisms.

Importantly, the approach will facilitate the adoption of scalable nature-based solutions for mitigating land degradation, supported by a financial incentive framework to be developed and applied across sectors such as agri-food, tourism, and other commercial sectors to support best practices. These measures are intended to provide socio-economic benefits to local communities, contribute to long-term ecological resilience, and improve adaptation to climate change, with the potential to be expanded both nationally and among Small Island Developing States (SIDS) worldwide.

There are **three (3) core barriers** to be addressed under the project in the context of the geographical focal area, and at the national level, namely; **(1) Weak policy, legal and institutional framework and limited capacity to address land degradation:** In general, planning and development related to agricultural and rural lands tend to prioritize immediate mandates over a comprehensive, long-term strategy aligned with sustainable land management principles. Although it is widely acknowledged that climate change poses substantial risks to productive landscapes in St Vincent and the Grenadines, there is currently no comprehensive strategy in place to address this challenge in the context of how lands are managed. While there has been some consideration of land degradation neutrality target setting, which can provide essential guidance for conserving degraded landscapes and sustaining the supply of goods and services, however work remains to mainstream into policy setting for land management. Approaches to fostering integrated landscape management that entail harmonizing regulations to mitigate land degradation threats have not been established and existing regulations provide little direction toward more sustainable lands management practice. The Town and Country Planning Act (No. 45 of 1992) for example establishes the needed framework for promoting sustainable land development through the proper planning of urban and rural landscapes. However, land development remains influenced by sectoral interests, with a general deficiency in adequate and effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. Capacity constraints persist in policy level know-how and approaches that are best suited to the country context in terms of blending landscape planning development with land degradation target advancement, while also considering the required policy and institutional framework that will avert resulting pollution triggered by land degradation, which is of relevance to the LBS Protocol. There is insufficient political will to effectively drive change on this matter largely attributable to limited awareness among key decision makers regarding the scope and scale of the issue, which is further compounded by limited awareness among sectoral stakeholders about the interconnected effects of land management and pollution discharges on environmental quality.

(2) Lack of sustainable financing mechanisms and constrained uptake of nature-based solutions to mitigate land degradation and restore ecosystems, compounded by lack of national capacity to assess ecosystem impacts to guide targeted actions: St. Vincent and the Grenadines faces challenges addressing land and ecosystem degradation due to limited financial mechanisms and associated public and private sector institutional capacity needed to enable expanded financing. National policies anticipate that practitioners will adopt sustainable land management practices, however investment relies mainly on short-term, project-based external grants, making long-term sustainability difficult. Few ongoing programmes support land degradation or ecosystem restoration, as financial incentives are typically tied to grant-

funded projects. Sustainable financing options therefore remain scarce, and government resources are insufficient to bridge the gap. Farmers and small businesses struggle to invest in environmental protection due to high costs, limited access to credit, and low business management skills, with most available credit focused on production rather than environmental improvements. The SVGCF, established in 2015 under the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, aims to provide alternative funding for environmental conservation and has the potential to be upscaled to support efforts to address land degradation and land-based pollution. Expanding resource mobilization, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and developing compensatory investment tools remain essential.

Directly associated with the challenge of sustainable financing is the need to implement on-ground remedial investments within the primary environmental degradation hotspot in the country, specifically the southwestern coastal corridor. This issue is urgent due to the impacts of climate change, especially in the Caribbean, where increased frequency and intensity of storm events are likely to accelerate the degradation of both landscapes and adjacent coastal waters, potentially resulting in productivity loss. There are few demonstrable models to guide the application and design of suitable land degradation mitigation investments in the project area for potential national upscaling. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) has worked with SMEs in environmental stewardship and riparian zone restoration in the project target area, further scale-up of these activities is necessary. Improving assessment and monitoring of land degradation, as well as applying nature-based solutions for remediation, is a key focus in that island area. However, protocols, technical resources, and methodologies, especially those integrating nature-based approaches, remain limited. Among agricultural practitioners, while technical specialists and extension workers have some familiarity with these methods, overall capacity remains insufficient, and knowledge among farmers and relevant stakeholders whose actions negatively impact land is minimal. Additionally, tools such as guidelines and technical assistance packages require updating and dissemination as part of continuous capacity development for practitioners and beneficiaries. Examples include guidelines for landscape restoration, reduced/low-chemical application, and the creation and maintenance of buffer zones and green spaces, which can help control the movement of chemicals and fertilizer residues, support natural pollination, maintain wildlife habitats, and protect hydrological resources.

Another challenge is the absence of an information management system that enables routine observation and compilation of environmental data. This in turn results in low stakeholder awareness (policy makers, private sector to civil society) of the connection between land degradation, land-based pollution, ecosystem and human health, which translates to very limited impetus for the urgent action that is required to address the issue. This gap is currently being addressed by an ongoing GEF initiative (Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project ID: 10549) aimed at establishing a national environmental data information system (National Environmental Data and Information Platform - NEDIP). However, expanding this system to include land degradation and other relevant parameters is necessary to assess progress toward land degradation neutrality and meet the requirements for implementing the LBS Protocol as a co-benefit, which also includes developing diagnostic testing capabilities for land, water and environmental quality indicators.

(3) Lack of an institutionalized programme for knowledge management on land degradation and low awareness of sustainable practices to elicit positive behavioral change in safeguarding threatened ecosystems and enable uptake of solutions by among stakeholders: Although there are several national initiatives that contribute to building awareness among stakeholders on the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services that may be impacted by land degradation in contribution to livelihoods and resilience-building in the face of climate change, this process of sensitization and education toward adoption of good practices requires continued investment. This is of critical importance to interests in the productive sectors that are reliant on the integrity of ecosystem services for sustainability of economic opportunity and livelihoods, where there remains a limited degree of influence particularly in the private sector. There are not sufficient opportunities for learning-by-doing through technical exchanges to other Caribbean countries and SIDS regions to see first-hand innovation in appropriate solutions that may be replicable in Saint Vincent & the Grenadines. There is a need to make more interactive platforms such as expo events and similar fora available to showcase the work of enterprises that are implementing good environmental practices and demonstrate the value of investing in nature-based solutions.

Stakeholders and beneficiaries: As typical of small island developing states like St. Vincent and the Grenadines, local communities have very close beneficiary relationships to land resources and the ecosystem services they yield, the

integrity of which is governed by degree to which the land resource is sustainably managed. The flow of benefits to stakeholders can be very directly and immediately impacted by poor land management, particularly on account of the smallness and interconnectedness of landscapes. Coordinated and inclusive engagement of stakeholders to address poor land management and mitigate land degradation can be a complex process where multiple interests intersect over mixed-use landscapes.

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, key private sector stakeholders include direct users and beneficiaries such as farmers and fishers, along with associated cooperative groups, who are directly impacted by land degradation that in turn affects land and ecosystem service productivity. The stakeholders of frontline importance are those located within the southwest corridor of mainland St. Vincent, although many of them also have mandates at the national level. In the agriculture sector, the main farmer organizations in the project target area include the South Windward Action Producer Cooperative, Nurtured by Nature, Innovative Food Alliance, the Orion Cooperative Group, the SVG Network of Rural Women Producers, and the SVG Bee Keepers Association among others. Other private sector stakeholders and beneficiaries are represented under the SVG Hotel and Tourism Association, a key stakeholder interest group given of the concentration of commercial investments along the coastal zone, which are being impacted by upstream land degradation that impacts the marine environment. Fishers represented by the Calliaqua Fisher-folk Co-operative Society who utilize the waters of the southwest corridor are an important beneficiary group.

Key governmental institutions charged with managing biodiversity and environmental health fulfill their mandates through various policies and regulatory instruments that facilitate resource mobilization, technical and policy guidance, environmental monitoring, enforcement, and collaboration between state and non-state actors. These agencies include the Sustainable Development Unit under the Ministry of Sustainable Development, the Environmental Management Department, the Environmental Health Division (Ministry of Health), the Forestry and Fisheries Departments, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning the Ministry of National Mobilization and the National Parks Rivers and Beaches Authority. Utility companies, particularly the Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CWSA), play crucial roles in water abstraction for potable water supply, relying on watershed integrity to maintain safe and sustainable water sources. Additionally, agencies with responsibility for waste and chemical management, including CWSA's Solid Waste Management Unit and customs authorities involved in agrochemical importation control, play wider but critical roles in addressing degradation and pollution impacts on SVG's watersheds. Conservation advocates and support entities include non-governmental organizations such as the SVG Environment Fund and SVG Conservation Fund, which actively engage in pollution mitigation and watershed conservation initiatives.

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[1] https://stats.gov.vc/subjects/population-and-demography/mid-year-household-population-estimates-by-age-and-sex/

[2] https://repositorio.iica.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/16601da9-d9cf-467a-a4e8-b16381ae1132/content#:~:text=SVG's%20agriculture%20sector%20largely%20consists,%E2%80%A2

[3] https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/11390

[4] GoSVG, 2023. Final Country Report of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN TSP), Forestry Department

[5] https://nationalparks.gov.vc/nationalparks/index.php/monitoring-program

[6] https://www.cbd.int/doc/nr/nr-06/vc-nr-06-en.pdf

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project description

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole. The project description is expected to cover the key elements of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF's policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the PIF guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

The project theory of change is underpinned by removal or lessening of the barriers described above toward achieving the desired intermediate states and long-term impacts where **(1)** approaches for land degradation abatement is effectively mainstreamed in development frameworks on the basis of land degradation neutrality, and means for access to solutions are sustainably incentivized for uptake by stakeholders and **(2)** ecosystems health shows positive recovery through reduced land degradation with co-benefits in expanded economic gains and widened social well-being.

A simple **'futures narrative'** is elaborated to illustrate how the project intends to ensure resilience of the GEF investment by considering uncertain **drivers** that will have bearing on potentially evolving conditions within the country, in the context of averting land degradation and moving toward land degradation neutrality. Based on the combinations of these drivers, the project design envisages durable investments based on the various future scenarios presented. Key drivers of relevance to this future scenario analysis are:

- **Agricultural commodity demands:** The landscape in the southern corridor of St. Vincent is a highly productive region with significant output across a range of diversified agricultural commodities. These demands are driven by both local and export markets, and the government provides incentives for investment. The demand for agricultural commodities is expected to continue rising in response to an expanding population.

- **Degree of investment in sustainable land management:** There is broad recognition that without investment in sustainable land management practices in the dominant agriculture sector, also mindful of the impacts of commercial and urban development, land productivity for agricultural production will decline. This will result in increased unit costs to maintain yields. Additionally, these challenges will be potentially compounded by the impacts of climate change, such as a greater frequency of intense erosive rainfall events or prolonged droughts.

- **Potential for extreme events linked to climate change:** Climate modeling indicates that annual rainfall will decrease in the Eastern Caribbean, but more intense, shorter rainfall events are expected, potentially causing damaging impacts[1][7]. The number of dry days is anticipated to deviate from long-term averages, directly affecting water and vegetation dynamics and future land degradation severity depending on land use changes.

- **Economic stability and growth potential:** As is characteristic of small island states, the economy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is susceptible to external shocks due to its relatively small size and limited diversification. The majority of economic output is concentrated in agriculture as the dominant sector, followed by tourism, with a small but growing services sector.

Based on the interaction of these drivers, simple future narratives are presented below to assist project design toward assurance of resilience of the GEF investment. Two key drivers, economic stability and growth potential, and potential for extreme events linked to climate change can be considered as the basis for the definition of four possible future narratives around the combinations of the drivers, from conservative to optimistic outlooks:

1. **Less frequent climate-triggered events and low economic growth:** The likelihood of acute land degradation may decrease under this scenario where slower economic growth may have the effect of reduced pressures for land development. However, government capacity to invest in land degradation abatement as needed may also decline, and stakeholders could face limitations in access resources to invest in land degradation control measures. Low economic growth may reduce the purchasing ability for food imports, resulting in increasing dependence on local production, which could have implications for expanded crop cultivation and landscape stress.

2. **Less frequent climate-triggered events and high economic growth:** This scenario is considered a possible lower risk of acute land degradation, however with increased landscape development pressures across all sectors. There could be a likely rise in agricultural production and investments in other commercial activities that has implications for sustainable management of land resources. On the positive side, government support for land management

regulations may increase, and stakeholders may have greater capacity to implement sustainable land management practices, although this is dependent on built capacities of stakeholders.

