# Integrating Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) into land use planning frameworks to strengthen national UNCCD enabling environments

**Part I: Project Information**

**GEF ID**

**Project Type**
EA

**Type of Trust Fund**
GET

**CBIT**
  CBIT **No**

**Project Title**
Integrating Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) into land use planning frameworks to strengthen national UNCCD enabling environments

**Countries**
Global

**Agency(ies)**
IUCN

**Other Executing Partner(s)**
UNCCD-GM

**Executing Partner Type**
Others

**GEF Focal Area**
Land Degradation

**Taxonomy**
Focal Areas, Land Degradation, Land Degradation Neutrality, Influencing models, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Demonstrate innovative approache, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-

making, Sustainable Land Management, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender-sensitive indicators

**Rio Markers**
**Climate Change Mitigation**
Climate Change Mitigation 0

**Climate Change Adaptation**
Climate Change Adaptation 0

| Type of Reports | Submission Date | Expected Implementation Start | Expected Completion Date | Expected Report Submission to Convention |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Duration**
24 In Months

**Agency Fee($)**
180,000.00

**A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS**

| Objectives/Programs | Trust Fund | GEF Amount($) | Co-Fin Amount($) |
|---|---|---|---|
| LD-EA | GET | 2,000,000.00 | |
| | **Total Project Cost($)** | **2,000,000.00** | **0.00** |

**B. Project description summary**

**Project Objective**

The objective of the project is to strengthen LDN governance and land use planning in a gender sensitive manner in line with UNCCD COP decisions. The project will analyze how the neutrality mechanism should be integrated into existing land use planning processes, in order to facilitate consideration of the likely impacts land use and land management decisions have on land-based natural capital and the implications for achieving neutrality. The project will attempt to fill in the gaps of land use planning strategies often being conducted in silos, and seek synergies with conservation planning and restoration of land use functions in a broader sense. The project acknowledges the importance having reliable information and cost-effective methods for collecting and analyzing data to address land degradation and improve policies. It will work with relevant platforms such as Trends.Earth to facilitate a better understanding of land degradation processes and provide effective planning tools for practitioners and planners. The project will also support developing the scientific guidance of the Science Policy Interface (SPI) into project and operational level guidance.

| Project Component | Expected Outcomes | Expected Outputs | GEF Project Financing($) | Confirmed Co-Financing($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| Project Component | Expected Outcomes | Expected Outputs | GEF Project Financing($) | Confirmed Co-Financing($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Component 1. Enhancing capacity for improved land use planning that integrates LDN | Outcome 1. Countries integrate LDN in their land use planning policies and practice in a gender responsive manner | 1.1 Published and disseminated report on the challenges and opportunities to integrate LDN in gender responsive land use planning and land governance, based on assessment of existing planning frameworks and consultation with relevant stakeholders<br><br>1.2 Scientific guidance from SPI on good practice related to LDN and gender transformative land use planning is published and integrated in operational technical guidelines for countries and available in three main UN languages<br><br>1.3 A good practice study on the central role of gender transformative and inclusive land use planning/ governance for land-based biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation/ adaptation and LDN is | 1,191,473.00 | |

| Project Component | Expected Outcomes | Expected Outputs | GEF Project Financing($) | Confirmed Co-Financing($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Component 2. Assessing LDN implementation status and gaps | Outcome 2: National LDN implementation strategies show stronger synergies with biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation and are more gender responsive, based on status assessments and LDN gap analysis | 2.1 Countries are assisted to identify and document operational synergies between LDN implementation with NBSAPs, NDCs, NAPs and other relevant initiatives and its reporting<br><br>2.2 Completed, existing and planned LDN, biodiversity and land-based climate change projects are documented, and their gender responsiveness is assessed, and accessible to facilitate investment coordination at national and regional level<br><br>2.3 Countries identify and document synergies between LDN projects and links to UNFCCC and CBD initiatives<br><br>2.4 Information on implemented actions and the established LDN targets is georeferenced, shared and accessible through | 290,000.00 | |

| Project Component | Expected Outcomes | Expected Outputs | GEF Project Financing($) | Confirmed Co-Financing($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Component 3: Facilitating gender transformative LDN investments | Outcome 3. Countries develop innovative financing proposals for LDN investment that is gender transformative | 3.1 Financing gaps for gender transformative LDN investments have been identified and documented in consultation with relevant stakeholders<br><br>3.2 A review of gender-responsiveness in LDN investment is published and disseminated<br><br>3.3 Guidance note on innovative public-private partnerships, tools and approaches for financing that support gender equality in integrated land use planning and LDN investments are developed and disseminated in the three main UN languages | 188,000.00 | |

| Project Component | Expected Outcomes | Expected Outputs | GEF Project Financing($) | Confirmed Co-Financing($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Component 4: Project knowledge management and Monitoring and Evaluation | Outcome 4. Project results are monitored and evaluated effectively and inform land use planning | 4.1 Monitoring and evaluation and consolidation of lessons learnt<br><br>4.2 Knowledge management and communication strategy that describes the specific audience and the products that will be generated is developed and implemented<br><br>4.3 LDN best practices are disseminated for replication and uptake | 148,709.00 | |
| | | **Sub Total ($)** | **1,818,182.00** | **0.00** |
| **Project Management Cost (PMC)** | | | | |
| | | 181,818.00 | | |
| **Sub Total($)** | | **181,818.00** | | **0.00** |
| **Total Project Cost($)** | | **2,000,000.00** | | **0.00** |

**C. Source of Co-Financing for the Project by Name and by Type**

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

**Total Co-Financing($)**

**Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified**

**D. GEF Financing Resources Requested by Agency, Country and Programming of Funds**

| Agency | Trust Fund | Country | Focal Area | Programming of Funds | Amount($) | Fee($) | Total($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| IUCN | GET | Global | Land Degradation | LD Set-Aside | 2,000,000 | 180,000 | 2,180,000.00 |
| | | | | **Total Gef Resources($)** | **2,000,000.00** | **180,000.00** | **2,180,000.00** |

**Part II. Enabling Activity Justification**

**A. ENABLING ACTIVITY BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

## Provide brief information about projects implemented since a country became party to the convention and results achieved

A large part of the world?s managed and natural ecosystems are degrading and at risk from climate change and biodiversity loss. As noted in the Sustainable Development Goals report 2019, approximately 20 % of the Earth?s total land area was degraded between 2000 and 2015, resulting in a significant loss of services essential to human well-being. UNCCD?s Global Land Outlook (UNCCD, 2017[1]) estimates that 20 % of cropland, 16 % of forest land, and 27 % of rangeland are degraded. Land degradation is broadly driven by (i) biophysical factors related to land use, (ii) institutional factors notably land use policies and (iii) socio-economic factors that affect the demand for and management of land. Institutional and socio-economic factors and particularly those related to land governance[2] are among the main constraining factors related to sustainable land management. Land governance includes aspects of (i) land use planning, (ii) land tenure, and (iii) land based interventions (see for example Verburg et al, 2019[3]) and is here based on the Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security (FAO, 2012) and promoting the ambition of inclusive and rights based governance of land. This also includes gender disparities in accessing land, employment and decision making related to land. Women often have less access to information, resources, and legal rights to land, natural and productive resources. In addition, land degradation is also driven by knowledge gaps and capacity constraints related to the limited knowledge of sustainable land use practices and integrated land use planning.

