Regeneration of Livelihoods and Landscapes (ROLL) Project

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID
10723

Project Type
FSP

Type of Trust Fund
GET

CBIT/NGI
☐CBIT
☐NGI

Project Title
Regeneration of Livelihoods and Landscapes (ROLL) Project

Countries
Lesotho

Agency(ies)
IFAD

Other Executing Partner(s)

Executing agencies: Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation (MFRSC); Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC);

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Land Degradation

Taxonomy

Forest, Forest and Landscape Restoration, Focal Areas, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Fire Management, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Sustainable Agriculture, Income Generating Activities, Sustainable Livelihoods, Ecosystem Approach, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Sustainable Pasture Management, Food Security, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Carbon stocks above or below ground, Land Cover and Land cover change, Biodiversity, Mainstreaming, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Influencing models, Demonstrate innovative approache, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Beneficiaries, Local Communities, Communications, Behavior change, Education, Awareness Raising, Private Sector, Capital providers, SMEs, Large corporations, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Type of Engagement, Participation, Partnership, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Women groups, Gender-sensitive indicators, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender results areas, Access and control over natural resources, Access to benefits and services, Capacity Development, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Innovation, Knowledge Exchange, Enabling Activities, Knowledge Generation, Learning, Adaptive management, Theory of change, Indicators to measure change

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 0

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 0

Duration

72 In Months

Agency Fee($)

332,782.00

Submission Date

11/2/2020

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
LD-1-1	GET	2,000,000.00	14,500,000.00
LD-1-4	GET	1,502,968.00	14,000,000.00
Total Project Cost ($)		**3,502,968.00**	**28,500,000.00**

B. Indicative Project description summary

Project Objective

Rural communities transform their landscapes and livelihoods by adopting sustainable land management practices, leading to enhanced flow of agro-ecosystem goods and services, climate change resilience and household income diversification

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
Component 1: Enhanced capacity in integrated landscape management	Technical Assistance	Outcome 1.1: Enhanced enabling environment and capacity for landscape management in place for landscapes in 5 administrative districts Outcome 1. 2: Improved, coordinated and collaborative landscape management and restoration of 350,000 ha in the targeted 5 LDN Hubs, contributing 58% to 600 000 ha LDN national target	1.1.1: Intersectoral mechanism for improved horizontal and vertical communication and collaboration on landscape management. 1.1.2: One capacity development strategy and programme for landscape management developed and approved by project stakeholders. 1.2.3 250 landscape management plans developed under 350,000 ha (58% of national LDN target) of restored land, including shrub lands, grasslands, rangelands and cropland. 1.2.1 : 250 landscape regeneration coalitions (local resource management groups, traditional authorities and local government) formed and operational (sustainably manage natural resources and	GET	1,837,968.00	7,500,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
Component 2. Landscape restoration	Investment	Outcome 2.1: 14,500 ha of landscapes under improved practices (crop land and rangeland) and sequestration of 1 206 559 tCO2, benefitting 20,000 GEF; 80000 total (GEF+baseline) rural households of which 50% are women, with strengthened livelihoods and sources of income 2.2 Effective facility and fund for landscape restoration/regeneration available for 200 farming enterprises	2.1.1: On-farm and off-farm sustainable soil and water conservation measures (conservation agriculture, drip irrigation) implemented on 4 500 ha of agricultural land 2.1.2: Village-level ecosystem restoration through SLM investments in e.g. village nurseries for reforestation on 5 000 ha (forests and shrub land), 2.2.1: Regeneration fund established and capitalized to support to 200 farming enterprises. 2.2.2: 20 000 rural households (50% women) engage in off-farm enterprises such as homestead gardening, bee-keeping and improved food value chains. 2.2.3: At least 400 million Lesotho Loti (USD 23 million) invested in	GET	1,000,000.00	16,000,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
Component 3: Knowledge Management, and M & E	Technical Assistance	Outcome 3.1: Improved monitoring tools and procedures generate LDN data which enable measurement of environmental and socio-economic change 3.2 Project monitoring system operates effectively and systematically provides information on progress, lessons learnt and informs adaptive management to ensure results	Output 3.1.1: Gender-sensitive landscape and improved livelihoods monitoring and reporting tools developed and institutionalized, using MPAT Output 3.1.2: 250 landscape coalitions trained in participatory landscape monitoring and evaluation 3.2.1: Five LDN information hubs operationalized as a mechanism for sharing and verification of monitoring data, including the dissemination of lessons learned and best practices to primary and secondary stakeholders 3.2.2: Curricula for teaching at schools and universities integrate landscape management aspects informed by ROLL project	GET	500,000.00	2,500,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
			Sub Total ($)		3,337,968.00	26,000,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
				GET	165,000.00	2,500,000.00
			Sub Total($)		165,000.00	2,500,000.00
			Total Project Cost($)		3,502,968.00	28,500,000.00

C. Indicative sources 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($)
Donor Agency	OPEC Fund for international development (OFID)	Loans	Investment mobilized	12,300,000.00
GEF Agency	IFAD	Loans	Investment mobilized	11,200,000.00
Donor Agency	FAO	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	The Lesotho Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3,000,000.00
			Total Project Cost($)	**28,500,000.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The Lesotho Regeneration of Landscapes and Livelihoods (ROLL) project refers to the total project that will be funded by IFAD, OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) and the Government of Lesotho (GoL), and where additional GEF resources are to be integrated. The set of activities to be funded in ROLL by the GEF resources, is herein referred to as ROLL-GEF. Table B describes the total funding of the ROLL project. IFAD will provide a grant-loan facility (50%-50%) for ROLL, for a total of US$ 11.2 million. The OFID has also committed to providing US$ 12.3 million in loan co-financing. FAO has committed a total amount of US$ 2 million in kind. The GoL has committed to align part of their budgets to ROLL, thereby substantially increasing the scale of the project.

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

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
IFAD	GET	Lesotho	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	3,502,968	332,782	3,835,750.00
				Total GEF Resources($)	**3,502,968.00**	**332,782.00**	**3,835,750.00**

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required

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PPG Amount ($)

150,000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

14,250

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
IFAD	GET	Lesotho	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	150,000	14,250	**164,250.00**
				Total Project Costs($)	**150,000.00**	**14,250.00**	**164,250.00**

Core Indicators

Indicator 3 Area of land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
350000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
4,500.00			

Indicator 3.2 Area of Forest and Forest Land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
5,000.00			

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and shrublands restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
340,500.00			

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (incl. estuaries, mangroves) restored

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

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

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
14500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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

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

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

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

Type/Name of Third Party Certification
Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
14,500.00			

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

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

Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title	Submitted

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	1206559	0	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

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

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	1,206,559			
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2022			
Duration of accounting	20			

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

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

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

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

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

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

Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	10,000			
Male	10,000			
Total	20000	0	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

The direct beneficiaries are the people expected to receive ROLL-GEF project services, i.e. reaching 20,000 households through direct investments on the ground. This estimate is to be further detailed during full project design. In total, the ROLL project is expected to reach and create positive benefits for 80,000 households, equaling about 400,000 people. ROLL-GEF resources will also have a positive impact on these households, albeit indirect; through the application of guidelines and sharing of best practices.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1) Environmental challenges, root causes and barriers

Lesotho, entirely surrounded by South Africa, is situated at the highest point of the Drakensberg escarpment on the eastern rim of the South African plateau. Lesotho is a landlocked country with an area of about 30,000 km2, divided into 4 ecological zones: the lowlands (between 1300 – 1800 m above sea level, 17%), the foothills (at 1800 – 2000 m, 15%), the mountains (between 2000 and 3400 m, 59%), and the Senqu River valley (within the lowlands and the foothills, 9%).