3. **More frequent climate-triggered events and low economic growth:** Severe land degradation is likely in this scenario where increased extreme rain events lead to aggressive erosion or where severe drought may have impacts on water and vegetation dynamics, in the absence on land degradation mitigation. Under weaker economic conditions there could be increased pressure on land resources for food production, especially if food imports are affected. This can intensify land degradation due to likely reduced government and stakeholder capacity to invest in sustainable land management. There is a possibility that there may be fewer economic investments (agriculture, other commercial and settlement), which could have the effect of relieving pressures on the land that may reduce further land degradation. It should be noted that when disruptive events occur, government policy attention will likely shift toward immediate crisis response and addressing priority needs of communities and businesses during post-disaster recovery.

4. **Increased climate-triggered events and rapid economic growth:** This scenario anticipates greater likelihood of land degradation due to increased occurrence of extreme events which may be potentially compounded by an acceleration in land exploitation for agricultural production and intensification, as well as increased investment in commercial enterprises and the expansion of settlements. However, with relatively stronger economic conditions, there may also be improved fiscal support from government for investments aimed at mitigating land degradation and there may be greater potential for investment in sustainable land management by stakeholders.

Taking into account these future narratives, the project is structured to be both responsive and resilient to changes in key drivers. It places particular emphasis on government policy and investment, supporting mainstreaming within development frameworks and practices toward land degradation neutrality through GEF investments under the project. The project is also intended to adapt to shifts in the factors influencing stakeholder mobilization and incentives, especially as wider socio-economic conditions evolve. Furthermore, it aims to withstand and remain effective in the face of outcomes associated with climate change-induced extreme events.

Considering the simple futures narrative above, the project interventions, through the generation of a suite of key outputs to address the barriers, expects to result in the realization of **six interconnected outcomes** that will lead to the desired intermediate states; **(1)** Enhanced policy, legal and institutional framework with effective capacity that will foster integrated landscape management to mitigate land degradation, contributing positively to ecosystem functioning; **(2)** Viable sustainable financing mechanism demonstrated to support accelerated uptake of nature-based (NbS) solutions in addressing land degradation; **(3)** Strengthened national capacity to assess ecosystem impacts that better guide targeted actions in mitigating land degradation; **(4)** Expanded uptake of effective nature-based solutions (NbS) that mitigate land degradation and restore ecosystems, that are replicable at the national level; **(5)** A coherent knowledge management programme on land degradation is operationalized and **(6)** Increased awareness among stakeholders fosters the adoption of sustainable practices related to mitigation of land degradation.

The following are the **main assumptions** that will need to be considered in the project design and eventual implementation; **(i)** There will be sustained political willingness to drive policy reform needed to address the drivers of land degradation and support commitment to national obligations under UNCCD and progress toward land degradation neutrality and the compliance to the provisions of the LBS Protocol that will be closely aligned, **(ii)** there will be policy level support and support from financial institutions to contribute to creation of enabling conditions to incentivize stakeholders to invest in effective nature-based solutions for addressing land degradation and ecosystem restoration, **(iii)** Private sector stakeholders will consider their engagement as critical to the project success and are willing to participate in demonstration of good practice in application of nature-based solutions that support improved ecosystem functioning upon which their businesses are reliant, **(iv)** Collaborative agencies retain the requisite capacity to support the project through implementation and maintain the capacity to continue the work post-project, **(v)** There are no adverse significant disasters (hurricane, volcanic activity) that has major disruptions to the project implementation across the project areas, **(vi)** Partnership collaborations established under the project persist into the longer-term and **(vii)** Technical knowledge acquired under the project will continue to be applied to effect behavior change in the long-term.

The project design is reflective of causal pathways captured in the theory of change below:

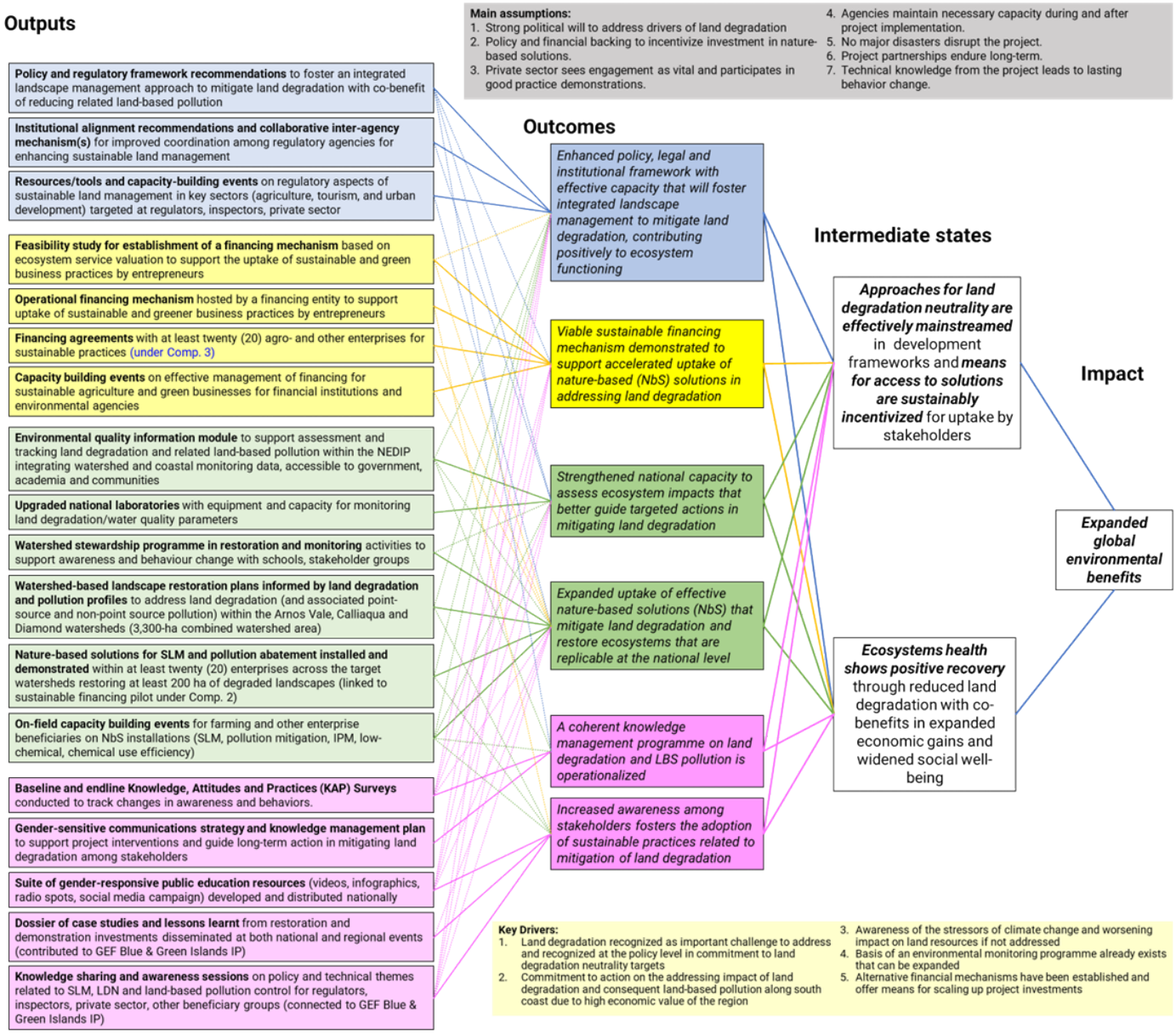

Figure 1. Project theory of change

The project components aligned to the outcome areas are described in more detail below.

Component 1 Enhancing legal and regulatory frameworks for integrated landscape management to mitigate land degradation. This component will result in the realization of ***Outcome 1.1*** *Enhanced policy, legal and institutional framework with effective capacity that will foster integrated landscape management to restore and rehabilitate degraded landscapes and contributing positively to effective ecosystem functioning.*

The integrated landscape management approach will need by necessity, to be based on a watershed management or ridge-to-reef management framework, where a coordinated policy and regulatory approach to addressing direct and indirect drivers of land degradation will be coupled with the measures to mitigate resultant pollution from degradation sources that negatively impact downstream ecosystems. The project target watershed areas in the southwest corridor will serve to demonstrate the shaping and application of policy and legislative reforms with the aim to scale to the national

level in coordination with other relevant initiatives. The project will contribute to a *comprehensive review of the relevant national policy and regulatory frameworks* related to land degradation mitigation and *recommend upgrades and revisions* to these instruments, related to *inter-alia* land management and development that takes into consideration the land degradation neutrality (LDN) target setting process (TSP) that was defined in 2019. The LDN-TSP proposed that national-level LDN is achieved by 2030 as compared to 2015, and that an additional 15% of degraded lands of the country are improved. Key targets include the restoration of 10% of degraded land (1,873 hectares of cropland) and reducing soil erosion by 15% by 2030.

Given the close nexus between sustainable land management planning in the agricultural and other commercial sectors, and potential for mitigation of land-based pollution as a result of land degradation, the project will also consider relevant policy, regulation and institutional frameworks that requires reform, as outlined in the LDN-TSP. Key among these policy and regulatory instruments will be *inter-alia* the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Physical Development Plan (2021-2041), the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Economic and Social Development Plan (if/as relevant), agricultural development policy directives, the Town and Country Planning Act (1992), the Environmental Management Act (2009) and the Forest Resource Conservation Act, 1992. It should be noted that while these regulatory instruments make provisions to varying degrees for improved management practice among productive sector investments in the context of mitigation of land and general environmental degradation, there is need for significant augmentation particularly in the regulations of the primary legislation to enhance and hasten action, and for aligning and coordinating the multi-sectoral effort that is needed. The project will be contributory to efforts of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in their plan to ratify the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) under the Cartagena Convention. The project will contribute to laying the basis for harmonizing the national framework needed to align with the articles of the Protocol alongside addressing drivers of land degradation that trigger land-based pollution. In the review and formulation of policy and regulatory recommendations, the process will seek to address the reform or elimination of potentially harmful subsidies that are at the root cause of ongoing land degradation.

The review and development of recommendations to policies and regulatory instruments will be carried out by consulting experts in environmental policy and legislation supported by land management, agriculture, pollution mitigation and water resources management specialists under the policy-level with coordination by the Sustainable Development Unit. The development of the recommendations that must take into account gender-related considerations (as guided by a gender action plan to be developed during the PPG phase) toward adoption by relevant agencies and stakeholders, will be advanced in a participatory process that assures full participation of target enterprises in the private sector; agricultural, hospitality, commercial and industrial sectors, and the beneficiaries – communities and resource user groups. An important consideration will be the *enhancement or establishment of inter-agency coordination mechanism(s) to realize an appropriate institutional alignment* in enabling a more integrated land management approach in the country. The suite of policy and regulatory instruments and the modalities for national coordination will be explored in detail during the PPG phase.

Capacity building and associated resources will be provided to regulators, ministerial personnel, private sector representatives, and other stakeholders. Capacity enhancement will focus on topics related to policy and planning for improved and integrated land management practices, which will also place emphasis on the outcome of mitigating land-based pollution across land development activities in the agricultural, hospitality and other commercial/industrial sectors. Training within the project implementation duration will be delivered by local and external consulting experts brought in under project resources that will build the capacity of trainees as trainers so that they can continue onward training of peers. To augment the specialized learning and knowledge management opportunities that are connected to other project components, the project will provide additional capacity building support to stakeholders in *obtaining diploma certifications through technical exchanges* with partner organizations that specialize in land development planning around sustainability of resource use. These partners will be identified during the PPG phase. The project will also work closely with the Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Land Management (PISLM) and the FAO within the scope of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines national sub-project under *CSIDS SOILCARE Phase 2 - Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) multi-country soil management initiative for integrated Landscape Restoration and climate-resilient food systems* (11390) in the context of capacity building for SLM and support to the county in advancing toward land degradation neutrality targets.

Component 2 Toward sustainable financing solutions to de-risk transition to sustainable practices for improved land management. This component will result in the realization of ***Outcome 2.1*** *Viable sustainable financing mechanism demonstrated to support accelerated uptake of nature-based (NbS) solutions in addressing land degradation.*

Currently, there are very limited financing options available in the country that support ongoing programmes addressing land degradation though investments in ecosystem restoration. Most resources for ecosystem restoration come from external donor funding, which is generally project-driven and short term. Farmers and business enterprises otherwise have limited opportunities to invest in improved practices to protect the environment, due to the relatively high costs associated with production and business operations in a small island investment climate. Credit accessed through local lending systems is primarily directed toward building production and service capacity, with minimal allocation towards environmental measures. For smaller enterprises, such as farmers, limited financial capacity, challenges in accessing credit, and low business management skills reduce both interest and ability to plan for and pursue investment in sound environmental practices.

