GEF-8 REQUEST FOR CEO ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

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General Project Information

Project Title Land Degradation Neutrality for Sustainable Use and Conservation of Uruguay Rangelands	
Region Uruguay	GEF Project ID 11061
Country(ies) Uruguay	Type of Project MSP
GEF Agency(ies): FAO	GEF Agency Project ID 742899
Project Executing Entity(s) Ministry of Environment	Project Executing Type Government
GEF Focal Area (s) Land Degradation	Submission Date 4/26/2024
Type of Trust Fund GET	Project Duration (Months) 48
GEF Project Grant: (a) 1,776,484.00	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b) 0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c) 168,766.00	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d) 0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d) 1,945,250.00	Total Co-financing 11,764,885.00
PPG Amount: (e) 50,000.00	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f) 4,750.00
Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f) 2,000,000.00	
Project Tags CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No	
Project Sector (CCM Only) AFOLU	

Taxonomy

Land Degradation, Focal Areas, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Land Cover and Land cover change, Sustainable Land Management, Ecosystem Approach, Sustainable Forest, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Pasture Management, Influencing models, Demonstrate innovative approache, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Local Communities, Communications, Strategic Communications, Awareness Raising, Behavior change, Education, Public Campaigns, Type of Engagement, Participation, Civil Society, Academia, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Beneficiaries, Indigenous Peoples, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender-sensitive indicators, Gender results areas, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Exchange, Learning, Theory of change, Indicators to measure change, Knowledge Generation, Training, Workshop, Professional Development

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation
Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Principal Objective 2

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. (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Temperate grasslands are among the most endangered ecosystems worldwide. The Pampa biome in South America is no exemption. It stands out for its water resources, fertile soils, productivity, and biodiversity but its grasslands are being converted into croplands and tree plantations. Persistence of the Pampean rangelands is seriously compromised, together with their supply of key ecosystem services. These trends are evident in Uruguay, where the rate of agricultural expansion has increased considerably due to technological changes and market conditions.

Uruguay stands out in Latin America for its high income per capita, low inequality and poverty, and strong institutional performance. Many Uruguayan producers, supported by public policies and applied research, implement sustainable land management (SLM) practices but there are still shortcomings in terms of regulations and innovative financial mechanisms that promote restoration and conservation of rangelands. Pressure on grasslands is expected to increase, due to agriculture, forestry and unsustainable management, accelerating land degradation and biodiversity loss and there is lack of knowledge and awareness of the ecosystem services rangelands provide. Uruguay has a clear opportunity to scale out SLM and strengthen its regulatory framework, particularly in alignment with UNCCD and CBD national country strategies, to avoid, reduce and reverse grasslands degradation, thus contributing to the national commitments to the Rio Conventions. This transformative project, with a main goal to enhance the health of rangelands and the ecosystem services they provide through sustainable management and a strengthened enabling environment in support of Uruguay’s voluntary LDN targets, will build on the potential that exists in Uruguay to achieve neutrality by (1) Enhancing engagement, awareness, and capacities to achieve LDN and SLM for biodiversity conservation, (2) Leveraging a sound legal framework and innovative finance to avoid degradation, (3) Reducing and reversing land degradation in key biodiverse landscapes, with a particular focus on integrating a gender-responsive approach to ensure women's participation and empowerment and (4) Tracking progress and out-scaling lessons learnt. The improvements in the policy framework and territorial planning will help avoid the degradation of 10,000 ha of healthy grasslands and wetlands (GEF Core Indicator 4.1). The project will

directly support the restoration of 4,000 ha of grasslands (GEF Core Indicator 3.3) and wetlands (GEF Core Indicator 3.4) and reducing degradation in 5,000 ha (GEF Core Indicator 4.3) in three watersheds located southeast Uruguay: Santa Lucia, Laguna Merin and Cuenca Atlantica. This will lead to the carbon capture/avoided loss of 1,787,179 tons of CO2 (GEF Core Indicator 6.1) and benefitting nearly 8,000 people (or families) (GEF Core Indicator 11) contributing to the empowerment and socio-economic advancement of local communities, particularly women and marginalized groups. Additionally, it will generate co-benefits such as improved food security, nutrition, and income generation opportunities. The project will last 4 years.

Project Description Overview

Project Objective

To enhance the health of rangelands and the ecosystem services they provide through sustainable management and a strengthened enabling environment in support of Uruguay's voluntary LDN targets

Project Components

1. Enhancing multi stakeholder engagement, awareness and capacities to achieve LDN for biodiversity conservation in Uruguay

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
532,150.00	3,524,199.00

Outcome:

1.1. Enhanced capacities at national and subnational levels to achieve Rangelands Degradation Neutrality and Biodiversity Conservation

Project indicators:

- At least 2,000 beneficiaries participate in knowledge exchange activities via the community of practice

-Validated methodology for monitoring trends in land use, carbon stocks above and below ground and land productivity is in place

-At least 100 extensionists and government staff from National and Subnational (at least 50 women) trained participate in decision processes regarding rangelands management

-At least 100 local producers trained on SLM and LDN of which 50% are women

1.2. Increased understanding and awareness of the ecosystem services that grasslands and rangelands provide and the need to conserve and restore them in Uruguay

Targets:

-Ecosystems Services Values (ECVs) of rangelands in Uruguay measured through economic metrics

-Proposal for a pilot plan to address grassland transformation and restoration including maps of validated priority conservation areas for rangelands published

-Awareness raising strategy developed

-At least three (3) gender sensitive knowledge and educational products developed and disseminated on the ecosystem services rangelands provide, their conservation status and threats

GEF Core Indicator 11: *% of the 8,000 targeted beneficiaries (50% are women)*

Output:

1.1.1. Established community of practice for knowledge exchange on LDN and sustainable management of rangelands in Uruguay

1.1.2. Capacity programme on achieving and monitoring LDN and biodiversity conservation of rangelands implemented

1.2.1. Ecosystem services provided by rangelands in Uruguay valuated in a participatory way

1.2.2. Rangelands degradation hotspots and greenspots and priority conservation areas identified and validated through multi-stakeholder consultations

1.2.3. Outreach campaign designed and implemented on biodiversity and ecosystem services in grasslands and rangelands and their contributions to society

2. Leveraging a sound legal framework and innovative finance to avoid rangelands degradation in Uruguay

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
288,339.00	1,909,544.00

Outcome:

2.1. Strengthened dialogue and articulation among stakeholders at local and national level (producers, academics, government, legislators, cooperatives, local governments, research institutions)

Targets:

-Functioning gender-sensitive inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms in place for SLM, rangeland restoration and biodiversity conservation in support of LDN and the synergy of the three Rio Conventions

2.2. Enhanced regulatory framework for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of rangelands

Targets:

- Draft of a national law for the conservation and restoration of rangelands in Uruguay

- A revision of normative instruments at department level for land use planning, and opportunities for integrating the neutrality mechanism for the conservation and sustainable management of grasslands is discussed with the Congress of Mayors

- Transformation and degradation of at least 10,000 ha of healthy grasslands and wetlands is avoided through territorial planning and incentives. (Core Indicator 4.1)

2.3. Opportunities to increase access to innovative financial mechanisms for restoration and conservation of rangelands are identified

Targets:

Report on existing and potential innovative sources of finance for the conservation of rangelands include specific provisions to ensure gender equity in access and benefits.

At least 2 functioning mechanisms for certification of products and accreditation of good practices are reinforced

Output:

2.1.1. Vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms among the main actors involved in LDN and Biodiversity Conservation are established and strengthened with a gender-responsive approach

2.1.2. Dialogue processes among Parliament and local governments are strengthened to support awareness raising and necessary framework changes

2.2.1. Proposal of a national law on conservation and sustainable management of grasslands is proposed for discussion in Parliament

2.2.2. Normative instruments at subnational level for land use planning are revised and entry points for considering the principle of counterbalancing identified

2.2.3. The neutrality mechanism for biodiversity conservation is considered within the administrative procedures implemented by the Ministry of Environment

2.3.1. Existing financing for SLM and Conservation of grasslands is revised and evaluated

2.3.2. Innovative financial mechanisms are proposed to facilitate the restoration of grasslands

2.3.3. Mechanisms for accreditation of good practices for sustainable rangeland management are strengthened

3. Reducing and reversing land degradation in key biodiverse rangeland landscapes

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
441,242.00	2,922,155.00

Outcome:

3.1 Ecological restoration of degraded key biodiverse grasslands and wetlands contribute to national LDN target 10

Targets

-GEF Core Indicator 3.3: *2,000 ha of degraded grasslands restored*

-GEF Core Indicator 3.4: *2,000 ha of degraded wetlands restored*

3.2 Scaling out of gender sensitive Sustainable Rangeland Management approaches and technologies in rangelands

Targets

- GEF Core Indicator 4.3: *LD reduced in 5,000 ha through improved rangeland management*

- GEF Core Indicator 6.1: *1,787,179 tCO2eq of avoided emissions or carbon sequestration*

Output:

3.1.1. Priority rangeland restoration sites mapped through participatory and gender responsive assessment

3.1.2. Gender-responsive strategies for agroecological transition and rehabilitation in rangelands developed based on agreements with the private sector and CSOs

3.1.3. Innovative restoration practices implemented to enhance productivity and biodiversity of degraded priority grasslands and wetlands

3.2.1. Integrated sustainable and gender sensitive Rangeland Management approaches and technologies adopted on the demonstration landscapes to reduce land degradation

4. Tracking progress towards neutrality in rangelands and out-scaling of lessons learned

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
260,588.00	1,725,762.00

Outcome:

4.1. Consolidated mechanism to monitor progress towards LDN and Biodiversity Conservation across scales is validated and adopted

Targets

- LDN DSS with validated data and in place

4.2. Knowledge management and lessons learned disseminated at the national level

Targets

- Best practices and lessons learned summarized and organized in a framework for scaling-up at regional and national levels

- At least three (3) gender sensitive LDN knowledge products developed and disseminated

- Lessons learned on SLM, LDN and BC mainstreamed in the national and regional development plans

Output:

4.1.1. National methodology to estimate the three (3) change of state LDN indicators validated by national experts in rangelands and supplemented with national LD and BD indicators

4.1.2. Co-developed LDN DSS for improved planning and monitoring of LDN and Biodiversity conservation at national level

4.2.1. Project lessons are captured, evaluated and shared nationally and across countries and regions

4.2.2. Gender-sensitive communication strategy developed and implemented to support the LDN targets and mainstreaming of lessons learned

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
92,750.00	614,243.00

Outcome:

ME.1. Gender-Responsive Project Monitoring and Evaluation system supports effective project delivery

Targets:

- Functioning monitoring system for GEBs and co-benefits established

1 Terminal Evaluation

Output:

ME1.1. Project M&E system designed and operational

ME1.2. Project evaluations completed on time to support project delivery and knowledge sharing

ME1.3. Monitoring Reports submitted on time to the Implementing Agency and GEFSEC

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1. Enhancing multi stakeholder engagement, awareness and capacities to achieve LDN for biodiversity conservation in Uruguay	532,150.00	3,524,199.00
2. Leveraging a sound legal framework and innovative finance to avoid rangelands degradation in Uruguay	288,339.00	1,909,544.00
3. Reducing and reversing land degradation in key biodiverse rangeland landscapes	441,242.00	2,922,155.00
4. Tracking progress towards neutrality in rangelands and out-scaling of lessons learned	260,588.00	1,725,762.00
M&E	92,750.00	614,243.00
Subtotal	**1,615,069.00**	**10,695,903.00**
Project Management Cost	161,415.00	1,068,982.00
Total Project Cost ($)	**1,776,484.00**	**11,764,885.00**

Please provide Justification

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

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

1. Rangelands are extensive areas where the vegetation is predominantly composed of grasses, grass-like plants, forbs or shrubs, including prairies, marshes, tundra, wet meadows, savannas, shrubland steppe, chaparral, desert grasslands, and woodlands[1]. They are spread over the five continents and have been historically important for social and economic development. They provide a wide variety of provisioning, supporting, regulating, and cultural ecosystem services that are valuable to many different stakeholders. However, rangelands are broadly threatened and are often undervalued as providers of ecosystem services[2].

2. The primary recognized value of rangelands has been the provision of goods such as food, fiber, and wood[3]. Currently, the global demand for provisioning services, especially with regard to water and forage for livestock, meets or exceeds the supply of these services. Increasing pressures are being placed on provisioning services of rangelands, such as the growing demand for livestock forage. Globally, the number of cattle, sheep, and goats increased by over 601 million individuals from 1979 to 2009, representing an addition of ~1.6 million livestock animals per month over 30 years[4]. Projections indicate that the quantity of livestock, and the resulting demand for forage, will continue to rise at a similar rate in the future; according to FAO,[5] by the year 2030, 3.2 billion tons of extra forage will be required annually to feed the additional 830 million cattle, sheep, and goats on the planet. These increasing demands are not evenly distributed across the globe. The social demand for livestock production – as a provisioning service of arid grasslands experiencing shrub encroachment for example, differs between North and South America, with ecosystems in developing countries mainly valued for livestock production whereas other services, such as recreation and hunting, might be in greater demand in developed countries[6]. Also, the demand for ecosystem services has recently started to change. Carbon sequestration, for example, is a service that rangelands have considerable potential to supply and for which demand is increasing because of growing concerns about climate change[7].

3. Rangelands in South America are represented in the Pampas and Campos biome, which includes parts of Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. The Pampa biome stands out for its water wealth, soil and vegetation, and imposing biodiversity, a part of which is yet to be scientifically investigated[8]. The grasslands of the Rio de la Plata Basin (28°–38°S; 47°–67°W), comprising the Pampas ecoregion in Argentina, the Campos in Uruguay and part of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, constitute one of the largest temperate natural grassland regions in the world and have been identified as one of the regions with the greatest diversity of grasses on Earth. They occupy an area of nearly 1,005,780 km^2, a region with a very old human occupation that is also home to three large cities -Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Porto Alegre. The Pampa biome has a history of agrarian occupation and of nurturing the social development of the gaucho, who managed extensive livestock systems, especially cattle and sheep. Extensive livestock production has taken place for over 300 years; from the second half of the nineteenth century, providing a unique case where livestock production and biodiversity conservation often integrate production systems with remarkable environmental sustainability. These

rangelands provide food for 43 million head of cattle and 14 million sheep besides storing 5% of Latin America's soil organic carbon in 3% of its area[9]9.

4. However, in the last 50 years, this landscape has been transformed by advances in agriculture and changes in economic, social, environmental, cultural, political, and institutional factors. Already in 1995, during the conservation assessment of the terrestrial ecoregions of Latin America and the Caribbean, excessive grazing by livestock and the conversion of natural habitats to agriculture were identified as the primary threats to biodiversity. During the last two decades, the rate of grassland conversion to croplands and exotic forest plantations has been significant in this region, mainly driven by the high price of commodities. Native vegetation now covers 43.2% of the biome's surface and there was a net loss of 8 million hectares of native vegetation of 16.3% in 20 years, between 2000 and 2019, with a reduction from 519,496 km² to 434,795 km² in the South American Pampas[10]10. The Pampas has undergone major landscape transformations in over 8,5 million hectares during the last two decades. Of the total loss of native vegetation across the region, 85% corresponds to the loss of grassland vegetation cover.

5. Landscape modification in the Río de la Plata Grasslands due to land-use change has had significant impacts on plant and animal diversity as well as on the provision of ecosystem services. Some studies, mainly on birds and mammals of the Argentinean Pampas, have reported that agricultural expansion has reduced the geographic ranges and/or abundance, sometimes leading to regional extinction, of many mammal and bird species, including grassland specialists and large herbivores and carnivores. The remaining rangelands are being increasingly used and unsustainable rangeland management is leading to loss of soil health and reduced productivity, hampering the achievement of land degradation neutrality (LDN).

6. The aforementioned regional trends are also evident in Uruguay, particularly since 2002, when sustained socio-economic growth has allowed the country to increase its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and improve the living conditions of its population, driven by agriculture and natural resources[11]11. The agricultural sector is key for Uruguay, with 12.4% of the Gross Domestic Product (year 2015) based on agribusiness -half in industry and half in agriculture- as well as 78% of exported goods (year 2016), leaving the country some 6440 million USD. The main products are beef, other forestry products and soybeans. There have been notable changes in the structure of the agricultural sector: rural migration is accentuating, hundreds of producers -especially medium and small-scale ones-, have abandoned agricultural activity, the occupation of the territory by agricultural activities is being reconfigured and there is a process of increased productivity. In 2016, agricultural production generated 228 thousand direct jobs -equivalent to 15% of the personnel employed nationwide-; of those, some 163,222 jobs were in the primary phase and livestock farming was the main source of work in the sector, with 98% of employees under permanent employment conditions. Family workers have a higher relative participation in horticulture and livestock in general (dairy, beef cattle, sheep, and others). While agriculture has experienced considerable growth, this has been, on the other hand, detrimental to ecosystems and the provision of ecosystem services, such as carbon storage and biodiversity conservation, as habitats continue to be lost in Uruguay[12]12. Between 2000 and 2015, the country lost 13.8% of its natural grassland cover (equivalent to 1,615,653 ha) to agriculture (mainly soybean) and forestry plantations with exotic species (eucalyptus)[13]13, resulting in biodiversity loss and land degradation, among other social and economic impacts. According to indicator 15.3.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), during 2000-2015, 26.4% of the country's territory (4,575,200 hectares) shows signs of land degradation, either through changes in land cover type, loss of net primary aerial productivity, or organic

carbon in the soil. 10% of the territory (1,749,200 hectares) experienced negative changes in soil cover, mainly due to the loss of grasslands; 20% of the territory (3,622,300 hectares) recorded a decrease in productivity, explained by changes in grassland cover to crops and the decrease in net primary production in grasslands, forests, and crops without changes in soil cover in the period; and 9.82% of the territory (1,701,700 hectares) experienced loss of organic soil carbon, due to changes in land use related to grasslands and wetlands.[14][14]

7. Livestock farms are oriented towards the international market; about 70% of the beef produced in the country is exported, equivalent to 5% of the total world volume traded. Half of the land is under private ownership in livestock farming and one third under lease contract with a concentration of land in enterprises larger than 1,000 hectares. In rural areas, women face significant employment gaps and gender stereotypes in agriculture, leading to their underrepresentation in paid jobs and undervaluation of their work. In livestock farming, women encounter further challenges with a clear division of labor and limited participation in decision-making roles. Addressing these issues requires recognizing and valuing the role of rural women, eliminating stereotypes, and providing better access to resources and opportunities. Despite these challenges, women contribute significantly to rural entrepreneurship, comprising 15-20% of enterprises depending on scale[15][15].

8. Livestock farming is based on rangelands and has a strong connection with the natural grasslands that provides around three quarters of the forage units used by the country's specialized livestock farming area. Natural grassland plays a key role in the conservation of ecosystem goods and services, essential for production but especially for sustaining life. In the context of the above-mentioned pressures, Uruguay's grasslands still maintain a unique biological diversity, serving as habitat for almost 300 priority species for conservation in the country. Some of them will only survive if a significant portion of grasslands is conserved, because this ecosystem is the main or only habitat for them: 64 bird species, 14 mammal species, 34 vascular plant species and 4 fish species. The Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in Uruguay indicate conservation priorities for different grassland bird species in specific areas of the country: of the 21 bird species highlighted by the KBAs in Uruguay, 17 use grassland as habitat, both as main or exclusive use and as generalist[16][16].

9. The National Biodiversity Strategy recognizes habitat loss and degradation as one of the main causes of biodiversity loss, with land use change being the most significant in its effects. Therefore, productive expansion and intensification is the main driver of these changes[17][17]. The country has 93% of its territory with productive land suitable for agricultural exploitation, and expects to double current food production in the coming years and, in this context, it is expected that pressures on grasslands will increase and therefore accelerate the trends indicated in terms of land degradation and biodiversity loss. Uruguay is also committed to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The LDN target setting process began in 2017, finishing in June 2022, during which the targets, their progress indicators and the LDN measures were formulated under a participatory process led by the Ministry of Environment, particularly the Directorate of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and involving public institutions and civil society organizations. In total 12 targets were set with 38 measures to achieve LDN in 2030, which are grouped into three areas: 1) Monitoring, planning and ordering of land use in rural areas; 2) Sustainable agricultural production; and 3) Conservation and restoration of ecosystems and habitats. These goals were established with the aim of promoting sustainable development, ensuring the conservation of the environment, the protection of biodiversity, and the responsible use of natural resources. The LDN strategy is one of the instruments that provides greater opportunities for the integration and expansion in the territory of national

commitments on biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation. At the same time, it takes into account the commitment to produce more food sustainably, in line with the country's priorities.

10. This ongoing process reflects Uruguay's strong commitment to sustainable land management and its dedication to coordination between government agencies, stakeholders, and communities to achieve LDN goals. The UNCCD, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (collectively known as the Rio Conventions) are spearheading global environmental policymaking on land, biodiversity and climate to address the multiple challenges that countries are facing in these areas. However, effective implementation of these Conventions depends, to a large extent, on the existence and expansion of operational synergies among them. It is been shown how LDN targets support biodiversity conservation in practice[18]18. In particular, the LDN target to restore and improve grasslands and savannas strongly supports many of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets[19]19 by (1) reducing threats to biodiversity: target 2 (restoration of degraded areas) and target 8 (minimize impact of climate change) and by (2) meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing: targets 9 and 10 (ensure sustainable land management) and target 11 (enhance ecosystem services). In this context the proposed project objective is to enhance the health of rangelands and the ecosystem services they provide through sustainable management and a strengthened enabling environment in support of Uruguay's voluntary LDN targets.

11. Uruguay experiences a humid subtropical climate significantly influenced by El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and La Niña. Climate change projections for the 2050 time horizon indicate an expected rise in mean annual temperatures by 0.5 to 1.6°C by 2044, and 1.5 to 5.5°C by 2099, depending on the emission scenario. Additionally, an increase in mean annual rainfall is projected, with a 10-20% rise across the country by 2044. Extreme weather events, including extreme rainfall, droughts, high winds, and storms, are expected to increase in frequency and intensity. Key potential hazards include soil erosion, crop loss, infrastructure damage, and displacement of communities due to extreme rainfall and flooding. Droughts could reduce water availability, affecting crop and livestock production and increasing the risk of wildfires. Heatwaves might cause heat stress in livestock, reduce crop yields, and increase evaporation rates. Implementing sustainable rangeland management practices (such as rotational grazing, using drought-resistant crop varieties, and adopting integrated water management solutions) would assist in enhancing resilience to climate variability. By incorporating mitigation measures, the project aims to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural systems and communities in Uruguay to climate change, ensuring sustainable development and enhancing overall resilience[20]20.

12. Four main barriers that limit achieving LDN and conserving the biodiversity of grasslands in Uruguay were identified and will be tackled by this project. The first barrier is the limited institutional and technical capacities to monitor and achieve land degradation neutrality as well as a general lack of awareness of the ecosystem services healthy rangelands provide. In Uruguay, there is a disconnection of most citizens with rural areas and nature. This disconnection was pointed out on various occasions by stakeholders linked to the livestock and agricultural sectors. In 2019, the *"Mesa de Ganadería sobre Campo Natural"*[21]21 (MGCN) declared the need to encourage the recognition of the biome for the multiple benefits it provides to society. In addition, the capacities to implement the country's international and national commitments related to the conservation and restoration of rangelands, have been insufficient. These commitments include the recently set LDN targets and the targets that were set in the National Biodiversity Strategy and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) to the Paris Agreement. To achieve these, improved knowledge and enhanced articulation and dialogue are needed within the main governmental structures, such as the Ministry

of Environment (ME), to base actions and decisions on the best available information. This is key to design, implement and monitor activities in the country and to comply with reporting requirements and other international obligations. Rangelands, because of their relevance in territorial coverage and importance in the country's economy, become an entry point of interest to enable these developments in the country and to have a perspective at regional scale.