Most recently the global COVID19 pandemic has put the global attention to the role of land use change and biodiversity loss as one of the primary transmission pathways for emerging infectious diseases and land use planning and effective land use governance as an important building block for a healthy environment and resilient food and water systems, and building-back-better strategies. Land based jobs may furthermore play an important role in the green recovery following the pandemic potentially providing jobs and social safety nets for the most vulnerable population.

The global community agreed in September 2015 on the ?2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (United Nations, 2015). Goal 15 urges countries to protect, restore and pro-mote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Target 15.3 aims to ?combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world? by 2030. The concept of land degradation neutrality (LDN) was then adopted by the 12th Conference of Parties

(COP12) of UNCCD in Ankara in October 2015 as a vehicle for driving the implementation of the Convention.

At UNCCD?s COP13 country Parties adopted the scientific conceptual framework for LDN[4] as well as a set of indicators for monitoring progress towards the 2018-2030 Strategic Framework. LDN is distinguished through the definition of neutrality as a specific goal ensuring that there are no net losses of land-based natural capital. LDN introduces a new proactive approach in which management of land degradation is coupled with land use planning. In fact, LDN promotes a long term approach in which land use planners consider the likely outcomes of land use and land management decisions, so that anticipated degradation can be counterbalanced by interventions to reverse the impacts of land degradation elsewhere, in order to achieve LDN. Its implementation follows the LDN response hierarchy ?Avoid > Reduce > Reverse? land degradation. LDN is monitored by determining baselines against which performance can be assessed and evaluated.

The successful implementation of the LDN concept builds upon a strong enabling environment that would be based on four pillars consisting of (i) enhancing land policies, (ii) providing tools for good land governance, (iii) ensuring the full stakeholders involvement and (iv) conducting land use related assessments. In addition, the successful implementation of the LDN concept and related actions is also driven by a clear understanding of the root causes and drivers that contribute to land degradation and the varied roles of women and men, gender balanced representation perspective and expertise and an enabling environment that allow a transformative change with this regard. There is a growing understanding on the central role of land use planning to implement land degradation neutrality as it helps identifying those land uses that best meet the demands of people while safeguarding soil, water, and biodiversity for future generations (UNCCD, 2017[5]). To be effective, the neutrality mechanism should be integrated into existing land use planning processes, to facilitate consideration of the likely cumulative impacts of land use and land management decisions on land-based natural capital and the implications for achieving neutrality. This framework applies a counterbalancing mechanism for maintaining (or exceeding) neutrality that is voluntary and focused pro-actively on planning. An internal analysis conducted by the Global Mechanism in September 2021 shows that, out of 101 countries that participated in the LDN Target Setting Programme and have completed and published at the UNCCD Knowledge Hub the outcomes of this process, only 31 countries (31%) have set specific LDN targets oriented to fully integrate LDN into their (sub)national land use planning frameworks. Land use planning strategies are often conducted in silos with only the objective to rehabilitate degraded land, and not with the aim to seek synergies with conservation planning and restoration of land use functions in a broader sense. Numerous international processes, including the UNCCD, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have highlighted land degradation as a key development challenge, and that a lack of reliable information and cost-effective methods for collecting and analyzing data hampers the development of policies to address that challenge. Analytical tools and platforms, such as Trends.Earth have been developed to facilitate a better understanding of land degradation processes and provide adequate planning tools for

practitioners and planners. As part of the current work program of UNCCD?s Science Policy Interface (SPI) specific scientific guidance on the concept of LDN in integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management is being developed. Nevertheless, concrete recommendations and hands on guidance for implementation of LDN and mainstreaming of LDN in land use planning / governance and landscape management at country level are yet missing. The project will support translating the scientific guidance of the SPI into project and operational level guidance. UNCCDs COP14 has requested UNCCD to take the necessary actions with this regard (see also decision 16, decision 18 at COP14).

**RELATED PROJECTS**

**LDN Target Setting Programme (LDN-TSP)**

With support from the Global Environment Facility, through its enabling activities program, and other financial and technical partners, 128 countries have engaged to date in setting voluntary LDN targets through their participation in the LDN-TSP. Since the launch of this Programme in 2016, 106 countries have already defined and validated a set of LDN targets and associated measures to advance their goals towards achieving LDN by 2030. Following the request made to the UNCCD by country Parties under *Decision 13/COP.14 (paras 5c and 5d)* to further develop the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme and support Parties in implementing and periodically reviewing and monitoring progress and to continue to promote synergies and knowledge-sharing among Parties participating in the LDN-TSP, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD are currently conceptualizing a follow up programme. This follow up programme will assist countries in strengthening and further refining their LDN targets in order to increase their policy coherence vis a vis other LDN-relevant commitments made under other processes (UNFCCC, CBD, Bonn Challenge, UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, etc.), and will also assist countries in improving the quality of LDN targets in terms of being more quantitative, time-bound and geographically explicit.. The proposed enabling activity proposal will ensure complementary with the follow up programme, contributing from the land use planning angle to strengthen national enabling environments for LDN target setting and related implementation efforts, and will also seek cost efficiencies with this Programme both in terms of the rolling out of national processes (i.e., stakeholder consultation meetings) and also related capacity building/training activities that may be conducted at national, regional and/or global levels.

**Anchoring agreements on gender equality and women?s empowerment in the Rio Conventions**

This initiative spanned from January 2018 to June 2019 and built on the strategies, platforms and partnerships formed by IUCN, including with previous support from and partnership with Finland. The main goal of this project was to advance the capacity of Parties, stakeholders and Secretariats of Rio Conventions and the GEF to accelerate gender-mainstreaming efforts toward maximizing the

effectiveness, efficiency and equity of initiatives, programmes and projects at national level. A special focus was on supporting gender-responsive action under the UNCCD. This initiative allowed UNCCD Parties enhance integration of gender considerations in their reporting by proposing gender criteria for inclusion in the UNCCD reporting manual and developing training materials to support the gender considerations included in the manual. The project also promoted that UNCCD Parties embrace gender equality and women?s empowerment as a guiding principle in projects and initiatives at national level. For this, a gender help desk was created through a collaboration between IUCN Gender Team and the Global Mechanism of UNCCD to meet the specific needs of Parties toward meeting implementation of the UNCCD Gender Action Plan (GAP) through transformative land degradation neutrality (LDN) projects and policies. Requests to review project proposals from Parties were channeled through the Global Mechanism to the gender help desk, and then IUCN gender experts reviewed proposals, policies, strategies and provided written feedback and suggestions to improve gender considerations in the documents. In addition, UICN in collaboration with UNWomen supported 4 countries through technical assistance and workshops to develop gender-responsive projects on the ground. One tool produced in this process of training was the manual for gender-responsive land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes. Finally the initiative contribute to enhanced capacity of national actors to implement gender-responsive policies, initiatives and legislative frameworks fulfilling obligations under the MEAs by contributing to stablish a gender caucus and developing MOOC content for gender and environment modules. The thematic modules of the MOOC on gender and biodiversity, climate change and land degradation were launched in June 2018.

**Global Support Programme (GSP)**

The Global Support Programme (GSP), which is funded by GEF, provides assistance to countries to enable the reporting process of the UNCCD. GSP was specifically set up to enhance the countries' capacity to submit quality UNCCD reports in a timely manner and create an enabling environment through capacity building and technical support. The Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD is the executing agency, responsible for carrying out the project activities in accordance with the project objectives and work plan. UNEP is the GEF agency responsible for implementation and project management. As of 2021 the third phase of the GSP is under implementation, focusing on strengthening the country reporting process under UNCCD and capacity building. The proposed enabling activity proposal will ensure complementary with the GSP, taking into account relevant results arising from the GSP such as guidance reports and training on new tools delivered as part of relevant GSP outreach activities and regional capacity building workshops.