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, through the Ministry of Finance, offers various duty-free concessions to enterprises. In agriculture, farmers can access farm vehicles duty-free via the Ministry of Agriculture. Additionally, agricultural inputs are subsidized to offset production costs. However, there are limited fiscal incentives specifically targeting improved environmental practices for businesses. Small grant programmes such as the **GEF Small Grants Programme (GEF-SFP)** and the **St. Vincent and the Grenadines Conservation Fund (SVGCF)** provide support for good environmental practices. Established in 2015, SVGCF aims to sustainably fund the management and expansion of protected areas and biodiversity conservation efforts. The fund has supported community initiatives like erosion control, coastal ecosystem restoration, and capacity building for community action. The **Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF)**, under which SVGCF operates, also finances a range of conservation projects including youth science internships, women's empowerment for sustainable livelihoods, and ecosystem restoration in Ashton Lagoon, Union Island.

This component is designed to expand sustainable financing options for addressing land degradation and for safeguarding and restoring ecosystems—including terrestrial, freshwater, and marine environments—that have been affected by direct degradation. The project will first support the *evaluation of the existing fiscal incentive framework as well as assess opportunities for generating new financial resources*, with particular emphasis on investments aimed at mitigating land degradation in line with proposed LDN goals. This assessment will be conducted by business development specialists under the guidance of the Ministry of Finance and affiliated entities, which include—but are not limited to—the SVGCF, CBF, GEF-SGP, and Invest SVG. The assessment should apply ecosystem service value (ESV) tools within the project landscape to be used as the basis for informing the financing mechanism so is compensatory to the quantum of funding needed to maintain the ecosystem service yields toward economic development needs.

Based on this evaluation, *proposals for financing mechanisms* that are sensitive to gender and youth investment considerations will be developed in line with the project gender action plan, demonstrating the potential for viable, sustainable financing approaches for land degradation abatement, LBS pollution mitigation and ecosystem restoration, as outlined under Component 3. This proposal may consider options such as payment for ecosystem services (PES), green bonds, guarantees, among others, in sustainable financing solutions. The proposal aims to strengthen and expand the national SVGCF and other mechanisms to enable greater support for sustainable agriculture and less-polluting business practices, with an emphasis on de-risking during the transition to sustainable practices. These proposals may have implications for policy and legislative enhancements, which will be considered for integration with Component 1 of the project. The proposals and options for expanded sustainable financing will be presented to regulatory and facilitating agencies, including the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Sustainable Development, the SVGCF, lending agencies, and beneficiaries for validation and adoption, to serve as demonstrations within the project and as the foundation for sustained financing in the future.

The project will demonstrate this financing model through Component 3, focusing on on-field demonstrations (pilots) of improved practices. A *cohort of existing business enterprises will be identified* that have shown potential for replication and scaling up at the national level. These enterprises will include crop and livestock farms, as well as businesses across

various sectors whose operations may be exacerbating land degradation and/or degrading downstream ecosystems. Through stakeholder engagement and capacity building, and in alignment with outputs to be delivered under Component 3, *financing agreements with at least twenty (20) farmers, agro-enterprises, and other enterprises* supporting sustainable practices will be established. Efforts will be made to promote gender equality and inclusive economic growth by ensuring that at least thirty percent (30%) of the supported entrepreneurs are women. The financing agreements will be structured on the basis of direct project contributions, complemented by leveraged co-financing from additional sources. It is anticipated that the primary co-financing will be sourced from the SVGCF and the CBF; however, this will be comprehensively evaluated during the PPG phase.

Based on consensus among stakeholders regarding the financing proposal options, the project will contribute to the development of *training resources and guidance materials* to support capacity building in the effective management of financing for sustainable agriculture and green businesses aimed at financial institutions and beneficiaries. During the PPG stage of project development, a *financial services node will be identified* to coordinate and deliver these capacity-building services. The project anticipates that a *series of capacity-building events* will be held throughout the implementation period, which will also align with awareness-raising and knowledge management activities under Component 4 of the project.

It should be noted that the project will incorporate emerging tools, methods and practices from the ***GEF8 Blue and Green Island Integrated Programme*** Child Projects (GEF ID: 11250) that will have SIDS focus that will parallel needs and replicable approaches in St. Vincent & the Grenadines. This output will be principally applied to Component 3 in definition of incentives and support for measures to reduce ecosystem degradation.

Component 3 Demonstrating effective nature-based solutions for improved land management and ecosystem health. This component will result in the realization of ***Outcome 3.1*** - *Strengthened national capacity to assess ecosystem impacts that better guide targeted actions in mitigating land degradation* and ***Outcome 3.2*** - *Expanded uptake of effective nature-based solutions (NbS) that mitigate land degradation and restore ecosystems that are replicable at the national level.*

This component is centered on targeted interventions that aim to demonstrate cost-effective approaches, including nature-based solutions and other methods, for mitigating land degradation and supporting the restoration of ecosystems affected by land degradation. These demonstration projects are intended to be replicable nationally and will draw on good practices from prior investments in the country, as well as experiences from the Caribbean and Small Island Developing States globally. This component will deliver on key outputs in terms of: **(a)** improving the assessment and monitoring capabilities of national entities for land degradation 'hotspot' tracking, and **(b)** installing demonstrative remedial measures to address land degradation.

(a) Improving the assessment and monitoring capabilities: To facilitate a more systematic approach to assessing sources of environmental degradation (in the field) and establish causal impacts to affected downstream ecosystems, that in turn informs targeted actions, the project will fill a longstanding gap in terms of absence of a knowledge management system that functions as a 'central' hub for tracking ecosystem degradation and information control. Agencies such as the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority (NPRBA) currently collect relevant data on ecosystem degradation through coastal water monitoring activities. However, strengthening the robustness of these monitoring programmes would improve the quality of management decisions, thereby informing regulatory development and controls designed to prevent further degradation. Requirements associated with monitoring LDN parameters such as sediment loading / turbidity and soil organic carbon will need to be considered. This enhancement would also enable the establishment of benchmarks for planning and tracking ecosystem recovery based on investment outcomes. The availability of such knowledge resources will be crucial in fulfilling the country's anticipated commitments in meeting LDN targets and be complementary to national level investments under SoilCare Phase 2 and also contribute to meeting obligations under the LBS Protocol. Concurrently, the GEF-WB *Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project* (GEF-ID 10549) is developing a National Environmental Data and Information Platform (NEDIP), which is expected to serve as a repository for additional knowledge and data systems related to environmental management nationwide. The NEPID will be hosted by the Sustainable Development Unit and is to be sustained by recurrent government funding.

Based on this project's anticipated timeline toward implementation, it is anticipated that the NEPID will be fully operational, and this project will evaluate the system functioning and architecture and propose recommendations for integrating a component or 'module' for assessment and tracking land degradation and land-based pollution, including operational requirements and data exchange protocols. The system is expected to be spatially-based, designed around data systems that are easily updated and managed within the capacity of the SDU and other entities and stakeholders interfacing with the system. The system will be designed also in consideration for data exchange and/or connectivity with the *Cartagena Convention Secretariat Data and Information Platform*[2][8] which can feed into the generation of State of Convention Area Reports.

The project will engage ICT specialists who, under the supervision of the SDU and relevant agencies, with technical support from the GOSVG Information Technology Services Division, will carry out a technical evaluation on hosting requirements, supported by relevant recommendations. Following acceptance of the recommendations, the project will support the development and hosting of an *environmental quality (land degradation/water quality) monitoring module under the NEDIP*, centered on watershed-level ecosystem quality monitoring with the goal of integrating watershed and coastal monitoring data, and making it accessible to government agencies, academia, and communities as appropriate. *Infrastructure and equipment requirements for system upgrades will be assessed and procured*. The extent of requirements will be validated at the PPG stage of project development. In the early stages of implementation, the project will support the *evaluation of agency capacity and capability to monitor and assess environmental parameters*. The evaluation will also include *recommendations on management and coordination mechanisms for monitoring* at the national level. This work will build upon outputs from the GEF-UNDP project *Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using a Ridge-to-Reef approach*, which anticipates establishing a national sustainable land management and biodiversity monitoring programme. This will also be informed by work under the GEF *SoilCare Phase 2 project* that anticipates development of a national soils information system for the country.

Based on the evaluation and subsequent recommendations, *national laboratories will be selected for upgrades in equipment and technical capacity* to monitor key parameters associated with land degradation and other ambient environmental quality parameters including water quality. These investments will be guided by a thorough *assessment of the current capacity of these laboratories*, along with clear *recommendations regarding the necessary equipment* and its procurement. The project will allocate resources for laboratory upgrades and provisioning, following these recommendations. This project will complement the anticipated *SoilCare Phase 2* investments in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. While the SoilCare Project intends to target soil parameters and provide associated diagnostic information to inform requirements for agricultural productivity enhancements through soil conservation measures, this initiative will support broader watershed-level assessments related to land and water quality impairment, particularly associated with hotspot areas experiencing active land degradation. The synergies between this project and investments under SoilCare 2 will be closely considered during the PPG phase that will also take into account the ability to maintain the system through sustained financing in the long term. Under the regional *Enhancing Ecosystems for Coastal Protection and Climate Change Resilience in the Caribbean Project (ECP-Caribbean)* financed by the Government of Canada, environmental monitoring equipment will be provided to the country for coastal environmental quality assessment, and this project will build on that contribution. Relevant *personnel involved in environmental monitoring will receive training* at the upgraded laboratories in the use of diagnostic equipment, contributing to the development of local human resource capacity.

Key emphasis in respect to the development of the monitoring module system and the laboratory diagnostic upgrade will be on assuring that there is convergence between these efforts at the national level to avoid duplication, gain synergy, and ensure is within the reach of organizational capacities.

The project will introduce the first of its kind *watershed stewardship programme* within the project target area (initially, but to expand to the national level) to engage schools, youth organizations, farmer associations, and women-led groups in restoration and monitoring activities, fostering long-term behavior change and environmental responsibility. The programme will contribute to existing school environmental education programmes where students from primary to tertiary level will be engaged in discovery through interactive learning experiences in the natural environment in close development collaboration with the Ministry of Education. This programme will incorporate citizen science approaches as a means to build awareness and support calls to action on environmental protection among community groups and the general citizenry.

(b) Installing demonstrative remedial measures to address land degradation: Nature-based solutions will be implemented using financial incentivization models from Component 2 to address land degradation and restore ecosystems, with the intention of future replication at the national level. To support interventions in the target landscape, the Arnos Vale, Calliaqua, and Diamond watershed areas, *watershed pollution profiles* will be developed. These profiles will incorporate characterizations of land degradation 'hotspot' locations that are under active degradation (or having future potential) and measured pollutant concentrations along watercourses for key parameters of interest (chemicals, sediment loads, pathogens; to be determined during PPG and further validated at project inception). The assessment will be conducted as an initial iteration during the PPG phase to determine the scope and scale of requirements for the project. During project implementation, this evaluation will be further validated. Drawing from the initial assessment at the PPG phase and confirmed during project execution, *landscape-watershed restoration plans* to include site-specific land degradation abatement plans/designs that incorporate green infrastructure interventions such as bio-engineered slope stabilization, rain gardens, bio-swales, and permeable surfaces, will be developed to guide stakeholder participation and execution. These restoration plans will take into consideration strategic directives from the stakeholder engagement plan and the gender action plan (that will be developed during the PPG phase) to ensure full engagement.

Based on the landscape-watershed restoration plans, the project will support farmers and other enterprises to incorporate *nature-based solutions into conservation installations and sustainable land management (SLM) measures covering at least 200 hectares of degraded landscapes*. This will include measures to reduce soil loss resulting from surface and gully erosion through uncontrolled runoff, to improve soil stability, reduce inefficient and excessive agrochemical and fertilizer application, enhance soil carbon stock and organic matter, conserve nutrients and water (that generally contributes to diffuse or non-point source pollution). Such measures will include *inter-alia* agro-forestry intercropping, integration of grass/vegetation contour barriers, interceptor and contour drains, vegetative filter beds, rain gardens, bio-swales, permeable surfaces, containment bunds and bio-engineering solutions incorporating geotex fabric and soil containment measures. For agricultural enterprises, low-chemical and chemical-use efficiency approaches in crop and livestock production systems will consider application of integrated pest management approaches in reduced reliance on chemical pesticide controls that are potentially harmful to the environment. The project will also assist enterprises in implementing control measures to mitigate the impacts of potentially harmful and polluting end-of-pipe discharges that may be directly contributing to degradation over landscapes.

The project will make provisions for the establishment and/or augmentation of plant propagation capacity to generate planting material for land conservation and bioremediation. Support strategies will be built upon ongoing efforts by the Ministry of Agriculture to promote sustainable and climate-resilient practices such as soil and water conservation, improved efficiency of agrochemical use or, where feasible, reduced agrochemical inputs to minimize negative effects on productive ecosystems.

