

# GEF-8 REQUEST FOR Land Degradation enabling activity

Proposal for Funding Under the GET  
Processing Type: Expedite

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## A. Funding Elements

GEF-8 Program	Trust Fund	GEF Financing (\$)
LD-EA	GET	2,186,320.00
<b>Total Enabling Activity Cost</b>		<b>2,186,320.00</b>

Does the enabling activity deviate from typical cost ranges?  Yes  No

If yes, please describe

## B. Enabling Activity Summary

### Enabling Activity Objective

The objective of this EA is to strengthen the capacity of UNCCD country Parties to effectively monitor and report progress towards SDG target 15.3 and the five strategic objectives of the UNCCD.

### Enabling Activity Summary

The Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) are required to communicate through the UNCCD secretariat on measures undertaken to implement the Convention. National reporting serves as an indispensable tool for effective planning and implementation of the Convention and the achievement of strategic objectives (SOs) at both global and national levels. Progress in implementing the UNCCD Strategic Framework is regularly reviewed through national reporting processes within the Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS).

In the current GEF-8 funding cycle, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) will continue supporting these efforts. As recommended by the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC21), the GEF will make funding available up to two years ahead of the 2026 reporting deadline. This timeline is designed to provide sufficient time for the disbursement of funds, data collection, and preparation of national reports. The funding support available under GEF-8 amounts to USD 120,000 per eligible country, inclusive of GEF agency fees. By offering funding two years before the reporting deadline, Parties to the UNCCD are better positioned to collect and analyze necessary data, enabling timely and comprehensive reporting.

To further enhance this process, the proposed enabling activity (EA) led by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is being introduced on a pilot basis with approximately 20 countries across three regions. This EA aims to maximize capacity development at national and regional levels. To participate in this pilot program, countries must meet specific criteria, including: (i) having ongoing or completed FAO-GEF projects on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) or Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and (ii) demonstrating regional interest in leveraging learning opportunities through collaboration.

The proposed enabling activity seeks to support countries' ability to report effectively through PRAIS during the 2025-2026 UNCCD reporting process by implementing an inclusive and multistakeholder approach. The project focuses on enhancing national institutional and technical capacities to monitor land degradation in a spatially explicit way and estimate SDG indicator 15.3.1, as required in PRAIS, following the SDG 15.3.1 Good Practice Guidance, by integrating national knowledge and data into the reporting framework. This ensures that submissions to the UNCCD are accurate and comprehensive and useful for decision making.

Key activities under the proposed EA include national workshops to estimate and validate results and organizing a Regional Knowledge Exchange Workshop and supporting the co-production of regional knowledge products.

In order to ensure national ownership of the process, participating countries are expected to conduct at least two national multi-stakeholder workshops to facilitate the reporting process. These workshops will involve the following steps:

- Identification of relevant stakeholders to invite to ensure an inclusive and gender balanced process.
- Provision of existing national datasets relevant to the report.
- Coordination of workshop logistics, including venue selection, invitations, and other organizational aspects.
- Coverage of workshop costs through country-managed funds.

The workshops will engage stakeholders in a participatory and inter-institutional process to compile and validate data for national reporting. This approach ensures the involvement of relevant institutions and organizations, guaranteeing a sustainable, inclusive and representative process. The participation of the UNCCD focal points (FPs) and reporting officers in all activities is integral to the successful co-production of final reports.

Furthermore, the enabling activity proposes mechanisms for institutionalizing the monitoring process to ensure the sustainability of reporting efforts. These measures aim to support the final submission of reports within the stipulated deadlines, contributing to the overall objectives of the UNCCD and enhancing global efforts to combat land degradation and desertification.

## ENABLING ACTIVITY COMPONENTS

### 1. Enhanced National UNCCD Reporting Process

GEF Enabling Activity Financing (\$): 1,824,000.00

Outcome:

1.1 Enhanced national capacities and submission of national reports to UNCCD which integrate national knowledge and datasets, co-produced through an inclusive participatory decision-making process based on evidence and expert knowledge.

*Indicator:*

*Number of countries that use national data and knowledge, with a target of 19*

Output:

1.1.1 National UNCCD reports submitted in a timely manner via the PRAIS platform.

1.1.2 Strengthened capacities of national experts in monitoring, data collection, and reporting under the UNCCD framework.