Lesotho's population is essentially made up of one homogeneous ethnic grouping, the Basotho, and is estimated to be 2 million. The population growth rate is 2.3%. Gross National Product (GNP) per capita is estimated at US$ 550, which is relatively high compared to other Eastern and Southern African countries. However, a significant portion (49%) of the population in Lesotho lives under the poverty line. The situation is particularly severe in rural areas where poverty rates exceed 60%. The same rural areas also suffer from high environmental degradation, which is strongly linked to the socio-economic situation and behavior of natural resource users. The development of an integrated agriculture and food system that ensures nutritious and affordable food while at the same time incentivizes local sustainable production of higher-value crops and livestock, is strongly intertwined with a much-needed regeneration of both landscapes and livelihoods.

As a small land-locked country, Lesotho's economy suffers from the fact that it is unable to compete with the economies of scale of producers in neighbouring South Africa and the majority of food consumed in the country is imported. Agricultural growth is limited by difficult agro-climatic conditions and limited arable land. The contribution of agriculture to the Gross domestic product (GDP) declined from an estimated 20% in the 1980s to around 6% in 2017. Even so, the sector is and remains critical to inclusive socio-economic development as close to 76% of households in Lesotho live in the rural areas and 70% derive all or part of their livelihoods from agriculture.

Rural households in Lesotho derive their income out of a variety of sources which are often highly volatile or characterized by low productivity (e.g. remittances, seasonal labour, small livestock and subsistence farming). Wool and mohair are important export products, making up around 5-6% of Lesotho's total exports and having an estimated 250,000

beneficiaries along the supply chain, with production dominated by smallholder farmers. A large share of Basotho own goats and sheep, resulting in an estimated total of 4 million small stock animals on approximately 1.8 million hectares of rangeland. The number of animals, an unequal geographical distribution, and the seasonal herd movements from the mountains in summer to the lowlands in winter result in unregulated and excessive pressure on Lesotho's rangelands.

At the same time, cropland is expanding to keep pace with food demand for the population. Main crops include maize, sorghum, and wheat which are planted as monocrops on 85 % of the country's arable land which comprises 10 % of Lesotho's total land area. Maize and sorghum are the most important staple food crops, with maize often receiving policy and financing support, for example through maize input subsidies. This is notwithstanding the fact that maize, despite being a staple food crop, is not suitable for production across much of Lesotho's agro-ecology, and the cost of production in the country is higher compared to the cost of importing from South Africa. On top of this, many farmers use inappropriate agricultural practices including inappropriate soil tillage, rangeland fires and over-extraction of medicinal plants and grasses.

These poor natural resource management practices have led to severe environmental degradation, demonstrated by soil erosion, loss of wetlands, loss of water retention capacity and increased incidence of pests and diseases. Lesotho's topography and climate make it vulnerable to soil erosion, but several human activities fast-track the problem. The current levels of degradation present a serious challenge to rural residents, leading to declining crop yields, crop failure, water points drying up and the need for considerable investments in the control of invasive species. The severe overstocking of rangeland decreases the recovering ability of the pastures, leading to a widespread denudation of soil surfaces which multiplies the impacts of climate events such as drought and heavy rainfall on soil losses. A large-scale effort is needed to transform this 'broken' system.

Lesotho is one of the least forested countries in Africa and is considered to be a 'grassland country', with grasslands playing a critical role in social-ecological and economic systems. The indigenous forests are of low occurrence but remain a very important resource to rural communities by providing medicine, fuelwood, construction material, forage and shelter. The grasslands are a critical resource for local construction (thatching grass), for socio-cultural purposes including the famous Basotho hats, and for traditional medicine on which the majority of the population depends. Despite various efforts on conservation, the destruction of these ecosystems continues unabated, although the rate of depletion has not been ascertained quantitatively.

The environmental challenges faced by Lesotho have an important counterpoint in a major environmental opportunity and potential enabler of a transformation towards sustainable use of landscapes: the abundance of freshwater. Lesotho's precipitation characteristics, high altitude and geographic proximity to major demand centers in southern

Africa, makes water one of the country's most valuable renewable and sustainable natural assets. The value of Lesotho's water resources is derived from its strategic position in the Orange-Senqu River basin. The basin accounts for over 10 % of GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa and is among the three most economically important basins per unit area on the African continent (after the Nile and the Limpopo river basins).

With its headwaters in the highlands of Lesotho, the Orange-Senqu River encompasses Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa with a catchment area of over one million square kilometers. The river flows roughly 2,300 kilometers to the west before discharging into the Atlantic Ocean, with main tributaries being the Senqu, Vaal, Fish and Molopo-Nossob river systems. The mountain Kingdom of Lesotho is fully situated within the basin but accounts for only 5 % of the basin surface area, while contributing 40 % of annual runoff. Mean annual precipitation is nearly 1,800 millimeters in the headwaters in Lesotho, but only 50 millimeters at the river's mouth between South Africa and Namibia. In contrast, Botswana accounts for 12 % of the basin and contributes little to the basin runoff, with South Africa occupying 64 % of the basin, accounting for more than half of the total mean annual runoff and 98 % of the consumption among the riparian basin states. Balancing the development of water resources for export against national priorities to improve the levels of access is one of the key challenges for the Lesotho government.

Root causes of environmental challenges

The root causes of the environmental challenges are situated primarily in the agriculture and food system, linked to the low levels of agricultural productivity, exacerbated by population pressure and poor land management capacities on the one hand and further socio-economic factors such as limited access to agricultural tools or credit schemes and the HIV-AIDS epidemic on the other. The root causes include:

Overgrazing as a result of overstocking

Cattle, sheep and goats which are raised extensively on communal rangeland dominate the livestock sector. Cattle are mainly used for subsistence which includes draught power, milk, fuel sources, socio-cultural uses and ceremonies. Sheep are of the merino type and raised for the sale of their wool, slaughter and for ceremonial purposes. Livestock herd sizes are mainly controlled by natural factors such as fertility and mortality than planned management. Overstocking, and the resulting overgrazing, is recognized as one of the key contributing factors to land degradation in Lesotho. The National Range Resources Management Policy (2014) states that degradation of the natural grazing lands of Lesotho is indeed primarily due to land use patterns, such as encroachment into rangelands; partial breakdown of traditional seasonal grazing patterns due to increased stock theft; loss of

authority of traditional chiefs; confusion about authority concerning land use; the decrease of fallow grazing land, due to a fear of loss of traditional rights of use if not tilled; and large livestock numbers. Poor rangeland management practices have furthermore contributed to the spread of alien invasive species, which negatively impact native species and livestock productivity.