To bolster the capacity of targeted stakeholders to implement the NbS/remedial measures, the project will develop a *suite of gender-responsive capacity building tools* to include *inter-alia* best practices in incorporating investments that enhance soil and water conservation, soil carbon enrichment and composting, bioengineering and green approaches in slope stabilization, grass / vegetative barrier establishment, integrated pest management agro-forestry systems with incorporation of native species (of biodiversity value) where practical, plant propagation techniques, input use efficiency and low-chemical production. These will be compiled in training resources (printed and online media formats) that will be delivered through *training events* via field extension and as warranted, in classroom settings. The capacity building will not only be directed to farmers and enterprises in the field, but also to professionals in responsible line agencies in train-the-trainer sessions. Cooperation will be built with partners already supporting capacity building in the agricultural sector including *inter-alia* the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and Inter-American

Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). The project will work closely with the Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Land Management (PISLM) and the FAO within the scope of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines national sub-project under *CSIDS SOILCARE Phase 2 - Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) multi-country soil management initiative for integrated Landscape Restoration and climate-resilient food systems* (11390) that has significant focus on building capacity for SLM. The project will establish linkages with established capacity building efforts under the BCRC-Caribbean's Digital Learning Hub (under the GEF-UNEP ISLANDS 10279 and 10472 projects). The collaboration framework will be defined in the PPG phase.

Component 4 Enhancing knowledge exchange and awareness toward greater adoption of sustainable practices for mitigating land degradation. This component will result in the realization of ***Outcome 4.1*** *A coherent knowledge management programme on land degradation is operationalized* and ***Outcome 4.2*** *Increased awareness among stakeholders fosters the adoption of sustainable practices related to mitigation of land degradation*.

This component will take a cross-cutting approach across all project components, focusing on knowledge exchange and raising awareness of the urgent issue of addressing land degradation in order to mitigate the resulting loss of ecosystem services within the overarching meeting national LDN targets and also serve to direct attention on associated pollution from land degradation. It will also promote the need for ecosystem restoration, along with the protection of freshwater and coastal water quality in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Implementation will occur through an institutionalized programme aimed at strengthening knowledge management to support the effective execution and long-term sustainability of the project's interventions. A *gender-sensitive communications strategy and knowledge management plan* will be developed to guide outreach and engagement throughout the project duration. The knowledge management plan will align with the development of technical knowledge resources across other project components and will be integrated within partner organizations participating in the project. *Communications products* supporting this strategy will be created and may include social media content, videos, infographics, and fact sheets. *Baseline and endline Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) surveys* will be conducted to assess changes in public awareness and behavior throughout the project lifecycle.

A *suite of gender-responsive public education resources*, comprising videos, infographics, radio segments, and a nationwide social media campaign, will be prepared and distributed to relevant authorities, designated audiences, and the general public. These activities will be aligned with national development objectives and obligations principally under UN Convention to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation and also with connection to national targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity, with specific reference to the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Additionally, a *dossier of case studies and lessons learned* from restoration and demonstration initiatives will be compiled and presented at both national and regional events to promote replication and scaling of successful interventions. This dossier will be supported by contributions from national and regional partners working on the topic of land degradation and ecosystem restoration and supplemented by materials produced through related projects available to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. All case studies and lessons learned will adhere to best practice guidelines established by the GEF, as well as those developed by the BCRC based on their expertise in knowledge management within current GEF project administration, particularly under the GEF-ISLANDS Project.

Furthermore, *knowledge sharing and awareness events* will be organized for stakeholders and beneficiary groups throughout the project's duration. These events, hosted by BCRC together with SDU and collaborating lead agencies and partners, will employ a variety of formats including both in-person gatherings and hybrid sessions utilizing remote meeting technologies. The project will foster close collaborative linkages to the national components of the CSIDS SOILCARE Phase 2 project, where the BCRC will work with the PISLM in organizing and hosting knowledge sharing and awareness events. The project will take advantage of the BCRC-Caribbean's *Digital Learning Hub* developed under the *GEF-UNEP ISLANDS* projects, to support online training (via e-learning courses) for stakeholders harmonized within the wider broader national framework designed to facilitate implementation of the LBS Protocol.

An important partner in this effort to enhance knowledge management will be the University of the West Indies (UWI) that is being supported under a GEF-UNEP project *Demonstration of a Caribbean Mechanism Toward Establishment*

of a SIDS-SIDS Green-Blue Economy Knowledge Transfer Hub. This regional knowledge hub project (led by Barbados and Grenada) aims to develop a methodology to assist Caribbean countries consolidate learning elements based on technical and policy best practice knowledge generated by projects, into teaching curricula within the university system and for stakeholders in-country. The knowledge and lessons learned from this project will be contributed to this knowledge hub that is being supported by UWI's Cave Hill Campus in Barbados for knowledge transfer via teaching curricula for wider uptake within the Caribbean region and SIDS at the global level.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A *project monitoring and evaluation system* will be put in place to ensure continual assessment of progress in meeting project outcome and output targets. The monitoring, evaluation and learning system will ensure full transparency of the project progress and performance against the results framework, and compliance with the established reporting and evaluation requirements, ensuring that gender metrics are fully integrated.

Given the likely time overlap with this new initiative and the incoming *CSIDS SOILCARE Phase 2 (national project)* (GEF-ID 11390) along with consideration of lessons learned from the *Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project* (GEF-ID 10549) and *Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using a Ridge-to-Reef approach Project* (GEF-ID 9580) (both of which will be in the latter stages of implementation by the start-up of this project), the M&E framework will need to consider the connections and opportunities for synergies from these projects for scaling up and replication. This will include an approach to address and build on the lessons learned from implementation challenges to be mitigated in the full project design during the PPG Phase.

[1] https://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/files/2021/08/OECS-Climate-Report.pdf

[2] https://cartagena.unepgrid.ch/

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Does the GEF Agency expect to play an execution role on this project?

If so, please describe that role here. Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing

The **Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean (BCRC-Caribbean)** has been designated as the project Executing Agency. Established in 2008, the BCRC-Caribbean's primary mandate is to support implementation of the Basel Convention and other multilateral environmental agreements, with a focus on the sustainable management of wastes and chemicals to safeguard human health and the environment. This mandate is closely aligned with governance frameworks related to management of land and water resources that underpins this project. The BCRC possesses significant familiarity and capacity to carry out an Executing Agency role given its current role of managing the Caribbean portfolio of the global GEF ISLANDS project. Given the administrative capacity constraints of the lead statutory agencies, the shift of the 'execution' administrative responsibilities to the BCRC on behalf of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, will enable these agencies to concentrate focus on policy and technical guidance. This is particularly relevant in managing procurement procedures in a timely manner, whether for consultants or other service contracts, and also in more efficiently and quickly directing resources toward effective knowledge management and capacity building, both of which are essential for adoption and replication within the project timelines. From the PPG phase through to implementation, the BCRC-Caribbean will deploy experienced project management staff to assure strengthened coordination, procurement and stakeholder engagement. The Centre will collaborate not only with national agencies responsible for environmental management, but also with regional partners such as the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management (PISLM), which holds the regional mandate for assisting countries in fulfilling their obligations under the UNCCD.

Approaches for the uptake of best practices and lessons learned from GEF and non-GEF projects will be evaluated for relevance to this initiative and appropriately integrated as relevant in the project design during the PPG phase. There are

ongoing relevant **GEF projects** where the experiences and lessons learned will be further upscaled and replicated within the target geography in this initiative. There are two **national projects**; **(1)** ***Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project*** (GEF ID: 10549) that is implemented by the World Bank and executed by the Government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Sustainable Development Unit) that seeks to improve the institutional framework and capacity for coastal and marine ecosystem management, enhance participatory conservation planning with the integration of innovative financing arrangements demonstrated through on-ground investments and improve the quality and availability of coastal and marine data to inform decision-making. The project commenced in 2022. **(2)** ***Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using a Ridge-to-Reef approach*** (GEF ID: 9580) and executed by the Government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Forestry Department) seeks to strengthen institutional capacities and gender responsive framework for protected area management, ecosystem conservation and sustainable land use, establish and enhance effective management of new and existing protected areas, expand integrated watershed management measures in a ridge-to-reef setting to reduce threats within protected areas and downstream marine areas with increased diversification of household incomes and strengthen knowledge management for sustainable land management, climate-smart agriculture and biodiversity conservation. The project commenced in 2019.

There are two ongoing **regional GEF projects** in where the country has national sub-projects namely **(1)** ***CReW+: An Integrated Approach to Water and Wastewater Management Using Innovative Solutions and Promoting Financing Mechanisms in the Wider Caribbean Region*** (GEF ID: 9601) that commenced in 2019 and **(2)** ***Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWEco)*** (GEF ID: 4932) that started in 2015. These regional-level projects under the International Waters portfolio seek to implement land-based pollution control measures from point and non-point sources to protect downstream coastal ecosystems in the Caribbean Sea through transboundary shared learning and cooperation with the other national sub-projects of participant countries. The project proponents and stakeholders for these above listed projects will be in common to this initiative that offers opportunity for institutional knowledge transfer and exchange among beneficiaries. These projects are designed to be explicitly harmonized with the LBS Protocol of the Cartagena Convention.

An incoming regional project of primary relevance will be the ***CSIDS SOILCARE Phase 2 - Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) multi-country soil management initiative for integrated Landscape Restoration and climate-resilient food systems*** (GEF ID: 11390) that will seek to improve the capacity of countries to monitor and report on LDN, implement proven interventions to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation to achieve LDN, enhance integrated land planning strategies based on sustainable land and sustainable soil management, leverage financing toward LDN and climate resilience, and mainstream LDN across policy frameworks. The proposed project target areas in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are Top Hill, Perseverance, Orange Hill and Chatham Bay (Union Island).

Although St. Vincent and the Grenadines is not a participating country, it will benefit through this new initiative with outputs developed under the GEF ***ISLANDS - Caribbean Child Project and Additional Caribbean Regional Project*** (GEF-ID:10279 and 10472) (implemented by UNEP) that is being executed by the BCRC. A Digital Learning Hub (DLH) is being developed as a sustainable training tool for the region. The hub features short courses on different focal areas and the environmentally sound management of waste streams of concern for the Caribbean. The DLH is accessible and can be utilized globally, and as such presents a unique opportunity for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to build capacity based on the work done under ISLANDS, having not participated in the project.

The table below lists incoming and ongoing GEF projects in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, summarizing their key 'complementary' outputs and how this proposed project will build on or complement these efforts. It should be noted that the target geographical areas under this proposed initiative will not overlap with those of current projects.

Project	Relevant main outputs	Areas for synergy and build-out under proposed project