1.1.3 Institutionalized reporting mechanism, with designated focal points across relevant institutions, ensuring sustainability.

## 2. Enhanced Regional Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange for UNCCD Reporting

GEF Enabling Activity Financing (\$): 258,210.00

Outcome:

2.1 Strengthened regional cooperation and south-south knowledge exchange improve planning and reporting processes, and implementation of the UNCCD Convention at both national and regional levels.

### Indicator:

*Curated list of recommendations or lessons learned resulting from the regional exchanges on the reporting process*

Output:

2.1.1 Regional network of LDN practitioners strengthened

2.1.2 Synergies, common needs, and strengths are identified

2.1.3 Based on the results from the regional workshops, policy briefs with recommendations on how to improve the reporting process submitted to UNCCD

## M&E

GEF Enabling Activity Financing (\$): 20,000.00

Outcome:

M&E plan supports better project delivery

Output:

ME1. Virtual project inception workshop implemented

ME2. Virtual Mid Term stocktaking and final report completed, including gender-related indicators.

M&E feedback loop supports better project delivery

### Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Enabling Activity Financing (\$)
1. Enhanced National UNCCD Reporting Process	1,824,000.00
2. Enhanced Regional Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange for UNCCD Reporting	258,210.00
M&E	20,000.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,102,210.00</b>
Project Management Cost	84,110.00
<b>Total Enabling Activity Cost</b>	<b>2,186,320.00</b>

Please provide justification

## SECTION 2: ENABLING ACTIVITY SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### C. Eligibility Criteria

Please provide eligibility information for this enabling activity.

Countries that are affected Parties to the UNCCD and are developing countries with reporting obligations, including on voluntary LDN targets, are eligible for this enabling activity. Given that this enabling activity corresponds to the option “Enabling Activity disbursement with agency execution support for enhanced data/reporting” offered by FAO, only those countries who have shown interest and commitment to implement a participatory and inclusive reporting process are eligible for this option. Additionally, only countries who have ongoing or completed FAO-GEF projects on LDN or Sustainable Land Management, and that belong to a region with a critical number of countries interested in this option are eligible, to allow for regional exchanges.

Under this enabling activity, the following countries were selected to participate in the pilot activity with FAO support. Full details of FAO support are provided in Annex B.

### D. Institutional Framework

Describe the institutional arrangements for implementation of the enabling activity.

**Implementing agency.** 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, located at the Land and Water Division, will provide oversight of day-to-day project execution;
- The Lead Technical Officer, located at the Land and Water Division – Land management team will provide oversight/support to the projects technical work in coordination with government representatives;
- The Funding Liaison Officer(s) and the GEF Technical Officers (GTO) within the Office of Climate and Biodiversity, 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.

**Executing agency/Executing partners.** There will be two executing partners for each country: (i) a national institution that will receive funds directly from FAO in the form of a Letter of Agreement, and (ii) FAO as outlined in the Announcement for UNCCD EA Support published by the GEF Secretariat.<sup>[1]<sup>1</sup></sup>

- ***National Executing Partners (EP).*** FAO and the participating countries will identify a partner to execute the main portion of the funds available (i.e. USD 70,000 per country). In order to ensure country leadership in the reporting process, EP are expected to engage relevant stakeholders in a participatory and inter-institutional process to compile and validate data for national reporting and submit the report within the reporting deadline currently set as November 2026.

-

FAO will sign a Letter of Agreement with each EP to transfer the corresponding resources, who will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the project results. This includes organizing national workshops and engaging relevant stakeholders in a participatory and inter-institutional process to prepare and submit the PRAIS-5 report.

Executing partners (EP) are 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

- ***FAO as an Executing agency.*** As outlined in the Announcement for UNCCD EA Support, FAO will also act as Executing Agency for a portion of the resources (i.e. USD 39,589 per country). FAO will use these resources to (i) provide technical support to countries, (ii) ensuring LDN experts attend in person at least two national workshops, and (iii) organize at least one regional knowledge exchange workshop by region. FAO will also use these resources to cover the travel costs of two government representatives to the regional workshop.

**Project management unit (PMU).** A PMU, consisting of a part-time Program Coordinator (PC) and administrative support will be established within the Land and Water Division of FAO (NSL) to ensure timely implementation of the pilot program. The PC, with the support of the relevant technical experts, will be responsible for (i) preparing TORs and hiring technical experts, (ii) prepare letters of agreement for signature with national EPs, (iii) ensure timely disbursement of funds to EPs, (iv) in collaboration with EPs,

organize travel of technical experts to national dialogues, (v) organize regional meetings with key stakeholders, (vi) prepare reports needed for the PSC and lead the preparation of the MTR and Final Report.