13. The second key barrier is a weak regulatory framework and financial mechanisms for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of rangelands. At a general level, progress was made in strengthening instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and natural habitats in Uruguay. For example, terrestrial and marine protected areas increased from 2.17% to 2.68% of total land area from 2000 to 2014[22]22. However, similar progress remains to be made to halt the loss and degradation of rangelands and grasslands and strengthen ecosystem restoration strategies, including innovative financing mechanisms to promote sustainable rangeland management. The challenge in this area remains to generate new regulatory frameworks for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity that explicitly incorporate the focus on ecosystem services, ecosystem restoration and the importance of biodiversity for human well-being. This is pointed out in the Voluntary National Report on the Sustainable Development Goals[23]23 and the National Environmental Plan[24]24 , and indicated as a regional challenge in the Decade Action Plan on Ecosystem Restoration in Latin America and the Caribbean -a crucial challenge for Uruguay, which is reported to be part of the group of countries in Latin America with the highest challenges related to an enabling environment for sustainability[25]25.

14. The third identified barrier is related to the lack of demonstration models to combat land degradation and biodiversity loss of grasslands through common approaches and solutions. Even though the country has implemented innovative methodologies to sustainably manage rangelands, greater efforts are required to out-scale these approaches, endure access to the results and lessons learned, develop capacities and foster collaboration among various stakeholders to effectively restore rangelands through concerted actions that increase synergies among the Rio Conventions. Concerted efforts are needed to overcome funding constraints, knowledge gaps, and organizational silos. By addressing these limitations and fostering collaborative gender responsive approaches, stakeholders can unlock the full potential of rangeland restoration initiatives and achieve meaningful impacts on land degradation and biodiversity loss.

15. Finally, the fourth barrier is the lack of systematic monitoring of key indicators to track progress towards LDN and biodiversity conservation as well as the assessment of the environmental and socio economic impacts of the implementation of restoration practices. A standardized protocol for monitoring and assessing land degradation processes or their sustainable management, specific to rangelands, (Participatory Rangelands and Grasslands Assessment tool- PRAGA) was designed and implemented in two pilot sites in Uruguay within a project implemented between 2017 and 2020 by MGAP in coordination with MA, with GEF funding and FAO technical support. Also, within the framework of the Initiative 20x20 for the restoration of degraded lands in Latin America and the Caribbean led by the World Resources Institute (WRI), an evaluation of grassland restoration opportunities focused on the Sierras y Lomadas del Este region was carried out between 2019 and 2021 by MGAP and MA.[26]26 Moreover, there have been significant national efforts directed to promote the adoption of sustainable management practices in livestock farms, such as the project *Ganadería y Clima* implemented by MGAP in coordination with MA, with GEF funding and FAO technical support, which included the monitoring and evaluation of on-farm sustainability indicators. However, greater

investment is needed to systematically monitor the LDN indicators in a meaningful way and evaluate the costs and benefits of the implementation of different SLM technologies and approaches.

16. Collaborative and evidence-based policy-making initiatives can help integrate knowledge and facilitate adaptive planning in relation to land degradation, biodiversity conservation and climate change. Particularly in socio-agro-pastoral systems, LD manifests itself in various forms and at different scales (country, landscape, estate) with the involvement of different stakeholder groups (e.g., land users, technical advisors, managers, and policy makers). The integration of different knowledge systems (e.g., traditional, local, scientific) and the joint generation of new knowledge often leads to more robust agricultural policy decisions towards addressing climate change, biodiversity conservation and LDN. Knowledge sharing can also facilitate more appropriate responses to the needs of local communities and protect their livelihoods and well-being. The experience of implementing the PRAGA methodology at pilot scale in Uruguay, highlighted the challenges of understanding the drivers and possible policy options by stakeholders. This understanding is a necessary but not sufficient condition for planning and decision making in dynamic situations. Therefore, rather than focusing on a policy response to the degradation problem, the focus of this project is on building institutional capacities that derive from the processes of collective diagnosis and proposing solutions, as well as their implementation, follow-up and monitoring. These capacities include policy responses to the current situation, but also install in the country's institutionality, the ability to follow-up on implementation and to re-evaluate and re-direct policies in future situations, ensuring resilience to future changes in the drivers.

[1] Kauffman and Pyke. 2001. Range ecology, global livestock influences. Encyclopedia of Biodiversity.

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B. 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 guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

17. The project's Theory of Change (ToC) is reflective of the project's strategy. The ToC provides a reference point that ensures stakeholder engagement throughout the lifecycle of the project; helps define and analyse monitoring data that contributes to continuous learning through the interventions. The ToC follows the STAP guidelines on the scientific conceptual framework for LDN and takes a phased approach adapting the DPSIR[27][27] framework to the project's causal pathways. These steps will be guided by taking into consideration the Land Degradation Neutrality Transformative Projects and Programmes (LDN TPP) Checklist and national priorities. The ToC diagram (Figure 1) outlines the project response linked to the barriers and the assumptions underlying these connections.

18. The project is structured in four interlinked components that address the barriers previously mentioned to achieve the necessary progress in the country (Annex E of the word prodoc: detailed Description of project components). The first component groups activities that will allow a better understanding of how ecosystems contribute to people's lives and will generate the necessary basis in terms of knowledge and capacities for the consolidation of policies that value and sustain efforts towards the sustainable management of rangelands and grasslands. The second component is structured to support the articulation and development of institutional capacities (guiding framework and regulatory framework) and their strengthening for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration in rangelands, including the promotion of innovative financing mechanisms and incentives. The third component focuses on the implementation of restoration activities and sustainable use of rangelands that jointly address land degradation and biodiversity loss in a pilot landscape[28][28]. The fourth component is related to knowledge management and dissemination of lessons learnt. The strategy incorporates the need to develop appropriate knowledge to monitor the status of biodiversity and ecosystem services in rangelands and grasslands, to evidence the contributions of nature to people and to inform and improve decision-making processes, supporting the implementation of actions that promote the practice of stakeholders and in the national political system, generating a favorable environment for the necessary behavioral change.

19. The proposed project is strategically designed to act as a catalyst for broader national efforts to reverse land degradation trends in Uruguay's agricultural sector. Despite its relatively small financial scale, the project is set to achieve significant impact through strategic co-financing, leveraging institutional investments, and serving as a model for larger-scale initiatives. The project is supported by substantial co-financing from various entities, amounting to USD 11,764,885. This includes contributions from the Government of Uruguay, such as USD 5,000,000 each from the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry

of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries. Additional support comes from the Instituto Plan Agropecuario (USD 245,885), the Gobierno de Florida (USD 200,000), the Gobierno de Canelones (USD 250,000), and the Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agropecuaria (USD 450,000). Other contributors include FUCREA (USD 400,000) and FAO (USD 219,000). These investments ensure that the project's interventions are not only well-funded but also integrated into broader institutional frameworks.

20. The project will develop and strengthen institutional capacities and regulatory frameworks, promoting innovative financing mechanisms and legal reforms that incentivize biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration. By promoting innovative financing mechanisms and legal reforms, the project ensures that sustainable practices are incentivized and institutionalized, creating a long-term impact beyond the project's direct interventions. For example, the project aims to draft a national law on rangeland conservation and revise subnational normative instruments, providing a strong legal foundation for sustainable land management.

21. Restoration activities will be implemented in 4,000 hectares of degraded grasslands and wetlands, with an additional 5,000 hectares benefiting from improved rangeland management practices. These pilots will serve as scalable models for reversing land degradation and preserving biodiversity, demonstrating effective practices that can be replicated nationwide.

22. The project emphasizes knowledge management and dissemination of lessons learned, ensuring that successful approaches are widely shared and adopted. This includes developing gender-sensitive communication strategies and educational products to raise awareness about ecosystem services provided by rangelands.

23. The project is designed to act as a catalyst for larger-scale initiatives by integrating activities with national priorities and leveraging substantial co-financing. By setting a roadmap for sustainable land management and demonstrating effective practices, the project paves the way for future investments and initiatives at a national scale. The project will avoid the degradation of 10,000 hectares of healthy grasslands and wetlands, directly support the restoration of 4,000 hectares, and reduce degradation in an additional 5,000 hectares. These efforts will benefit nearly 8,000 people, including women and marginalized groups, contributing to their socio-economic advancement.

24. By strategically aligning project activities with national priorities, leveraging substantial co-financing, and focusing on scalable and sustainable interventions, the project is well-positioned to create a meaningful impact on Uruguay's agricultural sector and set the stage for broader national efforts to combat land degradation. The investments mobilized were identified through consultations with key project stakeholders and by aligning with national plans, strategies, and priorities that guided the project development. Agencies and partners with comparative advantage and expertise in the project's priority areas were identified and consulted to foster a collaborative vision supporting both the project and the co-financiers' initiatives.

25. Ultimately, this project acts as a crucial starting point and model, showcasing how targeted, well-supported interventions can drive significant environmental and socio-economic benefits. It sets a precedent for scaling up efforts and securing additional investments to tackle land degradation on a national scale.

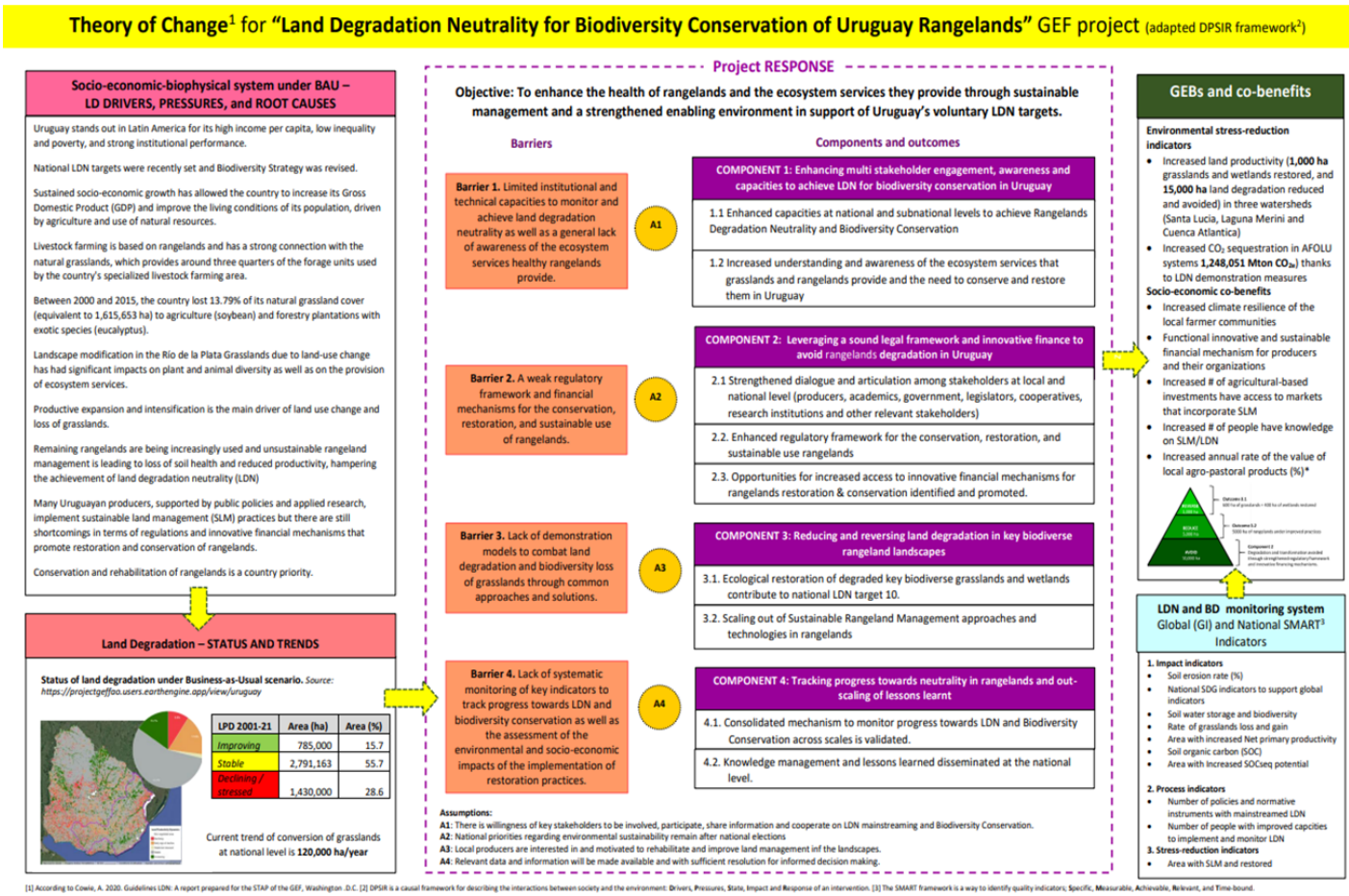

Figure 1: Project's Theory of change diagram

COMPONENT 1: Enhancing multi stakeholder engagement, awareness and capacities to achieve LDN for biodiversity conservation in Uruguay

26. The whole territory of Uruguay is within the temperate grasslands biome and given the importance of rangelands to the economy and well-being of the population, many initiatives and research related to these ecosystems have been carried out. It will involve developing appropriate knowledge and promoting stakeholder ownership on substantive issues such as the identification of priority areas for conservation, a better understanding of the economics of rangeland degradation and best practices for halting and/or reversing degradation at country, landscape and estate scale, in order to address the first identified barrier[29].

27. Multi-stakeholder partnerships and cooperation will be strengthened to support digital development to monitor degradation and biodiversity and build synergies to achieve LDN. Special attention will be given to transparency and collaborative production of FAIR data, as in Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable, in order to share knowledge and capitalize on the existing networks and information, such as the Inter-Institutional Technical Team on Livestock rearing footprint[30].

28. Cooperation with the University of the Republic and the National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIA) will be key to co-develop tools and training. The recent and successful experience in Uruguay with

Living Labs of the Instituto Plan Agropecuario (LL)[31][29] will be capitalized to adopt this innovative approach that consists of the use of open ecosystems in real-life environments to create sustainable impact for LDN.

29. Awareness raising through a public outreach campaign targeting youth will also be carried out to contribute to the behavioral change needed to achieve the project objective. The information and capacities that will be built among key actors within private and public institutions, as well as local land users, will play a key role to achieve the project objective. The outputs of this component will provide inputs to the activities of the remaining components, such as: *(i)* reports and assessments critical for the development of normative proposals to strengthen the regulatory framework and inform members of the Parliament (Component 2); *(ii)* identification of priority areas and appropriate methodologies for the rehabilitation of grasslands and wetlands and scaling out of SLM (Component 3); *(iii)* build a community of practice to design and implement an LDN decision support system that allows the monitoring of rangelands health and impacts of the field activities (Component 4).

30. Special consideration to target women's groups and organizations at the national and regional levels will be given, to support women land users and extensionists to gain relevant knowledge and skills in land management. Female participation in agricultural research and development will be prioritized, contributing to achievement of the National LDN target number 9[32], and following the recommendations of the CBD Gender Action Plan[33] and the National Gender Plan for Agricultural Policies[34]. This will be achieved through two outcomes with associated outputs and activities that will strengthen the institutional enabling environment for LDN, enhance the understanding and awareness of LD drivers and sustainable management practices, and enhance the capacity to implement LDN at national and local level. In Figure 2 the expected outcomes and outputs of component 1 are presented.

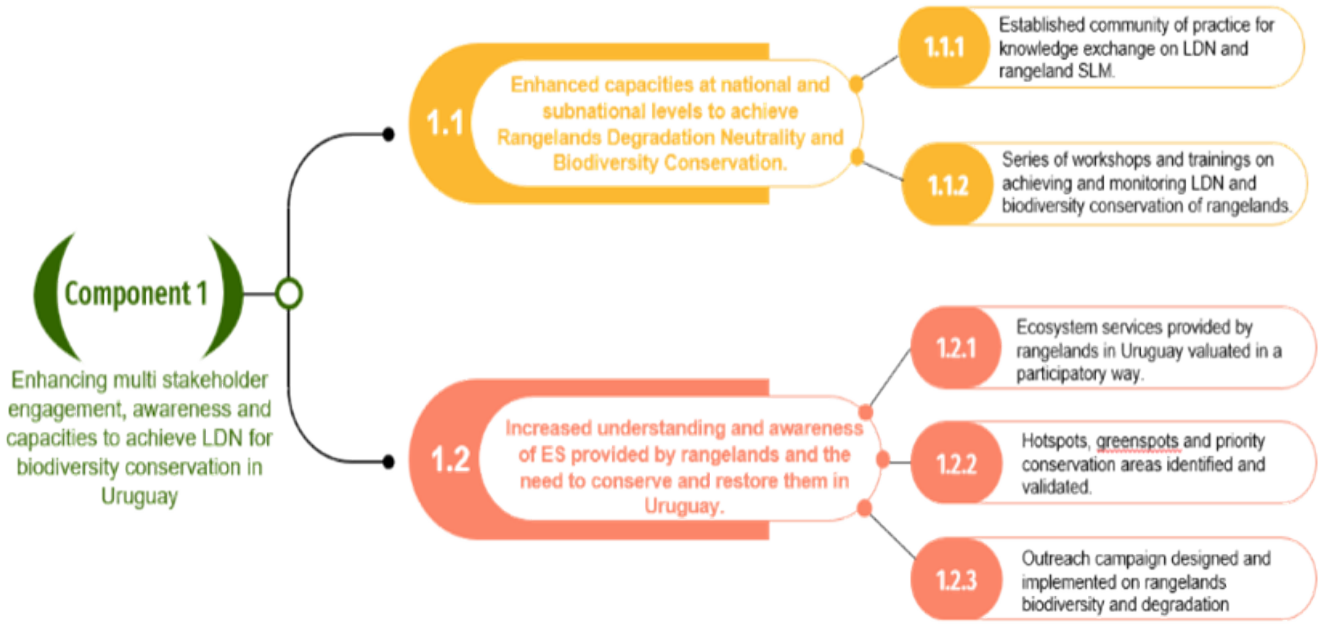

Figure 2: Outcomes and Outputs of component 1

31. The project will also develop basic information through participatory mapping and agreements to prioritize areas for conservation. This strategic investment underscores the significance of rangelands as major economic assets and emphasizes the importance of mobilizing resources within collaborative institutions. This basic information is instrumental for rangeland restoration and sustainable management, essential for the success of Component 3. Additionally, it will serve as a foundation for upscaling the project experience into national policies and initiatives, ensuring broader impact and sustainability beyond the project`s duration.

32. The project acknowledges the necessity of fostering a community of practice where all stakeholders speak the same language concerning LDN or land degradation baseline. Lack of a shared understanding of the problem among stakeholders makes it difficult to design and implement a solution effectively. Therefore, building a collaborative environment where stakeholders can exchange knowledge and experiences will be crucial for achieving project objectives and ensuring the long-term sustainability of interventions

Outcome 1.1: ***Enhanced capacities at national and subnational levels to achieve Rangelands Degradation Neutrality and Biodiversity Conservation***

33. A pivotal aspect of this outcome is the establishment of a community of practice (CoP) centered on knowledge exchange regarding LDN and sustainable rangeland management in Uruguay. Sponsored by the National Directorate of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, this initiative addresses various challenges, including the difficulty of assessing rangeland health through remote sensing and exploring financial incentives for agricultural producers. The CoP will be interconnected with existing international and national networks, emphasizing gender inclusivity. Its establishment will follow a phased approach, including assessing current networks, expanding through knowledge management platforms and workshops, and conducting validation workshops.

Output 1.1.1*:* **Established community of practice for knowledge exchange on LDN and sustainable management of rangelands in Uruguay.**

34. The community of practice (CoP) will build on the networks and knowledge established by the recently implemented GEF funded project "Participatory assessment of land degradation and sustainable land management in grassland and pastoral systems"[35] and the recently finalized LDN target setting process. It will be sponsored by the National Directorate of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and its domain will be achieving LDN and SLM in rangelands. One of the main topics to be addressed by the CoP will be the difficulties to assess rangelands health using remote sensing, which was one of the key barriers identified to map and monitor LD in Uruguay, in particular because changes in NDVI trends are often not related to the rangelands health, especially in areas with higher levels of biomass, where dried vegetation accumulates[36].

35. The community of practice will be led by the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIA), the Instituto Plan Agropecuario, and the Uruguayan Federation of Regional Agricultural Experimentation Centers (FUCREA[37]) ensuring comprehensive engagement and coordination among key stakeholders in the establishment and maintenance of the COP. Additionally, it will be interlinked to existing networks related to its domain at both, the international level, such as the Global Soil Partnership and the GEF funded Drylands Impact Program CoP1 on LDN, collaborating with established and experienced national organisations such as, Comisión Nacional de Fomento Rural (CNFR[38]), AUGAP (Asociación Uruguaya de Ganaderos del Pastizal)[39] and SUPRA (Sociedad Uruguaya de Pastoreo Racional)[40]. These existing CoPs will be evaluated, contacted and strengthened, to eventually delineate a Landscape of Practice[41][30]. It is expected that at least 2000 participants will take part in knowledge exchange activities and discussions to produce an open database with

available knowledge and a validated methodology for monitoring trends in land use, carbon stocks above and below ground and land productivity. Special attention will be given to include at least 50% of women in the CoP.

Output 1.1.2: Capacity programme on achieving and monitoring LDN and biodiversity conservation of rangelands.

36. Practical workshops and training sessions will be implemented for working groups and stakeholders from the public and private sectors, on LDN, land use planning, tenure rights, sustainable land management and economics of land degradation will be implemented. The training material will include a dedicated gender section that integrates relevant gender dimensions outlined in the UNCCD Manual for Gender-Responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Transformative Projects and Programs. The Ministry of Environment (ME) will lead Output 1.1.2, in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MGAP) for capacity-building activities. Collaboration will be established with the Programa de Conservación de la Biodiversidad y Desarrollo Sustentable en los Humedales del Este (PROBIDES), the Congress of Mayors, and their Institute of Training and Study of Subnational Governments. Additionally, local governments in Canelones, Lavalleja, Rocha, and Cerro Largo will support communication and outreach with the private sector and civil society. The Instituto Plan Agropecuario (IPA), National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIA), and the University will cooperate to co-develop tools and training on relevant issues.

Outcome 1.2: ***Increased understanding and awareness of the ecosystem services that grasslands and rangelands provide and the need to conserve and restore them in Uruguay.***

37. Outcome 1.2 seeks to increase understanding and awareness of the ecosystem services provided by grasslands and rangelands in Uruguay and the imperative to conserve and restore them. The project endeavors to quantify the value of these ecosystems, identify areas of degradation and conservation priority, and engage stakeholders through a comprehensive outreach campaign. Through participatory valuation processes, stakeholder consultations, and the application of the PRAGA methodology, the project aims to provide a holistic assessment of grassland ecosystems. Additionally, collaborative partnerships with Civil Society Organizations will be leveraged to amplify the impact of the outreach campaign, disseminating information effectively across various channels and promoting the importance of grasslands and rangelands at both local and global levels.

Output 1.2.1: Ecosystem services provided by rangelands in Uruguay valuated in a participatory way.