Incoming: **CSIDS SOILCARE Phase 2 - Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) multi-country soil management initiative for integrated Landscape Restoration and climate-resilient food systems** (GEF ID: 11390)	**Component 1:** 1.1.1 Infrastructure and technical skills assessed and upgraded for laboratories under Caribbean Soil Laboratory Network (CARSOLAN)	**Output 3.1.2** aims to enhance national laboratory diagnostic capabilities in alignment with the anticipated initiatives at the national level in collaboration with CARSOLAN. It will specifically develop components related to water quality that are not addressed under the national element of SoilCare Phase 2, thereby providing valuable data for broader landscape ecosystem parameter monitoring, especially regarding the quality of ambient environments such as rivers and coastal receiving waters.
	Component 2: 2.1.1 SSM and SLM best practices implemented in forest, rangeland and cropland demonstration sites. 2.1.2 SSM strategies to optimize agricultural inputs (fertilizers and pesticides) implemented and monitored in cropland demonstration sites. 2.1.3 Participatory gender-inclusive, and context-specific strategic land management plans produced for the implementation areas and integrated into national DSS.	**Output 3.2.1** and **3.2.2** will contribute respectively to the planning and to the on-ground investments in SLM and degradation control measures in areas that are not being addressed under the SoilCare project; these being Top Hill, Perseverance and Orange Hill, hence will expand treatment coverage across the island that will be complementary. This project focuses on the Arnos Vale, Calliaqua and Diamond watersheds (3,300-ha combined watershed area). Investments in nature-based solutions for SLM and pollution abatement will be installed and demonstrated within at least twenty (20) enterprises across the target watersheds restoring at least 200 ha of degraded/polluted landscapes. **Output 3.2.3** will be on-field capacity building events on best practices covering topics including SLM, pollution mitigation, IPM, low-chemical/chemical use efficiency for farming, etc
	Component 4: 4.1.3 Youth Agri-business initiative (YABI) towards CARICOM 25x25 vision implemented	**Output 2.1.3** will support uptake of best practices through facilitating financing agreements with at least twenty (20) agro- and other enterprises for sustainable practices that will be implemented under Component 3. This will be in close alignment with support under the SoilCare project toward enhancing youth agri-business development.
	Component 5: 5.1.3. Communication, knowledge and information management improved through networks established in Phase I and in collaboration with the SIDS – SIDS Green-Blue Economy Knowledge Transfer Hub	**Output 4.2.2** will be the compilation of a dossier of case studies and lessons learnt from restoration and demonstration investments disseminated at both national and regional events contributed to GEF Blue & Green Islands IP that will also feed to the GEF SIDS – SIDS Green-Blue Economy Knowledge Transfer Hub. Under **Output 4.2.3** knowledge sharing and awareness sessions on policy and technical themes related to land degradation abatement and LBS Protocol framework adoption, for regulators, inspectors, private sector, other beneficiary groups
Ongoing: **Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project** (GEF ID: 10549)	**Component 2:** 1. Area-based participatory integrated spatial plan developed and implemented for the 4 priority areas aimed at conserving species and ecosystems and reducing threats 2. Capacity, skills, and protocols for permitting, surveillance, monitoring and enforcement trialed and evaluated for replicability.	**Output 3.2.1** will deliver landscape restoration plans informed by watershed pollution profiles to address point-source and non-point source pollution within the Arnos Vale, Calliaqua and Diamond watersheds (3,300-ha combined watershed area). These areas do not overlap and will complement the areas targeted under the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project that are Leeward Coast Landscape/Seascape and coastal areas within Southeast Landscape/Seascape: Milligan Cay, Brighton, Diamond and Stubbs beaches. **Output 3.1.2** aims to enhance national monitoring and diagnostic capabilities with emphasis on ambient environmental quality parameters that blend land management and water quality parameters, hence will be complementary.
	Component 3: 1. National Environmental Data and Information Platform (NEDIP) established and functionalized	**Output 3.1.1** will address tracking key themes including land 'hotspot' degradation assessment and land-based pollution information as an integrated module within the proposed NEDIP. This module will incorporate watershed and coastal monitoring data and will be accessible to government entities, academic institutions, and communities.

Ongoing: **Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using a Ridge-to-Reef approach** (GEF ID: 9580)	**Component 1:** 1.1 Natural resources information management system harmonized for multi-departmental use, through development and implementation of a centralized geo-referenced Biodiversity and Land Use Database to support existing and new baseline data and monitoring systems, outputs of ecological assessment and inventories … 1.2 Strengthened coherence of policy, legal and regulatory framework for INRM (ridge to reef), biodiversity conservation, and protected areas… 1.3 Strengthened coordination and planning framework for INRM, SLM, BD and PA… 1.5 Strengthened Institutional Capacities for INRM (PA, BD &SLM) to support conservation of biodiversity and reduce land degradation ….	**Output 3.1.1** will contribute to the ability to track environmental status related to land degradation and pollution as part of the proposed NEDIP. This module will incorporate watershed and coastal monitoring data and will be accessible to government entities, academic institutions, and communities. **Output 1.1.1** will contribute to policy and regulatory framework recommendations for an integrated landscape management approach to address land degradation as main focus with related land-based sources of pollution as a co-benefit. This will be a complement to what is being developed under the Ridge-to-Reef project. This will be further supported by **Output 1.1.2** that will propose institutional alignment recommendations and collaborative inter-agency mechanism(s) for improved coordination among regulatory agencies that will complement the effort under the Ridge-to-Reef project.
	Component 3: 3.1 Improved SLM practices in 3 upper watershed landscapes in and surrounding the Central Mountain Forest Reserve, with watershed management plan developed and implementation initiated in the pilot Ridge to Reef site. … 3.2 National learning centers and demonstration sites on CSA and SLM. …. 3.3 Sustainable livelihood programme developed through identification of livelihood activities …	**Output 3.2.2** will deliver on installation of nature-based solutions for SLM and pollution abatement measures within at least twenty (20) enterprises across the Arnos Vale, Calliaqua and Diamond watersheds restoring at least 200 ha of degraded/polluted landscapes, complementing efforts over other parts of the island under the Ridge-to-Reef project. **Output 3.1.3** will support a watershed stewardship programme in restoration and monitoring activities to support awareness and behavior change among stakeholders that will augment the existing efforts under the Ridge-to-Reef project. **Output 3.2.3** will build on capacity building for farming and other enterprise beneficiaries on NbS installations.
	Given the nexus between the *Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using a Ridge-to-Reef approach* project and the new proposal, the following should be additionally noted in terms of key differences and complementarities:	
	9580 Conserving biodiversity and reducing land degradation using a Ridge-to-Reef approach • Project focus is more oriented toward the GEF biodiversity focal area and global environmental benefits with benefits of land degradation mitigation in a ridge-to-reef management framework. • Emphasis is on enhancing PA management effectiveness by strengthening governance systems primarily related to PA governance and management, taking into consideration addressing the enabling environments and knowledge management related to sustainable land management, climate-smart agricultural practices that are relevant • Sustainability of good practice is aimed at development of a sustainable financing mechanism exclusively for protected areas management, considering financing	11541 Watershed Action for Restoring Ecosystems in the South Corridor of St. Vincent (PIF) • Project focus is more oriented toward the GEF land degradation focal area and global environmental benefits in a ridge-to-reef management framework with LBS pollution reduction as an important co-benefit. • Emphasis on removing barriers to sustainable land management in productive landscapes (not protected areas management framework) by integrating policy and regulatory reforms, reducing financial risks, de-risking the transition to SLM in various sectors, and demonstrating NbS/SLM. • Sustainability of good practice is aimed at changing behaviour in the productive sector, particularly among farmers and enterprises, driven by policy reform and fiscal incentives to encourage wider adoption beyond practical

	approaches such as entry fees and payment for ecosystem services (PES). • The geographic scope is within the upper watershed areas that extend into the KBAs (7 in total) that constitute collectively the proposed Central Mountain Forest Reserve where the 'ridge to reef' approach underscores the importance of connectivity. Targeted watersheds within which on-ground investments are being piloted are the Buccament and Georgetown watersheds.	demonstrations, with LDN serving as the central theme. • The geographic scope has a narrower spatial footprint, focusing on a key multi-use development area within the southwest corridor, with the targeted watersheds - the Arnos Vale, Calliaqua, and Diamond watersheds.
Close-out: **CReW+: An Integrated Approach to Water and Wastewater Management Using Innovative Solutions and Promoting Financing Mechanisms in the Wider Caribbean Region** (GEF ID: 9601)	**Key contributions/deliverables** Output 3.1.2 Rural and community level Integrated and Innovative Water and Wastewater low tech solutions implemented • Enhancement work on Wastewater Treatment System at Belle Isles Prison Facility - water reuse for irrigation and washing of pens • "Hotspots" assessed & identified include 3 Hotels on South Coast; included the Kingstown Fish Market	**Output 3.2.2** will consider work under the CReW project that could be potentially expanded/replicated in respect to the installation of nature-based solutions for SLM and pollution abatement installed the target watersheds
Close-out: **Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States** (IWEco) (GEF ID: 4932)	**Key contributions/deliverables** Output 2 (Sub-component 1.1) Reforested and stabilized lands in Perseverance, resulting in increase in population species abundance and diversity toward prior natural condition of ecosystem • Adoption of the Taungya farming system to support forest regeneration and sustainable livelihoods (St. Vincent and the Grenadines) • Riverbank stabilization of 1800 square meters at South Rivers within the targeted area using fruit trees, glory cedar and other species and bioengineering • Thinning of 1,5 ha of Blue Mahoe in the Montreal area and preparation for an additional 4.85ha (12 acres) Output 5 (Sub-component 1.2) Integrated/sustainable waste management for pig production with inputs for organic agriculture	**Output 3.2.2** will build on the work of the IWEco national project based on investments in that project target areas (Perseverance, South Rivers, Montreal) in installing nature-based solutions for SLM and pollution abatement within the target watersheds under this project.
	Output 6 (Sub-component 2.1) Adoption into national accounts of IW and LD, and BD-related	**Output 3.1.1** will contribute to capacity for monitoring land degradation hotspots and consequent pollution

	indicators of process, stress reduction, and environmental and socioeconomic status to monitor improvements in the management of land and water resources and wastewater • ICT equipment procured to CWSA and additional water quality testing equipment pending delivery	discharges through the proposed NEDIP, integrating watershed and coastal monitoring data and making accessible to stakeholders. **Output 3.1.2** will seek to upgrade existing national capacities for laboratory-support in monitoring environmental / water quality parameters.

The following **non-GEF projects** in St Vincent and the Grenadines are relevant to the proposed project, and although decidedly oriented toward enhancing climate resilience and blue economy but will share proposed policy directions in integrated landscape resource management, spatially extended into the coastal environments. The ***Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: Pursuing Climate Resilient Development by Enhancing the National Adaptation Planning Process*** [SVG-NAP][1][9] is a GCF readiness initiative aimed at climate change adaptation planning at the national level with emphasis on the priority tourism, coastal and marine sectors. The initiative is being implemented by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre and will entail community climate vulnerability assessments for four communities. The ***Pioneering Blue-Green Economic Development on the South Coast, St. Vincent*** that is led by CANARI[2][10] adopts a landscape approach to address key risks from climate change and land-based pollution with focus on coral restoration and community stewardship in formulating action plans supported by capacity building and training. The ***Biodiversity Support Programme in ACP Coastal Environments*** funded by the European Union that includes the OECS region under the 'OECS BioSpace' Project aims to contribute to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway by supporting and improving the management and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources. In the OECS, focus will be on enhancing capacities to effectively manage coastal and marine biodiversity and enhance resilience to climate change, and support efforts to assess, protect, manage and sustainably use marine and terrestrial biodiversity. The ***Enhancing Ecosystems for Coastal Protection and Climate Change Resilience in the Caribbean Project (ECP-Caribbean Project)***[3][11] financed by the Government of Canada, implemented in partnership with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) (since 2023) aims at increasing climate resilience of communities and vulnerable populations by transforming the way coral reefs and coastal ecosystems are managed to ensure that their biodiversity is protected and that the vital services they provide are sustained. In the case of St. Vincent and the Grenadines as with the other six participating countries support will be provided to policy strengthening for coastal ecosystem protection, coastal resource mapping and coral/coastal ecosystem restoration, and development of platforms to enhance decision-making.

It is reiterated that the project will avoid overlap and will adapt and upscale the outputs and lessons generated from these above-listed projects. This project will complement work being done under the GEF7 Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Strengthening Project where the geographical areas of implementation include the Leeward Coast Landscape, the Southeast Landscape/Seascape and Colonarie for mainland St. Vincent, and the Grenadines Landscape. This project introduces an important innovative element that has not been sufficiently elaborated in the country under the suite of past or current initiatives; the formulation of a sustainable financing mechanism to incentivize enterprises to invest in nature-based solutions for pollution abatement. The target geography in the southwest of mainland St. Vincent presents an opportunity to build out this approach that is intended to be upscaled to the national level and to form the basis for sustainable financing that goes beyond traditional external grant donors. Existing financing mechanisms, notably the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Conservation Fund and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Environment Fund will be instrumental in this regard.

The project anticipates a close connection with the work of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission under its biodiversity and ecosystems management cluster underpinned by the St. Georges Declaration of Principles of Sustainable Development[17] with particular reference to Principle 13, to protect and conserve biological diversity. Within the aegis of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) the project will be aligned to Article 58 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas[18] on Natural Resource Management whereby the countries in the Community shall adopt measures for the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources.

[1] https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/20230504-readiness-st-vincent-proposal.pdf

[2] https://canari.org/news/canari-launches-project-pioneering-blue-green-economic-development-in-the-south-coast-st-vincent/

[3] https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/p011284001

Core Indicators

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
200	0	0	0

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
Cropland	200.00			

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
3300	0	0	0

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
3,300.00			

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	114564	0	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	114,564			
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2027			
Duration of accounting	20			

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)

Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	500			
Male	500			
Total	**1000**	**0**	0	**0**

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators:

Core Indicator 3: 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration. Based on cursory review of the landcover analysis from the CHARIM project (2015 data) and field observations, it is estimated that approximately 200 hectares within the target area (Arnos Vale, Calliaqua and Diamond watersheds) are under relatively intensive agriculture and associated uses that are contributing to land degradation and/or with potential of polluting discharges to the environment based on typical practices within agricultural production systems. The spatial extents of landscapes that are to be restored via NbS and other best practices will be validated during the PPG phase.