**Land Degradation Monitoring Project - Trends.Earth**

The GEF financed project *Land Degradation Monitoring Project (LDMP)* provided guidance on different methods and developed a remote-sensing based tool/ platform for the assessment and monitoring of land degradation trends using remote sensing products and other data sets. The tool/ platform Trends.Earth (http://trends.earth), which was developed by Conservation International, allows

non-technical users to integrate national data and information with global datasets to track changes in land degradation. A specific feature of Trends.Earth is its use of cloud-computing based on Google Earth Engine, which makes it possible for users with only limited computing capacity and without expert knowledge of cloud computing to make complex calculations related to land use and land degradation. Trends.Earth enables the community to use a set of standardized, recommended methods[6] for estimating the three biophysical LDN indicators adopted by the UNCCD, while providing the flexibility for users to customize the methods depending on local circumstances and the availability of national data. At the request of the UNCCD, CI participated in five regional capacity building workshops on reporting from March-May 2018; 316 representatives from 140 countries were trained in the use of Trends.Earth for monitoring land degradation.

**Strengthening LDN Data and Decision-making through Free and Open Access Platforms Project - Tools4LDN**

The GEF financed project Strengthening Land Degradation Neutrality data and decision-making through free and open access platforms ("Tools4LDN" for short )[7], implemented by CI, aims at continuing the development of tools to support countries in their assessments of land degradation and the planning of interventions to address it. More specifically the project focuses on (1) making available data at higher spatial resolution, (2) improving the understanding of the interactions between land degradation, drought, and socioeconomic factors, (3) linking remote sensing analysis with field and in-situ data for verification purposes, (4) including decision support tools for LDN priority setting based on multi-criteria evaluation of geospatial data, field data and participatory assessments at national level, and (5) conducting capacity building on planning, monitoring, and reporting of LDN in support of the UNCCD 2021-2022 reporting cycle. The project includes integration of different tools such as Trends.Earth, LandPKS and the WOCAT database. Since the completion of the first phase of the project, additional indicators on urban expansion, carbon sequestration, and deforestation have already been added.

The World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) is a global network of specialists on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) with the aim to support knowledge sharing and evidence-based decision-making for the promotion of sustainable land management. The WOCAT methods and tools have been widely used in different countries around the world to map land degradation, document and evaluate field-tested land management practices, and spread SLM practices. WOCAT?s global SLM database offers free access to over 1900 SLM practices from more than 120 different countries. WOCAT activities have been promoted in 15 countries through the GEF funded project Decision Support for Mainstreaming and Scaling Out SLM (implemented by FAO).

The Land-Potential Knowledge System (LandPKS) is a mobile app that allows site-specific land-use planning, management and monitoring, allowing land users, planners and other relevant experts to

complete rapid, local assessments of key soil properties using its core module (*LandInfo*). The latest update also includes a *Land Management* module for on-farm recordkeeping of inputs, management and yields. This module, together with the existing *LandCover* module (for monitoring pasture, rangeland, crop and crop residue cover) and a future *SoilHealth* module will together provide a free, global system for site-specific application, evaluation and adaptation of SLM practices.

Trends.Earth and related tools / platforms have already successfully facilitated access to default data on LDN indicators in the previous UNCCD reporting cycle and in this sense provided reliable data both for the development of national reports to UNCCD and also for the assessment of LDN baselines done by countries under the LDN-TSP and which effectively contributed from an LDN indicator data perspective to national LDN target setting processes. Nevertheless, a system integration with the UNCCD reporting is not yet available, neither has the information from the LDN target setting process been integrated in such a tool or platform. In addition, tools that facilitate trade off analysis and scenario-based land use planning would provide countries with objective information for achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030 (SDG 15.3).

**Group on Earth Observation Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative**

The Group on Earth Observation Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative (GEO-LDN) is a stakeholder-driven initiative that was launched in 2018 during the GEO Week in Kyoto, Japan. It brings together Earth observation data providers and governments to develop minimum data quality standards, analytical tools and capacity building needed to strengthen land degradation monitoring and reporting, using remote sensing and data collected on site. The GEO LDN Initiative responds to a call made by the UNCCD?s Conference of the Parties (decision 9/COP13) to bring data providers and data users together and support global efforts to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation globally.

Working Group 3 of the GEO-LDN Initiative is supporting the development of an open and collaborative data analytics platform ? a system of systems ? to support planning, implementation, and monitoring of actions to achieve LDN from Earth Observations and other data sources. These tools and methods are being developed using a modular approach, so that tools can evolve as technology and user needs change. The WG can therefore leverage work already conducted under related initiatives (Trends.Earth, Open Foris, openEO, EO4SDG, CEOS, etc.).

With a view to inspire innovation as well as collective and coordinated action towards its goals, the GEO-LDN Initiative, in collaboration with the UNCCD Science-Policy Interface (SPI), recently sponsored a competition to support data analytics around land use planning in the context of LDN, with the aim of connecting technical and software development experts with end users at the forefront of

LDN on the ground action. The GEO-LDN competition contributes to fulfill decision 18/COP.14, in which country Parties requested the SPI to stimulate the development of ?a demonstration, resulting from an open call, of how LDN can be incorporated into existing open source land use planning and trade-off analysis tools.? The GEO-LDN competition concluded on 18th March 2021 with the announcing of the winning prototype, LUP4LDN[8], which will require further development into an operational and scalable tool, dissemination and tailor-made training (for example through e-learning platforms) for practitioners.

Building upon the completed and ongoing GEF enabling projects, the project will continue to develop Trends.Earth and related platforms and would identify land use planning guidelines and best practices that should be developed based on LUP4LDN and taking also into account WOCAT information and planning tools, as well as additional relevant initiatives, such as the GIZ-led project on data integration into integrated land use planning (?From Data to Action? initiative). Guidance for the integration of LDN in land use planning and related planning tools and platforms needs to be developed. This will also include identifying global good practices related to gender mainstreaming in land use planning and land management, as well as gender specific training and capacity building with this regard. This project is expected to provide answers and practical tools to those issues.

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[1] UNCCD 2017: Global Land Outlook. Bonn, Germany

[2] See for example definition of land governance in P.H. Verburg, G. Metternicht, C. Allen, N. Debonne, M. Akhtar-Schuster, M. Ina?cio da Cunha, Z. Karim, A. Pilon, O. Raja, M. Sa?nchez Santivan?ez, and A. S?enyaz. 2019. Creating an Enabling Environment for Land Degradation Neutrality and its Potential Contribution to Enhancing Well-being, Livelihoods and the Environment. A Report of the Science-Policy Interface. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Bonn, Germany.
[3] Ibid

[4] https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/documents/2019-06/LDN_CF_report_web-english.pdf

[5] ibid

[6] Based on the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, available at: https://prais.unccd.int/sites/default/files/helper_documents/4-GPG_15.3.1_EN.pdf

[7] https://www.tools4ldn.org/

[8] https://www.unccd.int/news-events/geo-ldn-competition-winner-announced

## B. ENABLING ACTIVITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIVITIES

The proposal should briefly justify and describe the project framework. Identify also key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable. Describe also how the gender equality and women?s empowerment are considered in project design and implementation

The project is embedded in the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030. Its main objective is support to the implementation of some of the key decisions taken at UNCCD?s COP14 (September 2019, New Delhi, India). The different decisions made at COP14 point at a stronger support to country Parties to implement the concept of LDN at national level, through guidance for (i) raising awareness, building capacity and facilitate voluntary technology transfer related to LDN practices, (ii) strengthening national level coordination for LDN through among others land use planning, adequate land governance and integration in policy frameworks, (iii) Strengthening the national voluntary LDN target setting process, and (iv) mobilizing LDN financing and strengthening collaboration with GEF.