[1] [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2024-08/Announcement%20of%20UNCCD%20EA%20support%20in%20GEF-8\\_final.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2024-08/Announcement%20of%20UNCCD%20EA%20support%20in%20GEF-8_final.pdf)

## E. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Describe the budgeted M&E plan.

The project results, as outlined in the project results framework, will be monitored regularly, reported annually and assessed during project implementation to ensure the project effectively achieves these results. Monitoring and evaluation activities will follow FAO and GEF's policies and guidelines for monitoring and evaluation. The M&E system will also facilitate learning, replication of the project's results and lessons learned which will feed the project's knowledge management strategy.

Activity	Responsible party	Estimated cost	Time Frame
Project inception workshop	Program Coordinator	0 (virtual meeting)	Within 3 months of project signature
Monitoring and reporting of project progress against annual workplan	Program Coordinator National executing partners	0 (activities included as part of the TORs for PC and national partners)	Every 6 months
Virtual mid-term stocktaking	FAO - NSL	0 (activities included as part of the TORs for PC and national partners)	2nd Quarter of 2027
Policy briefs/knowledge products	PC, supported by FAO and LDN experts	0 (activity included in TORs for PC)	After each of the regional workshops
Terminal report	PC, and PSR Reports Group in FAO HQ	USD 6,650	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2027

**Project Inception Report.** A virtual project inception workshop will be held within three months of the project start date and signature of relevant agreements with partners. During this workshop the following will be reviewed and agreed:

- the proposed implementation arrangement, the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder and project partners;
- finalize the preparation of the first year AWP/B, including a proposed calendar of country visits and potential dates for regional workshops
- alignment with UNCCD capacity development program for PRAIS report
- the financial reporting and audit procedures
- an update of any changed external conditions that may affect project implementation;

**Mid Term review.** FAO, through NSL, will organize a mid-term review of the program to (i) assess the progress made towards achievement of planned results; (ii) identify problems and make recommendations to redress the project (iii) highlight good practices, lessons learned and areas with the potential for upscaling

**Terminal report.** Within two months prior to the project completion date, the Project Coordinator will submit a draft Terminal Report to the Project Steering Committee and the Budget Holder in NSL. The Terminal Report will include a section for a self-assessment to be carried out by the Office of the Budget Holder, and will also include clear account of implementation activities, delivery of outputs, stakeholder involvement, time taken, resource utilization and lessons, and per GEF guidelines (Completion Memorandum). The Terminal Report will also include brief summary of the main project deliverables, results, conclusions and recommendations. Likewise, the Terminal Report will provide guidance at the authority level on the policy decisions necessary to monitor the Project and present the donor with information on the use of funds. The report will be aimed at people who are not necessarily technical specialists and who must understand the policy implications of the findings and technical needs to ensure the sustainability of the project results. The Terminal Report will evaluate the activities, summarize the lessons and express the recommendations in terms of their application to landscape restoration in the intervention areas, in the context of development priorities at the national and provincial levels, as well as in terms of practical application.

## SECTION 3: INFORMATION TABLES

### F. GEF Financing Resources Requested by Agency, Country and Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	GEF Enabling Activity Financing (\$)	Agency Fee (\$)	Total (\$)
FAO	GET	Global	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	104,110.00	9,890.00	114,000.00
FAO	GET	Argentina	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Bhutan	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Bolivia	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Brazil	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Colombia	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Dominican Republic	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Ecuador	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Guatemala	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Honduras	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Kazakhstan	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Mexico	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Mongolia	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Nigeria	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Panama	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Paraguay	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00

FAO	GET	Peru	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Serbia	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Uruguay	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
FAO	GET	Cuba	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	109,590.00	10,410.00	120,000.00
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>2,186,320.00</b>	<b>207,680.00</b>	<b>2,394,000.00</b>

### Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total(\$)
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>0.00</b>

### G. Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Desertification
Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Principal Objective 2