Core Indicator 4: 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems. It is anticipated that 3,300 hectares, corresponding to the geographical footprint of the three target watersheds, will benefit from integrated landscape management planning, the basis upon which measures will be designed to address land degradation and pollution from point and non-point sources. This includes restoration of riparian zones and agricultural landscapes in upper watershed areas which will benefit from reduced land/water/soil degradation, reduced chemical use or more efficient application methods, with integration of IPM, agro-forestry, expanded vegetative cover among other treatments to benefit ecosystem health. This will be assessed during the PPG phase.

Core Indicator 6: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (metric ton of CO2e): The estimate was derived using the FAO ExAnte Carbon Balance calculator ver 9.4.2. The estimate was based on the 200 ha of active restoration, conversion from 'degraded area' to 'Planted Tropical moist deciduous forest' under the 2.2 Afforestation & Reforestation Land use change. The Implementation Phase is 5 years, and the Capitalization Phase is 20 years. This carbon benefit estimate needs to be reassessed and validated during the PPG.

Core Indicator 11: The project anticipates a total of 1,000 beneficiaries. In the southwest target area of mainland St. Vincent there are some active 12 community groups with estimated active beneficiary representation of 150, along with approximately active 350 farmers. It is estimated that the project will engage at least 100 persons affiliated with various private sector enterprises in this area. Overall, the project anticipates direct engagement of at least 150 policy and technical personnel from government support agencies. The project anticipates that at least 200 stakeholders in the educational arena will be more directly engaged;

this includes teachers/instructors and students contributing to the knowledge management aspects of the project. It is expected that there will an approximate even split between women and men in project engagement.

Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		
Climate	Moderate	The country lies within the Atlantic Hurricane belt and can be impacted by tropical cyclones. Depending on the severity of the event, mitigation measures that project can influence will be to ensure that infrastructure investments designed in accordance with national norms and standards in respect to design/build specifications and that investments are not located in inherently vulnerable locations. Data management systems for the project will be established to build redundancies and back-up to avoid loss of data in the event of infrastructure loss at affected locations. Additionally, climate events may compromise chemicals and waste storage facilities, leading to environmental contamination during disasters.
Environmental and Social	Moderate	Site-specific risks and impacts will need to be considered as they trigger Safeguard Standard 1: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Sustainable Natural Resource Management, Safeguard Standard 2 on Climate Change and Disaster Risks and Safeguard Standard 3: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency. The project must carefully evaluate whether recommended nature-based solutions / best practices to address land and ecosystem degradation, as well as pollution reduction, might lead to unintended negative consequences. It is essential to consider proven tools and methodologies that have been successfully applied in similar settings and adapted for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). This assessment should incorporate both previous and current investments in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Feasibility of replication and upscaling is a core consideration. Climate-proofing investments will be necessary. This will be informed by necessary feasibility studies and recommendations ahead of the on-ground investments. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will also facilitate participatory mechanisms to allay adverse social outcomes.
Political and Governance	Low	The GoSVG is committed to setting land degradation neutrality targets, underpinned by awareness of the fragility of landscapes and risk posed to productivity in agricultural landscapes particularly in the context of extreme climate risks posed by climate change. This extends to how land degradation is connected to land-based pollution and impacts to downstream ecosystems upon which economic sectors such as tourism is dependent on. In this regard the government plans to ratify the Land Based Sources of Pollution Protocol. This project will update policies, regulations, and institutional capacities common to land degradation and pollution control to protect terrestrial and marine ecosystems. This high-level policy directive provides a strong basis for investing in project implementation. Continued strengthening of coordination among agencies responsible for ecosystem management and land degradation

		abatement will be necessary to ensure effective delivery of, and uptake of project outputs; the project intends to contribute to this process.
INNOVATION		
Institutional and Policy	Low	No significant considerations anticipated
Technological	Low	The project design will incorporate insights gained from previous initiatives in the Caribbean and other SIDS regions. The range of applicable best practice solutions is generally well known among agencies responsible for supporting practitioners in uptake. The primary challenge lies in ensuring continuity after project financing ends. To address this, the project proposes integrating sustainable financing options, leveraging the value provided by nature-based solutions to justify investment in best practices.
Financial and Business Model	Low	No significant considerations anticipated
EXECUTION		
Capacity	Moderate	The organizations that are anticipated to be closely involved in the project are for the most part over-subscribed with many other initiatives, in addition to their 'routine' statutory functions. This is directly related to the small numbers of personnel within these organizations and the limited capacity to contribute the needed policy and technical guidance that the project will require, and to ensure that the outputs are fully mainstreamed in uptake and application in the long-term, post-project. As noted in the stakeholder engagement approach, efforts will be made to ensure efficiencies are made in consultations to mitigate fatigue. Viability and sustainability of the project investments will be assessed by application of fiscal mechanisms that will incentivize practitioners (private sector, communities) to invest in good practices and NbS to mitigate land degradation, LBS sources of pollution and safeguard ecosystems. This is anticipated to expand the fiscal space for alternative financing options besides grants and recurrent budgets from government. The project expects to expand engagement of communities and build citizen-science approaches to build proactive engagement and assist with monitoring of land degradation and ecosystem health where meaningful data can be fed into national data collection. The project anticipates learning from advancements made in the GEF8 Blue and Green Islands Integrated Program that will explore approaches in this regard. The project will mitigate the immediate challenge of project execution by delegating this function to the BCRC Caribbean as the project's Executing Agency on behalf of the Government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. The project approach considering designation of an external project Executing Agency will assure ownership by the policy directorate and technical level stakeholders within the responsible line agencies through close policy and technical oversight by the Sustainable Development Unit to the project Executing Agency via the project steering committee mechanism. Close communications and targeted needs assessments with the intended

		beneficiaries will ensure that project interventions are appropriately designed and implemented to achieve effective buy-in.
Fiduciary	Moderate	The project will be executed by BCRC-Caribbean as the project's Executing Agency on behalf of the Government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines that will lift the burden of the project technical and financial reporting off the counterpart government agency that is challenged by limited capacity. The EA will also have greater flexibility for making the procurements, but under the guidance/authorization of the lead national agencies and the project steering committee The BCRC-Caribbean possesses experience in the management of GEF grants, which constitutes a significant asset.
Stakeholder	Moderate	There are several environmental-related initiatives active in the country including GEF-financed projects. Stakeholder fatigue is an issue that will need to be managed in the scope of the project considering the relatively few numbers of personnel in agencies, community organizations that are expected to make inputs and provide oversight to project implementation. There could be possibilities for reducing the number of individual consultative events by hosting joined-up consultations with other partners with similar event agendas and ensuring that inputs by partners are gathered and made available via transparent sharing means to avoid duplication of effort. Consultations as far as is possible, should be targeted to relevant stakeholders with concise agendas based on tangible outputs/measurable expectations for action by stakeholders. Gender responsiveness will be underpinned across all the project components as the project anticipates benefits to be manifested at the outcome level. Appropriate gender-based indicators have been embedded within the project results framework. Gender responsiveness (guided by a gender action plan) will be underpinned across all the project components as the project anticipates benefits to be manifested at the outcome level. Appropriate gender-based indicators have been embedded within the project results framework.
Other	Low	(Volcanic eruption risk) In St. Vincent, the active La Soufrière Volcano could pose a risk depending on whether an eruption occurs during the course of implementation, and its severity and duration. The bulk of ground-work under Component 3 will be concentrated in the southern region that is of substantially lower risk. Mitigative measures in the context of Component 1 will be adaptive; in the event of an eruption event, activities may need to be delayed and/or scaled back from impacted locations.
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	Given the complexity of mitigating land degradation, particularly in the location where project investments are planned, it is essential for the project to adopt a multi-sectoral approach that incorporates a broad range of stakeholder interests. The successful implementation of LDN investments in productive landscapes will depend on strong stakeholder engagement to ensure sustained behavioral change and positive outcomes. Additionally, robust political support is vital to establish enabling conditions that facilitate the adoption of

		policies and incentivization measures to encourage the uptake of best practices. Although the country is making progress toward policy frameworks that recognize the importance of addressing land degradation within development initiatives, ongoing challenges warrant an overall moderate risk rating for the project.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Describe how the proposed interventions are aligned with GEF- 8 programming strategies and country and regional priorities, including how these country strategies and plans relate to the multilateral environmental agreements.

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The project aligns principally with the **GEF-8 Land Degradation Focal Area (LDFA) strategy**, specifically Objectives 1, 2 and 4 that will help the country address the drivers of land degradation across productive landscapes within the scope of advancing national implementation of the UNCCD Strategy (2018-2030) toward the aspiration of land degradation-neutrality. Mitigating land-based pollution that emanates from land degradation will be a major co-benefit. Considering the impacts of climate change, alignment with the LDFA will contribute to building resilience of landscapes, reliant communities and economies supported by changes in institutional arrangements required to maintain healthy landscapes. The project will generally follow the intervention logic proposed under the GEF8 Blue and Green Islands Integrated Program (BGI-IP) and anticipates to benefit from shared learning and knowledge exchange with the BGI-IP. The alignments to the GEF LDFA Strategy Objectives are elaborated here.

Objective 1. To avoid and reduce land degradation through sustainable land management (SLM). The project will apply a comprehensive landscape approach to address the multi-faceted nature of land degradation that is evident in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In this regard, the project will support targeted interventions across productive agricultural landscapes within the targeted geography to prevent further degradation of ecological processes. These efforts will aim to maintain and enhance crop yields while also reducing pollution discharges that result from poor agricultural production practice into the environment. The project will integrate improved watershed management approaches, invest measures to enhance hydrological functions and services to maintain agro-ecosystem productivity, including aspects such as implementing integrated pest management approaches to improve soil fertility and water management. Based on the SLM approaches applied within the target geography these will be scaled to the national level, whereby the project will support adjustments to enabling policy and institutional frameworks required to effect improved land management planning and use that curb land degradation (and associated pollution) and attain LDN. The project will enhance financial sustainability by considering the value of nature alongside the social and economic benefits gained from healthy ecosystems. Its goal is to test financial incentive mechanisms, developed through local and external partnerships, to encourage the adoption of nature-based solutions for ecosystem restoration within productive sectors. **Objective 2. Reverse land degradation through landscape restoration**. Areas under intensive agriculture production within the target geography are under active degradation with varying impairment of agro-ecosystem services that will have long-term consequences for agricultural production. Additionally, the extensive mixed urban and commercial land use across the target area results in considerable land disturbance, leading to adverse effects on soil and water quality and contributing to ecosystem degradation. The project will contribute to restoring agro-ecosystem services and avoid further reduction of vegetative cover, particularly across steep terrain and along riparian areas. This will strengthen the resilience of landscapes in maintaining agricultural productivity and provide stability for future investments in other economic sectors toward sustainable benefits and livelihood security for communities. Project investments will support the delivery of global environmental benefits considering the maintenance of productivity and agro-ecosystem functioning that will result in biodiversity conservation by maintaining natural habitats, improving their connectivity and safeguarding agro-biodiversity, improved soil health and reduced soil erosion, pollution risks and enhancing sustainability and resilience of agro-ecosystem services. **Objective 4. Improve the enabling policy and institutional framework for LDN**. This objective closely connects with FA Objective 1 in the project scope by explicitly strengthening the policy, institutional, and financial enabling conditions needed to achieve and maintain Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN). The project aims to integrate LDN into current national planning frameworks, sector policies, and regulatory frameworks, while improving inter-institutional coordination across agencies serving productive commercial sectors such as agriculture and tourism, as well considering the built (urban) development.

The initiative builds institutional capacities and explores options for establishing sustainable financing mechanisms that benefit small and medium enterprises, including by expanding the efforts of the existing SVG National Conservation Fund to incentivize land-degradation-neutral practices and also address harmful subsidies.

The **National Action Programme to Combat Land Degradation and Drought in St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2015-2020** was articulated in 2009 and outlines the country's commitment to mitigate and degradation by addressing nine priority areas. Relevant to this project are *Priority Area 6: Sustainable Soil Management* and *Priority Area 8: Reduction of Land-Based Pollution*. Under the Sustainable Soil Management priority area the aim is to reduce soil loss on farms and built-up areas and enhance farm productivity through improved sustainable agricultural land management. The approach calls for investment in climate-smart agriculture, through a combination of capacity building and education programmes, appropriate soil enhancement and slope stabilisation measures, and tree planting initiatives to mitigate against soil erosion in a wide range of areas, including farms, roadways and riverbanks. Based on the UNCCD LDN target-setting programme framework, and building on the baseline validated in 2019, the country set specific LDN targets and measures to address land degradation in alignment with SDG target 15.3. The aspiration is that at the national-level LDN is achieved by 2030 as compared to 2015, and an additional 15% of degraded lands of the national territory are improved. Important sub-targets and measures defined included restoration of 10% of degraded land or 1,873 hectares of cropland nationwide using sustainable practices to boost productivity, reduction of soil erosion by 15% by 2030, integration of LDN into land-use planning via policy instruments such as the National Physical Development Plan, and increasing financial and human resources to enhance monitoring and enforcement under the Town and Country Planning Act. Relevant to this project is that LDN is achieved in Saint George Parish - the location for the project investments (also the Charlotte and Saint Andrew parishes) by 2030, compared to the 2015 baseline plus an additional 5% has improved (no net loss/net gain).