**Raising awareness, building capacity and facilitate voluntary technology transfer related to LDN practices:**

? Support capacity building and voluntary technology transfer focusing on LDN monitoring and the development of LDN transformative projects *(Decision 2/COP.14 (para 2.a); Decision 12/COP.14 (para 5))*;

? Support research, capacity-building and development of land governance systems for LDN and develop science-based methods to support land-use planning, including scenario analysis *(Decision 16/COP.14 (paras 10.b, 10.c))*;

? Support national efforts to build capacity for the improved assessment and monitoring of (a) LDN; (b) multiple benefits; and (c) trade-offs to support integrated land-use planning *(Decision 16/COP.14 (para 11))*;

? Draft (a) technical report providing science-based evidence of how, in the context of LDN, integrated land use planning and landscape management can contribute to positive transformative change and (b) a demonstration of LDN integration into existing open source land use planning tools *(Decision 18/COP.14 (para 1 and annex))*;

**Strengthening national level coordination for LDN through among others land use planning, adequate land governance and integration in policy frameworks:**

? Strengthen national-level coordination and cooperation through the promotion of integrated land use planning and creation of an enabling environment, including the responsible land governance *(Decision 3/COP.14 (paras 2.b, 2.c))*, strengthen mechanisms that support LDN implementation and enforcement to better coordinate top-down and bottom-up actions (*Decision 16/COP.14 (paras 7.a and 7.b))* and promote considering land-use planning conditions for creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment for LDN *(Decision 16/COP.14 (paras 9 and 9.e))*;

? Strengthen the integration of the LDN concept and voluntary targets into relevant national policies and planning frameworks, including those related to land governance (*Decision 12/COP.14*

*(para 6.b))* and mainstream land degradation neutrality in national policy agendas *(Decision 16/ COP.14 (para 6));*

? Share guidance provided in document ICCD/COP(14)/CST/2 with land managers at national and subnational levels *(Decision 16/COP.14 (para 1.d));*


**Strengthening the national voluntary LDN target setting process:**

? Develop the LDN Target Setting Programme and support Parties in implementing, reviewing and monitoring progress *(Decision 3/COP.14 (para 5.c)*), encourage the periodic review of the implementation of those targets set at national level *(Decision 12/COP.14 (para 1))* and support countries integrating its voluntary targets into national action programs, relevant policies and planning frameworks *(Decision 12/COP.14 (para 7));*

**Mobilizing LDN financing and strengthening collaboration with GEF:**

? Request the Global Mechanism to continue its collaboration with the Global Environment Facility *(Decision 9/ COP.14 (para 4)),* establish new partnerships and support countries to access the seventh replenishing phase of GEF *(Decision 13/COP.14 (para 2.a))* and establish the necessary enabling environment for UNCCD implementation *(Decision 13/COP.14 (para 11.d));*

? Support country level activities for the implementation of voluntary LDN targets, including accessing finance and the LDN transformative projects and programs *(Decision 13/COP.14 (para 10));*

Under objective 2 ?*creating and enabling environment to support voluntary LDN target implementation*? of the GEF 7 programming directions[1], GEF support is targeted to:

? Embedding the LDN tool into the existing planning frameworks and participatory land-use planning to meaningfully involve local governments, cities and urban municipalities, local communities, indigenous peoples, and women;
? Policy work at national levels leading to the resolution of land tenure issues that are obstacles to LDN objectives;
? Promoting good governance especially in view of land tenure and efforts in securing livelihoods of smallholders;
? Providing the technical assistance required to bring bankable projects to the investment;
? Supporting smallholders through special lending and through extension systems;
? Building capacity at all levels required to restore and maintain functional landscapes;
? Lessons learning and knowledge exchange and south-south cooperation within regions; and
? Developing monitoring and information systems and targeted research on impacts, trade-offs, costs-benefit analysis of restoration, and identifying incremental synergies.

The project will respond to these priorities and particularly support (i) assessing LDN implementation and distance from targets; (ii) embedding LDN into existing land use planning policies, frameworks and tools; and (iii) providing countries with access to new tools and approaches for LDN financing. The project thereby builds upon completed and ongoing enabling activity projects of the Global Environmental Facility, such as the *Land Degradation Monitoring Project* and the *Strengthening Land Degradation Neutrality data and decision-making through free and open access platforms Project.*

Despite several ongoing and completed EA projects, gaps still remain. Specifically, the role of LDN in land use planning and land governance lacks concrete, technical guidance and tools for country parties that would disseminate scientific guidance into practical actions and recommendations. Notably an instrument or application, that enables countries to assess the gaps between the targets set in the LDN target setting process, existing and planned projects and the SDG target 15.3 is so far missing. Such an instrument or application would complement the existing monitoring instruments and enable countries to determine these gaps and develop scenarios for closing those gaps, including related to the non-inclusion of gender responsiveness actions.

Trends.Earth has for example been developed as a land monitoring instrument, but it is not yet widely applied as a planning tool at national and sub-national level. In addition, a trade off tool or application would be needed that helps identifying the trade-offs between different land use scenarios. While scientific guidelines are available, concrete recommendations and planning tools that are based on best practice in implementation are not yet available.

Lastly on the financing side, while other EA projects have supported countries to identify investment needs and formulate transformative projects, no concrete and actionable guidance is available on the role of the private sector and other innovative financing opportunities such as payment for ecosystem schemes. Ready to use technical guidance for country parties would be needed that can support countries to plan and implement projects and programs with innovative financing solutions. Similarly, earlier EA projects have so far provided guidance for gender mainstreaming and the formulation of gender responsive actions but have lacked ambition to achieve gender transformation.

With this regard the project proposal will build upon established platforms (notably Trends.Earth) as well as prototypes being developed through the GEO-LDN competition. The project will build on the outcomes of this competition, and connect or integrate those that offer best potential for dissemination and utilization as planning and decision support tools for LDN targeted land use planning at national and sub-national level. Using the latest analysis and decision support tools for LDN monitoring and land use planning thereby also responds to some of the key decisions from COP14. In addition, the project will draw upon the planning recommendations for gender transformative land use planning and the formulation of gender transformative LDN transformative projects and programmes (UN Women, Global Mechanism and IUCN, 2019). In short, the project will address a number of strategic enabling activities that are key decisions from UNCCD?s COP 14, highlighted in the programming directions for enabling activities of GEF7 and aimed at supporting countries mainstreaming and implementing LDN at various levels. This justifies the financing of the project as a GEF enabling activity. Where possible, the outcomes of the project will inform activities related to GEF country allocations or GEF impact programs.