### H. 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	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Mr. Stanley Jonah	Director	Federal Ministry of Environment- Nigeria	9/3/2024
Mr. Batkhisig Purevdoo	Special Envoy on Climate Change	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change - Mongolia	10/14/2024
Mr. Tshering Dorji	Director - Department of Macro-Fiscal and Development Finance	Ministry of Finance - Bhutan	10/23/2024
Mrs. Saule Sabiyeva	Deputy Director of the Climate Policy Department	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan	11/29/2024
Ms. Sandra Dokić	State Secretary	Ministry of Environmental Protection - Serbia	10/26/2024
Mr. Juan Rodrigo Walsh	Senior Advisor	Under Secretariat for Environment and Sustainable Development	11/25/2024

Mr. Carlos David Guachalla Terrazas	Viceministro de Planificación y Coordinación	Ministerio de Planificación del Desarrollo	11/12/2024
Ms. Luana Magalhaes	Deputy General-Coordinator for Sustainable Finance	Ministry of Finance	10/25/2024
Ms. Maria Teresa Becerra Ramirez	Head of International Affairs Office	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	11/21/2024
Mr. Ivan Marcel Cruz Burgos	Financial Mechanisms and Portfolio Management	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	12/13/2024
Mrs. Mireille Del Rosario Vasquez Cevallos	Director of International Cooperation	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition	10/7/2024
Mr. Malcolm Stufkens	Subsecretario de Estado	Secretaría de Energía, Recursos Naturales, Ambiente y Mina	1/22/2025
Ms. Gabriela Niño Gómez	Director of Sustainable Finance	Ministry of Finance and Public Credit	12/19/2024
Mr. Raul Pinedo	Planning Analyst	Ministry of Environment of Panama	9/12/2024
Mrs. Lilian Elizabeth Portillo	Director of the Strategic Planning Direction (MADES)	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	9/23/2024
Mr. Mauricio Gonzales	Head of the General Office for Cooperation and International Affairs	Ministry of Environment	11/18/2024
Mr. Robert Bouvier	Minister	Ministry of Environment - Uruguay	10/1/2024
Ms. Melanie Mus Figueroa	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources- Guatemala	1/22/2025
Mr. Ulises Fernández Figueroa	Director	Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología y Medio Ambiente – Cuba	3/24/2025

#### ANNEX A: RESPONSES TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Describe how the enabling activity has addressed comments from stakeholders, including Council Members, Convention Secretariats, and STAP (if applicable).

Not applicable

#### ANNEX B: PROJECT BUDGET TABLE

Attach the project budget table.

Expenditure category	Detailed Description	Unit	No Units	Cost per Unit	Component 1	Component 2	M&E	Subtotal	PMC	Total cost	Responsible Entity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>Consultants</b>														
	Program Coordinator	Days	217	450			13,350	13,350	84,110	97,460	FAO	32,487	32,487	32,487
	Senior LDN expert (20 days per country)	Days	380	500	190,000			190,000		190,000	FAO	63,333	63,333	63,333
	GIS expert (15 days per country)	Days	285	400	114,000			114,000		114,000	FAO	45,000	41,000	28,000
<b>Contracts</b>														
	Contracts with national executing entities	Contract	19	70,000	1,330,000			1,330,000		1,330,000	National Executing Partners	900,000	430,000	
	Terminal Report	Lumpsum	1	6,650			6,650	6,650		6,650	FAO	0		6,650
<b>Trainings, Workshops,</b>														
	Regional workshops (One per region, 20 national experts)	Lumpsum	1	115,710		115,710		115,710		115,710	FAO	45,000	41,000	29,710
<b>Travel costs</b>														
	Travel of FAO experts (2 missions per country to lead/support national workshops plus regional workshops; approx. 50 missions)	Lumpsum	1	190,000	190,000			190,000		190,000	FAO	65,000	65,000	60,000
	Government travel to regional workshops (approx. 32 missions)	Lumpsum	1	142,500		142,500		142,500		142,500	FAO	70,000	72,500	
<b>Gran Total</b>					<b>1,824,000</b>	<b>258,210</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>2,102,210</b>	<b>84,110</b>	<b>2,186,320</b>		<b>1,220,820</b>	<b>745,320</b>	<b>220,180</b>

## ANNEX C: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Attached any screening documents or other ESS related documents (if applicable). ESS screening is not required for EAs but should be included if its available.

Check this box is ESS screening is not required per Agency's regulations

Title

Full ES Risk Screening checklist for project 755813