38. To effectively tackle the challenges grasslands and rangelands face in Uruguay and show the true value of these ecosystems to stakeholders from all sectors, economic metrics to value and account for rangelands goods and services are needed. Therefore, accurate and scientifically sound measures of Ecosystem Service Values (ESVs) of rangelands will be developed in a participatory way. These assessments will be key to increase awareness, guide policies and decisions, evaluate programs and policies considering the costs of land degradation and biodiversity loss and make the economic case for investing in sustainable land management. To achieve this, the benefits of land and rangeland-based ecosystems and the services they provide will be valued in a gender sensitive way, including what losses are incurred when they are degraded, such as the impacts in the quality and quantity of water resources[42]. Special attention will be given to consider all types of ecosystem services, to contribute to an holistic assessment that will help better capitalize on the potential synergies between the national target systems and a harmonized implementation of national Rio targets. Since there are different methodologies to achieve this, links and cooperation with international initiatives such as the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative and The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity

(TEEB[43]) will be explored to decide the most appropriate methodological approach. The ME has already launched the Economic Valuation of Ecosystem Services (ESV) through a project funded by the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) .

Output 1.2.2: Rangelands degradation hotspots and greenspots and priority conservation areas identified and validated through multi-stakeholder consultations.

39. Building on the results and capacities developed previously in Uruguay on the implementation of the "Participatory rangeland and grassland assessment" (PRAGA) methodology and in coordination with the CoP (Output 1.1.1), maps at national scale will be produced to identify hotspots of degradation and priority areas for restoration of rangelands. The convergence of evidence principle[44] will be applied for mapping hotspots considering the main types and drivers of land degradation and the conservation activities undertaken at national, subnational (project area) and local level (project implementation areas). The assessment will consider the state, causes and evolution of soil, water and biological characteristics. It will also consider socio-economic causes of these phenomena including its impact on ecosystem services. The database and mapped outputs will provide a powerful tool to obtain an overview of land degradation and conservation in Uruguay and to guide project activities under component 2 (enhancing policy framework) and component 3.

Output 1.2.3: Outreach campaign designed and implemented on biodiversity and ecosystem services in grasslands and rangelands and their contributions to society.

40. To mobilize the power of public opinion in support of the achievement of LDN and the protection of grasslands and rangelands in Uruguay, an awareness-raising process will be carried out to inform and promote understanding among the general public, with a special focus on youth, of the importance of rangelands and the country commitments to achieve LDN. To achieve this a gender sensitive multidisciplinary task force that includes representatives of the youth will be established to work in close contact to the CoP to design and implement an outreach campaign. These activities will also contribute to giving visibility to the importance of grasslands at global level.

COMPONENT 2: Leveraging a sound legal framework and innovative finance to avoid rangelands degradation in Uruguay

41. Avoiding land degradation by addressing the drivers of LD and through proactive measures to prevent adverse change in land quality of non-degraded areas is far more efficient than reversing degradation both in the economic and environmental dimensions. The LDN the response hierarchy of Avoid > Reduce > Reverse land degradation acknowledges this and actions to avoid LD should be prioritized over reversing past degradation. To achieve LDN and avoid degradation of the remaining healthy rangelands of Uruguay a firm grounding of the 'neutrality' concept in national policies and policy procedures is needed. Thus, Component 2 will contribute to the formulation and adoption of principles, rules, and guidelines to influence decisions and actions at various scales for avoiding degradation and balancing anticipated new losses with gains, and to consider principles for limiting unintended outcomes. Increased resource mobilization is also essential to effectively implement LDN policies in Uruguay. Though there are resources available from the national budget, these funds are not sufficient, so this component also aims at identifying and promoting opportunities for increased access to innovative financial mechanisms for rangelands restoration & conservation. It is expected that these activities will lead to avoid the conversion of, at least, 10,000 ha of natural grasslands (GEF Core Indicator 4.1), contributing to the achievement of national LDN voluntary target 10a, which aims to reduce 50% of the rate of loss of Natural Grasslands of the period 2000-2015 for the period 2020-2030, at the country level.

This represents reducing the net loss of 120,000 ha/year to values lower than 60,000 ha/year. Given that in 2024 general presidential elections will take place, the project will work closely with the parliament and party referents to ensure sensibilization and capacities are in place to follow through the country commitments. This will be achieved through three outcomes with associated outputs and activities that will leverage a sound legal framework and innovative finance to avoid land degradation in Uruguay. In Figure 3 the expected outcomes and outputs of this component are presented in a diagram.

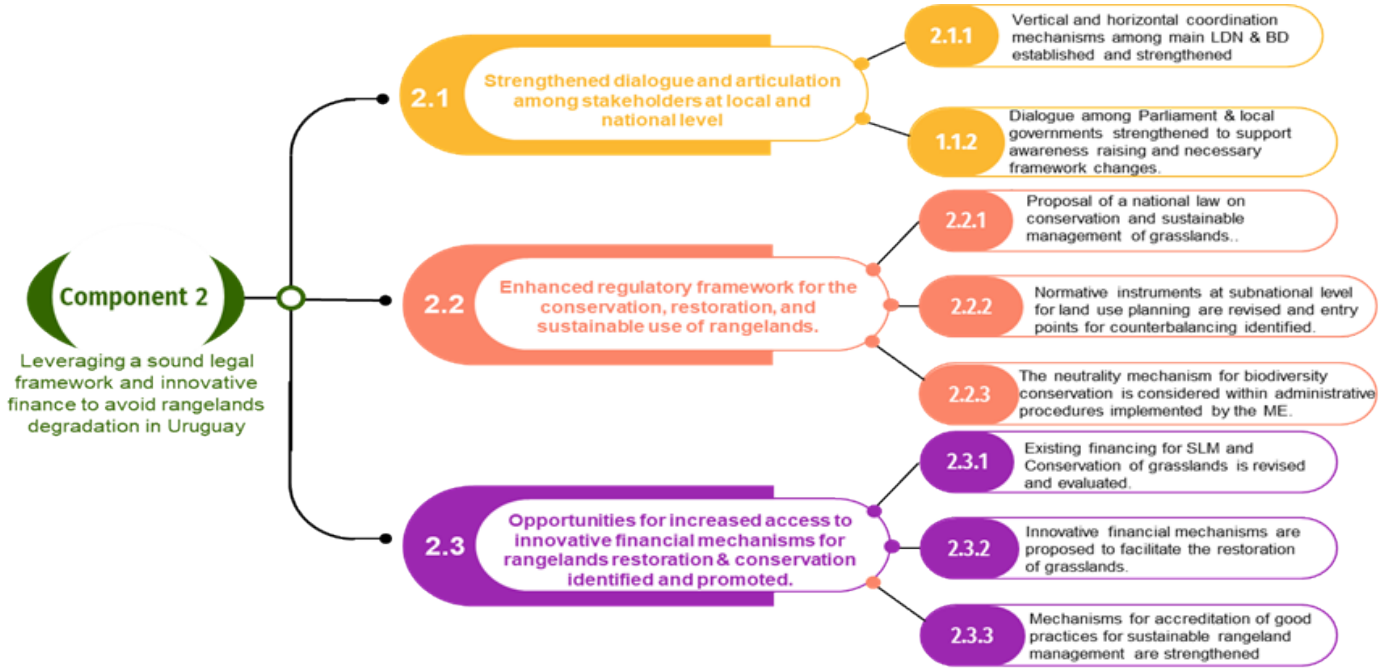

Figure 3: Outcomes and Outputs of component 2

42. Component 2 was designed to foster policy coherence by embedding the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) mechanism into national, subnational, and sectorial frameworks. At the national level, the project will promote the development of a national law for grassland conservation and propose priority grassland areas into legislation aiming that land use incentives align with conservation efforts. Additionally, the project will engage political parties and parliamentary committees through workshops, training sessions, and awareness campaigns to build capacity and foster political will for sustainable land management initiatives. These actions aim to establish and strengthen vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms among stakeholders, enhancing dialogue and promoting necessary legislative changes. At the subnational and sectorial levels, Component 2 will collaborate with local governments to enhance land use and sustainable management of landscapes containing grasslands. The project will review and revise subnational normative instruments and administrative mechanisms, such as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes, to ensure grasslands are adequately considered. Furthermore, economic-financial incentives, including subsidies for sustainable practices, access to green finance, and credit lines to support rangeland restoration and conservation, will be identified and promoted. By working with Producer`s organizations and financial institutions, the project will porpose tailored financial products that incentivize sustainable land use. These strategic actions aim to create a cohesive policy environment that supports sustainable rangeland management and aligns efforts across various levels and sectors in Uruguay.

43. In Component 2, the Ministry of Environment will take the lead in the execution, supported by FUCREA and key public entities such as the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries (MGAP). This collaboration

includes reviewing the sector's tax system and incentives. Additionally, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) will focus on aligning with sustainable finance initiatives, particularly regarding green finance guidelines and taxonomy associated with natural landscapes and local municipalities. This ensures that financial mechanisms for rangeland conservation and restoration are compatible with international standards and best practices. Furthermore, the project will engage with other essential stakeholders, including parliament, the congress of mayors, civil society organizations (through Comisión Técnica Asesora en Medio Ambiente - COTAMA[45]), and the private sector. Prominent players in the meat processing industry (as MINERVA), will assist in designing market incentives and certifications to promote sustainable rangeland management practices. The project will also collaborate with Banco República, the main financial institution (also public), to facilitate access to credit lines and other financial resources. Collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Territorial Planning will focus on regulatory aspects associated with territorial planning, contributing to the development of policies and guidelines that support sustainable land management and conservation efforts. The Parliament will coordinate activities vertically with the political system, including political parties and departmental boards. This coordination ensures that legislative efforts support the objectives of Component 2 and promote awareness and necessary framework changes at the national level. Active involvement of the Congress of Intendents will be sought to engage in discussions concerning regulations and incentives at the local level. Through these collaborative efforts, Component 2 aims to leverage a sound legal framework and innovative finance to effectively avoid land degradation and promote sustainable land management practices in Uruguay's rangelands.

Outcome 2.1: ***Strengthened dialogue and articulation among stakeholders at local and national level (producers, academics, government, legislators, cooperatives, municipal governments, research institutions and other relevant stakeholders).***

44. Outcome 2.1 aims to enhance dialogue and coordination among stakeholders at both local and national levels, including producers, academics, government entities, legislators, cooperatives, municipal governments, research institutions, and other relevant stakeholders. The project focuses on establishing and strengthening gender-sensitive vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms among key actors involved in LDN and Biodiversity Conservation. This includes analyzing existing coordination mechanisms and providing actionable recommendations for improvement. Additionally, dialogue processes with the parliamentary system and local governments will be intensified to support awareness raising and necessary framework changes. Through engagement with political stakeholders, efforts will be made to deepen understanding of biodiversity conservation and land degradation issues, ultimately leading to the development of party agreements to achieve commitments outlined in international conventions. These activities are crucial for promoting collaboration, enhancing awareness, and fostering policy changes to advance sustainable land management goals in Uruguay.

Output 2.1.1: **Vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms among the main actors involved in LDN and Biodiversity Conservation are established and strengthened with a gender-responsive approach.**

45. During the voluntary process of setting LDN targets, a multidisciplinary and interinstitutional group called the 'Convention Monitoring Group' was created. This group operated ad hoc and was composed of representatives from various sectors and institutions involved in environmental governance. Additionally, the COTAMA has a permanent working group established on biodiversity and ecosystem services, created under the mandate of the National Biodiversity Strategy and which will address issues related to LDN. The project will analyze the existing intersectoral coordination mechanisms between local, national, and international governance levels involved in the implementation of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), with a particular emphasis on gender considerations.

Output 2.1.2: **Dialogue processes with the parliamentary system and local governments are strengthened to support awareness raising and necessary framework changes.**

46. Given the upcoming election in Uruguay in 2024, in addition to promoting dialogue among local government and policy makers, the different partisant referents will be engaged in a dialogue process that will enhance understanding of the country commitments regarding CBD and UNCCD. These activities will contribute to the development of party agreements to achieve these commitments. The dialogue among and within the relevant stakeholders of the political system (Parliament and Congress of Mayors) will be prioritized due to their relevance in formulating and coordinating the policies of the subnational governments, among other relevant responsibilities.

Outcome 2.2 ***Enhanced regulatory framework for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use rangelands***

47. Outcome 2.2 focuses on enhancing the regulatory framework for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of rangelands in Uruguay. Efforts include proposing a national law on conservation and sustainable management of grasslands for discussion in Parliament, revising normative instruments at the subnational level for land use planning, and considering the neutrality mechanism for biodiversity conservation within the administrative procedures implemented by the Ministry of Environment. These initiatives aim to strengthen policies and procedures to support sustainable land management practices and biodiversity conservation efforts across the country.

Output 2.2.1: A national law on conservation and sustainable management of grasslands is proposed for discussion in Parliament.

48. The regulatory framework for the conservation of the environment and the natural resources management in Uruguay includes several national Laws and decrets, including the National Law for Territorial Planning and Sustainable Development[46], and the National System to Address Climate Change and Variability[47]. However, a national policy that considers how to permanently accommodate LDN and particularly the sustainable use and conservation of rangelands in the national agenda setting and in state budgets is missing. To address this gap, a proposal of such a law will be developed with national and international experts, following the consultations and dialogue processes with the Parliament and relevant stakeholders.

Output 2.2.2: Normative instruments at subnational level for land use planning are revised and entry points for the principle of counterbalancing are identified.

49. In addition to national policies, effective implementation of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in Uruguay requires robust procedures at the subnational level to enforce, monitor, and verify the impacts of policies on land use. This ensures an enabling policy environment for LDN and biodiversity conservation. To address this need, a revision of normative instruments for land use planning at the departmental level will be conducted. The aim is to identify opportunities to integrate the neutrality mechanism, strengthen land tenure security, and minimize trade-offs, thereby safeguarding the tenure rights of landholders. The results and recommendations will be discussed with the Congress of Mayors.

Output 2.2.3: The neutrality mechanism for biodiversity conservation is considered within the administrative procedures implemented by the Ministry of Environment

50. The Ministry of the Environment (ME), established in 2020, presents an opportunity to mainstream Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) within its administrative procedures. The ME is responsible for executing the national environmental policy, environmental planning, sustainable development, and the conservation and use

of natural resources. Collaborating closely with ME staff and experts, a diagnosis of ME administrative procedures will identify integration opportunities and develop a strategy aiming to incorporate the neutrality mechanism into applicable procedures.

51. Recent updates to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) [48] process now require the inclusion of criteria that consider the presence and conservation status of natural grasslands. According to Decree Nº 349/005 and Resolution 255/2022, projects, particularly those involving forest plantations, must assess potential impacts on ecosystems, including grasslands. However, due to the lack of prioritization for grasslands in current regulations, the EIA mechanism often does not adequately include grasslands in the impact assessment. This oversight can lead to habitat loss, species displacement, and ecological fragmentation, as grasslands are not given due consideration in the planning and approval stages of projects. By identifying priority conservation areas and incorporating these into national and local policies, the project aims to align land use incentives with conservation efforts.

52. This approach enhances policy coherence by integrating Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) goals into regulatory frameworks at both national and subnational levels. Collaborative efforts with the Ministry of Environment and other stakeholders will focus on policy development, ensuring administrative procedures explicitly evaluate impacts on grasslands. These actions aim to support sustainable rangeland management and align efforts across various sectors in Uruguay.

Outcome 2.3 ***Opportunities for increased access to innovative financial mechanisms for rangelands restoration & conservation identified and promoted.***

53. Translating commitments and ambitions to real action represents one of Uruguay's main current challenges. In the current context of the transition to SLM, it is necessary to show the pathways to LDN and emphasize the economic opportunities that will arise. Effective incentive systems are undoubtedly important for increasing farming and other land-use practices that preserve healthy soils and enhance the provision of ecosystem services for climate-resilient landscapes, including specific provisions to ensure gender equity in access and benefits. Nevertheless, this requires establishing long-term incentives and insurance systems that encourage land managers to transform their farming practices over time. Greater clarity on land tenure rights is also indispensable for large-scale land and soil rehabilitation investments. Three outputs are expected under this outcome.

Output 2.3.1: Existing financing for SLM and Conservation of grasslands is revised and evaluated.

54. Regional and national experiences will be revised and evaluated to identify necessary adaptations for Uruguay. Some of these existing mechanisms and initiatives are:

- The Low Carbon Agriculture (ABC) Plan in Brazil[49]31, that finances good agricultural practices. The ABC Plan is a credit initiative that provides low-interest loans to farmers who want to implement sustainable agriculture practices. These include no-till agriculture, the restoration of degraded pasture, biological nitrogen fixation, treatment of animal waste and the integration of crops, livestock and forest.

- Producers' cooperatives: Cooperatives in Uruguay, with an advance payment model and an export-oriented focus, offer an interesting opportunity that could be further leveraged to incentive grasslands restoration and rehabilitation. These cooperatives provide financial assistance to producers as a loyalty and product supply consolidation mechanism (widespread in sheep production). This incentive system can be expanded to include the development of good practices to achieve LDN and sustainably use rangelands.

- Meat processing industry: this industry has promoted the development of organic production and organic certification, as part of the portfolio of products that make up the image of the company.

Output 2.3.2: Innovative financial mechanisms are proposed to facilitate the restoration of grasslands.

55. Based on output 2.3.1, mechanisms that promote a structure of economic-financial incentives, facilitating access to credit lines to producers who want to implement sustainable rangeland management technologies will be proposed. A dialogue with key financing entities such as the Banco de la Republica and the Producers cooperatives that export products with an advance payment model, will take place to evaluate the possibility of a pilot experience.

Output 2.3.3: Mechanisms for accreditation of good practices for sustainable rangeland management are strengthened.

56. To implement incentives for the sustainable management of rangelands, a validated and official mechanism for the accreditation of good practices needs to be in place. The project will revise and through participatory consultations will assess the available possibilities, identifying strengths and weaknesses and proposing the necessary adjustments, if needed.

57. Two existing mechanisms were identified during the PIF phase and confirmed during PPG:

- The Grasslands Conservation Index (GCI)[50]32: developed by the Southern Cone Grasslands Alliance to help governments develop incentives for cattle ranchers contributing to conservation efforts. The measurements of the GCI are based on a few simple parameters, avoiding the need for expensive instruments; the aim is to promote its widespread geographical application, with the possibility of repeating the application each year to obtain historical data from monitoring the evolution of the natural grasslands. The Grasslands Alliance has also experience in other certification mechanisms in Uruguay, such as a Certification Protocol to distinguish beef meat produced through sustainable grassland management.

- The Ecological Outcome Verification (EOV)[51]33: developed by the Savory Institute, is a protocol for monitoring land health, that assesses key indicators of the effectiveness and health of ecosystem processes, including criteria such as soil health, biodiversity and ecosystem function (water cycle, mineral cycle, energy flow and community dynamics). Savory Network Hubs are the program's primary mechanism to

evaluate and verify new producers and there is one Hub in Uruguay, which in 2020 signed an agreement with the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Agriculture of Uruguay (MGAP)[52]34.

COMPONENT 3: Reducing and reversing land degradation in key biodiverse rangeland landscapes

58. National LDN target 10.b states that Uruguay is committed to improving the condition of at least 1 million ha of natural grasslands. This component aims to contribute significantly to this commitment. Specifically, the initiative will focus on restoring 2,000 ha of degraded grasslands (GEF Core Indicator 3.3) and an additional 2,000 ha of degraded wetlands (GEF Core Indicator 3.4). Furthermore, the project will target a reduction in land degradation (LD) across 5,000 ha through enhanced rangeland management, emphasizing sustainable practices (GEF Core Indicator 4.3). Additionally, the efforts will result in the avoidance of 1,787,179 tCO2eq emissions or carbon sequestration (GEF Core Indicator 6). The approach will not only reverse degradation in specified areas but also establish a workflow and methodology to upscale sustainable management and restoration of grasslands, drawing from past experiences. Special attention will be given to prioritizing Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices that are gender-responsive, [53]35 to avoid the implementation and dissemination of gender-blind technologies that therefore reduce the potential impact for adoption and reinforce existing prejudices and inequalities. To achieve this, activities will be in line with the National Gender Plan for Agricultural Policies[54]36. The process for selecting the areas to implement these activities within the project target landscapes (watersheds Santa Lucia, Laguna Merin and Cuenca Atlantica[55]37) will be conducted in a participatory and evidence based way, in close coordination with Outcomes 2.1, 2.2 and 4.1. The selection of these watersheds as project landscapes was based on a participatory assessment that considered biophysical and socio-economic criteria as well as alignment with national priorities and initiatives. The representativeness of the country's rangeland degradation processes, the economic importance, and the presence of Key Biodiversity Areas[56]38, including designated Ramsar sites and Biosphere Reserves, were considered. Almost 32 % of the project landscapes are KBA (1,615,000 ha)[57]39. A sound baseline assessment of the conditions of the implementation areas and consistent monitoring of impacts will allow for adaptive management throughout the project and to evaluate the costs and benefits of the interventions. This will be achieved through two outcomes with associated outputs and activities that will contribute to reduce and reverse rangelands degradation in Uruguay. In Figure 4 the expected outcomes and outputs of this component are presented in a diagram.

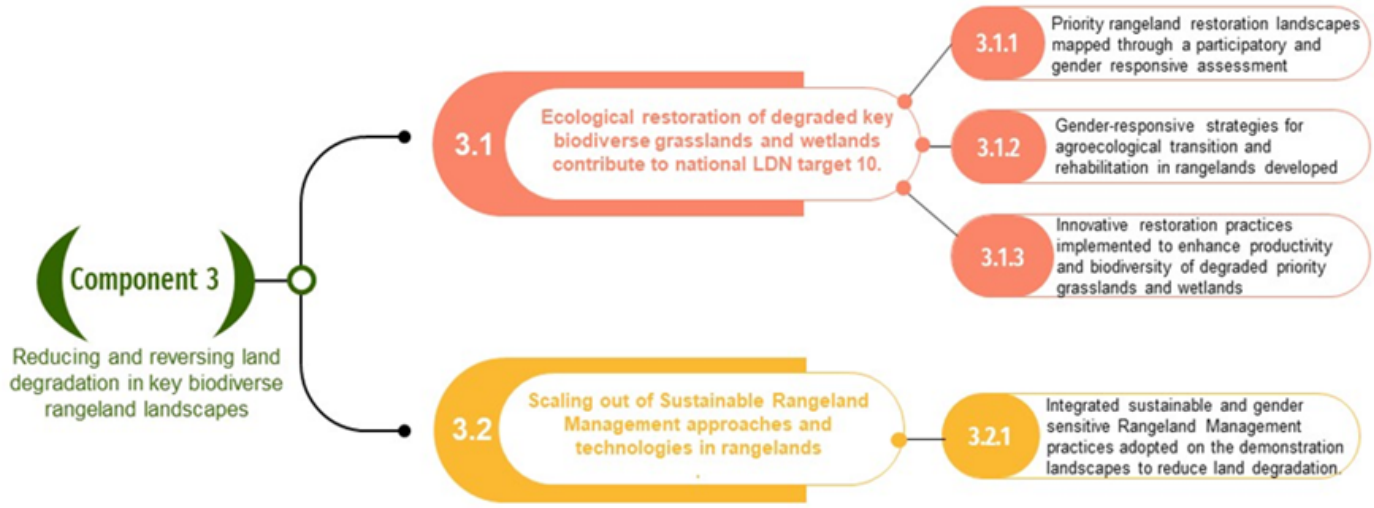

Figure 4: Outcomes and Outputs of component 3

59. In Component 3, key stakeholders will play an active role in executing activities aimed at reducing and reversing land degradation in rangeland landscapes. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Environment (MA) and the PMU, efforts will be led to address this challenge. Agreements will be established with the National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIA), the Instituto Plan Agropecuario, and the University to enhance assessments with their expertise. Additionally, the project will receive support from the MGAP to ensure a coherent and coordinated territorial intervention, integrating the Rural Development and Natural Resources Directorates and associated decentralized areas. Exploration of synergies with the SARUy Project regarding agroecological transitions and best practices implementation, along with collaboration with the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, will further enhance project outcomes. Local governments will assist in the implementation of restoration practices with farmers, while the private sector will be engaged as both beneficiaries and key stakeholders in mobilizing producer organizations.