The project aims to taking this forward in the three components: (1) Enhancing capacity for improved land use planning that integrates LDN, (2) Assessing LDN implementation status and gaps and (3) Facilitating gender transformative LDN investments;

Several stakeholders will contribute to the implementation of the project notably the Global Mechanism of UNCCD as executing agency of the project as well as IUCN as GEF implementation agency that will ensure overall coordination with GEF and due diligence with the relevant GEF

policies. In addition, other stakeholders, such Conservation International (CI) will contribute to specific aspects of the project, such as Trends.Earth and related platforms as well as the mainstreaming of gender in land use planning and aspects of biodiversity. The project will work closely with different stakeholders to not only ensure their full involvement and commitment to the project, but also to enable a co-design approach for the development of tools, and a bottom-up approach for the collection of best practices related to enabling environments and land use planning for LDN. The main stakeholders will include the national focal points for the UNCCD (usually in the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forests or Ministry of Environment) and government departments directly responsible for land use planning as well as the national governments? ministries, agencies and departments, which have participated in the LDN target setting process and are, in broader sense, responsible for national development planning, land use planning, land management, and land governance. As the project will not support a specific country, but will be an enabling project with a global scope open to participating countries from all UNCCD Regional Annexes using a regionally-balanced approach, its focus will be on identifying, reviewing and sharing best practices for sustainable land use planning and land degradation neutrality and enabling national processes to facilitate the effective incorporation of LDN in land use planning frameworks. The project will target a group of 15 countries, to be identified through a dedicated call for expression of interest using selection criteria that ensures a varied representation of participating countries (i.e., countries already working on integrating LDN in land use planning frameworks, countries with LDN targets explicitly linked to integrated land use planning, countries with high values of indicator 15.3.1 that would benefit from improving their land use planning). During project implementation, IUCN and the Global Mechanism may identify potential opportunities to expand this initial group of 15 countries that may arise through collaborations with other technical and financial partners. The project will also ensure that case studies and best practice examples will be presented and illustrated that provide a balanced representation of different regions (Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Middle East and North Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia), agro-ecosystems, status of economic and human development, and other relevant factors. Where necessary for the testing and application of platforms such as Trends.Earth, the prototypes developed through the GEO-LDN competition and other relevant initiatives, the project will facilitate the engagement and consultation with local governments and communities, farmers organization, women and youth groups, business organizations, civil society and other partners.

The unprecedented global COVID 19 pandemic, which is affecting nearly all countries globally since March 2020, is not only requiring governments, UNCCD, IUCN and other stakeholders to adapt rapidly to new forms of collaboration, such as online meetings and webinars, but brought renewed attention to the central role of land and biodiversity for a healthy environment. COVID 19 has also further amplified existing vulnerability of women, for example with regard to their role in the informal sector or limited access to health services. The COVID 19 pandemic has also underscored the attention to the role of land and biodiversity change as a transmission pathway for diseases and land use planning as a key instrument for sustainable land management and guiding land based recovery from the pandemic. The project would thus follow a two path strategy in response to the COVID 19 pandemic: (a) providing guidance to countries on effective land use planning, land governance, LDN and biodiversity conservation to recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic and create healthy resilient

environments, and (b) having a flexible approach on workshops, country engagements and learning that will effectively combine online activities and face-to-face events where possible and necessary.

At the regional level, the project will collaborate with specialized regional organizations which can act as multiplicators in regions and have specific regionally technical mandates relevant for the project. This may include for example Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the African Union Development Agency -New Partnership for Africa?s Development (AUDA NEPAD) in Africa, the Caribbean Climate Change Center in the Caribbean or Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management in Central Asia. Involved stakeholders at global level will include partners, which have worked on the Trends.Earth and Tools4LDN project, notably Conservation International (CI). Other partners at global level include GEO, FAO, UNEP, UNHABITAT, ICLEI and IFAD. With UN WOMEN and IUCN the project will collaborate on advancing good practice related to gender transformative land use planning and biodiversity conservation. The project will be aligned with other ongoing initiatives of UNCCD / GM and IUCN, such as the GEO-LDN competition. However, a dedicated co-financing is not foreseen.

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[1] GEF7 Programming Directions, Annex A: Programming Directions and Resource Allocation for the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund.

**C. DESCRIBE THE ENABLING ACTIVITY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

Discuss the work intended to be undertaken and the output expected from each activity as outlined in Table A

The project is built around the following 3 components for a total financing volume of US$ 2 million, of which US$ 181,818 is foreseen for project management by the Global Mechanism of UNCCD.

?	Component 1: Enhancing capacity for improved land use planning that integrates land degradation neutrality;

?	Component 2: Assessing LDN implementation status and gaps;

?	Component 3: Facilitating gender transformative LDN investments;

.	Component 4: Project knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation

**Component 1: Enhancing capacity for improved land use planning that integrates land degradation neutrality.** The component will focus on identifying and disseminating good practices on gender transformative land use planning and related instruments that support the implementation and mainstreaming of LDN in the planning and enabling environment. Attention will be paid to identifying good practice planning instruments, which have been recognized in different environmental, political and economic contexts, and to addressing inclusive land governance, including different forms of land tenure, the documentation and registration of land tenure, and limiting factors related to land

governance that impact land management and different stakeholders? meaningful participation. In this context the component will specifically pay attention to the role of women in land governance, the specific challenges of women in accessing land and land tenure, as well as their role in land use planning.

Activities will concretely include stakeholder consultations to identify good practices related to inclusive and participatory land use planning, land governance, climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation, as well as technical assistance to document and disseminate good practices for gender responsive land use planning and implementation for LDN. Consultations would be conducted with national governments? focal points for land degradation, biodiversity conservation and climate change, and gender focal points where they exist, as well as on the basis of case studies, zooming into specific local governments, extension services, sector organisations including private sector, women and youth representatives with the aim to identify challenges and opportunities related to LDN as well as its relevance and planning in land use planning and land governance. Specific attention will be given to an active collaboration with women and with vulnerable groups[1], including specific stakeholder groups such as women farmers? associations. The case studies under this component will be developed under the overall guidance of UNCCD?s SPI and with the aim to document good practice, identify synergies in the planning processes related to land degradation neutrality and biodiversity conservation, and develop guidance notes for scaling them up in similar contexts. With this regard the scientific guidance from SPI will be disseminated in the form of practical ready-to-use guidelines for experts from (sub-) national governments.

Building upon the results from the GEO-LDN competition, relevant open source land use planning and trade-off analysis tools will be further developed, connected or integrated with Trends.Earth and disseminated to support countries to use these planning tools for an effective scenario-based land use planning for identifying additional measures for avoiding, reducing, and reversing land degradation. The project will essentially support the roll out of the GEO-LDN competition by developing the winning prototype(s) into operational and scalable software modules, demonstrating their suitability for use in different contexts and building countries capacities to use these tools.

Related training modules that facilitate the dissemination of land use planning tools will be developed with relevant partners, including the prototypes? developers, CI, the GEO-LDN Initiative, IUCN, etc. Training modules and training opportunities will be provided in the form of blended learning, as a combination of face-to-face training and online training courses. This would allow the benefits of online learning, notably in times of the ongoing COVID19 pandemic, with the benefits from face-to-face engagements, when relevant and possible. These activities will also include identifying good practices related to a gender transformative approach for land use planning, land governance and managing land degradation neutrality. GM/UNCCD will collaborate closely with partners, such as

IUCN and UN Women, and will organize consultations with women and youth interest groups and other relevant stakeholders and identify practical strengths, weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats for scaling them up to other countries. The main output of the component will be a technical report presenting good practices of land use planning and land governance for land degradation neutrality, including a guidance note for the dissemination through national and local governments, communities, women and sector based organisations. An additional report on the status and gaps of gender responsive inclusion, and recommendations for better implementation will be published and disseminated. In addition, the component will support workshops, training and reports for strengthening the coordination, planning and implementation of LDN. Countries will be supported to conduct stakeholder consultations and strengthen or establish national platforms or coordination mechanisms that would facilitate the implementation at country level. The guidelines will be actively disseminated in three UN languages (English, French and Spanish).