The draft **St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2026-2030** under current development is aligning national priorities with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Some fourteen targets have been identified of which the key targets of relevance to this project include *Target 7. Pollution Reduction* and *Target 9. Habitat Restoration and Climate Resilience*. Under *Target 7. Pollution Reduction* (with focus on agrochemicals and waste discharge abatement), it is proposed that by 2030 there will be reduced discharges of nutrient, chemicals and plastic pollution to freshwater and marine ecosystems. This is to be actioned by establishing discharge limits upon which abatement measures such as constructed wetlands will be deployed. Low-chemical and fertilizer input regimes will be promoted in agricultural production systems, along with the expansion of riparian buffer zones and measures for diversion of hazardous waste and other pollutants discharges. Under *Target 9. Habitat Restoration and Climate Resilience* it is envisaged that by 2030, at least 30% of degraded ecosystems nationwide will be restored including rainforest, riparian zones, mangroves, littoral woodlands, beaches, coral reefs, and seagrass meadows, prioritizing climate-vulnerable habitats. The approach will include a community-based "River-Keeper" PES scheme to facilitate citizen mobilization in restoration efforts.

At the regional level the **Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) under the Cartagena Convention**[1][12] provides a framework for addressing pollution from land based on national and regional needs and priorities articulated by countries of the wider Caribbean region. The GoSVG has initialized the process for ratification of the Protocol with a request for deposition of the instrument for ratification made in September 2025. This is against the national concern over the increasing influx of land-based pollution into coastal waters and the adverse impacts to coastal ecosystems, including within the upstream source areas; freshwater ecosystems and productive landscapes, that ultimately presents significant threats to economies and livelihoods. This nexus between land degradation and land-based pollution is most exemplified within the southwest corridor of St. Vincent. Implementing the provisions of the Protocol very closely aligns with efforts to address causes of land degradation that lead to land-based pollution.

The lead agencies with responsibility for natural resource management and biodiversity at policy and technical implementation levels that will be the front-line agencies for implementation of this project include the (i) Sustainable Development Unit of the, Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development & Culture, (ii) Forestry Department, (iii) Fisheries Division, (iv) National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority, (v) Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit of the

Ministry of Agriculture, (vii) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines National Trust. Entities that have responsibilities related to pollution control (chemicals and hazardous substance management) not listed above include the (i) Solid Waste Management Unit, (ii) Ministry of Health & the Environment, (iii) Customs & Excise Department, (iv) National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) the (v) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards.

The mandates of these agencies are underpinned by the **legal framework consisting of the following legislative instruments**; the National Parks Act (2002 and amendment), Natural Forest Resource Act (1947), Wildlife Protection Act (1987, later amendments), Wildlife Conservation Act (1991), Fisheries Act (1986, later amendments), Marine Parks Authority Act (1997), Public Health Act (1977), Environmental Health Services Act (1991), Plant Protection Act (2005). There is an overarching environmental legal instrument the Environmental Management Act and Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2009) that remains in draft. Other relevant legislation are the Town and Country Planning Act (1992) and the Central Water and Sewerage Authority Act (1991) that are the remit of the Ministry of Housing, Informal Human Settlement, Physical Planning, Lands and Surveys and the Central Water and Sewerage Authority respectively. Key legislative instruments related to chemicals and hazardous substances include the Waste Management Act (2000), Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Act, Pharmacy Act and the Waste Management Act (2000).

The **St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Economic and Social Development Plan (2013-2025)**[2][13] lays out strategic developmental goals, objectives and targets to guide development pathways toward optimal improvement of the quality of life for all Vincentians. Relevant to the project includes realizing over-arching goals that include improved physical infrastructure and environmental sustainability. The **draft St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Physical Development Plan (2021-2041)**[3][14] outlines strategic spatial development directions and policies under critical policy areas that are of direct relevance to the project, specifically food and agriculture, protection of water resources and watercourses and natural heritage. The **draft Policy Framework and Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development (2012-2018)**[4][15], while now outdated, provided important provisions protecting the natural environment and biodiversity within the sector. It advised the development and implementation of management plans consistent with international best practices, specified actionable priorities including investment in sustainable land use practices, development of a comprehensive database of land characteristics, uses, and capabilities; designing detailed land-use plans; and ensuring the upgrade and implementation of appropriate legislation. The **National Parks and Protected Area System Plan (2010-2014)** sets the operational mandate of the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority in management of the system of parks and protected areas.

The following **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity targets are most relevant to the project**:

Target 2: Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.

Target 7: Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources, by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including: reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and also preventing, reducing, and working towards eliminating plastic pollution.

Target 10: Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems and to food security, conserving

and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services.

Target 23: Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the framework through a gender-responsive approach where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity.

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[1] https://www.unep.org/cep/resources/factsheet/protocol-concerning-pollution-land-based-sources-and-activities-lbs-protocol

[2] https://finance.gov.vc/finance/index.php/economic-planning-industry-and-social-development/national-economic-a-social-development-plan

[3] https://transport.gov.vc/transport/images/stories/PDF/St_Vincent_and_the_Grenadines_National_Physical_Development_Plan_Draft_Consultation_Version_20211101.pdf

[4] https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/stv172929.pdf

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during PIF development as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes and plan to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan before CEO endorsement has been clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes

Were the following stakeholders consulted during project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Yes

Civil Society Organizations: Yes

Private Sector: Yes

Provide a brief summary and list of names and dates of consultations

Gender Equality and Women´s Empowerment:

It should be underscored that the project will ensure fairness in the distribution of financial and technical support to beneficiaries. During the PPG phase, a gender analysis will be conducted, to inform the design of a gender action plan to provide appropriate guidance under all components of the project in addressing gender-related issues. This will assist in ensuring active input from women's groups such as the SVG Network of Rural Women Producers, as well as youth and other representative groups that are involved in small business enterprise development so that they remain invested in land degradation remediation from policy reform, to on-ground solutions implementation, to learning, knowledge transfer and replication of good practice.

The following is a summary of stakeholder consultations in the formulation of the PIF.

Date(s)	Consultation outcomes	Participant organizations
2-4 October 2023	**Primary stakeholder planning dialogues with UNEP to formulate the PIF** Lead convener: Sustainable Development Unit Format: in-person; field visit to potential project location Key discussion points: 1. Initiatives in St. Vincent & the Grenadines presented by lead responsible agencies: o GEF6 Ridge-to-Reef Project (GEF-ID: 9580) and GEF7 Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Management Strengthening (GEF ID: 10549). Key outputs include interventions in on-ground restoration, mangrove restoration, sustainable livelihoods, waste and pollution reduction, trail upgrade at Jennings, national protected areas system plan and policy prepared. o GEF Regional IWEco Project (GEF-ID: 4932). Main actions on restoration in watershed in the eastern part of St. Vincent o GEF Regional POPs Project (GEF ID: 5558); project completed. o GEF Soil Care Phase II; country to participate. o Blue-Green Eco-based Adaptation project - coral restoration, stewardship action plans, capacity building and training o National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority developing an MPA for the South Coast o Union Island Alliance undertaking conservation work on the Union Island Gecko, Grenadines Pink Rhino Iguana and Caribbean Diamond (tarantula), focus on Chatham Forest reserve. Work on solid waste management, erosion control to combat overgrazing, o SVG Conservation Fund; 2 grants issued- Dark View Falls and Owia post-eruption. Need more PPP arrangements in conservation. North Leeward initiative using vetiver grass o CANARI is engaged with 10 SMEs in the southwest area in adopting good environmental stewardship; supporting the establishment of 'biorock' to aid in coral reef regeneration; restoration of riparian zones. All this work will require scale-up. 2. Possible main elements for new GEF8 project and considerations: o Overall focus on biodiversity; assessment and mapping of BD hotspots, investment in major national center for knowledge for biodiversity; threatened biodiversity assessment and management controls Protocol for monitoring of and mitigation of pollution within primary geographical focus in the southwest watersheds, support to sustainable livelihoods, awareness raising o Need to rationalize how much this project takes on-board. o The Fenton area could be considered for demonstration of good agricultural practices; recognized as having some adverse impacts in the watersheds and coastal areas. Farmers applying urea fertilizer indiscriminately leading to environmental concerns.	Sustainable Development Unit team • Janeel Miller, Kurt Dougan, Tyshana Thomas, Brenton Quammie, Shanae Browne, Samantha Jagmohan, Lashana Maloney Representatives of the following agencies: • National Parks Authority • Union Island Alliance (community) • GEF IWEco and GEF R2R Project teams • Ministry of Agriculture • SVG Conservation Fund (NGO) • Ministry of National Mobilisation Social development & Youth • Ministry of Economic Planning • Forestry Department • Fisheries Department • CANARI (NGO) UNEP • Christopher Cox

Date(s)	Consultation outcomes	Participant organizations
	○ Need to build a knowledge base on use of medicinal plants; the proposed center for biodiversity could be used as a focal point. ○ Community engagement in the project must be very prominent. Project should expand community-based PPP opportunities in economic use of biodiversity. Vulnerable youth at risk should be incorporated in project opportunities. The SVG Community College (SVGCC) should be engaged to support community capacity building. ○ Need to ensure there are no issues with land tenure regarding location of project investments ○ Invest St Vincent & the Grenadines should be involved pertaining to private sector engagement. Vincy Fresh is a major private sector entity that could be considered a partner for the project. ○ Project should also consider marine biodiversity; focus on hotspots for elkhorn and staghorn coral for example. Determine where important assets are and their threats in an inventory and mapping.	
7-8; 15-17 February 2024	**Focus stakeholder consultation – Government: Forestry Department** Lead convener: Sustainable Development Unit Format: in-person; Key discussion points: Biodiversity assessment opportunities: The area of focus (The Southcoast Marine Conservation Area) is approximately 2.8 sq. km. In 2014, with consideration to a more streamlined upland/ridge to reef (Ecosystems based Adaptation/EbA)-type management approach, the upper watershed boundary was established under the consultancy of Doctor Kimberley Baldwin during the preparation of the NBSAP 5. Definitive places could not be determined as there are various areas that are now densely populated but have pockets of semi deciduous forest (Belmont to Glen shed). There are some corridors of vegetation on hills sides and ridges coming down to the valley areas in Belmont. However, the following areas can be considered: - The Fenton Mountain range should be looked at for connecting the central mountain range creating corridor to connect wildlife with water systems and other eco system services. - Upland areas of SCMCA (upland ridge/corridor in South coast Marine Conservation Area). - Coastal zones which include: Sion Hill Bay (coastal area near Arnos Vale Sporting Complex), Canash Beach (area leading up to Coconut Grove, Rathomill), White Sand Beach (area after Coconut Grove, below what we know as the “Haunted Hotel”). Key species / ecosystems: • Vulnerable endemic species in these areas include the St. Vincent Parrot, Blue Headed Euphonia,Whistling Warbler (*Carthoropeza bishopi*), St. Vincent Tree Boa (Congo Snake), St. Vincent Black Snake *Chironious vincentii*) • Plants: White Begonia	Forestry Department • Fitzgerald Providence • Andrew Lockhart GEF Project Coordinator - UNDP • Makini Barrow