60. In this component sustainability is prioritized through workflow and methodology development for the restoration of degraded grasslands and wetlands, along with the implementation of sustainable rangeland management practices. By engaging key stakeholders and utilizing a participatory approach in project area selection, tailored interventions are developed. Continuous monitoring and adaptive management strategies enhance sustainability, fostering resilient rangeland ecosystems that benefit biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods.

Outcome 3.1 ***Ecological restoration of degraded key biodiverse grasslands and wetlands contribute to national LDN target 10.***

61. Outcome 3.1 aims to contribute to Uruguay's national LDN target 10 by focusing on the ecological restoration of degraded key biodiverse grasslands and wetlands. The project proposes three outputs to achieve this objective. Firstly, priority rangeland restoration sites will be mapped through a participatory and gender-responsive assessment process, integrating socioeconomic and environmental indicators to prioritize areas for restoration activities. This will involve establishing a task force, conducting participatory mapping workshops with stakeholders, and integrating resulting maps into the LDN Decision Support System. Secondly, gender-responsive strategies for agroecological transition and rehabilitation in rangelands will be developed in

collaboration with private sector entities and civil society organizations, aiming to ensure inclusivity and diverse perspectives. Finally, innovative restoration practices will be implemented to enhance the productivity and biodiversity of degraded priority grasslands and wetlands, involving baseline assessments, restoration efforts in 4000 hectares of priority areas, workshops and campaigns to demonstrate the effectiveness of restoration practices, and impact evaluations to refine techniques and optimize effectiveness. Strategic collaboration with key actors and organizations will be sought to enhance the impact and sustainability of restoration efforts. Through these outputs, the project aims to contribute significantly to Uruguay's efforts in achieving land degradation neutrality and biodiversity conservation goals.

Output 3.1.1 Priority rangeland restoration sites mapped through a participatory and gender responsive assessment

62. During the first year a participatory and evidence based process[58]40 will take place to identify and map target areas for restoration, consideration will be given to the opportunities to improve the extent, quality and connectivity of high-biodiversity areas, as well as those that deliver important ecosystem services, as identified in output 1.1.2 (valuation of ES). Output 1.1 (Community of practice) will provide support and be involved in the process. Output 1.2.2 (Hotspots, greenspots and priority conservation areas identified and validated) will also provide key inputs for this process. Accounting for biodiversity in the selection of priority areas for restoration activities will help Uruguay meet its international commitments associated with the CBD and its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Criteria to prioritize these areas will include socioeconomic indicators, including land tenure status and clarity, rural poverty, population density, legal, institutional, policy and financial limitations/opportunities and level of demand for specific products; as well as environmental indicators such as intensity of degradation, potential to sequester SOC, availability of water resources, among others.

Output 3.1.2: Gender-responsive strategies for agroecological transition and rehabilitation in rangelands developed based on agreements with the private sector and CSOs.

63. Output 3.1.2 focuses on developing gender-responsive strategies for agroecological transition and rehabilitation in rangelands, with a strong emphasis on collaboration and documentation. The project aims to develop these strategies in coordination with existing initiatives, securing agreements with private sector entities and civil society organizations (CSOs). To achieve this, civil society organizations focusing on gender and youth will be involved, including organizations with an absolute predominance of women property owners. This involvement ensures inclusivity and diverse perspectives in strategy development and implementation. The project will collaborate with the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries (MGAP) and relevant stakeholders, including the Commission for Agroecological Promotion, to define sustainable production criteria in livestock and align with the SENDA agroecological project. Furthermore, executing and evaluating these strategies will be meticulously conducted in target areas, with stakeholders actively engaged to gather feedback for continuous improvement. Lastly, lessons learned will be comprehensively documented, with a specific focus on integrating these strategies into the governance structure of the Commission for Agroecological Promotion[59]41. This structured approach ensures effective implementation and sustainable outcomes while promoting gender responsive practices in agriculture and rangeland management.

Output 3.1.3: Innovative restoration practices implemented to enhance productivity and biodiversity of degraded priority grasslands and wetlands

64. Output 3.1.3 focuses on implementing innovative restoration practices to enhance the productivity and biodiversity of degraded priority grasslands and wetlands. The project aims to restore 4,000 hectares of priority grasslands and wetlands, directly contributing to achieving LDN target 10b. This involves conducting a comprehensive baseline assessment at selected intervention sites (Output 3.1.1) to identify key characteristics necessary for implementing innovative restoration practices. Based on the assessment, restoration practices will be implemented, such as adjusting stocking rates, rotational grazing, direct seeding of native species, and establishing microcatchments. The impact of these practices will be evaluated, and adjustments will be made based on lessons learned to optimize effectiveness. Additionally, workshops and campaigns will be organized to demonstrate the effectiveness of these practices, increasing awareness and understanding among local communities and stakeholders. To monitor soil health, key aspects will be monitored, including an analysis of risk and threats, soil productivity, soil biological activity, soil organic carbon and soil physical properties following a Protocol for the assessment of Sustainable Soil Management[60]42, in order to provide an evaluation of the soil's ability to maintain prioritized ecosystem services.

Outcome 3.2 ***Scaling out of gender sensitive Sustainable Rangeland Management approaches and technologies in rangelands***

Output 3.2.1: Integrated sustainable and gender sensitive Rangeland Management approaches and technologies adopted on the demonstration landscapes to reduce land degradation.

65. Previous work in Uruguay has identified and implemented Sustainable Rangeland Management approaches and technologies, setting an opportunity to scale out these SRM practices. A similar approach to the restoration of priority grasslands (Outcome 3.1) will be implemented, including the participatory and evidence based selection of landscapes of intervention, a baseline assessment, the identification of most appropriate SRM practices and implementation in 5,000 hectares (GEF Core Indicator 4.3)

COMPONENT 4: Tracking progress towards neutrality in rangelands and out-scaling of lessons learnt

66. This component focuses on monitoring, evaluation and learning to support the scaling up of the LDN approach in Uruguay through establishment of a LDN monitoring system and collection and analysis of lessons learned. To facilitate informed decision making for LDN mainstreaming and Sustainable Rangeland Managment, a Decision Support System (LDN DSS) will be developed integrating validated and relevant biophysical and socio economic data. This will contribute to national voluntary LDN target 1 that states that "By 2030, there is a consolidated monitoring mechanism for changes in land use, carbon fluxes on the land surface, and land productivity dynamics". In Figure 5 the expected outcomes and outputs of this component are presented in a diagram.

67. Collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture is key in this component since they will oversee the Euroclima project, that will focus on promoting sustainable (climate smart) livestock practices and aims to construct a national monitoring system tailored to assess the sustainability of livestock farming, strengthen capacities for on-site technical assistance, and test policy instruments to encourage the adoption of best practices in livestock management. Additionally, EUROCLIMA is part of a broader international effort supported by the World Bank to reduce emissions intensity in livestock farming. Through this program, Uruguay has secured a loan with reduced interest rates, contingent on surpassing national targets for methane emissions reduction. The project emphasizes bolstering technical assistance at the farm level and establishing a dedicated fund comprising resources committed by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) and savings generated from the interest rate subsidy. This fund will finance policies aimed at meeting the national mitigation targets, reaching over 500,000 ha. Overall, EUROCLIMA represents a significant collaborative endeavor aimed at advancing sustainable livestock practices and mitigating environmental impacts.

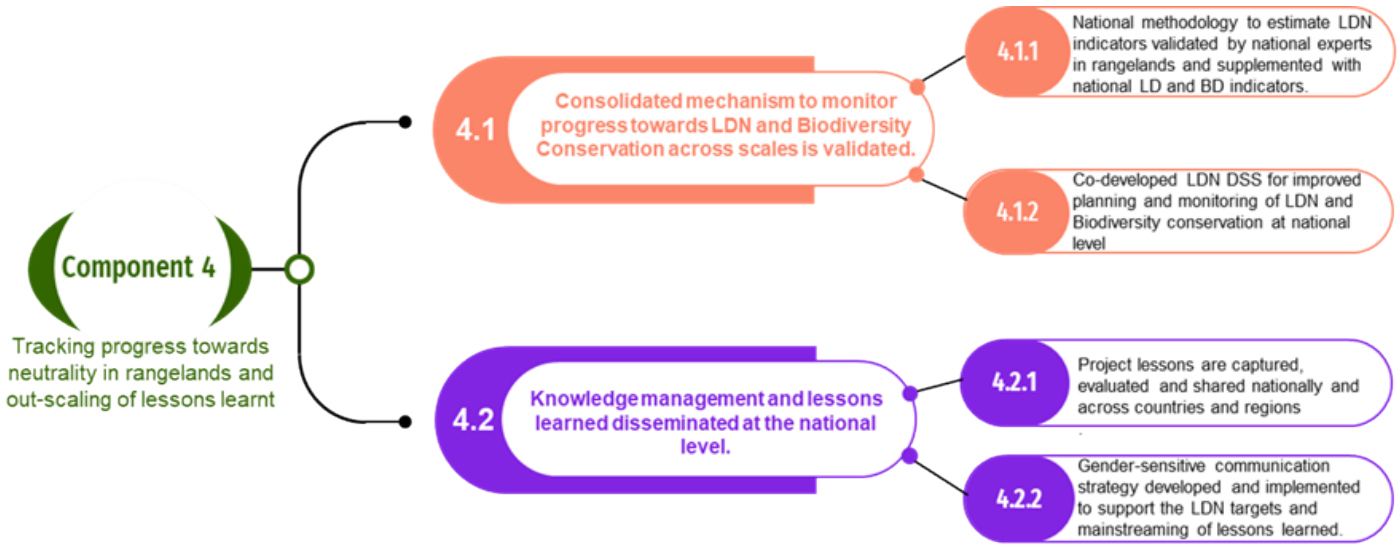

Figure 5: Outcomes and Outputs of component 4

Outcome 4.1. Consolidated mechanism to monitor progress towards LDN and Biodiversity Conservation across scales is validated.

68. Outcome 4.1 focuses on establishing a consolidated mechanism for monitoring progress towards Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and Biodiversity Conservation across scales. The project aims to validate a national methodology to estimate LDN indicators, incorporating inputs from satellite data, field verification, and expert consultations. Key activities include compiling national LD-related indicators, selecting the best data sources, and conducting participatory assessment and validation of LDN indicators. Additionally, the project aims to co-develop an LDN Decision Support System (DSS) for improved planning and monitoring. This involves establishing a comprehensive data management system, consulting stakeholders for feedback, conducting capacity-building workshops, and adapting the DSS based on stakeholder input and requirements. Through these efforts, the project aims to enhance monitoring and decision-making processes related to LDN and Biodiversity Conservation in Uruguay.

Output 4.1.1 National methodology to estimate the three (3) change of state LDN indicators validated by national experts in rangelands and supplemented with national LD and BD indicators.

69. Validation of satellite derived indicators through field verification and expert consultations through bottom-up and participatory mapping approaches involving local experts will be undertaken to develop and choose the most appropriate and representative methodologies and results to assess land degradation at the national level. The selection of these metrics will build on the work currently done by Uruguay in establishing the LDN baseline, PRAIS4 National report and through component 1 of the project. Activities for capacity building, horizontal exchange of knowledge and participatory validation of LDN indicators across scales will also take place throughout the process.

Output 4.1.2 Co-developed LDN DSS for improved planning and monitoring of LDN and Biodiversity conservation at national level

70. Through regular consultative and feedback processes, a knowledge platform and a decision support system will be developed and integrated into a national platform. The system will allow the identification and prioritization of appropriate and gender-sensitive interventions for specific sites and navigate trade-offs within landscapes at different scales, considering the environmental and socio-economic status and implications, the LDN response hierarchy and the principle of counterbalancing anticipated losses with planned gains. To develop the system, a bottom-up approach with full stakeholder participation (gender sensitive, inclusive and transparent) will be implemented to promote national empowerment and ownership of the LDN approach following previous successful experiences[61]43 and will build on the DSS developed at PPG phase[62]44. The design of the DSS will build on the identification, testing and calibration of different metrics for LDN indicators (Output 4.1.1) that will allow decision-makers to analyze trade-offs and synergies between different types of land uses, practices, and national objectives. Activities for further development of the decision support system for LDN established at the PPG stage will include discussions together with all levels of stakeholders, capacity building and adaptation of the methodologies to the end users' needs and feedback.

Outcome 4.2 Knowledge management and lessons learned disseminated at the national level.

71. Best practices and lessons learned from the project will be summarized and organized in a framework for scaling-up at regional and national level. At least three (3) gender sensitive LDN knowledge products will be developed and disseminated, and lessons learned on SLM and LDN will be mainstreamed at national and regional level. The outcome will be generated by the following outputs and associated activities.

Output 4.2.1 Project lessons are captured, evaluated and shared nationally and across countries and regions

72. The project will produce key knowledge regarding the provision of ecosystem services rangelands provide, methodologies to map and monitor land degradation and sustainable rangeland management (component 1), and technologies and approaches to reduce and reverse land degradation will be implemented and monitored in

over 10,000 ha (component 3). Under output 4.2.1 the project will develop a set of manuals and media products to be used by extension specialists and producers. These informational materials will capture and describe the improved practices, measures and technologies, including not only a technical description of the practice but also its impacts (before vs. after) and its economic costs following international databases such as the ECON data base[63]45. In addition to publishing national level good practices materials, the practices will be documented in international databases, such as WOCAT SLM database[64]46, which is the recommended database by UNCCD. A regional workshop will be held to foster South South cooperation on LDN for biodiversity conservation in rangelands.

Output 4.2.2 Gender-sensitive communication strategy developed and implemented to support the LDN targets and mainstreaming of lessons learned.

73. Gender sensitive knowledge and communication products will be developed on rangelands restoration and sustainable management that can be applied to achieve LDN at sub-national and national level. A national LDN guideline will be published that describes how LDN should be monitored at different scales and how gains and losses could be balanced at farm level, landscape and up to the national scale.

74. As a result, the proposed project will deliver global environmental benefits through (1) increased land productivity through the restoration of 4,000 ha grasslands and wetlands (GEF Core Indicator 3) , and 15,000 ha with land degradation reduced and avoided through sustainable land management practices (GEF Core Indicator 4) and (2) increased CO2 sequestration in AFOLU systems 1,787,179 Mton CO2e (GEF Core Indicator 6) thanks to LDN mainstreaming for avoiding, reducing and reversing land degradation. The project will also provide socio economic co-benefits such as increased climate resilience of the local farmer communities, functional innovative and sustainable financial mechanisms for producers and their organizations, increased number of agricultural-based investments have access to markets that incorporate SLM and enhanced capacities for achieving and monitoring LDN.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Outcome ME.1. Gender-Responsive Project Monitoring and Evaluation system supports effective project delivery

75. The M&E system will incorporate gender-responsive monitoring to ensure that gender equity is maintained across all project components. Specific gender-disaggregated data will be collected and analyzed to monitor the participation and benefits received by women and men. This will facilitate the identification of any gender disparities and the implementation of corrective measures. The Gender Action Plan will be also monitored and evaluated through this component. The M&E component has three outputs, (more detailed information can be found in Annex G of the word ProDoc):

ME1.1. Project M&E system designed and operational

ME1.2. Project evaluations completed on time to support project delivery and knowledge sharing

ME1.3. Monitoring Reports submitted on time to the Implementing Agency and GEFSEC

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[27] The DPSIR (Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Response) framework is a tool used for analyzing environmental problems. It provides a structured approach to identify the Drivers (socio-economic factors), Pressures (human activities causing stress), State (condition of the environment), Impacts (effects on ecosystems and human health), and Responses (actions taken to address the issues) related to environmental management. http://glossary.eea.europa.eu/EEAGlossary

[28] Further information and description of the pilot landscape available at Annex B: Baseline Scenario, Pilot Area

[29] Drawing from the PRAGA experience in the country, assessments can be conducted and synthesized into reports that offer insightful policy recommendations. These reports can serve as invaluable resources to be mainstreamed into sectorial or local plans, thereby ensuring that the findings and recommendations are effectively incorporated into broader strategies for rangeland management and conservation. By promoting stakeholder ownership and engagement, these reports can facilitate a deeper understanding of substantive issues, such as identifying priority areas for conservation and comprehending the economic implications of rangeland degradation.

[30] https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-ambiente/comunicacion/publicaciones/reporte-final-huella-ganaderia-uruguay

[31]https://www.planagropecuario.org.uy/web/292/destacados/sea-parte-del-proyecto-gesti%C3%B3n-del--pasto.html

[32] Medina, S. (2022). Programa de Establecimiento de Metas Voluntarias de Degradación Neutral de la tierra en Uruguay. Informe Final. Montevideo: Proyecto “Asistencia técnica para el seguimiento y la presentación de informes a la Convención de las Naciones Unidas de Lucha contra la Desertificación (UNCCD)EP/URU/036/GFF

[33] https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-11-en.pdf

[34]https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-ganaderia-agricultura-pesca/sites/ministerio-ganaderia-agricultura-pesca/files/documentos/publicaciones/PNGAgro.pdf

[35] FAO and IUCN. 2022. Participatory rangeland and grassland assessment (PRAGA) methodology. First edition. Rome, FAO and Gland, IUCN. https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0841en

[36] https://www.fao.org/3/cb1027es/CB1027ES.pdf

[37] FUCREA, established in 1966, brings together over 600 agricultural producers and CREA Groups to enhance economic and financial outcomes through knowledge exchange and capacity-building initiatives.

[38] CNFR represents around 17,000 agricultural producers through approximately a hundred primary-level entities. Its role is to channel producers' demands to public institutes and promote knowledge exchange for the sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

[39] AUGAP is an organization formed in 2014, part of the Grassland Alliance, uniting rural producers engaged in livestock farming across Uruguay. Its aim is to promote livestock production while conserving grasslands and enhancing livelihoods.

[40] SUPRA, a non-profit entity, is dedicated to Rational Grazing, a sustainable livestock farming approach. It seeks to maximize livestock productivity while emphasizing animal welfare, soil regeneration, and social reconstruction in rural areas.

[41] Pyrko et al. 2019, “Communities of practice in landscapes of practice” https://doi.org/10.1177/135050761986085

[42]Perez Rocha, J. 2020. El estado del campo natural en el Uruguay. Montevideo. FAO, MVOTMA y MGAP. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb0989es

[43] https://www.eld-initiative.org/en/ and https://teebweb.org/

https://doi.org/10.1177/135050761986085

[44]Cherlet, M., et al. 2018.,World Atlas of Desertification, Publication Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, https://wad.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

[45] COTAMA, established by Law 16.112 on May 30, 1990, and regulated through Decree 261/993, plays a crucial role in advising the Ministry of Environment. It comprises representatives from various ministries, the Office of Planning and Budget (OPP), the Congress of Intendants, the University of the Republic (Udelar), business chambers, workers, and environmental NGOs. The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Working Group, operating within COTAMA since 2016, focuses on integrating biodiversity and ecosystem values into planning and development processes, with representatives from diverse organizations and institutions.

[46] Law N.º 18.308 from June 18, 2008.

[47] Decrete N.º 238/009.

[48] Ministerial Resolution 255/2022 dated March 18, 2022.

[49]https://ccafs.cgiar.org/bigfacts/#theme=evidence-of-uccess&subtheme=policiesprograms&casestudy=policiesprogramsCs1

[50] Parera, A. F. (2014) An Index to measure the Conservation of Natural Grasslands. Report by Southern Cone Grasslands Alliance.

[51] https://savory.global/land-to-market/eov/

[52] https://app.savory.global/savory-institute-uruguay-espanol/

[53] https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2022-05/WOCAT_full_version_Gender_Respondive_SLM.pdf

[54]https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-ganaderia-agricultura-pesca/sites/ministerio-ganaderia-agricultura-pesca/files/documentos/publicaciones/PNGAgro.pdf

[55] More information about Pilot Landscape on Annex B: Baseline Scenario, Pilot Area. The main basins of the national hydrographic network are six: Rio Uruguay, Rio de la Plata, Atlantic Ocean, Laguna Merín, Rio Negro and Rio Santa Lucía). The ones selected are where major challenges for water provision are present as stated in the National Water Plan https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-ambiente/sites/ministerio-ambiente/files/2020-07/Plan-Nacional-de-Aguas.pdf

[56] BirdLife International (2021) World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas. Developed by the KBA Partnership: BirdLife International, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, American Bird Conservancy, Amphibian Survival Alliance, Conservation International, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Global Environment Facility, Global Wildlife Conservation, NatureServe, Rainforest Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Wildlife Conservation Society and World Wildlife Fund. March 2021 version. More information: http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/

[57] https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

[58] Onyango, V. et al.. 2021. Land degradation neutrality: A rationale for using participatory approaches to monitor and assess rangeland health. Rome, FAO and IUCN. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb6131en

[59] The Honorary Commission comprises thirteen members, seven designated by specific entities like the MGAP, ministries, educational institutions, and the Office of Planning and Budgeting, while the remaining six are appointed by the Executive Branch, based on proposals from civil society organizations. The Commission's responsibilities include drafting the National Plan for Production with Agroecological Bases, fostering dialogue and reflection, establishing specialized commissions, coordinating with Executive Branch bodies for plan implementation, and overseeing program execution, among other tasks

[60] FAO-ITPS 2020. Protocol for the assessment of Sustainable Soil Management. Rome, FAO.

[61] Teich et al. 2022: An interactive system to map land degradation and inform decision-making to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality via convergence of evidence across scales: a case study in Ecuador. DOI: 10.22541/au.166256286.69297348/v1

[62] https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

[63] https://www.wocat.net/en/projects-and-countries/projects/costs-and-benefits-slm-technologies

[64] https://www.wocat.net/en/global-slm-database

Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Please describe the Institutional Arrangements for the execution of this project, including financial management and procurement. If possible, please summarize the flow of funds (diagram), accountabilities for project management and financial reporting (organogram), including audit, and staffing plans. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

76. The Ministry of Environment (ME) will have the overall executing and technical responsibility for the project, with FAO providing oversight as GEF Agency as described below. The ME will act as the lead executing agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions of the Operational Partnership Agreement that will be signed with FAO. As OP of the project the ME is responsible and accountable to FAO for the timely implementation of the agreed project results, operational oversight of implementation activities, timely reporting, and for effective use of GEF resources for the intended purposes and in line with FAO and GEF policy requirements. ME will ensure close coordination with these activities, including the ongoing initiatives mentioned in previous sections.

77. In particular, the Ministry of Environment through DINABISE will be responsible for coordinating and supervising the project's execution, providing detailed information and authorizing the opening of the project-associated account at the National Development Corporation (CND), which will act as a fiduciary agent. Additionally, it will oversee the proper administration of the project's resources, collaborating closely with CND and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in document preparation, contracts, and acquisitions.

78. CND, on the other hand, will manage the fund's resources, open and administer the project-associated account, and make investments of the resources in accordance with the agreement with the Ministry of Environment DINABISE. It will also provide financial advice to the Ministry of Environment DINABISE, review project operational documents, and coordinate financial actions with FAO.

79. FAO will play a supervisory and advisory role, evaluating the opening of the project-associated account, providing information about the project, and participating in meetings and supervisory missions alongside CND and the Ministry of Environment DINABISE. It will also have full responsibility and accountability for the overall management and reporting, timely and quality delivery of project results, as well as monitoring compliance with OPA agreement and certification of the technical quality of the OP activities.