**Component 2: Assessing LDN implementation status and gaps.** This component focuses on closing the technical and human capacity gap between different GIS based tools or platforms and their relevance as planning instruments providing concrete guidance on land use planning and LDN at regional, national and local level. More specifically, the component will support the analysis of gaps between the existing land degradation targets and the vision to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030 as defined in SDG target 15.3. In other words, it will support the development of new or existing tools and platforms (building upon *Trends.Earth*) that will provide guidance, on voluntary targets as well as projects and actions currently under implementation, and support the quantification of any remaining gaps to achieving land degradation neutrality in a country by 2030. The component will provide the relevant tools and platforms and support parties of the convention to conduct such an analysis in a voluntary manner. Member states will be trained to apply these tools in an efficient manner through blended learning in a combination of face-to-face training, webinars and online tools.

In the same context the component will support the documentation, geo-location and sharing of information through existing tools and platforms concerning completed, existing and planned LDN, biodiversity and land-based climate change projects. Countries would be enabled and supported to (voluntarily) map project locations (including, where possible, types of interventions such as afforestation, conservation agriculture, etc.). This would enable countries to get an objective overview of the impacts of LDN targets on land based natural capital and conduct scenario planning to identify additional measures for achieving LDN.

In addition, the component will identify operational synergy and, where possible, further simplify country implementation and reporting related to the three Rio conventions, notably with regard to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP), National Determined Contributions (NDC), and National Adaptation Plans (NAP) as well as reporting under other relevant initiatives. To further streamline LDN monitoring and reporting Trends.Earth will be further integrated with UNCCD?s Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS). The main output of the component will be updated tools and applications facilitating scenario-based land use planning and a

technical report on integration of LDN into existing open source, GIS based LDN planning tools. In addition, the component will support workshops, training and reports for strengthening the coordination, planning and implementation of LDN monitoring.

**Component 3: Facilitating gender transformative LDN investments.** The component will summarize a number of key actions that will bridge the gap between LDN monitoring and land use planning with concrete (gender transformative) actions and investments in land degradation neutrality, climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as biodiversity conservation at national level. As an enabling project, activities under this component will focus on extending the available tools and instruments that facilitate investments for example through payment for ecosystem services, land stewardship initiatives, private sector participation for land degradation neutrality projects as well as the formulation of performance criteria and standards to be applied in the context of land degradation neutrality projects. Activities under this component will focus on broad consultations with relevant stakeholders, such as governments, extension services, sector organisations, women and youth representatives, and private sector to identify relevant investment financing gaps for LDN. A particular focus will be on consultations and collaboration with women groups to identify specific needs, actions and incentives that lead to innovations and incentives in support of transformative gender actions in integrated land use planning and LDN investments. Guidance notes will be complemented with a technical report, that supports the argumentation with regard to land use planning and integrated landscape management to positive transformative change. The main output of the component will be a technical guidance note on investment instruments and incentives in support of gender actions for land degradation neutrality, including the preparation of relevant training material for decision makers and planners.

**Component 4: Project knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation.** The component summarizes the project management activities, which are directly carried out by the executing entity (UNCCD). This includes activities related to project equipment and supplies, progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation, project coordination meetings and knowledge management and communication.

This component will ensure that the project is effectively managed and coordinated, and that it monitors and evaluates its progress and impacts. The component will further ensure that the outputs and lessons learned are effectively and systematically disseminated through the relevant knowledge management platforms (e.g. the UNCCD knowledge hub, the GEF knowledge and communication platforms, and the IUCN communication channels) in order to support scaling up of best practices, approaches and methodologies for effective governance and land use planning at national, regional and international levels. Conferences and workshops will be considered as other relevant opportunities to disseminate project?s outputs and lessons.

In year one, an inception workshop will be organized. UNCCD will lead the day-to-day management of the project under the guidance of the Steering Committee. UNCCD will prepare project progress (technical and financial) reports, that will be complied and validated by IUCN for submission to the GEF. Progress made in project delivery and project planning will be regularly assessed by UNCCD and will be the opportunity to review the project?s results framework together with M&E system, and make the necessary adjustments.

A short communication and knowledge management strategy will be developed to ensure that general guidance on communication and knowledge management is provided for all project partners. The strategy will describe the audience, the approach, and the tools that will be used to disseminate the projects results externally and internally (e.g. website, reports and publications, guidelines, briefings, meetings, etc).

**Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment**
The proposed project will put gender transformative actions in the center of its design and operation. This can have many forms including, but not limited to, gender informed and gender transformative planning at the inception phase, technology development (such as the advancements on Trends.Earth and LandPKS) conducted in a way that it includes gender specific information, as well as gender transformative training and the development of gender informed guidelines for land use planning in the context of LDN projects. The project will also identify approaches for financing of LDN and innovative public-private partnerships in support of gender actions in integrated land use planning and LDN investments in alignment with the UNCCD/GM support from the Government of Canada.

The proposed project will thereby follow the recommendations formulated in the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy, UNCCD?s Gender Action Plan and the Manual for Gender Responsive LDN Transformative Projects, which was jointly formulated by IUCN, Global Mechanism and UNWOMEN[2]. This includes women?s participation during the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of project activities including:

?       Conducting gender and social assessment that outlines the context, problems, root cases and drivers that contribute to land degradation and women?s and men?s varied roles, rights and duties regarding land, productive and natural resources, and how the project interventions might affect them differently.

?       Identifying and reaching out to stakeholders and partners, ensuring gender-balanced representation, perspectives and expertise. This will include gender specific consultations for example with women groups, representatives of women farmers associations and others.

?       Collecting gender disaggregated datasets to better understand women?s land rights and access to resources and provide specific guidance to gender informed and gender transformative actions related to land use planning in the context of LDN implementation.

? Designing gender appropriate training documentation that enhances women?s access to improved knowledge and technologies and provide training programs geared toward closing the disparities between men and women on accessing technology.

? Formulating gender transformative indicators, mainstreaming gender issues and particularly target women in training, consultations and dissemination.

**Project Management**

The project will be implemented by IUCN as GEF Implementing Agency and executed by the Global Mechanism of UNCCD as project executing agency. In terms of the division of roles and responsibilities IUCN will be responsible for the due diligence toward GEF (for example reporting, compliance, audit) whereas GM will be responsible for the overall coordination and project management. In addition, Conservation International (CI), which has developed the Trends.Earth and Tools4LDN platforms with the support of another GEF Enabling Activity project, will be contracted by UNCCD to implement some of the activities under outcome 1.

Project steering committee: A project steering committee, comprised of representatives from IUCN and the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD as executing agency would convene twice a year to provide overall guidance to the implementation of the project. Other relevant experts, stakeholders and UNCCD focal points from involved countries may be invited to attend steering committee meetings based on specific issues or guidance required as/if needed.

Project management: IUCN will be responsible for the overall reporting to GEF, monitoring and evaluation and ensuring due diligence with regard to the policies set by GEF. GM/UNCCD will be itself responsible for overall project management, the implementation and recruitment of specialized staff, consultants and service providers as well as operational management of the project. GM/UNCCD will work closely with IUCN to ensure a swift implementation of the project.

Financial Management and Procurement: IUCN will ensure due diligence with the GEF policies on procurement and financial management. UNCCD / Global Mechanism will apply vetted standard procedures of the UN system for procurement and financial management of the project.