Over-cultivation of soils and landscapes

Cropping in Lesotho is dominated by maize cultivation. In rural areas, houses with a home garden and/or fruit trees are a clear minority - trees are seldom seen in conjunction with agricultural fields. Yields are low and declining: in the period 2006 to 2016, the average annual grain production fell to 108 800 metric tons (a fall of 53%), average annual yield per ha was only 0.612 metric tons and average annual grain imports had risen to 155 000 metric tons. Domestic production can only satisfy 30% of this demand. The decline can be attributed to a number of causes, including declining soil fertility and inappropriate management practices such as late planting operations. Cultivation in Lesotho is done using inappropriate practices and occurs in mountain sides which are already prone to erosion due to factors such as ploughing down the slope instead of across it, probably due to lack of knowledge and experience.

Climate change

Historic rainfall data of the past 30 years show a concentration of rainfall during summer months and reduced precipitation in autumn and spring. The delay of spring rains increases farmers' uncertainty when to prepare fields and put seeds into the ground. Changing rainfall patterns are also strongly related to the El Niño–Southern Oscillation. There is a higher drought risk during El Niño and a higher flood risk during La Niña. Lesotho's people and environment are also increasingly subject to other extreme weather events such as hailstorms and unseasonal snowfall. Severe soil erosion destroys ecosystems and habitats including wetlands, reduces water retention capacity and contributes to the loss of important ecosystem services, including biodiversity loss.

Other root causes that are especially relevant in specific localities include habitat destruction due to developmental activities, such as major construction works (roads, infrastructure and mining) having impact on wetlands; and the over-exploitation of biological resources such as thatching grass, trees and shrubs for socio-economic and cultural purposes.

Enabling conditions, linked to land property, access

Gaps exists in the legislation framework required to regulate rangeland management, land tenure and land use and in defining the role of traditional authorities in regulating natural resource usage. Existing policies and strategies are also somewhat outdated and/or are not being implemented. From this it is evident that there is a need for policy and regulatory reform if the goals of the National Strategy Development Plan (NSDP) II are to be achieved

The enforcement of limiting access is a major constraint. The biggest challenge currently in Lesotho is to (i) define boundaries and (ii) enforce restrictions, especially in the zones far from the villages.

Barriers to achieve sustainable landscapes

Substantive barriers to sustainable landscape and ecosystem management can be clustered in three groups:

1.Weak institutional capacities and enabling environment

This includes weak implementation and enforcement capacities for existing regulations and policies. There is also limited institutional, technical capacity to coordinate and promote cross-sectoral action to implement environmental initiatives and interventions, including limited capacity to design and implement appropriate interlinked policies and programs. Specific problems contributing to the negative state of affairs can be identified as inadequate enforcement of legislation, contradicting programs, poor grazing controls, ineffective institutional arrangements, fragmented legal instruments, and outdated range resources management policy and legislation.

2.Lack of a coordinated, efficient investment strategy for land and water management

The situation has become so dire that it has left many communities convinced that there are no solutions to most of the environmental challenges they face, and that they are natural and therefore irreversible. This is particularly the case in parts of the country where there has not been sufficient activity in addressing key environmental problems. Critical in the challenge is finding the right incentive system to engage resource users, which is anchored in a longer-term investment strategy. Cash-for-work programmes are and have been successful in addressing immediate restoration needs but cannot be a structural measure for landscapes to become more sustainable, not from the perspective of the land users nor from the perspective of the taxpayers. For Lesotho and for the region, financial incentives for sustainable landscape management are indeed an investment into the future and need to be regarded as such. A long-term investment strategy is needed for sustainable land and water management based on a benefit sharing mechanism and leveraging blended (public and private) finance.

3. Inadequate knowledge and weak technical capacities for effective sustainable land management practices

While there have been successful projects and programmes in Lesotho targeting environmental degradation and specifically land degradation, interventions have not always been accompanied by strong approaches to knowledge management and awareness raising on the successes of the interventions. This is exacerbated by weak capacities to monitor environmental changes effectively, or the effect these have on livelihoods and socio-economic conditions. Inadequate monitoring systems also limit Lesotho's ability to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and policies. Similarly, current environmental monitoring practices does not enable the production of knowledge that can directly inform policy making.

2) Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects

In the baseline scenario, various government and non-government partners address the identified barriers through interventions and projects that are effective only within a limited scope and are jointly not sufficient to reverse land degradation trends.

The primary baseline project is the Lesotho Regeneration of Landscapes and Livelihoods (ROLL) project which is being developed by government and development partners. The full project design is expected to take place in November 2020 and the project is expected to start implementation in August 2021 . The purpose of the project is to address environmental degradation, enhance the resilience of local stakeholders to environmental and climatic shocks and increase livelihood opportunities, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation and food security. An innovative aspect of the project is the setting up of a **Facility** to enable coalition building and provide incentives to smallholder farmers and pastoralists to adopt an integrated approach to managing the productive landscape, and a **Fund** to enable investments in landscapes where an effective coalition has been established. These two elements bring together multiple actors in a common approach centered around sustainable management of landscapes. The project interventions will help overcome the barrier related to the lack of a coordinated, efficient investment strategy.

While the ROLL project sets an ambitious target, it nevertheless is limited in the extent to which it can address the barriers related to weak technical and institutional capacities and the need for a strengthened enabling environment; specifically targeted at the problem of land degradation. An additional investment centered on promoting a landscape approach to reducing land degradation through sustainable land and water management, sustainable livestock management and agricultural production, and strengthening local and institutional capacities is therefore warranted. The ROLL-GEF-contribution will be instrumental in linking on-the-ground investments (through the ROLL Fund) to a national agenda of reinforced monitoring, knowledge management and a strengthened enabling environment aimed at, inter alia, supporting Lesotho to meet its land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets.

 The ROLL-GEF project will build on the ROLL Project Management Unit (PMU), institutional arrangements and overall governance structures. However, the direct split of tasks and funding items will be further defined during design. Within the ROLL project, ROLL-GEF resources will be used to finance activities that will enable mainstreaming of sustainable landscape management within the entire project in order to contribute to Lesotho's LDN targets of balancing losses and gains of productive land through SLM. ROLL-GEF will finance 2 or 3 expert positions in the PMU dedicated to follow-up on ROLL-GEF activities and provide environmental and monitoring expertise.

Other relevant baseline projects include:

- **The Smallholder Agriculture Development Project (SADP).** This project, also financed and supervised by IFAD and the primary baseline for LASAP LDCF project, will increase the resilience of small-scale agriculture to climate change impacts by promoting climate-proofed investments for agriculture-based development, as well as by enhancing the resilience of agricultural productivity under increased climate variability. The ROLL project will build on lessons learned in the SADP project by producing and disseminating more detailed and more appropriate local adaptation strategies and reduce the risks of disruptions by anthropogenic activities and extreme events. ROLL will similarly de-risk the investments made by SADP in for instance irrigated agriculture.