Date(s)	Consultation outcomes	Participant organizations
	• Upland SCMCA is highly developed with the Glen Forest juxtaposed with a major residential area. Government acquired several acres of the Dry Forest for housing. Along the coast, there are smatterings of White and Button Magroves along Sion Hill Bay, Canash Beach and White Sands Beach. • Offshore there is significant patches of coral reef in different locations along the SCMCA, including "Critter Corner" off the southern end of Young Island. Significant species are the Staghorn (*A. cervicornis*) and the Elkhorn (*A. palmata*) corals. <u>Eco-tourism opportunities in project geography:</u> The probability of a trail being established from the point of the proposed 'Centre of Excellence leading to the Belmont Look-out Point was discussed with the Director of Forestry. There are existing trails that connect the starting point from the base of Mount St. Andrew, traversing the Greenhill Mountains leading to the Belair/Gomea area through the Fenton Mountain Range. From there an existing trail can be used to go over to the Belmont area. The existing trails need refurbishing to accommodate human traffic. The trail measures 9.66 km from the base of Mount St. Andrew to the Belmont Look-out Point. The cost to rehabilitate this trail still to be determined. <u>Cross cutting issues:</u> a. Consideration must be given to the current CANARI project: Pioneering a blue green economic model for coastal adaptation, livelihoods and sustainability in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This project is financed by the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF). The focal point for this project is NPA. b. Under the UNCDRR – Resilient Cities Project which is a part of the South Coast (Great Head Bay, Indian Bay, Calliaqua Bay) has been earmarked for project intervention which will supplement coastal area plan. More information will be sought from NEMO. c. The GEF-funded Ridge to Reef project intends to construct an extension on the present Forestry Division building located in Campden Park. This extension is to house their Interpretation Centre which is attached to Output 1.1 of Component 1, where a Biodiversity and Land Use database called CIMS (Centralised Information Management System) will be located. This will be used as a tool to strengthen multi-agency access to natural resource information at the national, landscape and site level. The information stored will include both spatial and non-spatial data and facilitate ease of access to relevant research, technical and project reports which will be used to inform policy and evidence-based management decisions.	
12 February 2024	**Focus stakeholder consultation – Government: National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority, Roads Buildings and General Services Authority** <u>Lead convener:</u> Sustainable Development Unit <u>Format:</u> face to face <u>Key discussion points:</u> <u>Proposed conservation center of excellence at the Botanical Gardens:</u> • Possible 3 potential locations in the Botanical Gardens; two areas on the north end of the gardens both have existing structures which can be extended, or modifications made to completely house the Centre. These two options may incur the least cost to operationalise. The third option is an empty lot on the southeast end on the gardens which borders with the perimeter of Prime Minister's residence. This	National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority • Rodica Tannis Roads Buildings and General Services Authority (BRAGSA) • Calvin Llewellyn • Vincent Buntyn

Date(s)	Consultation outcomes	Participant organizations
	will incur the most cost as a complete structure has to be erected along with other works. Estimated costs will need to be formulated. • Eco-tourism related livelihood opportunities for stakeholders - Including a gift shop facility with light memorabilia. Tea/Café which has samples of edible local byproducts and options to buy which will connect to education on conservation which links to gastronomy (cultural food a drink indigenous to SVG). Include a substantial amount of history/historical data and cultural data that connects to conservation best practices in education packages offered at the Centre and tailor it to the trail/hiking package through targeted tours (Tours specific to what is leant in educational package). Proposed nature trail extending from the Botanical Gardens/proposed Centre of Excellence to Belmot: • There are existing trails that connect from the base of Mount St. Andrew which is close to the Botanic Gardens leading through the Fenton Mountain range connecting to the Belmont area.	
12; 19-20 February 2024	**Focus stakeholder consultation – Government & non-governmental (farmer group): Ministry of Agriculture, Innovative Food Alliance** Lead convener: Sustainable Development Unit Format: face to face Key discussion points: Potential number of agriculture beneficiaries/ farmers with the project area of influence. • A majority of farmers located around the Kingstown/Fenton/Belmont Mountain ranges are in need of support. A figure of 350 active farmers which are scattered along the area of focus. Innovative aspects the project may introduce based on key needs (eg,crop production/ biodiversity enhancement, soil erosion/pollution control measures etc.) • Creating and maintaining agroforestry systems that support commercial benefits; use of fruit trees which can be economically beneficial. Species that will increase percolation and reduce siltation. The presence of more trees along economically active land will create corridors for fauna particularly the bird species, some of which are endangered. • Introduction of valued timber/non-timber species on farms (mahogony, bamboo) that are soil stabilizers and have economic significance. • Introduce ecosystem and agro-food related tours including farmers/farmer groups as partners to co-manage these tours and in-field teaching sessions. • Demonstrations must be done to teach Sustainable land management and good agricultural practices and must reflect what is taught in agroecological tours (This can be done through the Centre of Excellence).	Ministry of Agriculture, Extension Services • Colville King • Marcus Richards Innovative Food Alliance

Date(s)	Consultation outcomes	Participant organizations
	• Suggestion of having the Centre and trails co-managed through communities and farmer/social groups to ensure their success.	
14-15; 18-19 February 2024	**Focus stakeholder consultation – Private Sector: Dive Antilles, Serenity Dive, SVG Hotel and Tourism Association, Paradise Beach Hotel** Lead convener: Sustainable Development Unit Format: face to face Key discussion points: Enhancing nature-based tourism potential of the proposed Center at the Botanical Gardens and the connecting trail network related to potential livelihood opportunities in project area. • Stakeholders from the dive shops and other commercial businesses along the Southcoast have opportunity for presence at the Centre of Excellence to educate visitors on their business and ways in which their activities are sustainable and teach best practices. A stall system can be set up and rent can be paid as it is an avenue to market their business. • These same businesses can contribute material to the Centre for research as they are involved in restorative initiatives.	Dive Antilles • James Walker • Kerry Walker Serenity Dive • Vaughn Martin SVG Hotel and Tourism Association/Owner Paradise Beach Hotel • Kim Halbich
7-8 February 2024	**Stakeholder consultation – Non-governmental/private sector: St. Vincent and the Grenadines Environment Fund** Lead convener: Sustainable Development Unit Format: face to face Key discussion points: Pressing environmental issues and how they could lever societal support to help improve the environment. • Lack of awareness of efficient/sustainable land and resource use particularly at the coast. Need to regulate “consumption” of resources in the coastal zones. There must be a shift in mindsets to protecting/preserving the resources that contribute significantly to ecosystem services. Initiatives such as Mangrove and coral restoration are pertinent as their presence improves the Tourism product at the coast. • Pollution is a major issue in the Southcoast area. The physical disposal of trash as well as contamination by way of waste and effluent mismanagement. • Need for mitigation measures to deal with global environmental issues that affect coastal resources and creating awareness of the public’s role to support the initiatives to help deal with the restoration of these resources.	SVG Environment Fund • Stephan Hornsey
20 February 2024	**Focus stakeholder consultation – Non-governmental: SVG Conservation Fund** Lead convener: Sustainable Development Unit Format: face to face	SVG Conservation Fund • Vanburn Harry • Alanda Moses

Date(s)	Consultation outcomes	Participant organizations
	Key discussion points: Possibility of small grant availability to complement the GEF financing with community and producer groups • There are resources available for co-financing on projects that address conservation through nature-based solutions. • Collaboration on a project of this nature is beneficial to the Fund as it is crucial for them to complete initiatives under CBF. It is suggested that whatever is put forward for a component that relates to the development/promotion of sustainable practices within communities or including farmer groups will be matched. Further discussion could be facilitated to work out contribution.	

5 August 2025	**Stakeholder workshop - Promoting Ratification of the Land Based Sources of Pollution Protocol in St. Vincent & the Grenadines**
	
	Lead convener: Sustainable Development Unit
	
	Format: face to face/hybrid
	
	Key discussion points:
	
	• Purpose of Protocol ratification - address one of the most significant threats to Caribbean marine ecosystems: pollution from land-based sources including domestic wastewater, solid waste, agricultural runoff, industrial effluent, and sediment from deforestation and construction activities
	
	• Consideration of the links between land-based activities and marine pollution
	
	• Key elements of LBS Protocol implementation - improving legislation and regulations, strengthening the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems, expanding monitoring and assessment, and prioritizing recovery and rehabilitation
	
	• Benefits of ratification - greater public awareness, access to regional projects and funding, enhanced monitoring capacity, enhanced integrated coastal zone management, and stronger community participation
		Agencies in attendance
		
		• Regional Activity Centre - Institute of Maritime Affairs
		
		• Cartagena Convention Secretariat
		
		• Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
		
		• Ministry of Agriculture
		
		  ○ Fisheries Division
		
		  ○ Forestry Department
		
		• Maritime Affairs SVG
		
		• Physical Planning
		
		• Solid Waste Management Unit
		
		• National Parks Rivers and Beaches Authority
		
		• Ministry of Health/Public Health
		
		• SVG Conservation Fund
		
		• Ministry of Legal Affairs

(Please upload to the portal documents tab any stakeholder engagement plan or assessments that have been done during the PIF development phase.)

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

And if so, has its role been described and justified in the section B project description?

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

We confirm that we have provided indicative information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program and any measures to address such risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex D).

Yes

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate			

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described in the Project Description (Section B)

Yes

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant($)	Agency Fee($)	Total GEF Financing ($)
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	1,462,437.00	138,931.52	1,601,368.52
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-2	Grant	4,094,825.00	389,008.85	4,483,833.85
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-4	Grant	584,975.00	55,572.63	640,547.63
Total GEF Resources ($)						**6,142,237.00**	**583,513.00**	**6,725,750.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount ($)

150000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

14250

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	150,000.00	14,250.00	164,250.00
Total PPG Amount ($)						**150,000.00**	**14,250.00**	**164,250.00**

Please provide justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total($)
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	4,000,000.00
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	890,000.00
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	2,000,000.00
Total GEF Resources					**6,890,000.00**

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
LD-1	GET	1,462,437.00	3635000
LD-2	GET	4,094,825.00	9451000
LD-4	GET	584,975.00	1454000
Total Project Cost		**6,142,237.00**	**14,540,000.00**

Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)

Recipient Country Government	Sustainable Development Unit (SDU), Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development & Culture	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2000000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development & Culture	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3000000
Recipient Country Government	National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority (NPA)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	4500000
Recipient Country Government	Forestry Department	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1500000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1000000
Others	Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management (PISLM)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of National Mobilisation Social Development & Youth	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	100000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500000
Others	Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CWSA)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	50000
Donor Agency	SVG Environment Fund (NGO)	Grant	Investment mobilized	40000
Private Sector	Agricultural, tourism enterprises, other commercial • Innovative Food Alliance • SVG Hotel and Tourism Association • Dive tourism enterprises • Others TBD	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	150000
Others	Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	850000
Civil Society Organization	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	50000
Others	University of the West Indies (UWI)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	150000

Others	Caribbean regional Seas Programme; Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution (LBS) Protocol	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	150000
Total Co-financing				**14,540,000.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Conservation Fund (SVGCF) is financed from philanthropic sources to support environmental conservation in the country. The entity is active in support of community and NGO-based on-ground actions through the award of small grants to recipients to assist restore ecosystems, advance environmental education and promote advocacy. The organization has pledged support to the project through co-financing of $40,000 via small grants for aligned activities. The details of the support will be elaborated during the project design phase.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Name	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	Ersin Esen	3/18/2024	Programme Management Officer		ersin.esen@un.org
Project Coordinator	Christopher Cox	3/18/2024	Programme Officer/Task Manager		christopher.cox@un.org

Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Name	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Janeel Miller	Director, Sustainable Development Unit	Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development & Culture	3/18/2024

ANNEX C: PROJECT LOCATION

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place

(1) Project area (watersheds) – approximate geographic centroids:

Arnos Vale watershed - 13.163919 N, -61.202184 W

Calliaqua watershed - 13.147705 N, -61.189481 W

Diamond watershed - 13.147203 N, -61.171543 W

ANNEX D: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

(PIF level) Attach agency safeguard screen form including rating of risk types and overall risk rating.

Title
Revised SRIF (Feb-2026)

ANNEX E: RIO MARKERS

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation

No Contribution 0	Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Principal Objective 2

ANNEX F: TAXONOMY WORKSHEET

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Influencing Models	○ Transform policy and regulatory environments ○ Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making ○ Demonstrate innovative approaches ○ Deploy innovative financial instruments		
Stakeholders	○ Private Sector	○ SMEs Individuals/Entrepreneurs	
	○ Beneficiaries ○ Local Communities ○ Civil Society	○ Community Based Organization ○ Non-Governmental Organization ○ Academia	
	○ Type of Engagement	○ Information Dissemination ○ Partnership ○ Consultation ○ Participation	
	○ Communications	○ Awareness Raising Education ○ Public Campaigns ○ Behavior Change	
Capacity, Knowledge and Research	○ Capacity Development ○ Knowledge Generation and Exchange ○ Targeted Research ○ Learning ○ Knowledge and Learning	○ Theory of Change ○ Indicators to Measure Change	
Gender Equality	○ Gender Mainstreaming	○ Beneficiaries ○ Women groups ○ Sex-disaggregated indicators ○ Gender-sensitive indicators	
	○ Gender results areas	○ Capacity development ○ Awareness raising ○ Knowledge generation	

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Focal Area/Theme	○ Land Degradation	○ Sustainable Land Management	○ Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands ○ Ecosystem Approach ○ Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach ○ Community-Based NRM ○ Sustainable Livelihoods ○ Income Generating Activities ○ Sustainable Agriculture ○ Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques
		○ Land Degradation Neutrality	○ Land Productivity ○ Land Cover and Land cover change ○ Carbon stocks above or below ground
		○	○