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[1] The definition of vulnerable groups (groups vulnerable to land degradation) context, country and location specific and may include, but not be limited, to social context such as indigenous people, beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, health and disability, poverty, literacy, livelihoods, climate and environment, land ownership and access to land, and others.

[2] UNWOMEN, IUCN and Global Mechanism, 2019. A Manual for Gender Responsive Land Degradation Neutrality Transformative projects and Programs

## D. DESCRIBE, IF POSSIBLE, THE EXPECTED COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT

Facilitating the implementation of the decisions taken at the COP14, notably with regard to synthesizing good practice and guidance on land use planning with the aim to have effective, cost efficient and technically sound instruments is the project?s main objective. Building upon existing projects and well-established partnerships, the project will minimize the need for duplicating efforts and costs for the development of monitoring and decision support tools needed to assess and inform land degradation. WOCAT maintains the UNCCD recommended platform for documenting sustainable land management practices and has a vast global network of partners on which the project can build on. Trends.Earth, also the result of a GEF funded project, was built on the premise of free and open access for the global good. The GEO-LDN Initiative responds to a call made by the UNCCD to bring data providers and data users together and support global efforts to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation globally. This project will fully build upon and valorize these platforms and tools.

Through coordination with the partners the project will not only reduce the cost of providing monitoring and planning tools, as compared to the development of new tools. All tools will be developed based on open source or open access software applications and data sets. All platforms, data and information will be freely accessible to users across the globe. For large scale capacity building events, the project will seek direct synergies and cost saving opportunities with regional and or global capacity training workshops that may be delivered as part of the follow up of the LDN Target Setting Programme currently under development by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and its partners. With regards to budget and expenses, the project will be following an economic and efficient management of resources and apply market conform rates for consultants (firms and individual).

## E. DESCRIBE, DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M & E PLAN

Project monitoring and evaluation will be conducted in accordance with established procedures of IUCN, the Global Mechanism/UNCCD and GEF. The monitoring and evaluation plan will be presented and finalized at the project inception workshop, including a review of indicators, means of verification, sources of data and risks to project delivery.

### A. Monitoring and Evaluation Roles and Responsibilities

IUCN and the Global Mechanism/UNCCD will be responsible for project monitoring and evaluation. A results-monitoring framework measuring outcomes, output and intermediate results will be drafted in line with the key outcome indicators of GEF and those set by IUCN and the GM/UNCCD. GM/UNCCD and IUCN will also be responsible for semi-annual steering committee meetings, quarterly and annual reporting to GEF, documentation of lessons learnt and other forms of monitoring.

Global Mechanism/UNCCD will be responsible for providing all required information and data necessary for timely and comprehensive project reporting, including results and financial data. IUCN will support overall assurance, and oversight role and will ensure contracting and oversight of the planned independent external evaluation exercises at the end of the project. The project will address the following key issues for monitoring and evaluation:

a. Inception workshop. Project inception workshop will be held within the first three months of project start with the project stakeholders. An overarching objective of the inception workshop is to assist the project partners in understanding and taking ownership of the project?s objectives and outcomes.

b. Inception report. GM/UNCCD and IUCN will produce an inception report documenting all changes and decisions made during the inception workshop to the project planned activities, budget, results framework, and any other key aspects of the project.

c. Results framework (Objective, Outcomes, and Outputs). A results framework will be developed GM/UNCCD and IUCN, which will include objective, outcome and output indicators, metrics to be collected for each indicator, methodology for data collection and analysis, baseline information, location of data gathering, frequency of data collection, responsible parties, and indicative resources needed to complete the plan.

d. GEF Core Indicators. The relevant GEF Core Indicators will be completed (i) at effectiveness, (ii) at mid-term review, and (iii) project closure. Considering that the overall duration for the implementation of the project is 2 years no further monitoring and evaluation related to the GEF Core Indicators will be conducted.

e. Project steering committee meetings. Project steering committee (PSC) meetings will be held semi-annually, or when deemed necessary. Meetings shall be held to review and approve project annual budget and work plans, discuss implementation issues and identify solutions, and to increase coordination and communication between key project partners. The meetings held by the PSC will be monitored and results adequately reported.

f. Semi-annual progress reporting. The project will submit semi-annually progress reports to GEF, including a budget follow-up and requests for disbursement to cover expected quarterly expenditures.

g. Annual project implementation report. The Global Mechanism/UNCCD will prepare an annual project implementation report to monitor progress made since project start. The project implementation report will summarize the annual project result and progress. A summary of the report will be shared with the project steering committee.

h. Final project report. The GM/UNCCD will draft a final report at the end of the project.

i. Lessons learned and knowledge generation. Results from the project will be disseminated within and beyond the project intervention area through existing information sharing networks and forums. The project will identify and participate, as relevant and appropriate, in scientific, policy-based and/or any other networks, which may be of benefit to project implementation though lessons learned.

**B. Monitoring and Evaluation Components and Activities**

The Project M&E Plan should include the following components

| Type of Monitoring and Evaluation | Reporting Frequency | Responsible Partners | Indicative Budget (USD) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Inception workshop | Within 3 months of project effectiveness | GM and IUCN | 25,000 |
| Inception report | Within 4 months of project effectiveness | GM and IUCN | |
| Results framework | Within 4 months of project effectiveness present final results framework (with inception report) | IUCN and GM | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| GEF Core Indicators | ? Four months after effectiveness<br><br>? at mid-term review<br><br>? project closure | GM and IUCN | |
| Project steering committee meetings | Semi-annually | GM, IUCN and others as observers | 33,709 |
| Annual project implementation reports | Annually | GM and IUCN | 10,000 |
| Project knowledge and communication products | Annually in line with CRIC and UNCCD COP meetings | GM and IUCN | 80,000 |

**F. EXPLAIN THE DEVIATIONS FROM TYPICAL COST RANGES (WHERE APPLICABLE)**

**Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And GEF Agency(ies)**

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

| Focal Point Name | Focal Point Title | Ministry | Signed Date |
|---|---|---|---|

**B. Convention Participation**

| Convention | Date of Ratification/Accession | National Focal Point |
|---|---|---|