- **Support to Integrated Catchment Management in Lesotho supported by the 11th European Development Fund (EDF)**, in collaboration with GIZ. The 11th EDF National Indicative Program (NIP) 2014-2020 includes water management as one of three focal sectors of cooperation - support which will contribute to the implementation of the Lesotho National Strategic Development Plans (NSDP, and its successor NSDP II) with an allocation of EUR 69,000,000. The specific objective of the proposed action is to have Integrated Catchment Management institutionalized and under full implementation in Lesotho, based on gender equality and climate adaptation principles. This objective is building upon outputs of an effective and efficient sensitive and climate-resilient policy framework for Integrated Catchment Management developed; effective and efficient institutions for Integrated Catchment Management established, with equitable representation of women and youth; capacity, skills and knowledge of public, private sector and civil society for sustainable Integrated Catchment Management facilitated and Integrated Catchment Management measures implemented. The ROLL project interfaces with this project on multiple fronts, where ROLL will take up some of the approaches and working modalities tested under this project, including technical guidelines and improved institutional arrangements for project delivery.

- **Agricultural Productivity Program in Southern Africa (APPSA) funded by World Bank.** The main focus will be in developing research priorities and or activities on horticultural crops (fruits: peach and apples, potatoes and vegetables: tomato), including Sorghum and Beans being commodities already under research in cereal and legumes by participating countries in the region. APPSA Lesotho activities include: (i) supporting regional collaboration in agricultural research, technology dissemination, and training; (ii) establishing Regional Centers of Leadership (RCoLs) on commodities of regional importance, and (iii) facilitating increased sharing of agricultural information, knowledge, and technology among participating countries. APPSA funds would be used to support ROLL in:

- improving institutional management and performance systems, including knowledge and information sharing systems; and,

- human capital development, including scientific training on IWM, upgrading of skills through short courses or targeted training, and scientific exchanges; and strengthening of seed, regulatory and related services.

- **The Wool and Mohair Promotion Project (WAMPP) funded by IFAD** has been designed in response to the Government's request to provide support to this important aspect of Lesotho's rural economy on which so many of its women and men smallholder producers depend. Lesotho is a country that is almost totally reliant on rain-fed agriculture and in recent years the agricultural economy has suffered from extreme weather conditions – prolonged droughts and very damaging flooding. There is an acute awareness in the Government and within the communities that climate change is already impacting on the lives of the people of Lesotho and threatening their future. WAMPP is therefore designed to address the issues of rural poverty and food insecurity in the context of climate change and the increasing vulnerability of poor livestock producers. WAMPP is national in scope however most of the activities focus on the poorer mountain regions of the country, where the incidence of poverty and food insecurity is highest and agricultural activity is severely restricted due to the lack of cultivable land, the degraded rangelands and the harsh climate. In these mountainous areas sheep and goat herding is the main economic activity and subsistence and food security is essentially derived from the proceeds of selling animals or wool and mohair.

EU/GIZ funded Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) is a benchmark project working on improving the governance at national and inter-ministerial levels in Lesotho. Taking advantage of their focus on governance and legal reform, synergies and complementarity will be sought. Therefore, at this stage a strong focus on governance reform has not been included in the ROLL project. ROLL will nevertheless work at community and district level on the enforcement of local regulations. At the same time, some rules are bylaws – such as resting of grazing land – that need collective enforcement from communities/users and this will be one focus of the coalition-building component 1.

3) Alternative scenario and project description

The proposed GEF resources will be fully integrated with the ROLL project. The ROLL-GEF resources will focus on sustainable management of the natural resource base, particularly in ecosystem hotspots and development of monitoring tools and procedures to enable measurement of biophysical and socio-economic change and effectively share lessons learned and project successes. The aim of ROLL-GEF is to maintain or improve agro-ecosystem services through an integrated approach to SLM, sustaining livelihoods and food production systems, as well as to reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses while increasing the resilience of the targeted landscapes.

The overall ROLL approach is founded on a graduation model that integrates both landscapes as well as communities, combining an integrated bio-physical and socio-economic assessment of catchment status with a progressive intervention strategy. This is based on the understanding that rural populations are heterogeneous and that there is considerable variance in the asset base of households, their human resources, their levels of food security, and these are closely linked with their usage of natural resources. It is also based on the understanding that there is considerable variance in the governance, economic exploitation, and environmental degradation of landscapes, and this will require differentiated interventions along the development pathway.

The use of a graduation model that encompasses both communities and the state of the local environment, allows for differentiated targeting of communities and households, both to improve their livelihoods as well as to incentivize different categories of beneficiaries to graduate to higher levels of support based on their demonstrated contributions and effectiveness in regenerating their landscapes.

A participatory and iterative process is required which engages local communities in defining their sustainable land management challenges, such as increasing soil erosion due to inappropriate tilling techniques, encroachment on wetlands, poor water management, overstocking of rangelands, etc., and in identifying the right actions and in building the commitment necessary to ensure the effective implementation of measures to regenerate the landscapes and enhance the communities' livelihoods. This will be a phased process, based on the establishment of local coalitions (comprised of chiefs, local government councilors, government officials, local resource management groups, and community members) together with the introduction of a set of incentives which will support communities to transform their landscapes, including agricultural ones, to more sustainable forms of natural resource usage. This will include incentives to reduce the numbers and improve the quality of livestock, to restore landscapes and wetlands, to negotiate and plan for different and sometimes conflicting land uses, to enhance sustainable biotrade/natural product development (bee keeping, dried indigenous herbs and medicinal plants, artefacts) and eco-tourism initiatives, to pursue more sustainable agricultural practices, as well as interventions to balance agricultural income streams with off-farm income generating activities to increase the resilience of both the landscapes and local livelihoods.

The graduation model will enable the project to identify localities with different levels of environmental degradation and socio-economic profiles, ranging, for example, from highly degraded ecosystems/ catchments with high levels of poverty, to others where communities have demonstrated the capacity both to restore landscapes and to reduce local poverty. The design of project interventions will be tailored to the different needs of rural youth, women, men and the landscapes in which they live. Using smart incentives, landscapes which need urgent remedial measures and have a high incidence of poverty will be supported with labour-based schemes for instance, while catchments further ahead on the graduation journey will be supported with more innovative outcome/performance schemes that include the creation of alternative livelihood opportunities. The model

enables communities to graduate to a higher level of landscape management once they achieve a demonstrable balance between human economic activity and the environment. It will also enable some rural communities and households to balance agricultural production with off-farm income generating activities that may include manufacturing, food processing, eco-tourism and other sustainable businesses.