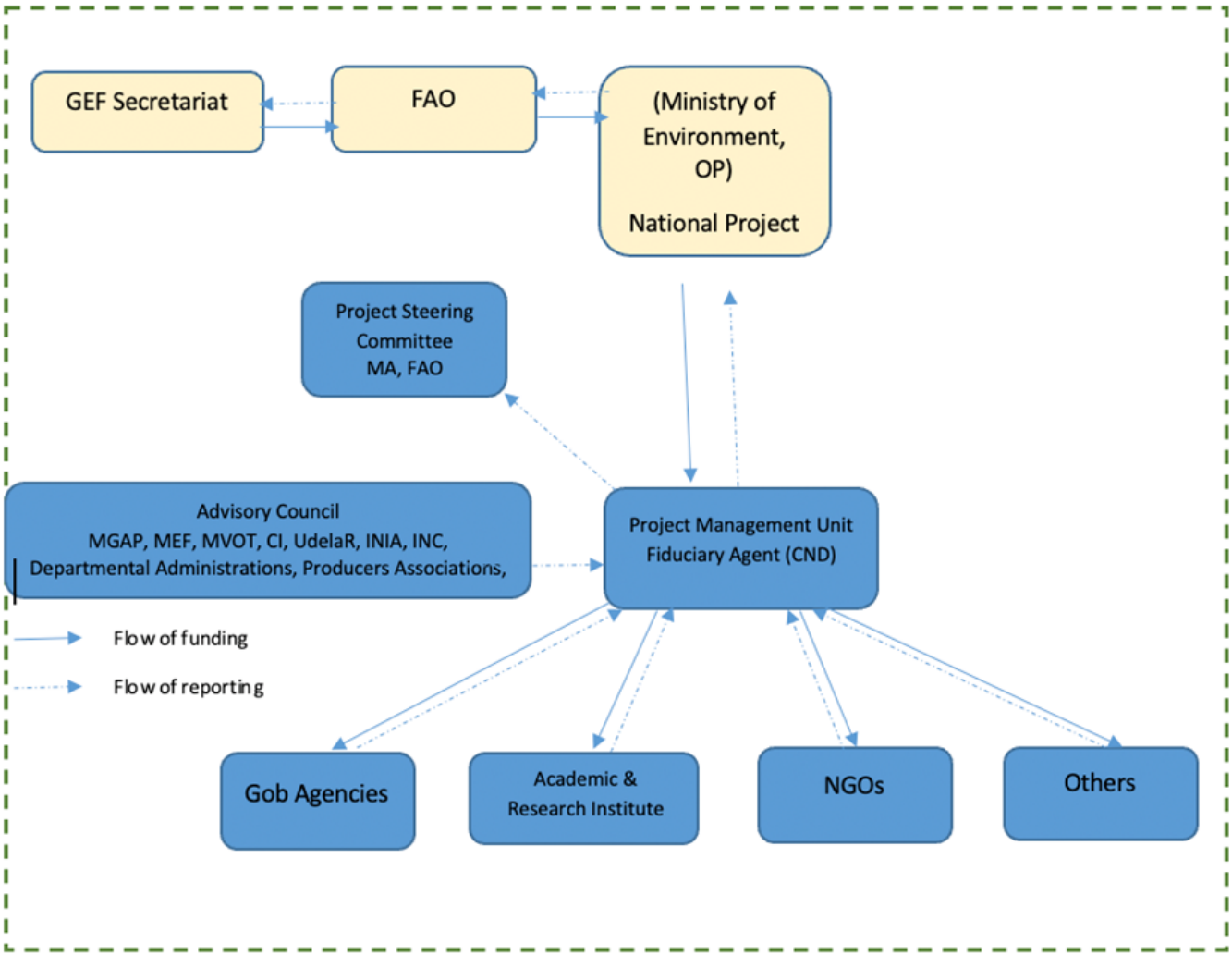
80. While the Ministry of Environment will execute a significant portion of the project, FAO's involvement will complement national capacities through four Letters of Agreement (LOAs) with national institutions and private sector representatives. Acting as an executing agency, FAO ensures timely engagement of national stakeholders and expedites the execution process with established procedures outlined in the agreements. Leveraging its global network and reputation, FAO facilitates comprehensive multi-stakeholder engagement, ensuring broad participation and buy-in from government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector, as specified in the agreements. FAO's specific areas of involvement within the project include assisting in Outputs 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 3.2.1, and 4.1.1.

81. Project implementation will be supported by: (a) governmental structures -national and subnational- that have competence in rural development planning, environmental, social and productive issues in relation to the focus of the intervention: Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries, along with the National Parliament, departamental Governments and National Institute of Colonización; (b) the national academic system, including research and extension, through the Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agropecuaria (INIA), the Instituto Plan Agropecuario (IPA), and in coordination with the University of the Republic; (c) the private sector, including producer organizations that have extensive

experience in rural development issues and in promoting the conservation of the grassland and biodiversity, such as FUCREA, Comisión Nacional de Fomento Rural (CNFR), Cooperativas Agrarias Federadas (CAF), Alianza del Pastizal and AUGAP, and in later stages of project development other stakeholders from the financial system (Banco República) and agribusiness (MINERVA) will be involved; (d) other civil society organizations that integrate the country`s institutional framework (NGO networks and their affiliates that make up the advisory commissions that integrate COTAMA), including the advisory board on natural grasslands (Mesa de ganadería sobre Campo Natural); (e) the United Nations System in Uruguay (both in initiatives and projects of the system); and (f) FAO initiatives associated with land degradation, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation - in general and especially in the regional team for Latin America.

82. To ensure this coordination and interaction, a **Project Steering Committee** and an **Advisory Council** will be established to integrate stakeholders, report on progress or emerging issues and include them in the strategic decision making of the project.

83. The project organization structure is as follows:



84. The government may designate a **National Project Director** (**NPD**). Located in the Ministry of Environment the NPD's primary role will involve coordinating activities among all national entities associated with various project components and engaging with project partners. Furthermore, the NPD will provide oversight and guidance to the Project Coordinator (see below), ensuring alignment with government policies and priorities.

85. The Ministry of Environment will chair the **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** which will be the main governing body of the project. The PSC will approve Annual Work Plans and Budgets on a yearly basis and will provide strategic guidance to the Project Management Team and to all executing partners.

86. The PSC will be comprised of representatives from _MA _and FAO. Additonally, the cofinancing entities will participate in the PSC sessions to saty informed and assess the porgress of the project.The members of the PSC will each assure the role of a Focal Point for the project in their respective agencies. Hence, the project will have a Focal Point in each concerned institution. As Focal Points in their agency, the concerned PSC members will: (i) technically oversee activities in their sector; (ii) ensure a fluid two-way exchange of information and knowledge between their agency and the project; (iii) facilitate coordination and links between the project activities and the work plan of their agency; and (iv) facilitate the provision of co-financing to the project.

87. The PSC will convene at least biannually to ensure:

i) Oversight and assurance of the technical quality of project outputs.

ii) Establish close linkages between the current project and other relevant ongoing projects and programs.

iii) Ensure timely availability and effectiveness of co-financing support.

iv) Address the sustainability of crucial project outcomes, emphasizing up-scaling and replication.

v) Facilitate effective coordination among government partners involved in the project.

vi) Approve the biannual Project Progress and Financial Reports, as well as the Annual Work Plan and Budget.

vii) Make consensus-driven management decisions whenever guidance is sought by the National Project Coordinator of the Project Management Unit (PMU).

88. The A**dvisory Council**'s primary responsibilities encompass strategic guidance and broader stakeholder engagement rather than operational management. Specifically, its main tasks include: (a) providing strategic direction for the project's implementation; (b) ensuring institutional commitments that facilitate the project's operational effectiveness, including the integration of resources, strategies, plans, programs, and policy proposals; (c) promoting the dissemination of project outcomes across various sectors and stakeholders; (d) facilitating the dissemination of project results to pertinent private sector entities such as landowners' associations, financial institutions, and governance sectors focused on natural resources, notably land degradation and biodiversity; and (e) aiding in the process of scaling up lessons learned at the national level by offering advice on priorities and strategies to enhance the project's impact and sustainability. This integration involves key stakeholders such as: Ministry of Livestock (MGAP), Producers associations (CNFR, CAF, AUGAP, and others), COTAMA delegates from NGOs national networks, Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), Ministry of Housing and Land Arrangement (MVOT), Congreso de Intendentes (CI), Universidad de la República (UdelaR), National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIA), Instituto Nacional de Colonización (INC), Departamental administrations, Technical and gender, representatives from these and other institutions for the specific aspects that the project will address. The Advisory Council will convene at least biannually. Civil Society will integrate the Advisory Council that plays a significant role in providing strategic guidance and fostering stakeholder engagement and its responsibilities are paramount for the project's success.

89. A **Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be jointly funded by the GEF and FAO, with its establishment within the Ministry of Environment. Guided by the PSC, the PMU's primary role will be to

ensure efficient management, coordination, implementation, and monitoring of the project, focusing on effective execution of the annual work plans and budgets. The Project Management Unit (PMU) will be comprised of key national staff including: **Project Coordinator**, responsible for overall project management, coordination, and oversight of project activities; **Gender and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist**, facilitates gender-responsive approaches and ensures effective engagement with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle; **GIS Expert**, provides technical expertise in Geographic Information Systems for spatial analysis and mapping related to project activities; **Agronomist** (Livestock – Grassland – Field) **Specialist**, offers specialized knowledge in agronomy and livestock management, particularly in grassland ecosystems; **Environmental Policy Specialist**, ensures alignment of project activities with environmental policies and regulations, facilitating policy process; **Monitoring Expert**, supports monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track project progress and outcomes effectively; **Knowledge Management and Communication Specialist**, manages information dissemination, knowledge sharing, and communication strategies to enhance project visibility and impact, and **Legal Specialists in National and subnational Instruments**, provide legal expertise related to regulations and instruments governing project implementation. These national staff members, integrated into the Project Management Unit, will collaborate closely to ensure the efficient management, coordination, implementation, and monitoring of the project's activities, guided by the Project Steering Committee. Their collective expertise will be instrumental in achieving the project's objectives effectively and in accordance with relevant policies and regulations.

90. A **Project Coordinator (PC)** will oversee the daily management, administration, and technical aspects of the project, operating on behalf of the operational partner and within the PSC's established framework. Key responsibilities of the PC include:

i) Leading the coordination and establishment of a community of practice for LDN and rangeland management as outlined in Component 1. Spearheading coordination mechanisms, stakeholder dialogues, and innovative financing proposals as detailed in Component 2. Directing the capture and dissemination of project lessons nationally and internationally, and developing a gender-sensitive communication strategy as outlined in Component 4.

ii) Coordinating with relevant initiatives

iii) Fostering collaboration among participating institutions and organizations at national and local levels.

iv) Ensuring adherence to Operational Partner Agreement (OPA) provisions, including timely reporting and financial management.

v) Overseeing and monitoring the project's activities.

vi) Tracking project progress and ensuring timely delivery of outcomes.

vii) Offering technical support and evaluating outputs from national consultants funded by GEF and other project-generated products.

viii) Approving and managing financial resource requests as per OPA annex formats.

ix) Monitoring financial resources and ensuring accurate reporting.

x) Timely submission of fund requests, financial, and progress reports to FAO in line with OPA requirements.

xi) Documenting and providing evidence of proper resource utilization as per OPA provisions.

xii) Implementing the project's monitoring and communication strategies.

xiii) Organizing project-related workshops, meetings, and preparing annual budgets and work plans.

xiv) Submitting biannual Project Progress Reports (PPRs) to the PSC and FAO.

xv) Drafting the initial Project Implementation Review (PIR).

xvi) Assisting in organizing mid-term and final evaluations in coordination with FAO's Budget Holder and Independent Office of Evaluation (OED).

xvii) Forwarding semi-annual technical and financial reports to FAO, facilitating information exchange between the operational partner and FAO, if required.

xviii)Promptly notifying the PSC and FAO of any implementation delays or challenges to ensure timely corrective actions and support.

91. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) will be the GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for the Project, providing project cycle management and support services as established in the GEF Policy. As the GEF IA, FAO holds overall accountability and responsibility to the GEF for delivery of the results. In the IA role, FAO will utilize the GEF fees to deploy three different actors within the organization to support the project (see Annex J for details):

- The Budget Holder, which is usually the most decentralized FAO office, will provide oversight of day to day project execution;
- The Lead Technical Officer(s), drawn from across FAO will provide oversight/support to the projects technical work in coordination with government representatives participating in the Project Steering Committee;
- The Funding Liaison Officer(s) and the GEF Technical Officers (GTO) within FAO will monitor and support the project cycle to ensure that the project is being designed and carried out in accordance with FAO and GEF minimum fiduciary and technical standards.

92. FAO responsibilities, as GEF agency, will include:

- Administrate funds from GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO;
- Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans, budgets, agreements with co-financiers, Operational Partners Agreement(s)and other rules and procedures of FAO;
- Provide technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned;
- Conduct at least one supervision mission per year; and
- Reporting to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review, the Mid Term Review, the Terminal Evaluation and the Project Closure Report on project progress;
- Financial reporting to the GEF Trustee.

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this project?

No

If so, please describe that role here and the justification.

While the Ministry of Environment will execute a significant portion of the project, FAO's involvement will complement national capacities **through four Letters of Agreement (LoAs) with national institutions and private sector representatives**. FAO's involvement as an implementing agency ensures the timely engagement of national stakeholders and expedites the execution process with established procedures and mechanisms outlined in the agreements. FAO's global network and reputation facilitate comprehensive multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration, ensuring broad participation and buy-in from government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector as specified in the agreements.

FAO's specific areas of involvement, as outlined in the project, includes assisting outputs: 1.2.1; 1.2.2; 3.1.1; 3.1.3 ; 3.2.1; 4.1.1. through above mentioned LoAs.

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 (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

93. This project will build upon past initiatives such as the GEF-funded project "Participatory assessment of land degradation assessments and sustainable land management in grasslands and pastoral areas" (GEFID 5724), implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Through this project, significant progress was made in enhancing the capacity of stakeholders to address land degradation and promote sustainable use/conservation in grasslands and rangelands. Drawing from lessons learned[1]47, the proposed project aims to strengthen and expand these efforts, focusing on recommendations provided by the Ministry of the Environment, including the National Directorate of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (DINABISE). Additionally, the current project will leverage outcomes and experiences gained from the 'Livestock and Climate' project (GEFID 9153) implemented by the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) and the Ministry of Environment (ME). While these projects may have concluded, their successes provide a valuable foundation upon which to build, particularly emphasizing stakeholder participation to advance sustainable productivity increase and resilience enhancement in livestock systems.

94. The project will align with and contribute to broader ongoing national strategies and initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable agricultural development and environmental conservation, by integrating with these initiatives and leveraging their outcomes, the project will ensure coherence and alignment with national priorities, maximizing its impact and sustainability over the long term. In particular:

- alignment with the Technology Adoption Program for the sustainable development of pastoral livestock farming, currently developed by the Office of Planning and Agricultural Policy (OPYPA) within MGAP and the Directorate of Climate Change (DINACC) within ME, in coordination with the Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (AUCI). This forthcoming initiative, funded by the EUROCLIMA program and implemented from 2024 to 2026, aims to strengthen national capacities for improving livestock sustainability and testing policy instruments and is designed to ensuring that by 2030, 700,000 hectares of pastoral livestock farming incorporate good animal management and pasture practices with a triple-win approach. This approach aims to increase productivity and income for producers, reduce methane emission intensity from livestock committed in the Nationally Determined Contributions, and improve biodiversity indicators. Supported by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and backed by the World Bank, this program anticipates funds to be channeled annually for the transfer

and adoption of technologies by agricultural producers. Therefore, the results of the propossed project will also contribute to integrating actions in this program and will contribute to the development of a comprehensive national monitoring system and support the adoption of sustainable practices in the livestock sector

- complement the ongoing 'Agroecological and Resilient Systems in Uruguay' (SARU) project financed by the World Bank, by aligning strategies and sharing knowledge, the proposed project will contribute to enhancing sustainability and resilience across agricultural sectors in Uruguay.
- alignment with the objectives and findings of the GEF-funded project 'Binational and integrated water resources management in the Merín Lagoon Basin and Coastal Lagoons' (GCP/RLA/231/GFF), which aims to promote sustainable water management and environmental conservation in the region.
- collaborate with the ongoing 'Consolidating biodiversity and land conservation policies and actions as pillars of sustainable development' project (GEFID 10081), ensuring knowledge exchange regarding field activities and policy assessments for the benefit of all projects.
- collaborate with GEF Project ID 11054 under GEF 8, in which Uruguay participates, an initiative that aims to mobilize resources for implementing the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework by supporting capacity building, institutional arrangements, and biodiversity financing plans.
- tap into the Livestock Environmental Footprint working group, established in 2021 to address environmental sustainability challenges in the livestock sector. Collaboration with government institutions, research organizations, and industry stakeholders involved in this initiative will facilitate the development of effective strategies to enhance sustainability in grassland management.

[65] Cortés Capano, et.al. 2020. Degradación y gestión sostenible del campo natural en el Uruguay - Resultados de una evaluación participativa en el norte del país. Montevideo, FAO, CAF y MGAP http://www.fao.org/3/cb1032es/CB1032ES.pdf

Formoso, D; et.al 2020. Degradación y gestión sostenible del campo natural en el Uruguay - Resultados de una evaluación participativa en el sureste del país. Montevideo, FAO, CAF y MGAP. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb1027es

Perez Rocha, J. 2020. El estado del campo natural en el Uruguay. Montevideo. FAO, MVOTMA y MGAP. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb0989es

Core Indicators

Indicate expected results in each relevant indicator using methodologies indicated in the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Guidelines. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

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)
4000	4000	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)

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)
Natural grass	2,000.00	2,000.00		

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)
2,000.00	2,000.00		

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)
15000	15000	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)
15,000.00	10,000.00		

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)
	5,000.00		

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)	1787179	1787179	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)	1,787,179	1,787,179		
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2024	2024		
Duration of accounting	20	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	4,000	4,000		
Male	4,000	4,000		
Total	**8,000**	**8,000**	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)

Area of land restored (CI 3): The estimation of indicator 3 was based on: (1) consultations with the private sector, in particular through the Associations of cooperatives “Cooperativas Agrarias Federadas” and “Asociación Uruguaya de Ganaderos de Pastizal'' which nucleate more than 1000 producers who were initially consulted on the interest to introduce restoration practices in their productive lands. The Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries, the Ministry of Environment and the Instituto Plan Agropecuario (IPA), who have a network of extensionist were consulted in this regard; (2) a spatial multicriteria assessment using the geospatial platform [66] developed for the PIF (and PPG) preparation where the areas of degraded rangelands (with declining land productivity) in Key Biodiversity areas in the pilot areas where mapped and (3) the cost estimates of restoration activities (US$300/ha) from previous experiences in similar contexts in Uruguay and the literature [67]. The estimation of 4,000 ha corresponds to sub-indicators 3.3, “Area of natural grass and shrublands restored” (2000 ha) and 3.4 “Area of wetlands restored” (2000 ha) and is the lowest threshold based on the 3 levels of estimations: level 1: using only GEF resources (1000 ha), level 2: including co-financing activities (+500 ha – 2000 ha) and level 3: with resources from the cooperatives and producers (+1000 ha).

Area of landscapes under improved practices (CI 4): The project will work following the LDN hierarchy of responses. The estimation for this indicator is based on reduce and avoid type of responses, whereas indicator 3 is directly related to reverse type of responses. The project is expected to avoid the transformation of 10,000 ha of grasslands (GEF Core Indicator 4.1), through the implementation of new regulatory frameworks and following national commitments (components 1 and 2). This estimation is very conservative and assumes a reduction of 2% in the estimated current trend of conversion of grasslands (120,000 ha/year) at national level[68] , which corresponds to 4% of the national LDN target 10a (reducing the rate 50%=60,000 ha/year). The project will target 5,000 ha of land degradation reduced through improved rangeland management- (GEF Core Indicator 4.3). This estimation is based on the consultations and multicriteria analysis explained for CI as well as previous experiences with PRAGA methodology in the GEF7 funded project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (CI 6): Estimates have been calculated through the EX-Ante Carbon-balance Tool (EX-ACT v9.0), with a direct carbon-benefit of 1,787,179 tCO2e for a total period of 20 years (4 years of implementation and 16 years of capitalization).

Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment (CI 11): The project aims to directly benefit 8,000 individuals, representing approximately 10% of the total rural population of the pilot landscape, as a co-benefit of GEF investment according to Core Indicator 11. These direct beneficiaries will receive targeted support through a comprehensive approach that encompasses direct actions of the project and leverages resources from connected initiatives within the co-financing framework. This approach includes assessing the environmental situation and natural resources in the intervention area, providing valuable data to local stakeholders, securing financing, and strengthening monitoring systems for sustainable land management. Livestock farmers, as well as other stakeholders including extensionists, government staff, and local producers, will receive training on sustainable land management practices, biodiversity conservation, and rangeland degradation neutrality. Additionally, the project targets enhancing capacities at national and subnational levels to achieve Rangelands Degradation Neutrality and Biodiversity Conservation. This involves knowledge exchange activities, training of extensionists and government staff, and the development of gender-sensitive educational products. Increased understanding and awareness of the ecosystem services provided by grasslands and rangelands are prioritized, with initiatives focusing on measuring ecosystem service values, proposing pilot plans for grassland transformation and restoration, and developing awareness-raising strategies.

[66]https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

[67] Knight / Overbeck, 2021. How much does it cost to restore a grassland? https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13463

[68] According to national estimations (DINOT-MVOTMA, 2015) between 2000 and 2015, the rate of natural grasslands conversion was -1.27% and total grassland area in 2015 was 9,503,454.

Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		
Climate	Low	Climate Change Projections/Scenarios: Uruguay, located in eastern South America, experiences a humid subtropical climate influenced significantly by El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and La Niña. Projections for the 2050 time horizon indicate: -Temperature Increase: Mean annual temperatures are expected to rise by 0.5 to 1.6°C by 2044, and 1.5 to 5.5°C by 2099, depending on the emission scenario. -Rainfall Variability: An increase in mean annual rainfall is projected, with a 10-20% rise across the country by 2044. Extreme rainfall events, particularly in autumn and spring, are expected to become more frequent. -Extreme Weather Events: There will be an increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including extreme rainfall, droughts, high winds, and storms. Key Potential Hazards: - Extreme Rainfall and Flooding: These can lead to soil erosion, crop loss, infrastructure damage, and displacement of communities. - Droughts: Reduced water availability can affect crop and livestock production and increase the risk of wildfires. - Heatwaves: These can cause heat stress in livestock, reduce crop yields, and increase evaporation rates. Mitigation Measures: -Climate-Smart Practices: Implement sustainable land management (SLM) practices in grasslands to enhance resilience to climate variability. Techniques such as rotational grazing, using drought-resistant crop varieties, and adopting water harvesting solutions will be employed. -Climate Data Gathering and Services: Enhance the collection and dissemination of climate data to support proactive responses to extreme weather events. Develop and integrate early warning systems to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of extreme weather. Policy Integration: Integrate climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction into national, regional, and local policy strategies, plans, and investments. Embed climate risk assessments into planning processes and build capacity for climate resilience within relevant institutions. Innovative Financial Mechanisms: Include financial mechanisms such as climate insurance schemes and payments for ecosystem services (PES) to support and sustain grassland management and restoration efforts. Collaborate with financial institutions to create tailored financial products that incentivize sustainable land use. Project Activities: The project will incorporate these mitigation measures through its robust set of activities designed to modulate existing climate risks. This includes:

		applying best SLM practices in grasslands, enhancing the adaptive capacity of communities through education and capacity-building initiatives, ensuring that policy development processes explicitly evaluate and address climate impacts on grasslands, promoting economic incentives for sustainable practices and developing innovative financial mechanisms to support these initiatives. By implementing these measures, the project aims to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural systems and communities in Uruguay to climate change, thereby ensuring sustainable development and enhancing overall resilience. Fore detailed information refer to the Climate Risk Screening uploaded in the portal
Environmental and Social	Moderate	According to the Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) conducted, the activities under Components 1 and 4 are low risk and will not cause significant adverse environmental and social impacts, as they focus mainly on experience sharing, knowledge management, capacity building, monitoring, among others. The main project risks are associated with Component 2 due to the potential exclusion of vulnerable groups in decision-making processes and access to resources, and potential restrictions on land use; as well as Component 3, specifically because some activities could be implemented near or within a sensitive/critical natural area or in its buffer zone. Environmental and social safeguards will be integrated into the project following the mitigation hierarchy, to avoid and minimise adverse impacts on the environment and local communities. Once the specific project site locations are selected (through a multi stakeholder validation approach), an Environmental and Social Management Plan (site-specific) will be developed following FAO guidelines. To ensure effective participation of different key actors, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Gender Action Plan (GAP) have been developed and will be updated according to the project progress. Additionally a project level Grievance Redress Mechanism has been set and will be socialised with all project stakeholders. All these to ensure transparency, accountability, facilitate dialog and consultations and promote a participatory decision-making processes along project life-cycle. Capacity building initiatives will be implemented to enhance the skills and knowledge of project stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, and civil society organisations regarding potential E&S risks and its mitigation measures. These capacity building efforts will empower stakeholders to actively participate in project activities, advocate for their interests, and contribute to positive social outcomes. For additional information refer to Annex I “Environmental and Social Assessment”
Political and Governance	Moderate	National elections coincide with project implementation, potentially diverting political attention and resources away from project objectives. Furthermore, changes in government priorities may impact support for conservation and sustainable grassland management initiatives. To

		mitigate these risks, the project will adopt a multi-faceted strategy: Political Risks and Mitigation Measures: Engagement and Sustained Involvement: Continuously engage with the political sector throughout the project formulation and execution phases. This will include regular meetings, briefings, and consultations with key political figures and parties to ensure ongoing support and alignment with project goals. Advocacy and Institutional Continuity: Advocate for project goals to maintain priority status, leveraging Uruguay's tradition of institutional continuity. This will involve highlighting the long-term benefits of the project and its alignment with national and international commitments to biodiversity and sustainable development. Collaboration and Dialogue: Foster collaboration and dialogue among political stakeholders to mitigate the impact of political transitions on project continuity and effectiveness. Establishing a bipartisan support base and securing commitments from various political entities can help ensure the project's resilience against political changes Policy Risks and Mitigation Measures: Potential policy contradictions exist between agricultural development objectives and biodiversity conservation goals, posing challenges to project implementation and stakeholder alignment. The mitigation strategy will focus on: Stakeholder Engagement: Engage stakeholders from diverse sectors, including agriculture, conservation, and local communities, in participatory processes aimed at fostering dialogue and consensus-building. This inclusive approach will help align interests and address potential conflicts early in the project- Proactive Environmental Assessments: Conduct proactive environmental assessments and monitoring activities to identify and mitigate negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Adhere to existing environmental regulations and governance mechanisms to minimize conflicts and promote harmonious coexistence between agricultural development and conservation objectives. Policy Integration and Coherence: Work towards integrating the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) mechanism into national and subnational policies, aligning agricultural development with biodiversity conservation goals. By establishing priority conservation areas and incorporating them into national and local land-use planning instruments, the project aims to create a cohesive policy environment that balances development and conservation needs.
INNOVATION		
Institutional and Policy	Low	Uruguay has developed a forestry promotion law including incentives for the industrial phase of pulpwood. The Ministry has responded with a decree that attempts to regulate the advance of plantations. Other existing partial tax exemptions for several investments (tax reform, investment promotion law) do not currently contradict the project's results, but could be seen as a risk if extended to the promotion of activities that could constitute threats to the grassland. This risk should be monitored and

		mitigated through the awareness raising and dialogue actions foreseen in the project.
Technological	Low	Technical design of project or program Technical capacity in the country is high. No major problems expected. There is good collaboration between the Ministries of Environment and of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries and the stakeholders related to the private sector, civil society and the Academy. FAO, as the leading agency on livestock and grassland issues in the country, has accumulated capacity and knowledge in supporting and articulating similar initiatives and in engaging diverse stakeholders towards achieving common interests.
Financial and Business Model	Moderate	Macro-economic: The risk arises from the potential inability to secure co-financing from public sources due to extreme economic conditions, such as regional economic downturns or financial crises, which may impact Uruguay's capacity to allocate funds to the project. Develop contingency plans based on potential economic scenarios, including regional economic downturns or financial crises, to anticipate and mitigate the impact on co-financing availability. This proactive approach will enable the project to adapt its financing strategy accordingly and seek alternative funding sources if necessary. Moreover, the project also relies on co-financing from ongoing projects, with established agreements, providing a more stable funding base. Additionally, the involvement of the private and financial sectors migh help mitigate the risk associated with the potential lack of public co-financing in cases of extreme economic conditions, such as regional economic downturns or financial crises. This diversification of funding sources will strengthen the project's resilience against economic fluctuations and ensure its continuity
EXECUTION		
Capacity	Low	Experience from previous GEF projects on grasslands in the country and the interviews conducted at this stage of Project formulation show that the institutional capacities are sufficient for implementing and sustaining the proposal. Indeed, relationships between all parties remain collaborative and aligned, enabling teamwork and exchanges of information and the achievement of the agreements necessary to manage the project and deliver the planned results. The risk of a decreased commitment on key stakeholders could materialize in the event of a change in staff in the participating institutions. However, the project will work at a number of levels within these institutions and will support the fulfillment of their mandates. Therefore, although a change in staff could affect the speed of delivery of outputs, it would not likely result in a significant obstacle to the project’s implementation. Changes in project staff, including members of the FAO regional teams and local office. Although it is important to ensure the continuity of project staff and the FAO regional team, the project’s systems for recording information and decision making would minimize the difficulties that could potentially

		result from staff turnover. Changes in project staff and the FAO regional teams are therefore not viewed as a threat to the continuity of activities In conclusion, establishing robust mechanisms for capacity building, knowledge management, and continuous stakeholder engagement, coupled with the establishment of a dedicated governance structure comprising the Project Steering, Oversight, and Advisory Committees, will be crucial for mitigating risks and ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of the project. -Technical design of project or program: Technical capacity in the country is high. No major problems expected. There is good collaboration between the Ministries of Environment and of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries and the stakeholders related to the private sector, civil society and the Academy. FAO, as the leading agency on livestock and grassland issues in the country, has accumulated capacity and knowledge in supporting and articulating similar initiatives and in engaging diverse stakeholders towards achieving common interests.
Fiduciary	Low	While there is significant capacity in Uruguay, the project team will conduct a fiduciary assessment of the project executing entity in line with FAO's due diligence.
Stakeholder	Low	Stakeholder engagement may face challenges due to potential resistance or lack of cooperation from key stakeholders, including financial institutions (Banco de la República), the meat industry, local governments, political actors such as parliament and party leaders, INIA, FUCREA, IPA, in addition to Cooperativas Agrarias Federadas, Alianza del Pastizal, Asociación Uruguaya de Ganaderos del Pastizal, academia, and the Ministry of Agriculture. Experience from previous GEF projects on grasslands and livestock in the country and the interviews conducted for the PIF and Project Preparation phases show key partners will support to ensure stakeholder engagement. To mitigate this risk, the project developed a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan during the formulation phase. This plan was crafted with the involvement of key stakeholders, including financial institutions (Banco de la República), the meat industry, local governments, political actors such as parliament and party leaders, Instituto Nacional Investigación, FUCREA, Plan Agropecuario, as well as Cooperativas Agrarias Federadas, Alianza del Pastizal, Asociación de Ganaderos del Pastizal, academia, and the Ministry of Agriculture. By engaging stakeholders early in the formulation process, the project aimed to gain their support and commitment from the outset. The stakeholder engagement plan outlines tailored approaches for engaging each stakeholder group, strategies for addressing their interests and concerns, and mechanisms for fostering collaboration and consensus-building. Regular consultation and feedback loops were incorporated into the plan to ensure that stakeholder perspectives were continuously integrated into project design and implementation. Through proactive communication and outreach efforts,

		the project sought to build trust and rapport with stakeholders, emphasizing the mutual benefits of collaboration and the shared goal of achieving sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation objectives. Additionally, the stakeholder engagement plan will serve as a guiding framework throughout project implementation.
Other	Moderate	Covid-19 adversely impacted the ability to implement projects in the last three years. The Covid-19 situation is evolving rapidly, and while the pandemic will very likely impact the project in the short-term, the longer-term impacts are expected to diminish over time. FAO at both the national and international levels has designed and adopted a number of Covid-19 coping strategies to ensure projects are able to move forward in a timely manner. Likewise, the impacts will be most prevalent in the short-term and will diminish over-time. The project will adopt a flexible approach to activity planning, allowing for adjustments between virtual and in-person formats based on the prevailing COVID-19 situation. Virtual platforms will be utilized extensively for training sessions, workshops, and other knowledge-sharing activities to minimize the need for physical gatherings. However, where feasible and safe, in-person activities will be conducted, leveraging national technical resources to lead and support project activities. This approach will not only reduce dependence on international personnel but also align with the country's capacity to manage COVID-19 challenges effectively. Additionally, the project will closely monitor and adhere to national health guidelines and regulations to ensure the safety of participants involved in in-person activities.
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	Please refer to the ESS checklist annexed both in the portal entry and in Annex I: Environmental and Social Safeguards in the word ProDoc.

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

Explain 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.

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.

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

95. The proposed project is aligned with the GEF-8 Land Degradation Focal area (LDFA). The project seeks to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought in the Uruguayan rangelands by applying sustainable land management principles (LDFA Objective 1). Specifically, the project will (i) support sustainable investments in rangeland management in order to maximize output and support livelihoods, and (ii) strengthen community based natural resources management to improve agro-ecosystem functions. SLM activities will help improve ecosystem connectivity and safeguard agro-

biodiversity, improve soil health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving vegetative cover and accumulating soil organic matter.

96. The proposed project aligns well with the Land Degradation Neutrality Country Support Program (LDN CSP) and sets specific targets for achieving LDN in Uruguay's rangelands, integrated into national policies and action plans, reflecting the LDN CSP's goal of helping countries achieve voluntary LDN targets. It provides technical guidance and tools for monitoring and assessing land degradation, including geospatial data and remote sensing technologies, mirroring the technical assistance offered by the LDN CSP. Additionally, the project includes training and capacity-building activities for government officials, local communities, and other stakeholders, strengthening local capacities in line with the LDN CSP's emphasis on enhancing stakeholder knowledge and skills. The project leverages significant co-financing and mobilizes additional financial resources, ensuring sustainable funding for its activities, consistent with the LDN CSP's objective of mobilizing financial resources for LDN initiatives. It supports the integration of LDN targets into national and regional development plans, reflecting the LDN CSP's focus on policy integration. The project promotes multi-stakeholder engagement, encouraging collaboration between government agencies, the private sector, civil society, and local communities, aligning with the LDN CSP's aim to foster broad-based stakeholder engagement. Finally, the project facilitates the exchange of best practices, experiences, and lessons learned, supporting the LDN CSP's goal of disseminating knowledge and promoting collaborative learning among countries. This alignment underscores the project's strategic approach to achieving LDN and contributing to global efforts to combat land degradation.

97. In addition, the project will bring Biodiversity cobenefits as it will follow a landscape approach to improve conservation, sustainable use and restoration of the grasslands in Uruguay (BDFA Objective 1). Specifically, the project will support biodiversity mainstreaming into the agriculture and forestry sectors by financing (i) spatial land use planning activities to optimize production without undermining biodiversity, (ii) will support the development of a stronger policy and regulatory framework (Component 2) by proposing a national law on conservation and sustainable management of grasslands for consideration by the national parliament, and (iii) support farmers efforts to upscale sustainable management approaches and technologies to sustainably use biodiversity and conserve rangelands.

98. The program will support the country advance towards achieving GBF targets 1 as follows:

Target1 : The project will support integrated spatial planning and will work with local communities to reduce degradation of globally important grasslands in Uruguay. Currently there are 0.95 million ha of grasslands that are KBA but are not protected.

Target 10: The project will partner with local cooperatives to support the application of biodiversity friendly practices in order to contribute to the long term sustainability of these productive systems.

99. **Alignment with national and regional priorities.** Latin America has developed a Plan of Action to promote and support the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, reflecting an understanding of the need to advance on this front and the importance of restoring the region's natural capital. The overall vision set out in the Plan is that, by 2030, Latin America and the Caribbean will have made significant progress in defining policies and plans and implementing projects in marine, terrestrial and inland water ecosystem restoration at a relevant spatial scale to reverse the negative impacts of degradation and, as a result, ecosystems and natural habitats across the region will be in the process of being restored, protected and sustainably managed. In this context, given the relevance of grasslands and the challenges they are facing, they should be integrated as one of the central biomes to advance this issue in the region.

100. Progress was made in Uruguay, strengthening instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, as reflected in the approval and implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy 2016-2020, a National Native Forest Strategy, and a wetland conservation policy. The challenge in this area remains to generate new regulatory frameworks for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity that explicitly incorporate the focus on ecosystem services, ecosystem restoration and the importance of biodiversity for human well-being. This is pointed out in the Voluntary National Report, in the National Environmental Plan and, indicated as a a crucial challenge for Uruguay in the Decade Action Plan on Ecosystem Restoration in Latin America and the Caribbean,.

101. Integration **with National Strategies and Reports:** The project will draw upon and contribute to the insights and recommendations outlined in these documents, including the ongoing process of updating the National Biodiversity Strategy in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to inform its implementation strategies and enhance its effectiveness in achieving its objectives. By aligning with these strategic frameworks, the project will ensure coherence and complementarity with national priorities and commitments. Leveraging the ongoing updates to the National Biodiversity Strategy will enable the project to incorporate the latest scientific findings and policy developments, thereby strengthening its contribution to biodiversity conservation efforts at the national and global levels.**Addressing Potential Policy Contradictions:** During the project design phase, potential policy contradictions have been identified regarding reconciling agricultural development objectives with biodiversity conservation goals. Divergences have been noted regarding policy instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of grasslands, as some stakeholders believe that economic incentives are more appropriate than land use regulation (normative instruments). To address this challenge, the project will engage stakeholders from various sectors in a participatory process aimed at promoting dialogue and consensus-building. Through this approach, sustainable land management practices that balance economic development with environmental conservation will be identified and advocated for. Moreover, Component 2 has been designed with a set of actions at national, local, and sectorial levels to create a cohesive policy environment. Nationally, it will promote laws for grassland conservation and align land use incentives with conservation efforts through legislative engagement. Locally, the project will collaborate with governments to enhance land use and management of grasslands, revise Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes, and promote economic incentives such as green finance and credit lines. Sectorially, collaboration with producers' organizations and financial institutions will develop financial products that encourage sustainable land use. These actions will support sustainable rangeland management across Uruguay.

102. Additionally, the project will actively seek opportunities to collaborate with local research institutions and universities to ensure that scientific knowledge and expertise inform decision-making processes.

Alignment TO FAO Strategic framework, SDGs and COUNTRY Programming Framework

103. The proposed Land Degradation Neutrality project significantly aligns with the Country Programming Framework (CPF), providing guidelines for technical cooperation between the FAO and the government of Uruguay during the 2022-2025 period. Specifically, the project closely aligns with CPF's Priority Area 1, focusing on environmentally sustainable and resilient agricultural and livestock production for territorial development. This approach aims to promote agroecological practices, sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity, and enhance capacities in the integrated management of water resources – all integral components of the project proposal.

104. Moreover, the project's objectives align directly with CPF's goals, such as the proper management of natural resources and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This approach directly addresses the governmental priorities set for the 2021-2025 period, reflecting the need to strengthen regulations and develop innovative financial mechanisms for the restoration and conservation of pastures, as proposed by the initiative.

105. The project proposal also integrates with the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, contributing to a sustainable economy, an efficient state, quality public policies, and a society that promotes development and human rights. The FAO's focus on technical cooperation with various government institutions, including the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries, and the Ministry of Environment, aligns with the strategy outlined in the CPF to support the country through collaboration with diverse governmental entities.

106. The GEF project proposal emerges as a consistent and strategic extension of the Country Programming Framework, reflecting comprehensive collaboration between the FAO and the government of Uruguay in achieving shared objectives related to sustainable development and efficient natural resource management.

Lessons learned from past projects

107. The implementation of PRAGA[69][48] yielded significant insights into sustainable land management. Firstly, it highlighted the critical role of participatory approaches in engaging local communities and stakeholders in the assessment process. By involving them actively in the assessment process, PRAGA fostered a sense of ownership and empowerment, laying the groundwork for more effective and enduring solutions. cultivated a sense of ownership and empowerment, laying a solid foundation for more effective and lasting solutions. Additionally, it underscored the importance of integrating local and scientific knowledge, recognizing the unique insights each perspective offers. However, challenges with remote sensing technologies revealed the necessity for ongoing innovation in data collection methodologies. Moreover, capacity building initiatives proved vital, enhancing stakeholders' ability to contribute meaningfully to land degradation neutrality efforts. PRAGA's impact extended to informing policy and decision-making processes, offering valuable insights for sustainable development initiatives at various levels.

108. The Resilient Family Livestock (CNFR[70][49]) project emphasizes the effectiveness of involving community members in decision-making, enhancing project legitimacy and sustainability. This approach is highly suitable for guiding technical assistance aimed at supporting the implementation of Good Livestock Practices (GLPs) in family systems. GLPs, as management measures researched and validated at the level of these productive systems, constitute a 'toolbox' available during discussions of diagnoses and redesign proposals between field technicians and producer families. They are low-cost, high-impact practices aimed at improving the management of the main resource available to families to feed their livestock: natural fields.

109. The *Livestock and Climate* (GEFID 9153) project underscores the need to adapt strategies based on feedback and changing conditions, and the significance of engaging producer organizations to leverage local

knowledge. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of clear Letters of Agreement, inclusive planning, and training teams in measurement and reporting practices for effective governance.

110. The *National Program for the Promotion of Agricultural Awareness in Uruguay* (UTF /URU/037/URU) offers insights into communication strategies tailored to target populations, such as decision-makers, sector stakeholders, and urban communities distanced from rural life. Effective communication strategies aligned with specific objectives are crucial for achieving project goals.

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[69] "Participatory assessment of land degradation and sustainable land management in grassland and pastoral systems" GEF ID: 5724. FAO 2022. Terminal evaluation of the project "Participatory assessment of land degradation and sustainable land management in grassland and pastoral systems". Project Evaluation Series, 02/2022. Rome.

[70] http://www.inia.uy/Documentos/P%C3%BAblicos/UCTT/Publicaciones/Publicaci%C3%B3n%20ganader%C3%ADa%20familiar%20resiliente.pdf

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

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

Yes

1) Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive-measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women's empowerment?

Yes

If the project expects to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment, please indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources;

Yes

Improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or

Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

Yes

2) Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

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

Yes

Select what role civil society will play in the Project

Consulted only; No

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

Co-financier;

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body ; No

Executor or co-executor; No

Other (Please explain) Yes

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

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

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program, including risk screenings/ assessments and, if applicable, management plans or other measures to address identified risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex E).

Yes

TBD

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Low	Medium/Moderate		

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described during Project Preparation in the Project Description and that these activities have been budgeted and an anticipated timeline for delivery of relevant outputs has been provided.

Yes

Socio-economic Benefits

We confirm that the project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

From the Role of civil society question - Other: Civil Society will integrate the Advisory Council that plays a significant role in providing strategic guidance and fostering stakeholder engagement and its responsibilities are paramount for the project's success. Also, in Output 2.1.1, civil society's presence within COTAMA enhances collaboration and coordination for LDN and Biodiversity Conservation. They provide diverse perspectives, local knowledge, and community engagement, ensuring the inclusion of stakeholders' concerns and priorities in awareness-raising and monitoring activities

E.1 Knowledge management and Communication

111. The **knowledge management approach** is designed to address the complex challenges of sustainable land management and land degradation neutrality (LDN) in Uruguay. It focuses on facilitating information exchange, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and disseminating best practices to create a robust framework for informed decision-making and action. Through innitiatives like the Community of Practice, capacity-building initiatives and participatory valuation processes, stakeholders will be equipped with the tools and resources needed to address the pressing issues of land degradation and conservation. Aligned with broader sustainable development objectives, the knowledge management approach integrates various components aimed at addressing multifaceted nature of the problem. From raising awareness, engaging with the media, reviewing legal frameworks or exploring innovative financing mechanisms are strategically designed to contribute to the project's overarching goals. A structured timeline ensures a systematic implementation, allowing for adaptive learning and continuous improvement throughout the project's duration. As the project progresses, it aims not only to achieve its immediate objectives but also to lay the groundwork for long-term impact and scalability. Documentation of project findings, preparation of comprehensive reports, and organizing dissemination events will facilitate broader knowledge sharing and capacity building in the field of sustainable land management. These efforts will foster a culture of collaboration and innovation, ultimately leading to positive outcomes for sustainable land management and land degradation neutrality in Uruguay and beyond.

112. The overall **budget** is about $100,000 is allocated as follows: $58,000 for hiring a Knowledge Management and Communication Specialist to oversee the implementation of the knowledge management approach and communication strategy. Additionally, $40,000 is allocated for capacity building activities, baseline reporting, and related initiatives aimed at empowering stakeholders and ensuring effective project implementation. This budget allocation ensures that critical components of the project are adequately funded while allowing flexibility to address various project needs. The timeline is presented below.

113. The **communication strategy**, it aligns closely with the knowledge management approach, aiming to convey key messages, engage stakeholders, and foster collaboration throughout the project. Establishing a knowledge-sharing platform and community of practice, conducting capacity building sessions, awareness campaigns, media engagement, advocacy efforts and engagement with financing entities and industry partners are all integral components. Task force establishment and baseline assessment ensure transparency, with community involvement and ongoing support to ensure effective implementation of guidelines at all levels.

114. Additionally, the project will collaborate with the FAO Campus[71][50] to align with regional biodiversity information and knowledge management initiatives, ensuring that capacity development and communication strategies meet high standards and are scalable and sustainable.