## ANNEX A: Project Budget Table

**Please attach a project budget table.**

| Outcomes | Outputs | Year / Quarter / Activities | Activities | Project Officer | National Consultancy | International Consultancy | National Workshops | Regional Workshops | International Travel | Sub-contract/ Procurement | Overhead |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Component 1: Enhancing capacity for improved land use planning that integrates LDN** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Outcome 1: Countries integrate LDN in their land use planning policies and practice in a gender responsive manner; | 1.1 Published and disseminated report on the challenges and opportunities integrate LDN in gender responsive land use planning and land governance based assessments of existing planning frameworks and consultation with relevant stakeholders | A.1.1.1 | Commission (sub) national studies to identify and document challenges in land use planning and land governance and the opportunities and best practices related to the role of LDN in supporting land use planning, land governance, climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation | $ 20,000.00 | $ 70,000.00 | | $ 170,000.00 | | | | |
| | | A.1.1.2 | Identify good practices and produce case studies related to a gender transformative approach for land use planning and land governance | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 20,000.00 | | | | | |
| | | A.1.1.3 | Convene national consultations to review the (sub) national studies and case studies (ensuring participation of women and youth interest groups and other relevant | $ 20,000.00 | | | | $ 80,000.00 | $ 10,000.00 | | |
| | 1.2 Scientific guidance from SPI on good practice related to LDN and gender transformative land use planning is integrated in operational technical guidelines for countries and available in three main UN languages; | A.1.2.1 | Develop technical guidelines (based on SPI good practice scientific guidance) for integration of LDN into gender transformative land use planning frameworks in three main UN languages | $ 15,000.00 | | $ 20,000.00 | | $ 20,000.00 | | | |
| | 1.3 A good practice study on the central role of gender transformative and inclusive land use planning/ governance for land-based biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation/ adaptation and LDN is documented and disseminated; | A.1.3.1 | Support integration and application of good practice guidance into relevant land use planning policies and strategies at (sub) national level | $ 10,000.00 | $ 50,000.00 | | $ 170,000.00 | | | | |
| | | A.1.3.2 | Produce good practice technical report providing science-based evidence of how, in the context of LDN, gender transformative and inclusive integrated land use planning and governance can contribute to land-based biodiversity conservation and climate | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 20,000.00 | | | | | |
| | 1.4 Training modules on LDN and gender transformative land use planning / governance are available in three main UN languages and capacity building delivered; | A.1.4.1 | Develop training modules and convene training workshops at regional level on gender sensitive LDN transformative land use planning/governance in 3 UN languages. | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 60,000.00 | $ 10,000.00 | | |
| | 1.5 Appropriate open source land use planning and trade-off analysis tools that integrate LDN are further developed and connected to or integrated with Trends.Earth supporting the identification of gaps between established LDN targets and achieving SDG 15.3; | A.1.5.1 | Commission the integration of LUP4LDN tool into Trends.Earth and update Trends.Earth workflow to facilitate user experience through the baseline, land use planning, and monitoring process. | $ 10,000.00 | | | | | | $ 243,091.00 | |
| | 1.6 Training modules on the use of these tools are designed and made available in three main UN languages and capacity building delivered; | A.1.6.1 | Develop training materials available through Trends.Earth website available in written and video form in 3 UN languages demonstrating suitability for use in different contexts to build countries capacities to use these tools | $ 10,000.00 | | | | | | $ 63,382.00 | |
| | | A.1.6.2 | Convene training events in the form of blended learning through a combination of face-to-face training and online training courses (in conjunction with A.1.1.3) | $ 10,000.00 | | | $ 40,000.00 | | $ 10,000.00 | | |
| **Component 2: Assessing LDN implementation status and gaps** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Outcome 2: National LDN implementation strategies show stronger synergies with biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation and are more gender responsive, based on status assessments and LDN gap analysis | 2.1 Countries are assisted to identify and document operational synergies between LDN implementation with NBSAPs, NDCs, NAPs and other relevant initiatives and its reporting | A.2.1.1 | Develop practical guidance on the identification and documentation of operational synergies between LDN implementation with NBSAPs, NDCs, NAPs and other relevant initiatives and its reporting | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 20,000.00 | | | | | |
| | | A.2.1.2 | Convene national stakeholder workshops to role out practical guidance and facilitate identification of operational synergies between LDN and other relevant initiatives at the national level in conjunction with A.1.1.3 | $ 10,000.00 | $ 45,000.00 | | $ 15,000.00 | | | | |
| | 2.2 Completed, existing and planned LDN, biodiversity and land-based climate change projects are documented, and their gender responsiveness is assessed, and accessible to facilitate investment coordination at national and regional level; | A.2.2.1 | Document and develop database/platform with implementation tracking tool of existing and planned LDN, biodiversity and land-based climate change projects at (sub) national level and regional level where feasible and publish and update on relevant and appropriate websites e.g. PRAIS, and | $ 15,000.00 | $ 25,000.00 | $ 20,000.00 | | | | | |
| | 2.3 Countries identify and document synergies between LDN projects and links to UNFCCC and CBD initiatives | A.2.3.1 | Produce technical briefs and case studies on synergies between LDN projects and links to UNFCCC and CBD initiatives | $ 5,000.00 | | | | | | | |
| | 2.4 Information on implemented actions and the established LDN targets is georeferenced, shared and accessible through relevant platforms and the PRAIS; | A.2.4.1 | Enhance database developed in A.2.2.1 by mapping and including geo-locations and graphics using existing tools and platforms where feasible on completed, existing and planned LDN, biodiversity and land-based climate change projects including tools for | $ 10,000.00 | $ 20,000.00 | | | | | | |
| | 2.5 Countries are supported to conduct a gap analysis between established LDN targets, implemented actions and achieving SDG target 15.3 and other relevant SDG's; | A.2.5.1 | Develop operational guidance to conduct a gap analysis between established LDN targets, implemented actions and achieving SDG target 15.3 (in conjunction with A.1.2.1.1) | $ 15,000.00 | | | | | | | |
| | | A.2.5.2 | Convene national capacity building and awareness raising events to undertake gap analysis in conjunction with relevant events | $ 10,000.00 | $ 30,000.00 | | $ 30,000.00 | | $ 10,000.00 | | |
| **Component 3: Facilitating gender transformative LDN investments** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Outcome 3: Countries develop innovative financing proposals for LDN investment that is gender transformative; | 3.1 Financing gaps for gender transformative LDN investments have been identified and documented in consultation with relevant stakeholders; | A.3.1.1 | Commission national assessments to identify financing gaps for gender transformative LDN investments | $ 20,000.00 | $ 20,000.00 | | | | | | |
| | 3.2 A review of gender-responsiveness in LDN investment is published and disseminated | A.3.2.1 | In coordination with A.1.1.1, consult stakeholders regarding financing gaps (from public, private and other financing mechanisms) and opportunities for gender | $ 10,000.00 | $ 20,000.00 | | $ 30,000.00 | | | | |
| | 3.3 Guidance note on innovative public-private partnerships, tools and approaches for financing that support gender equality in integrated land use planning and LDN investments are developed and disseminated in the three main UN languages; | A.3.3.1 | Commission the preparation of briefing and guidance notes on innovative public private partnerships, tools and approaches for financing gender transformative LDN | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 28,000.00 | | | | | |
| | | A.3.3.2 | Update the existing LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes training materials and convene regional capacity building events on project preparation and resource | $ 10,000.00 | | | | $ 40,000.00 | | | |
| **Component 4: Project konwledge management and Monitoring and Evaluation** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Outcome 4: Project results are monitored and evaluated effectively and inform land use planning | 4.1 Monitoring and evaluation and consolidation of lessons learnt | A.4.1.1 | Organise inception meeting | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 8,000.00 | | | $ 15,000.00 | | |
| | | A.4.1.2 | Semi-annual Project Steering Committee Meetings, project progress reports | $ 10,000.00 | | | | | $ 15,709.00 | | |
| | | A.4.1.3 | Elaborate project progress reports | $ 10,000.00 | | | | | | | |
| | 4.2 Knowledge management and communication strategy | A.4.2.1 | Develop communication strategy, develop workshop material, i.e press release, videos, | $ 10,000.00 | | $ 30,000.00 | | | | | |
| | 4.3 LDN best practices are disseminated for replication and uptake - include translation | A.4.3.1 | Good practices and training material are developed and disseminated | $ 10,000.00 | | | | | | $ 30,000.00 | |
| Project Management | Project Management Cost | | | | | | | | | | $ 181,818.00 |
| **TOTAL** | | | | $ 300,000.00 | $ 280,000.00 | $ 176,000.00 | $ 455,000.00 | $ 200,000.00 | $ 70,709.00 | $ 336,473.00 | $ 181,818.00 |