The proposed ROLL-GEF project has three interlinked and mutually reinforcing components:

● *Component 1: Enhanced capacity in integrated landscape management*

● *Component 2: Landscape restoration*

Component 3: Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Component 1: Enhanced capacity in integrated landscape management

Coalition and community capacity building will be underpinned by cross-sectoral guidelines where applicable, including for instance technical guidelines on catchment planning or soil and water conservation, biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, climate change adaptation, etc. The ongoing EU / GIZ project on Integrated Catchment Management will provide a particular useful source for these guidelines. The management plans resulting from the activities in this project will form the basis for the landscape restoration activities (Component 2). Project support to implementing partners will be determined on an area basis and reviewed annually, to ensure efficient, effective and adaptive delivery and to allow for the graduation model to be applied.

By building on cross-sectoral guidelines and applying these with coalitions of local, district and national partners, the project will establish a solid foundation of best practices and lessons to be learned, while mainstreaming integrated landscape approaches into relevant national agencies and policies. For instance, participatory land use mapping will support the establishment of broadly accepted landscape management plans, including approaches to sustainable pasture management will be shared and mainstreamed, for combatting encroachment by shrubs and alien species, often a sign of overexploitation

The coalitions to be formed will vary in the composition. Some will be already existing groups, such as the 70 existing grazing associations across Lesotho (some of which manage up to 10.000 hectares of range land), others will be more livelihood focused, such as village saving groups also working on environmental aspects (e.g. one group sells bottled water using a local spring and invests in its continuous flow). Other coalitions will be built through a participatory consultation process with support from government extension and project staff. The design mission will evaluate if a third party (CSO/NGO) will be required to support this aspect further.

The enhanced capacity in integrated landscape management will be a major contributor to outcome 1.2 improved, coordinated and collorative management of degraded productive landscapes, and to outcome 2.1 restoration of landscapes. It will promote collaborative efforts to reduce land degradation and to improve sustainable land management, by installing and raising communication and collaboration opportunities between local resource users and GoL agents, establishing local coalitions and developing landscape management plans that contribute to broader watershed plans and policies and even have positive co-benefits on regional basin management. Wherever possible, intermediaries such as local NGOs and community organizations will be tasked to bridge existing gaps, support the project strategy with their localized expertise and experience and to catalyze behavioral change.

The participatory land-use mapping and development of land-use management plans will also contribute towards maintaining of SLM in the agricultural productive landscapes and thus ensuring the food security of the target beneficiaries while supporting the achievement of the national LDN target.

Outcome 1.1 objects to enhance an enabling environment and capacity for landscape management in 5 administrative districts

The following outputs will contribute to achieving this outcome:

1.1.1   Intersectoral mechanism for improved horizontal and vertical communication and collaboration on landscape management;

1.1.2   One capacity development strategy and programme for landscape management developed and approved by project stakeholders;

1.1.3   250 stakeholders from project implementing partners (Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation (MFRSC) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) trained on landscape management

Outcome 1.2 aims at improved, coordinated and collaborative management of 350,000 ha of restored land in the targeted 5 LDN Hubs, contributing 58% to 600 000 ha LDN national target:

1.2.1   250 landscape regeneration coalitions (local resource management groups, traditional authorities and local government) formed and operational (sustainably manage natural resources and climate-related risk);

1.2.2   Participatory land use mapping by local rural community resource users (♀ and ♂) and implementing partners

1.2.3 250 landscape management plans developed under 350,000 ha restored land, including rangelands, shrub lands, grasslands and   cropland.

1.2.4   By-laws for the implementation of 250 landscape management plans developed and enacted.

The practical activities under component 1 include landscape assessment by communities, discussions on how livelihood activities could evolve and reduce their environmental footprint (e.g. shifting to more intensive farming, fodder production, small-scale irrigation/water harvesting, saving group formation and investment in small businesses), etc. It will be a people-centred approach, working with communities in selected landscapes. In addition coalitions will support the line ministries and their officers to work effectively with related government ministries through landscape management plans. Activities will also include further capacity building measures/training and work on behaviour change/awareness raising with relevant stakeholders.

Component 2: Landscape restoration

This component will enable investments in landscapes where an effective coalition has been established through the activities under component 1. It will be designed and

established in collaboration with several ROLL partners, such as IFAD, OFID, FAO, GoL as well as GEF, and is expected to be operational by the start of the second year of the project. Guiding principles for the design of the fund have been distilled from the experiences of IFAD and partners, including the GEF-funded Upper Tana Nairobi Water Fund, Cape Water Fund and Okavango Fund.

The fund will cover the following activities (i) Labour-based schemes which will focus on reseeding, reforestation of severely degraded areas, following appropriate environmental protocols and (ii) physical infrastructure development mainly construction of water points, small-scale irrigation and access roads . The fund aims to relieve immediate pressure in catchments experiencing high levels of poverty and land degradation.

 (iii) Performance-based incentives aimed at ensuring a smooth transition in areas undergoing a transition to more sustainable management practices, including incentives to reduce the flock-size by culling-exchange interventions to increase the quality of livestock, to restore landscapes, to pursue more sustainable arable agricultural practices, agro-forestry investments, such as orchards, fodder production at home-stead/field level as well as interventions to balance agricultural income streams with off-farm income generating activities to allow people shifting from extensive land-use to other livelihoods. The incentives for change in behaviour of communities and individuals are also partly a result from component 1 and the coalition building. The innovation is the principle, of working on results-based approaches and incentivising change through collective planning from coalitions and paying against these plans. However, in more advanced cases, aspects of out-come based payments/incentives (potentially cash transfers) will be piloted. The results based approach, involves all the communities in management, accountability in conducting a full assessment of their efforts on regeneration of landscapes, management and monitoring progress toward the achievement of expected results. The approach integrates lessons learned into management decisions and reporting on performance and in identifying the right actions and building the commitment necessary to ensure the effective implementation of measures to regenerate the landscapes and enhance the communities' livelihoods. Collective planning will promote partnership with communities in having natural resources linked to the value chain and encourage public private partnership. Collective planning also provides a form of social contracting among the community members and self-regulation, which are incentives for change. The collective planning with communities will improve governance through building stronger community institutions and increased community capacity, empowerment and voice, which can in turn provide a vehicle for strengthening local governance in other spheres of social and economic development. Collective planning builds a common vision for community members and strengthens the social capital.

(vi) Business development support for off-farm income-generating activities partially facilitated through existing projects. (v) Innovations and trials of new development approaches, revenue-sharing mechanisms in areas adjacent to reservoirs, and the potential introduction of unconditional cash transfer schemes.

A detailed analysis of Fund structure and governance procedures including where the Fund will be housed, expected funding sources, mechanisms and conditions tied to these sources will be carried out during project design, and may include public funds, funds generated through levies as well as direct private sector contributions from the water, food and agriculture sectors. A Steering Committee comprising relevant stakeholders will furthermore be established during the design phase of the Fund, to ensure alignment, co-ownership and broad-based support. In terms of Fund governance, the right balance of independence and delegated power will be sought to allow for effective implementation,

with accountability to various stakeholders. The governance structure and balance of powers will reflect the composition in funding sources. Finally, a transparent reporting mechanism will be established using clear, pre-agreed environmental and social performance indicators.