Deliverable	Knowledge Management Timeline															
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 3			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
1. Establishment of Knowledge-Sharing Platform and Community of Practice																
Map existing LDN networks and partnerships		x	x	x												
Expand Community of Practice through baseline data compilation and learning activities					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Workshops to enhance knowledge exchange and seek commitment for institutionalisation													x	x		
2. Capacity Building and Dialogue Sessions																
Training modules on LDN and SLM					x	x										
Dialogues and conduct training sessions on participatory valuation and gender-responsive practices							x	x	x	x						
3. Participatory Valuation and Base Map Creation:																
Participatory valuation process for ecosystem services						x										
Detailed base map created							x	x								
Engage stakeholders in completing questionnaires and publishing resulting maps on open-access platforms						x	x	x								
4. Awareness-Raising Campaigns and Media Engagement:																
Awareness-raising strategy gender-sensitive task force					x											
Form partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to enhance campaign reach					x	x	x									
Execute outreach activities, including press releases and media engagement						x	X	X	X	X	X	X				
5. Coordination Mechanisms and Legal Framework Review:																
Analyse coordination mechanisms between governance levels involved in SLM and LDN						X	X									
Review legal framework related to conservation in Uruguay and engage legal experts for review				X	X											
Collaborate to draft proposals for national laws on LDN and conservation							x	x	x	x						
6 Opportunities for Increased Access to Innovative Financial Mechanisms for Rangelands Restoration & Conservation Identified and Promoted																
Review ABC Plan from Brazil and identify adjustments for financing mechanisms in Uruguay, establishing partnerships for potential cooperation (Year 2)					x	x										
Engage with the meat processing industry to propose incentives for LDN practices and promote sustainable land use (Year 2)					x	x										
Develop a proposal for economic-financial incentives, leveraging regional experiences (Year 2)							x	x								
Initiate dialogues with financing entities and explore the feasibility of a pilot program (Year 2, 3)								x	x							
Review existing accreditation mechanisms, documenting strengths and weaknesses (Year 2)					x	x										
Facilitate workshops to propose adjustments and strengthen accreditation mechanisms (Year 2, 3)							x	x	x							
7. Task Force Establishment and Baseline Assessment:																
Establish a task force and compile available data for priority rangeland restoration sites				x	x											
Comprehensive baseline assessment at selected intervention sites					x											
Workshops and campaigns to demonstrate the effectiveness of restoration practices									x	x	x					
8. Development of Manuals, Media Products, and National LDN Guidelines:																
National LDN guidelines and fact sheets										x	x	x	x	x		
Gender-responsive SLM approaches through various communication channels									x	x	x	x	x	x		

E.2 Socio-economic Benefits and Decent Rural Employment

115. The proposed project aims to deliver significant socioeconomic benefits at both the national and local levels. At the national level, the project will contribute to enhancing environmental sustainability, which in turn supports the achievement of global environmental benefits outlined by the GEF Trust Fund. By implementing sustainable land management practices and promoting biodiversity conservation, the project will help mitigate land degradation and reduce the impacts of drought in the country's rangelands. These efforts will enhance ecosystem resilience, safeguard biodiversity, and improve soil health, thereby contributing to the global objectives of combating climate change and preserving ecosystem services.

116. Moreover, the project will have tangible socioeconomic impacts at the local level, particularly in rural areas where land degradation and biodiversity loss pose significant challenges to livelihoods and agricultural productivity. By supporting sustainable investments in rangeland management and strengthening community-based natural resources management, the project will create employment

opportunities and generate income for local communities. Additionally, the promotion of biodiversity-friendly practices and the adoption of sustainable land management approaches will enhance the resilience of agricultural systems, ensuring food security and economic stability for rural households.

117. Furthermore, the project will actively promote full and productive employment and decent work in rural areas, in line with the principles of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the progressive realization of the right to Decent Rural Employment. Through capacity-building activities, training programs, and the dissemination of best practices, the project will empower local communities to engage in sustainable agriculture and natural resource management practices, thereby enhancing their livelihoods and well-being. By fostering inclusive and participatory approaches, the project will ensure that the benefits of sustainable land management are equitably distributed among all stakeholders, promoting social cohesion and economic development in rural areas.

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[71] https://capacitacion.fao.org/

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

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 ($)
FAO	GET	Uruguay	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	1,776,484.00	168,766.00	1,945,250.00
Total GEF Resources ($)						**1,776,484.00**	**168,766.00**	**1,945,250.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Was a Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount ($)

50000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

4750

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)

FAO	GET	Uruguay	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00
Total PPG Amount ($)					**50,000.00**	**4,750.00**	**54,750.00**

Please provide Justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total($)
FAO	GET	Uruguay	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,000,000.00
FAO	GET	Uruguay	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	945,250.00
Total GEF Resources					**1,945,250.00**

Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
LD-1	GET	1,776,484.00	11764885
Total Project Cost		**1,776,484.00**	**11,764,885.00**

Confirmed Co-financing for the project, by name and type

Please include evidence for each co-financing source for this project in the tab of the portal

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment of Uruguay - MA	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5000000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries of Uruguay - MGAP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5000000
Recipient Country Government	Instituto Plan Agropecuario - IPA	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	245885
Recipient Country Government	Florida Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200000

Recipient Country Government	Canelones Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	250000
Recipient Country Government	Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agropecuaria	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	450000
Others	FUCREA	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	400000
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	219000
Total Co-financing				**11,764,885.00**

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing

not applicable

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
Project Coordinator		Hernan Gonzalez		
GEF Agency Coordinator		Jeffrey Griffin		

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

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template.

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Adrian Pena Robaina	Minister	Ministry of Environment	12/21/2022

ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Please indicate the page number in the Project Document where the project results and M&E frameworks can be found. Please also paste below the Project Results Framework from the Agency document.

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
Project Objective and indicators targets:							

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
COMPONENT 1: Enhancing multi stakeholder engagement, awareness and capacities to achieve LDN for biodiversity conservation in Uruguay							
Outcome 1.1: Enhanced capacities at national and subnational levels to achieve Rangelands Degradation Neutrality and Biodiversity Conservation	Number of participants in knowledge exchange activities via the CoP Validated methodology for monitoring trends in land use, carbon stocks and land productivity Number of Extensionists and government staff trained regarding rangelands management and number of female Number of local producers trained on SLM and LDN and % female ***GEF Core Indicator 11*** *Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment: % of the 8,000 targeted people (50% are women)*	Expected to initiate with Project No validated methodology Expected to initiate wirh Project Expected to initiate wirh Project	At least 1000 participans One Methodology validated for monitoring trends At least 60 extenstionsts and Government staff (at least 25 women) trained At least 60 producers trained on SLM and LDN (50% woman)	At least 2000 participants One Validated methodology is in place monitoring land use, carbons stocks and land productivity At least 100 (at least 50 women) trained participate in decision processes regarding rangelands management. At least 100 producers (50% woman)	CoP activity reports, knowledge products generated workshop/training attendance records, feedback forms	Adequate funding, commitment from stakeholders, and enabling policy environment for knowledge exchange and capacity building	PMU
Output 1.1.1: Established community of practice for knowledge exchange on LDN and sustainable management of rangelands in Uruguay.	Online platform available and number of registered users Number of participants enrolled in the capacity program	Expected to initiate with GEF project participants and stakeholders Expected to initiate with GEF project participants and	1 Online platform available 120 participants (60 woman)	- 200 participants (100 woman)	Online platform available Progam Documentation, Registration records	Resources, expertise, commitment to inclusivity, active engagement of stakeholders; effective collaboration with existing networks, Timely progression through phases. Relevance of tools for LDN and SLM	PMU

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
		stakeholders					
Output.1.1.2: Capacity programme on achieving and monitoring LDN and biodiversity conservation of rangelands.	Number of comprehensive training modules developed Number of particpants and Gender ratio among participants in training sessions	0	4 100 50%	4 200 50%	Documentation of developed training modules Attendance Records	Availability of resources and female participants	Project Management Unit
Outcome 1.2: Increased understanding and awareness of the ecosystem services that grasslands and rangelands provide and the need to conserve and restore them in Uruguay.	Number of established Ecosystem Services Values (ESV) specific to grasslands. Completion status of the pilot plan proposal for addressing grassland transformation and restoration. Development status of the awareness-raising strategy. Number of gender-sensitive knowledge and educational products developed and disseminated	One established baseline for ESV specific to grasslands No pilot plan proposal for addressing grassland transformation and restoration. Strategy not developed zero	Two grassland ESV One pilot plan proposal in progress. Strategy Developed within the first year 1	Four grassland ESV by the end of the project One pilot plan proposal completed and published. Strategy implemented and ongoing, with regular updates and adjustments based on feedback and evaluation. 3 gender senstitive educational productos developed and disseminated	Maps, stakeholder consultations Pilot plan and maps of priority conservation areas published Documentation of strategy development process, meeting minutes, and finalized strategy document Published materials, feedback survey	Data availability, stakeholder collaboration Public engagement, funding availability Government commitment, stakeholder collaboration Content expertise, funding	PMU
Output 1.2.1: Ecosystem services provided by rangelan	Number of participatory Ecosystem Service Valuation (ESV) process innitiated	No participatory assessments for ESV	2 participatory ESV assessments conducted	4 participatory ESV assessments conducted	Reports workshops, stakeholder feedback Gender-disaggregated data from	Adequate participation, stakeholder collaboration, resource availability Inclusive participation, awareness of	PMU

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
ds in Uruguay valuated in a participatory way.		conducted			participatory assessments	gender dimension	
Output 1.2.2: Rangelands degradation hotspots and greensposts and priority conservation areas identified and validated through multi-stakeholder consultations.	Percentage of completion in the production of scale maps identifying hotspots of degradation and priority areas for restoration of rangelands.	No scale maps identifying hotspots of degradation and priority areas for restoration of rangelands exist. No gender-sensitive data integrated in baseline assessments	90% progress in the production of scale maps identifying hotspots of degradation and priority areas for restoration of rangelands, based on the application of the PRAGA methodology and convergence of evidence principle Gender dimensions integrated in 30% of the existing and proposed participatory assessments	100% completion Comprehensive set of LD and rangeland degradation maps available for public access	The database and mapped outputs published in open acces platforms, expert reviews	Willingness of stakeholders, resource availability, accuracy of data collection Integration with PRAGA methodology, accuracy of data sources, stakeholder involvement	PMU
Output 1.2.3: Outreach campaign designed and implemented on biodiversity and ecosystem services in grasslands and rangelands and their contribu	Number of outreach strategies/campaigns designed and implemented on biodiversity and ecosystem services in grasslands and rangelands	Initial outreach efforts without a structured campaign	1 comprehensive awareness-raising strategy developed detailing objectives, target groups, key messages, methods, activities, and an evaluation plan, in collaboration with partners and stakeholders.	1 comprehensive awareness-raising strategy developed and implemented, in collaboration with partners and stakeholders.	Documented strategy and feedback reports. Campaign materials, media coverage reports, and public engagement metrics.	Stakeholder engagement, availability of resources, cultural and social acceptance, partnership agreements	PMU

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
tions to society.							
COMPONENT 2: Leveraging a sound legal framework and innovative finance to avoid rangelands degradation in Uruguay							
Outcome 2.1: Strengthened dialogue and articulation among stakeholders at local and national level (producers, academics, government, legislators, cooperatives, municipal governments, research institutions and other relevant stakeholders).	Number of intersectoral Established or reinforced Coordination Mechanisms for SLM, rangeland restoration and Biodiversity conservation in support of LDN Number of stakeholders demonstrating increased understanding and engagement in support of the development and formalization of two party agreements related to CBD and UNCCD commitments.	Baseline scenario involves limited dialogue and single mechanism (COTAMA), which the project seeks to expand and reinforce Baseline to be established by conducting an initial assessment of stakeholders' understanding of CBD and UNCCD commitments	The mid-term target is to reinforce one mechanism (COTAMA) and identify) another additional mechanisms, ensuring a considerable portion is gender-sensitive. Increased number of stakeholders demonstrating understanding and engagement, resulting in the development and formalization of at least two-party agreements related to CBD and UNCCD commitments	2 intersectoral coordination mechanisms established or reinforced for SLM Achieve increased understanding among stakeholders, supporting the development and formalization of two party agreements related to CBD and UNCCD commitments	Surveying stakeholders to assess their understanding and engagement levels, documenting agreements or MOUs related to CBD and UNCCD commitments, and reviewing records of stakeholder meetings or workshops.	Stakeholder willingness and engagement. Existing awareness of CBD and UNCCD commitments. Available opportunities for dialogue. Adequate resources for agreement development. Minimal external obstacles to engagement. Stakeholder commitment to CBD and UNCCD goals	Ministry of Environment

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
		and documenting any existing agreements related to these commitments					
Output 2.1.1: Vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms among the main actors involved in LDN and Biodiversity Conservation are established and strengthened with a gender-responsive approach.	Percentage of established/strengthened coordination mechanisms Percentage of Identified Coordination Mechanisms Analyzed for Gender Considerations	Initial assessment to identify existing coordination mechanism and gender considerations	Analyze 30 % of identified mechanisms Analyze 30% of identified coordination mechanisms and integrate gender considerations into their roadmap.	Analize 50% of identified mechanisms reinforced or established and 50% integrate gender considerations into their roadmap	Records of identified and established coordination mechanisms Analytical reports, records of completed analyses Gender-disaggregated report of identified and established mechanisms	Active engagement of stakeholders, political support Availability of relevant data, cooperation from involved sectors Recognition of gender importance, stakeholder commitment	Project Team & Partners
Output 2.1.2: Dialogue processes with the parliamentary system and local governments are strengthened to support awareness raising and necessary	Number of Dialogue Processes conducted with parliamentary and local governments Number of Party Agreements Facilitated	To be established by conducting an initial assessment of current dialogue processes. None	Conduct at least one dialogue process with the parliamentary system and one with local governments. Facilitate the development of one party agreement.	Conduct at least one dialogue process with the parliamentary system and one with local governments. Facilitate the development of two party agreement.	Documentation of the engagement and understanding plan. Records of executed dialogue processes, including attendance and key outcomes. Party agreements developed.	Active participation and cooperation from political stakeholders. Timely adaptation of strategies based on feedback and changing political landscapes. Recognition of the importance of CBD and UNCCD commitments	PMU and Partners

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
framework changes.							
Outcome 2.2 Enhanced regulatory framework for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use rangelands	Number of normative instruments revised and addressed/propossed **Core Indicator 4.1** Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity 10,000 Ha of grasslands and wetlands avoided degradation	Assesment of existing normative instruments (sectorial and at department level) Assesment of current status of grasslands and wetlands.	Discussion and initial revision of at least 2 normative instruments with the Congress of Mayors, 1 with Parliament Implementation of administrative measures to avoid transformation of 10.000 ha	At least 3 normative instrument revised and addressed/propossed 10,000 hectares of grasslands and wetlands avoided degradation	Technical proposals at all levels and registered feedback from parliament, congress of mayors and ME Project reports	Availability of data for normative instrument revision. Political commitment to LDN and biodiversity conservation. Continued collaboration with the Congress of Mayors and willingness of ministries to support new legislation.	ME – PMU
Output 2.2.1: A national law on conservation and sustainable management of grasslands is proposed for discussion in Parliament.	Number of Draft National Law for Conservation and Restoration of Rangelands	There are existing law proposals related to grassland management, but they lack sufficient support for further discussion and agreement.	First draft of a Law for Conservation and Restoration of Grasslandsnt legal package, presented and discussed in parliamentary sessions	Grassland management legal package submitted to Parliament for thorough discussion and eventual approval as a national law.	Technical reports from validation and stakeholder dialogue workshops. Reports on parliamentary sessions discussing the legal law projects. Documentation of the submitted pastureland management legal package.	Project inputs effectively contribute to an enhanced draft of the existing proposal - Supportive political climate and Willingness of grassland management-related line ministries to support and collaborate on new grassland management legislation.	Project Team in collaboration with relevant ministries and governmental bodies involved in pastureland management Legal

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
							Experts
Output 2.2.2: Normative instruments at subnational level for land use planning are revised and entry points for the principle of counterbalancing are identified.	Number of normative instruments at the subnational level revised to integrate the neutrality mechanism and enhance land tenure security. Number of Identified entry points for counterbalancing principles integrated into revised normative instruments.	There are existing normative instruments at the subnational level governing land use planning, but they lack specific provisions for integrating the neutrality mechanism for biodiversity conservation and may have limitations in ensuring robust land tenure security.	Conduct a thorough review of existing normative instruments, identifying and incorporating entry points for the principle of counterbalancing into at least 30% of the revised instruments	Complete the revision of normative instruments at the subnational level, ensuring that at least 50% of the identified entry points for counterbalancing principles are successfully integrated.	Reports on the review and revision of subnational normative instruments. Documentation highlighting the incorporation of counterbalancing principles into revised instruments. Records of meetings, feedback, and collaboration with the Congress of Mayors.	Willingness and cooperation of local authorities and stakeholders in the revision process. Availability of relevant data and information for the revision. Supportive political climate for the integration of counterbalancing principles. Positive collaboration and engagement with the Congress of Mayors.	PMU
Output 2.2.3: The neutrality mechanism for biodiversity	Number of administrative procedures within the Ministry of Environment (ME) that integrate the neutrality mechanism for biodiversity conservation	Currently, there is no specific integration of the	Complete a comprehensive diagnosis of administrative procedures within the ME to	Achieve integration of the neutrality mechanism into at least 2 of the applicable administrative procedures within the ME,	Documented reports on the results of the diagnosis, highlighting identified opportunities for integration.	Commitment from the Ministry of Environment to embrace LDN principles and biodiversity conservation. Adequate resources and support for	ME and PMU.

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
conservation is considered within the administrative procedures implemented by the Ministry of Environment		neutrality mechanism within the administrative procedures of the Ministry of Environment	identify opportunities for the integration of the neutrality mechanism, laying the foundation for subsequent integration efforts.	ensuring comprehensive alignment with biodiversity conservation goals.	Internal assessments by the Ministry of Environment on the effectiveness and feasibility of integration.	training and capacity building within the Ministry.	
Outcome 2.3 Opportunities for increased access to innovative financial mechanisms for rangelands restoration & conservation identified and promoted.	Roadmap for Accessing Innovative Financial Mechanisms Number of Strengthened Accreditation Mechanisms for LDN and BC for grasslands	Limited collaborative efforts in road map development. Limited or no official accreditation mechanisms in place for LDN and Biodiversity Conservation	Develop and present an interim draft roadmap for accessing innovative financial mechanisms, achieving consensus among key stakeholders. 2 official acreditatin mechanisms revised and amendments recommended for LDN and Biodiversity Conservation	Increased collaboration and consensus, resulting in a well-defined roadmap for accessing innovative financial mechanisms. Increased awareness and promotion of various financial mechanisms supporting rangelands restoration and conservation. Established and recognized accreditation mechanisms proposals by stakeholders	Records of collaborative sessions, documentation of developed roadmaps, accreditation processes and stakeholder feedback. Increased awareness and promotion of various financial mechanisms supporting rangelands restoration and conservation.	Willing collaboration of stakeholders. Alignment with national and subnational policies. Capacity to establish/adapt an official accreditation mechanism. Producer readiness for sustainable practices. Government commitment.	ME and FAO
Output 2.3.1: Existing financing for SLM and Conservation of grasslands is revised and evaluated.	Number of existing financing mechanisms revised and evaluated	Regional and national experiences provide insights into existing financing	Analyze the Low Carbon Agriculture (ABC) Plan in Brazil to identify necessary adaptations for Uruguay. Propose adjustments for financing	At least 2 financing Mechanisms within Uruguayan cooperatives and the meat processing industry revised and evaluated	Reports on the analysis of the ABC Plan in Brazil. Documentation highlighting proposed adjustments for financing mechanisms.	Willingness of financial entities to engage in dialogue and explore innovative mechanisms. Supportive policy environment for the promotion of innovative financial mechanisms.	PMU

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
		mechanisms supporting Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and grassland conservation	mechanisms in Uruguay.			Availability of data and information for the evaluation and adaptation of existing mechanisms.	
Output 2.3.2: Innovative financial mechanisms are proposed to facilitate the restoration of grasslands.	Number of innovative financial mechanisms proposed	Initial evaluation of existing mechanisms in regional and national experiences.	Propose 1 economic-financial incentive structures based on the results of Output 2.2.1. including specific provisions to ensure gender equity in access and benefits.	Proposal of 1 innovative financial mechanism and successful initiation of dialogue with financing entities such as Banco de la Republica and Producers cooperatives for implementing a pilot experience.	Documentation highlighting proposed financial mechanisms. Reports on the dialogue with financing entities and exploration of a pilot experience.		PMU
Output 2.3.3: Mechanisms for accreditation of good practices for sustainable rangeland management are strengthened.	Number of validated and official mechanism for accreditation of good practices for LDN	Two existing mechanisms were identified during the PPG phase (GCIEOV)	Proposal for necessary adjustments based on participatory consultations.	2 Strengthened and validated accreditation mechanism for LDN and sustainable rangeland management.	Reports on the assessment of available possibilities. Documentation highlighting proposed adjustments and strengthening of the accreditation mechanism	Willingness of stakeholders to participate in consultations. Supportive policy environment for the accreditation of good practices. Availability of data and information for the accreditation mechanism.	PMU
COMPONENT 3: Reducing and reversing land degradation in key biodiverse rangeland landscapes							

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
Outcome 3.1 Ecological restoration of degraded key biodiverse grasslands and wetlands contribute to national LDN target 10.	**Core Indicator 3.3** Area of natural grass and shrublands restored: 2,000 ha degraded grassland restored in pilot area **Core Indicator 3.4** Area of wetlands restored: 2,000 ha degraded wetlands restored in pilot area	No restoration sites selected through participatory approaches in pilot landscape and no protocol for reversion available	Initiate restoration activities for 2,000 hectares of degraded wetlands and 2,000 hectares of degraded grasslands.	Implement restoration activities and restore 2,000 hectares of degraded wetlands and 2,000 hectares of degraded grasslands. Complete assessment for all restored areas to evaluate ecological recovery and impact on LDN targets	Site visit reports documenting restoration activities and progress and satellite imagery. Reports from restoration teams detailing the areas restored and the techniques used. Assessment reports documenting the ecological status of restored areas and their contribution to LDN target	Adequate and favorable weather conditions conducive to successful ecological restoration efforts. Cooperation from stakeholders in selecting restoration sites and participating in restoration efforts. Access to relevant scientific knowledge and technology to guide restoration interventions	PMU - FAO
Output 3.1.1 Priority rangeland restoration sites mapped through a participatory and gender responsive assessment	Percentage of priority restoration sites with completed participatory mapping.	Limited participatory mapping of degraded areas for LDN and Biodiversity Conservation (BC) in the pilot area, hindering targeted restoration efforts.	Completion of participatory mapping for 100% of priority restoration sites, ensuring comprehensive data for planning and implementation.	Completion of participatory mapping for 100% of priority restoration sites, providing crucial data for planning and implementation.	Records of workshops conducted with land users and stakeholders, including details on the participatory mapping process, discussions, and feedback. Published documents containing final maps integrated into the LDN Decision Support System (DSS) and a comprehensive methodology report.	Stakeholders,land users, actively participate in the participatory mapping process, contributing valuable insights. Data collected is accurate and reliable for effective planning and implementation. Gender-Responsive considerations are integrated into the mapping process, addressing specific needs and perspectives .	Project Team
Output 3.1.2: Gender responsive strategies for agroecological transition and	Extent of existing gender-responsive strategies	Limited gender-responsive strategies for agroecologi	Development and agreement on gender-responsive strategies with private sector and CSOs for 100% of	Development and agreement on gender-responsive strategies with private sector and CSOs for 100% of target areas.	Documentation of Existing Strategies Agreements and Memoranda signed with private sector entities and CSOs, outlining	Private Sector and CSO Collaboration. Effective Agreement Implementation: Assumes that agreements reached will be effectively implemented to ensure the adoption	PMU (Gender specialist)

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
rehabilitation in rangelands developed based on agreements with the private sector and CSOs.		cal transition and rehabilitation.	target areas.		gender-responsive strategies for each target area.	of gender-responsive strategies in the specified target areas.	
Output 3.1.3: Innovative restoration practices implemented to enhance productivity and biodiversity of degraded priority grasslands and wetlands	Number of intervention sites assessed for baseline conditions Area of priority grasslands and wetlands where innovative restoration practices are implemented	None None	Conduct baseline assessments in 100% of selected intervention sites Implement innovative practices in 4000 hectares of priority grasslands and wetlands	Implementation of innovative restoration practices in 4000 hectares. 4,000 (Directly tied to restoration practices)	Regular reports on implementation of restoration practices, and the extent of restoration in hectares. Utilization of satellite imagery and GIS data of the targeted hectares.	Availability of necessary resources, to implement innovative restoration practices. Active engagement and cooperation from stakeholders in the implementation of restoration practices. Effective project management to ensure timely implementation	PMU
Outcome 3.2 ` Scaling out of Sustainable Rangeland Management approaches and technologies in rangelands	**Core Indicator 4.3** Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems: 5,000 ha of land degradation reduced through improved rangeland management **Core Indicator 6.1** Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU sector : -1,787,179 tons of CO2 equivalent	None in pilot area None in pilot area	2,500 ha of land degradation reduced through improved rangeland management	5,000 ha of land degradation reduced through improved rangeland management Avoid emissions or sequester 1,787,179 tCO2eq through sustainable rangeland management practice	Field surveys and assessments Monitoring and evaluation reports Carbon sequestration modelling Documentation of implemented rangeland management practices Reports on adoption rates and scaling-out efforts	Availability of suitable rangelands Willingness of landowners to adopt sustainable management approaches Adequate funding and technical resources Supportive policy environment for sustainable rangeland management	
3.2.1 Integrated sustainable and gender sensitive Rangeland Management	Number/ha of landscapes selected for implementing gender-sensitive SRM practices Documentation and publication of gender-sensitive SRM practices	Zero landscapes chosen initially	Select landscapes covering 5,000 hectares for implementation	Select landscapes covering 5,000 hectares for implementation Document and publish gender-sensitive sustainable	Baseline Assessment Report Project Progress Reports Field Observations and Data Collection	Engagement and cooperation of local communities and landowners Adequate funding and resources for implementation Supportive policy environment for	

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
approaches and technologies adopted on the demonstration landscapes to reduce land degradation -				rangeland management practices implemented in demonstration landscapes	Documentation of Implemented Practices Publication of Gender-Sensitive SRM Practices	gender-sensitive SRM practices Access to relevant expertise and technical knowledge	
COMPONENT 4: Tracking progress towards neutrality in rangelands and out-scaling of lessons learned							
4.1. Consolidated mechanism to monitor progress towards LDN and Biodiversity Conservation across scales is validated and adopted	*Targets* *- LDN DSS with validated data and in place*	None in pilot area None in pilot area	2,500 ha of land degradation reduced through improved rangeland management	5,000 ha of land degradation reduced through improved rangeland management Avoid emissions or sequester 1,787,179 tCO2eq through sustainable rangeland management practice	Field surveys and assessments Monitoring and evaluation reports Carbon sequestration modelling Documentation of implemented rangeland management practices, adoption rates and scaling-out efforts	Willingness of landowners to adopt sustainable management approaches Adequate funding resources, expertise. Supportive policy environment for sustainable rangeland management	
4.1.1 National methodology to estimate the three (3) change of state LDN indicators validated by national experts in rangelands and supplemented with national	Development and validation of a national methodology for estimating LDN indicators in rangelands, including the identification of national LD-related indicators, selection of data sources, and participatory validation by national experts.	Initial identification of LD-related indicators and assessment of available data sources.	Selection of relevant LD-related indicators and data sources, and initiation of participatory validation process	Completion of the national methodology, incorporating validated LDN indicators and data sources for monitoring LD trends.	Documentation of identified national LD-related indicators and their sources. Reports or documentation from participatory workshops validating LDN indicators.	Expertise and stakeholder engagement Institutional support Political will	

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
LD and BD indicators							
4.1.2 Co-developed LDN DSS for improved planning and monitoring of LDN and Biodiversity conservation at national level	Availability of Co-developed LDN Decision Support System (DSS) for improved planning and monitoring at the national level	No comprehensive LDN Decision Support System in place	Completion of stakeholder consultations and feedback processes, establishment of the data compilation and management system, and initial capacity-building workshops conducted	Full establishment and customization of the LDN DSS, with stakeholder feedback incorporated and capacity-building workshops successfully completed.	Documentation of the establishment of the comprehensive data compilation and management system, including details on the structure, functionality, and accessibility of the system, records of stakeholder consultations and feedback processes	Organizational capacity, buy-in and support for the implementation of the LDN DSS, including a culture that values knowledge management, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous improvement	
4.2. Knowledge management and lessons learned disseminated at the national level.	Targets: -Number of best practices and lessons learned summarized and organized in a framework for scaling-up at regional and national levels. -At least three (3) gender-sensitive LDN knowledge products developed and disseminated. -Lessons learned on SLM, LDN and BC mainstreamed in the national and regional development plans	No framework for scaling-up best practices and lessons learned currently exists No gender-sensitive LDN knowledge products have been devel	Initial framework for scaling-up best practices and lessons learned developed. One gender sensitive knowledge product developed.	Framework for scaling-up best practices and lessons learned developed and disseminated Three gender-sensitive LDN knowledge products developed and disseminated.	Field surveys and assessments Monitoring and evaluation reports Carbon sequestration modelling Documentation of implemented rangeland management practices Reports on adoption rates and scaling-out efforts	Willingness of landowners to adopt sustainable management approaches Adequate funding and resources Supportive policy environment for sustainable rangeland management Access to relevant expertise and technical knowledge	

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
		oped or disseminated.					
4.2.1 Project lessons are captured, evaluated and shared nationally and across countries and regions	Number of sustainable rangeland management practices showcased nationally and internationally	No sustainable rangeland management practices for LDN and Biodiversity Conservation showcased	Showcase at least one sustainable rangeland management practices nationally /internationally	Showcase at least three sustainable rangeland management practices nationally /internationally	Documentation of showcased practices Reports on national and international events where practices are presented	Availability of successful sustainable rangeland management practices to showcase. Willingness of stakeholders to participate in knowledge dissemination	
4.2.2 Gender-sensitive communication strategy developed and implemented to support the LDN targets and mainstreaming of lessons learned	National LDN guideline and fact sheets developed and disseminated.	No national LDN guideline and fact sheets developed or disseminated.	Draft of LDN guideline and fact sheets b	Develop and disseminate national LDN guideline and fact sheets by the end of Year 4	Documentation confirming the development, dissemination, and availability of national LDN guideline and fact sheets.	Recognition of the importance of gender-responsive approaches in sustainable land management by stakeholders and policymakers.	

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Financial management/ analyst (5% - PPG execution costs)	2,300.00		2,300.00
Specialist in background study and actor mapping	6,000.00	6,339.00	
Cofinancing Specialist	4,000.00	4,082.00	
Political Analysis Specialist	4,000.00	4,048.00	

Specialist in safeguarding and gender studies	6,000.00	6,204.00	
Gender Action Plan		4,099.00	
GEF Project Design Expert (PDE)	14,000.00	8,498.00	5,416.00
National/local travel (Incl BGD)	1,000.00		
International travel (incl BGD)	3,000.00	3,137.00	
OPIM Fiduciary assessment	4,300.00		4,300.00
Local stakeholder consultations	700.00		700.00
Logframe validation workshop	700.00		
Translation	4,000.00		877.00
Total	**27,700.00**	**3,137.00**	**877.00**

ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES

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

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Santa Lucía	-33.97	-56.07	3,440,564

Location Description:

https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Laguna Merin	-33.25	-54.28	3,457,088

Location Description:

https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Cuenca Atlántica	-34.05	-53.86	3,443,2

Location Description:

https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

Activity Description:

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where project interventions are taking place as appropriate.

To better understand and present the location and information available on LDN and natural resources of the project selected Basins, the project designers have developed an interactive Decision Support System (DSS) that was used during the PIF. It will be available for use, and further development during project design and implementation (as described in Outcome 4.1 of the alternative scenario). The LDN-DSS allows for context specific baseline establishment at the required scales, providing data for different administrative and landscape units, with a set of spatial data layers, toolboxes and cross-analytical statistics. To access the project specific LDN-DSS, please follow the provided link:

https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

This system allows users to explore relevant baseline data, visualize maps and use them for a wide range of scenarios and scales. The LDN-DSS allows to perform multi-criteria analysis and explore land cover transitions to select hotspot and areas of interest and thus serving as a basis for a future monitoring and reporting system. The possibility to explore the dataset in a dynamic way without any GIS requirement and in an intuitive environment also facilitates stakeholder engagement; more people can evaluate the quality and usefulness of the data, which contributes to understand how to improve the LDN indicators in the future. It also can provide a range of information on project demonstration sites as described below.

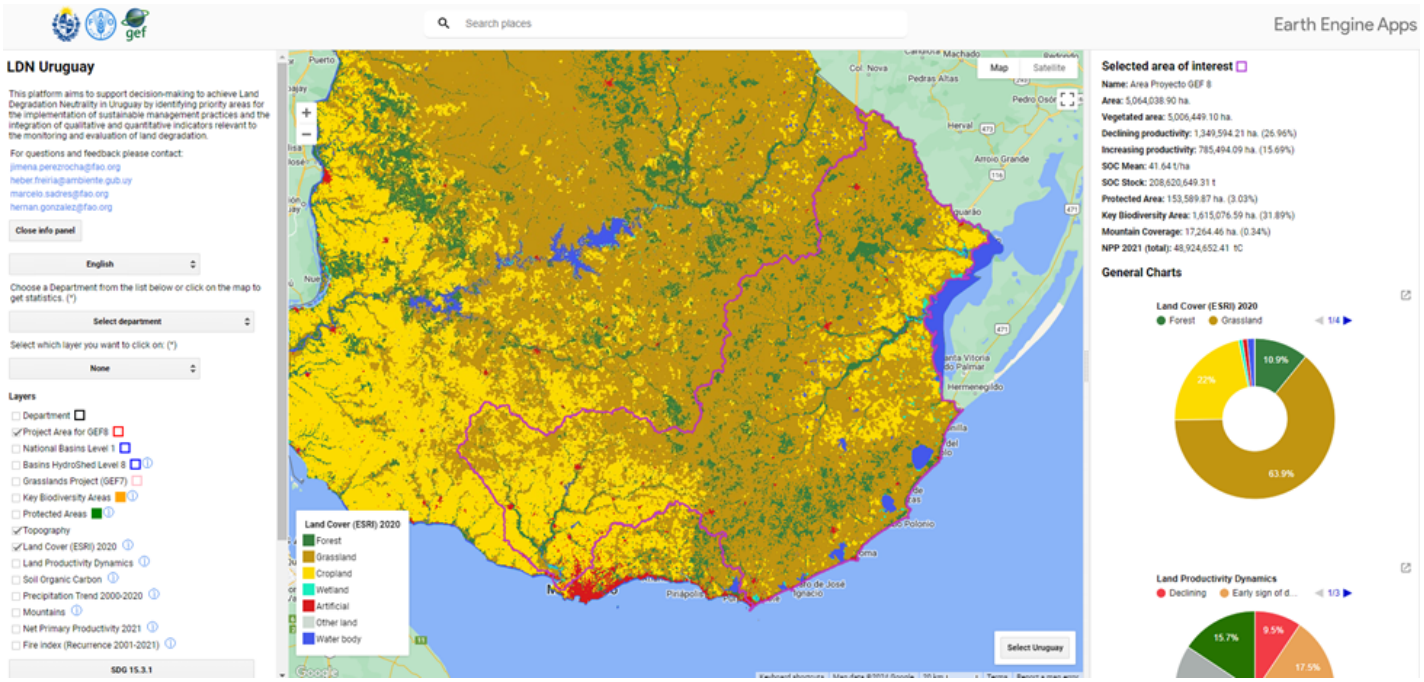

Figure 8: Project Design Decision Support System https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

The project area covers 5,064,038.90 ha in total and is defined by 3 watersheds in south east Uruguay: Santa Lucia, Laguna Merini and Cuenca Atlantica (Figure 9). In table 1 the area, SOC stock and percentage of key biodiversity area[120]51 [121]52 in each watershed are presented.

Table 1: Statistics and coordinates of the three target watersheds

Watershed	Area (ha)	SOC stock (t)	Key Biodiversity Area (ha)[2]	Latitude	Longitude
Santa Lucía	1,346,000	58,863,054	227,965 (16.90%)	-33.97	-56.07
Laguna Merin	2,877,000	114,418,504	1,204,567 (41.87%)	-33.25	-54.28
Cuenca Atlántica	838,316	35,350,107	182,542 (21.77%)	-34.05	-53.86

https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

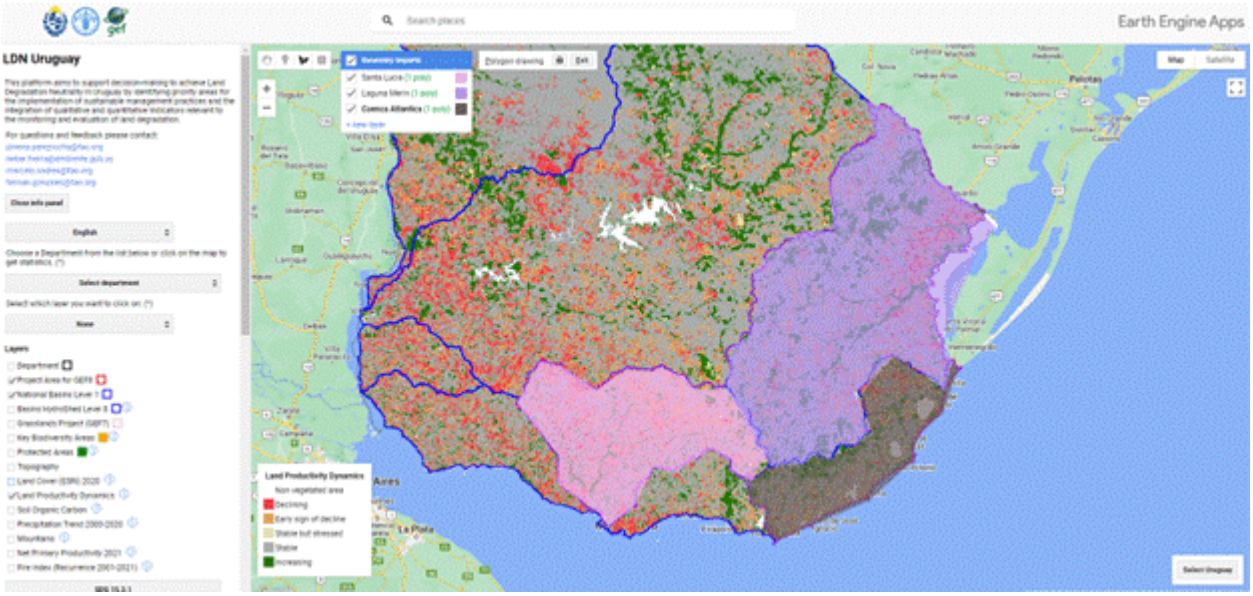

Figure 9: Land productivity map of Uruguay and project target landscapes (purple line) comprising the three watersheds (Santa Lucia in pink polygon, Cuenca Atlantica in grey polygon and Laguna Merin in purple polygon).
Source:https://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguayhttps://projectgeffao.users.earthengine.app/view/uruguay

[120] From the Key Biodiversity Areas map developed by the KBA Partnership. BirdLife International (2021) World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas. More information: http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/

[121] Same as 97

ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

Attach agency safeguard datasheet/assessment report(s), including ratings of risk types and overall project/program risk classification as well as any management plans or measures to address identified risks and impacts (as applicable).

Title

Climate Risk Screening

Project ESS_CEO Endorsement Stage

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here.

Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

FAO Cost Categories	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	M&E	PMC	Executing Partner	National Development Corporation (CND) - Budget	INIA	FUCREA	IPA	Udelar	FAO Support Services	Total GEF
5013 Consultants														
International LDN Expert	9,000	0	0	0			CND	9,000						9,000
International Legal Expert and Financial Specialist	0	9,000	0	0			CND	9,000						9,000
International Gender and LDN Specialist	0	0	0	9,000			CND	9,000						9,000
International LDN Monitoring SIG Expert				9,000			CND	9,000						9,000
Sub-total international Consultants	9,000	9,000	0	18,000	0	0		36,000						36,000
Project Coordinator		73,389	0	53,388		86,823	CND	213,600						213,600
Gender and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist	30,550	9,100	32,500	0			CND	72,150						72,150
GIS Expert	84,100	0	0	22,400			CND	106,500						106,500
Agronomist Livestock - Grassland Field Specialist	13,000	0	13,000	13,000			CND	39,000						39,000
Environmental Policy Specialist	6,500	30,550	0	7,800			CND	44,850						44,850
Monitoring Expert	0	0	0	0	23,200		CND	23,200						23,200

Knowledge Management and Communication Specialist	29,000	0	0	29,000			CND	58,000						58,000
Legal Specialist National Instruments	0	32,500	0	0			CND	32,500						32,500
Legal Specialist Sub-National Instruments	0	20,800	0	0			CND	20,800						20,800
Sub-total national Consultants	163,150	166,339	45,500	125,588	23,200	86,823	CND	610,600						610,600
5013 Sub-total consultants	172,150	175,339	45,500	143,588	23,200	86,823	CND	646,600					0	646,600
5650 Contracts														
5575- INIA Letters of Agreement for Scientific Research Services and Surveys for Ecosystem Services Valuation and Rangeland Restoration Mapping in Uruguay (Outputs 1.2.1, 1.2.2, and 3.1.1)	280,000	0	70,000	0			INIA	0	350,000					350,000
5581- FUCREA Letters of Agreement for Policy Development: Enhancing Financial Mechanisms and Sustainable Rangeland Management in Uruguay (Outputs 1.1.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, and 2.3.3)'(1.1.1; 2.3.1; 2.3.2 and 2.3.3)	10,000	90,000	0	0			FUCREA	0		100,000				100,000
5577- IPA Letters of Agreement for Training of Beneficiaries Implementation of Innovative Restoration Practices on 4,000 Hectares and Adoption of Sustainable Rangeland Management Approaches on 5,000 Hectares'			200,000	0			IPA	0			200,000			200,000
5575- University, Facultad de Agronomía Letters of Agreement for Scientific Research Services and Surveys, Degradation Hotspots and Greenspots (Output 1.2.2) and Mapping of Priority Rangeland Restoration Sites (Output 3.1.1), Slection Indicators 4.1.1	15,000		15,000	35,000			Udelar	0				65,000		65,000
5571- Contract Publication Layout Design				35,000			CND	35,000					0	35,000
5650- Contracts Budget: Mid Term Review (Formal Supervision mission)					20,000		FAO	0					20,000	20,000
5573- Contracts - Administrative support required for the implementation of Project						44,392	CND	44,392					0	44,392
5650- Contracts Final Report					6,550		FAO	0					6,550	6,550
5650- Contracts Budget: Final Evaluation			0		40,000	0	FAO	0					40,000	40,000
Audits						15,200	FAO						15,200	15,200
Spotchecks					26,600		FAO						26,600	26,600
5650 Sub-total Contracts	305,000	90,000	285,000	70,000	66,550	59,592	CND	79,392	350,000	100,000	200,000	65,000	108,350	902,742
5021 Travel														
International travel (international consultants)	8,000		0	6,000			CND	14,000						14,000

National travel (field visits)	0	8,000	7,000	5,000			CND	20,000						20,000
Travel for training/workshops	5,000			10,000			CND	15,000						15,000
5021 Sub-total travel	13,000	8,000	7,000	21,000	0	0	CND	49,000						49,000
5023 Training														
5920- Training Budget (workshops CoP)	5,000			0			CND	5,000						5,000
5920- Training Budget (Participatory Valuation Ecosystem Services)	10,000			0			CND	10,000						10,000
5920- Training Budget (Training Sessions- Dialogues LDN)	10,000			0			CND	10,000						10,000
5920- Training Budget (Dialogue Parliament and Council of Mayors)		10,000		0			CND	10,000						10,000
5920- Training Budget (SRM and Innovative restoration practices)			15,000	7,000			CND	22,000						22,000
5920- Training Budget (Capacity Building Workshops 4.1.2)				10,000			CND	10,000						10,000
Inception workshop					3,000		CND	3,000						3,000
5023 Sub-total training	25,000	10,000	15,000	17,000	3,000	0	CND	70,000						70,000
5024 Expendable procurement														
5930- Office supplies including stationery, printing materials, and computer consumables.	0	0	0	0		15,000	CND	0						0
5949- Publications Training materials, manuals, and educational resources for capacity building workshops and sessions.	10,000	5,000	3,500	0			CND	18,500						18,500
5024 Sub-total expendable procurement	10,000	5,000	3,500	0	0	15,000	CND	18,500						18,500
6100 Non-expendable procurement														
Land Monitoring Equipments	3,000	0	0	9,000	0		CND	12,000						12,000
6100 Sub-total non-expendable procurement	3,000	0	0	9,000	0	0	CND	12,000						12,000
5028 GOE budget														
6175- Vehicles Operation And Maintenance	4,000		2,000	0			CND	6,000						6,000
5941- Other Field Supplies (for restoration activities, includes small machinery for collecting native seeds, agricultural tools, electric fencing, solar panels)			83,242				CND	83,242						83,242
6300 Sub-total GOE budget	4,000	0	85,242	0	0	0	CND	89,242						89,242
TOTAL	532,150	288,339	441,242	260,588	92,750	161,415		964,734	350,000	100,000	200,000	65,000	108,350	1,788,084

ANNEX I: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS

From GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF.

Component	Main changes from PIF
*(PIF) Output 1.1.2**: Series of workshops and trainings** on achieving and monitoring LDN and biodiversity conservation of rangelands implemented.*	*(PPG) Output 1.1.2: **Capacity programme** on achieving and monitoring LDN and biodiversity conservation of rangelands implemented.* The change involved refining the wording from 'series of workshops and trainings' to 'capacity program' to better reflect the comprehensive nature of the initiative. This adjustment aims to convey a more integrated approach to enhancing capacities, aligning with the project's overarching goals of sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation
Component 3. Reducing and reversing land degradation in key biodiverse rangeland landscapes	The narrative of the introductory paragraph of component 3 was revised for clarity and alignment with the goals outlined in the PIF. The core indicators and their values remained consistent with the PIF stage, and only the narrative was adjusted to ensure coherence with the project objectives. The addition of GEF Core Indicator 6 highlights the project's impact on carbon emissions or sequestration.
*(PIF) Outcome 3.2: **Scaling out of** Sustainable Rangeland Management approaches and technologies in rangelands*	*(PPG) Outcome 3.2 **Scaling out of gender sensitive** Sustainable Rangeland Management approaches and technologies in rangelands* The outcome title was rephrased to emphasize the integration of gender-sensitive approaches in scaling out Sustainable Rangeland Management technologies. This change aligns with the project's commitment to promoting gender equality and ensuring the inclusion of women in sustainable land management initiatives. Additionally, this adjustment clarifies the connection with it`s only Output 3.2.1, as stated in PIF, which specifically addresses the adoption of gender-sensitive Rangeland Management approaches and technologies on demonstration landscapes to reduce land degradation
*(PIF) **The project's risk management section was outlined according to the initial project plan**.*	***The project's risk management section was revised, deepened, and adjusted for execution based on emerging issues identified during consultations and studies conducted in the project document preparation phase**.* The risk management section of the project underwent significant revisions to account for emerging issues and challenges identified during consultations and studies conducted while preparing the project document. The adjustments ensure that the risk management strategy is robust and responsive to potential obstacles that may arise during project implementation. By deepening the analysis and incorporating insights from stakeholders and studies, the project is better equipped to anticipate and mitigate risks effectively, enhancing its overall resilience and success potentia
Comments at PIF d) Stakeholders related to grasslands are mentioned in general terms. Please briefly describe all the stakeholders targeted in the project being more specific on their respective roles (producers, academics, government, legislators, cooperatives, municipal governments, research institutions...).	The project's stakeholder engagement strategy ensures the active involvement of a diverse range of stakeholders, as detailed in Annex J: Stakeholders and Indigenous Population. The engagement plan outlines specific roles and contributions of stakeholders from various sectors and governance levels, ensuring comprehensive involvement in project activities.