 Sustainable landscape management investments will be achieved through two outcomes :

2.1   Restoration of 350 000 ha of landscapes and sequestration of 1 206 559 tCO2 benefiting 20,000 GEF; 80000 total

(GEF+baseline) rural households of which 50% are women, with strengthened livelihoods and sources of income.

The outputs contributing to the above outcomes are:

2.1.1   On-farm and off-farm sustainable soil and water conservation measures (conservation agriculture, drip irrigation) implemented on 4 500 ha of agricultural land;

2.1.2   Village-level ecosystem management activities carried out through SLM investments, e.g. villages nurseries for reforestation of 5 000 ha (forest and shrub land).

2.2   Effective facility and fund for landscape restoration/regeneration available for 200 farming enterprises

The outputs contributing to the above outcomes are:

2.2.1   Regeneration fund for support to farming enterprises established and capitalized

2.2.2   20 000 rural households (50% women) engage in off-farm enterprises such as homestead gardening, bee-keeping and improved food value chains.

2.2.3   At least 400 million Lesotho Loti (USD 23 million) invested in regeneration of 350 000 ha of landscapes, channeled through the regeneration fund

The types of intervention supported under this component will be determined by the extent of degradation of the ecosystem as well as demonstrated capacities to improve implementation of and collaboration for SLM (see the above-described graduation model) and will be guided by a robust, evidence-based decision making agenda. The on-farm investments will contribute to improved food security for the target beneficiaries.

The ROLL-GEF resources will be earmarked for investing in activities that show great innovation potential for sustainable landscape management on the ground.

Together with the landscape coalitions and their landscape management plans instituted under component 1, component 2 aims at investing in on-the-ground landscape management activities. It thereby contributes to the aim of outcomes 1.2 and 2.1, coordinated and collorative management and restoration of landscapes.

A further emphasis will be on investment opportunities in off-farm enteprises that enhance both the beneficiaries' resilience and contribute to sustainable landscape management, such as homestead gardening, fodder and fertilizer production, fostering alternative energy options to reduce firewood use (solar stoves, biogas etc.), and strengthening food value chains such as through local food processing facilities (food system approach). Broadened livelihood opportunities aim at improving the socio-economic status of local resource users, thus reducing their dependence on and overexploitation of natural resources.

Since forest cover in Lesotho is scattered. The majority of work will be on grassland and rangeland. However, agroforestry have proven to work in some locations as livelihood base and to assist reforestation. Ministry of forestry also supports reforestation, and community level forest projects (micro-scale) which will be part of component 2, but will not be main focus of the project. The 5,000 ha core indictaor is an estimate of the area that is covered with trees albeit in the form of shrubs and tress.

The funding sources of the regeneration fund will be elaborated at design and will depend on a detailed analysis that will be conducted during project design The ROLL project also aims to leverage further funds during implementation. However, with with more than USD 25 M initial investment in the Fund from IFAD and OFID, the set objectives are realistic. The full ROLL design will cost the activities and their returns further through a robust Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA). A residual uncertainty remains, and will be listed in the overall project's risk matrix, with accompanying mitigating measures. Overall, interventions are scalable, so if fewer funds are available the fund can operate, but its overall scale will be less, and equally it will be larger scale with more funds.

Component 3: Knowledge Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation

This component will incorporate a learning process to support the overall project objective while at the same time creating further collaborative links between local resource users and GoL agencies at district and national levels and to survey and evaluate their impacts on landscape and ecosystem health and the services these provide for their own livelihoods. It will also support the management of the project, including financial management, accounting, procurement, the monitoring and evaluation of project outputs and outcome and, communication and knowledge sharing. The project level M&E system will include identified indicators for each output and outcome as well as means of measurement and verification. It will also be under this component that the Regeneration Fund management is financed.

Outcome 3.1 aims at improved monitoring tools and procedures generate LDN data which enable measurement of environmental and socio-economic change via two outputs:

3.1.1   Gender-sensitive landscape and improved livelihoods monitoring and reporting tools developed and institutionalized, using MPAT

3.1.2   250 landscape coalitions trained in participatory landscape monitoring and evaluation

Outcome 3.2 Ensures that project monitoring system operates effectively and, systematically provides information on progress, lessons learnt and informs adaptive management to ensure results

3.2.1.   Five LDN information hubs operationalized as a mechanism for sharing and verification of monitoring data, including the dissemination of lessons learned and best practices to primary and secondary stakeholders

3.2.2   Curricula for teaching at schools and universities integrate landscape management aspects informed by ROLL project

Component 3 activities will be focused on assisting the GoL implementing agencies to integrate protocols and tools used for project M&E, e.g. in the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) concept, or elements of the Land Degradation Surveillance Framework (LDSF), into their agencies' M&E frameworks to align GoL and ROLL approaches for SLM. Furthermore, a scoping study will investigate opportunities for additional technical and/or financial support, e.g. through the LDN Fund. In parallel, beneficiaries and their local organizations will be trained to provide the GoL agencies with basic data sets for these monitoring protocols and therefore become an integrated part of the implementation and decision making chain and appreciate the changes they initiate, e.g. through their early involvement in project activities such as baseline surveys for climate change vulnerabilities and socio-economic assessments. ROLL will not only focus on biophysical monitoring tools for analyzing the graduation status of the landscape, but also allow for the monitoring of socio-economic parameters to assess the impact on livelihoods and formation of social capital, such as through multi-dimensional poverty assessments.

Outcome 3.2 will broaden this knowledge management approach beyond the selected ROLL areas via five LDN information hubs linked to the targeted landscapes operationalized as a mechanism for sharing and verification of monitoring data, including the dissemination of lessons learned and best practices to primary and secondary stakeholders (output 3.2.1). Emphasis will be on amending and influencing curricula at schools and universities to integrate ROLL experiences in the teaching of sustainable landscape management (output 3.2.2), so as to reach out to the Basotho youth to carry on and extend the project goals in time and scale. In line with south-south collaboration and exchange, visits to other relevant funds in the region following a learning routes approach are foreseen.

The project approach outlined above provides the backbone for further engagement with GoL entities and local stakeholders in a national dialogue and during the envisaged project preparation phase. Only the active engagement with and full involvement of local resource users and the partner organizations in charge of implementing the respective national policies can lead to a meaningful specification of activities on the ground that respond to needs, expectations and particular circumstances, including gender-based roles, responsibilities and discrepancies.

Theory of change

The theory of change (ToC) provides a basis for the investment logic of the GEF-ROLL project. High poverty levels and land degradation among rural households are largely caused by:

(a) Weak institutional capacities and enabling environment

 (b) Lack of coordinated, efficient investment strategy for land and water management,

(c) Inadequate knowledge and weak technical capacities for effective sustainable land management practices

GEF-ROLL aims to transform rural communities landscapes and livelihoods by adopting sustainable management practices through (i) Labour-based schemes and physical infrastructure development aimed at relieving immediate pressure in catchments experiencing high levels of poverty and land degradation (ii) Business development support for off-farm income-generating activities partially facilitated through existing projects. The ToC shows how the GEF-ROLL interventions in these areas lead to the project's goal which is: 'Regeneration of landscapes and livelihoods', leading to enhanced flow of agro-ecosystem goods and services, climate change resilience and household income diversification.'

Assumptions

1. The rural communities in Lesotho capacitated in land managemnet will result in improved knowledge which will result in improved land management practices.

2. Funds will be available to implement the project until the end.

3. Stakeholder by in promotes local communities participation in the implementation of the project and jointly agreed upon monitoring and evaluation system.

4. Clear and common understanding of sustainable use.

4) Alignment with GEF focal area strategies

The proposed ROLL project is designed to particularly contribute to the goals of the land degradation focal area in improving agro-ecosystem services and sustaining rural livelihoods through integrated watershed and sustainable land management (LD 1-1), by bringing together local, regional and national stakeholders to jointly plan for and implement SLM measures, and in reducing competing land uses and increasing the resilience in landscapes and their users (LD 1-4) by pooling resources for SLM and thus establishing a coordintated scheme for programming and financing integrated sustainable land management in the targeted landscapes and beyond.

The ROLL intervention strategy contributes to achieving the LDN targets set by GoL for 2030, particularly target 2, rehabilitate 600,000 hectares of degraded land to functionality by 2030. It is equally well-aligned to the LDN intervention strategies to achieve SDG 15.3 set by the parties to the UNCCD, such as a) rationalizing engagement with partners, overcoming fragmentation and systematically tapping into increasing finance opportunities; b) designing and implementing bold LDN transformative projects that deliver multiple benefits; and c) tracking progress towards achieving the LDN targets. ROLL-GEF will be doing so by facilitating participatory land use planning and by contributing to resolve issues relating to competing land uses, while supporting smallholders' livelihoods; and by developing the capacities to sustainably continue these approaches to maintain functional landscapes providing ecosystem services for all its users.

Beyond the targeted focal areas under land degradation, ROLL will have important additional environmental co-benefits. In applying integrated watershed and sustainable land management approaches, the proposed project will contribute to the GEF biodiversity focal area strategy and the synergetic implementation of multiple (MEA) objectives and in particular SDG 15.3. Though biodiversity is not selected as a GEF focal area given that the local and regional nature of the biodiversity benefits is incongruous with GEF requirements for global environmental benefits, ROLL's landscape approach will indeed mainstream biodiversity concerns across priority sectors and policies (BD-1-1) and support the restoration of more resilient and biodiverse watershed areas for sustainable use (BD-1-4), while addressing pressures and drivers for habitat and species protection.

The embedding of the proposed ROLL-GEF project into a broader GoL, IFAD and OFID-funded programme will strengthen its impact on fostering the resilience of smallholders, livelihoods, and natural and physical assets, also against the adverse effects of climate change. The combined landscape and livelihoods approach will, through the local processes, also be used to promote alternative and sustainable energy sources and advance local level knowledge that will broaden the beneficiaries' adaptive capacities.

Though not part of the GEF Impact Program on Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration, the project proponents see a strong connection with this IP and a possibility to learn from projects in this IP and contribute with knowledge generated under ROLL.

5) Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contribution from the baseline

Scenario without GEF: Without GEF-support to the ROLL project, emphasis would be on supporting agricultural development and smallholders' livelihoods, without an integrated landscape management approach, targeting improved ecosystem services as the underlying foundation for resource users' livelihoods. Beneficiaries would mainly derive local environmental benefits from local planning and co-management of natural resources, without realizing global environmental benefits through integrated planning, policy and legal reforms and incorporation of community-led, district and national level natural resource management approaches. However, ROLL-GEF will not have strong focus on governance reform, but the focus will be on bottom-up work and coalition building and bringing about solutions and improvements at the local level, empowering communities and districts to address these issues. Where necessary, national level regulations and their changes will become part of the small sub-component on institutional work under component 1. Without GEF support, a regional and global connection to best practices would be missing: globally used knowledge management on how to achieve the LDN targets and M&E tools for the LDSF would not be integrated into the national M&E strategies and local stakeholders would not be knowledgeable about the underlying concepts and how to meaningfully contribute their own expertise in providing data to these tools.

Scenario with GEF: The GEF financing will facilitate the integration of initiatives combating land degradation - extending integrated planning/management of natural resources to the landscape level - focusing on strategies and activities that generate benefits for the global environment contributing to the productive landscape and ensure food security for the targeted beneficiaries and achievement of LDN. The GEF support will be catalytic and ensure the establishment of the regeneration fund with the systems and structures in place for the operations and investment using the IFAD and OFID resources. The GEF resources will also provide seed capital for the fund. The ROLL-GEF resources will be used for connecting critical pieces of knowledge and innovation globally to local application through SLM coalitions, while influencing the enabling policy, legal and institutional framework in Lesotho to integrate lessons learned around local engagement in landscape management approaches. Proposed investment will be designed to strongly contribute to the national LDN goals, target the restoration and enhancement of key ecosystems and their services, while contributing to local resilience opportunities through improved food security and livelihoods diversification. The proposed alternative is based on a holistic and integrated landscapes and livelihoods approach with specific interventions in different ecosystems. Various projects aimed at landscape management have been piloted in Lesotho including integrated watershed management and integrated catchment management, but it has not been applied systematically before. While the water resources management sector has been interacting with landscape management issues for some time, the enabling environment was never able to catch up on these integrated approaches, such as food system thinking. The high-level decision to adopt landscape management therefore presents tangible opportunities for the solutions to the landscape degradation problem to be devised at the most appropriate level and for the specific environmental degradation problems to be well-understood before solutions are crafted.

6) Global environmental benefits and adaptation benefits

ROLL-GEF is designed to support the country's transformational agenda to achieve greater environmental and economic security. It will primarily support community-led investments in sustainable land and water management and catalyze associated behavioral change in specific sub-catchments and landscapes, while raising capacities to promote long-term climate resilient development and to achieve biodiversity co-benefits through applied and integrated SLWM approaches. ROLL-GEF will take a landscape management approach, informed by lessons learned on the interlinked challenges of poverty, ecosystem services, climate change, biodiversity, institutional performance, governance, and community-based engagement and management. GEF support will be fully blended with GoL, IFAD and OFID resources to fund locally driven planning and replicable, innovative investment action, and the following global environmental benefits[1][1]:

- At least 350,000 hectares of restored land under landscape management plans and improved management including:

o 5,000 ha of restored forest and shrub land

o 4,500 ha of restored agricultural land,

o 340,500 ha of restored rangelands, shrub lands and grasslands

- Diversification of agro-ecological food production systems;

- Through the improved and diversified vegetative cover, as a co-benefit, contributions to GHG mitigation are expected;

- Increased resilience of ecosystems and landscapes due to reduced surface water runoff and soil erosion;

- Enhanced capacities and knowledge to apply sustainable land management practices in the targeted landscapes (for which a shortlist has been defined) for approximately 100,000 rural people, leading to sustainable use of the available natural resources (land, water, flora and fauna).

- 20 000 beneficiaries (50% ♂ and 50% ♀) are expected to benefit from project activities

The targets are estimated based on the available resources and experience from on-going and past projects in the country. Based on the core indicators, the restoration of the agricultural land is estimated at USD 1,170/ha while the restoration of rangelands and grasslands is estimated at USD 25/ ha. The agricultural land investment includes small-scale infrastructure such as irrigation, which justifies the higher per hectares costs.

Through these GEB, the project will further provide a substantial contribution to achieving Lesotho's LDN targets, set to be by 2030:

· Improve productivity and Soil Organic Carbon stocks to 1% in all land classes;

· Rehabilitate 600,000 hectares of degraded land to functionality;

· Halt the conversion of forests and wetlands to other land cover classes (by 2022);

· Increase forest cover by 61,325 ha;

· Reduce the rate of soil erosion and sealing (conversion to artificial land cover) by 20%.[2][2]

7) Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up

The project presents a new and innovative approach for Lesotho to move away from narrow approaches to environmental and particularly land degradation towards an integrated landscape graduation model, catalyzing more context-specific and locally-relevant integrated responses with a strong evidence and performance-based agenda. Most importantly, this initiative presents a concrete opportunity for an empowerment of both land users and local level authorities (e.g. district council and chieftaincies) to directly participate in defining the problems and crafting solutions to them jointly with the technical institutions that are responsible to lead the process – via the 250 landscape regeneration coalitions the project will establish. This is key for ensuring sustainability and ownership of solutions at the local level, and for facilitating knowledge, skills and capacity development, sowing the seeds for increased investments in sustainable land management and environmental stewardship. All components are key for supporting local-level knowledge creation, skills sharing and capacity development for local resource users, communities and authorities for sustainable management of natural resources, as well as for mainstreaming these into national policies through dialogue processes, best practice examples, broad coalition building and knowledge management for integrated monitoring.

The proposed ROLL-GEF project is adding an important dimension by working towards further mainstreaming and advocating for a holistic landscape graduation model with focus on the local planning levels. Coupled with increased capacity and better, integrated advisory services for landscape management, the ROLL-GEF project will support an enabling environment that consolidates investments on the ground with the view to ensure sustainability and scaling up of project outcomes. In terms of investment, the proposed GEF resources will contribute to both knowledge-related aspects as well as select activities that enhance capacity for production and contributing to the restoration of landscape and ecosystem functions that will positively impact on key ecosystems for production and habitats for biodiversity. The GEF financing will provide support to capacity development, joint planning at the community level and increased awareness about global environment at the local level. Together with the knowledge management approach described above, this will provide for good replicability and scalability beyond the initially targeted project areas.

1b. *Project Map and Coordinates.* Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.

The project will take place in landscapes primarily in Lesotho's highlands and foothill areas, with strong impact on the lowlands adjacent to the foothill areas. See Annex 1 for Project Area Map; coordinates: -29.6099873; 28.2336082.

The project will be implemented in five landscapes. Given the participatory nature of the project, the element of coalition building between different stakeholders and the involvement of a multitude of actors, a multi-layer demand-driven approach will be implemented. Based on the in-country discussions amongst proposed project stakeholders, the following selection criteria have been determined: (i) Land degradation hotpots according to FAO land cover atlas, (ii) Poverty vulnerability, (iii) current & existing developmental initiatives and interventions taking place, (iv) socio-economic aspect and livelihoods support. Based on these indicators, the pipeline of project landscape clusters in the table has been developed. The selection of landscapes will be done in phases with the first phase being selected at design and more landscapes will be selected during implementation. In principle, the project is intended to work at national scale, though there are some discussions with Government, to initially start with 5 districts administrative hubs. These districts account for the 50,000ha where GEF financing will directly contribute.

  ROLL –GEF project target districts, constituances, councils and landscape clusters

District	Constituency	Council	Landscapes cluster
Thaba-Tseka	Thaba-Tseka	Mohlanapeng	Litsoetsoe
	Mants'onyane	Denezulu	Mants'onyane
	Mashai	Sehong-Hong	Mashai
Leribe	Maliba-Mats'o	Mphorosane	Lejone-Matsoku
	Thaba-Phats'oa	Bolahla	Tsoinyane
	Pela-Ts'oeu	Menkhoaneng	Hlatsoane
Berea	Khafung	Phuthiatsana	Ha Nts'ang
	Thupa-Kubu	Senekale	Nchela-Matholoana
	Thupa-Kubu	Senekale	Lekokoaneng-Souru
Qacha'nek	Tsoelike	Tsoelikana	Mosuoe
	Qacha'sNek	Qanya	MateeSubcatchment
	Tsoelike	Tsoelikana	Mapakising
Botha-Bothe	Mechechane	Ngoajane	Qholaqhoe
	Hololo	Likila	Marakabei-Hololo
	Motete	Nqhoe	Motsinkaneng

The GEF resources and associated objectives are mainstreamed across these landscapes but will be focused on specific SLM- and integrated resource management activities which ensure GEF financing is effectively realized in areas where they are most needed to achieve GEBs. The integrated and participatory nature of the project strategy nevertheless requires close collaboration, interaction and selection with local representatives as well as with core GoL co executing partners such as MFRSC and MTEC, or the MEA National Coordinating Committee. In addition, landscape selection will also be influenced by coordination efforts with other national partners and international agencies funding the overall ROLL project (IFAD, OFID, FAO).

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[1] At this early stage of project proposal development, GEB indicators can be only approximate. Project preparation activities are particularly geared toward substantiating these indicators in close collaboration with the envisaged stakeholders. They will therefore evolve alongside the proposal in the project preparation phase.

[2] *Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting in the Kingdom of Lesotho*, Lesotho LDN TSP Country Report, 2019,
p. 12.

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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

Map: Distribution of the 74 micro catchments in Lesotho[1]

Map indicating the geographic location of the ROLL and ROLL-GEF projects

[1] Puri, Shammy. (2016). Lesotho: Planning Integrated Water Management - guidelines & strategies.

10.13140/RG.2.1.2945.3680.

2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above,please explain why:

In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.

This PIF is the result of various on-site engagements between November 2018 and November 2019, engaging with core GoL agencies and their extension officers on the ground in six different landscapes. Here, input and expertise of local resource users and stakeholders was equally sought to receive input to and feedback on the initial project ideas. Specific areas of attention arising from the consultation of local stakeholders included (i) the need for alignment and buy-in of both local government and traditional authorities when planning and implementing landscape interventions; (ii) the need for sustained and coordinated support by various government agencies and other development partners and (iii) the value of frequent follow-up from those partners and the challenges in mobilizing such support due to lack of transport and budgets. Both the overall project intervention strategy and the major thrusts of the PPG are rooted in full stakeholder engagement and participation from local and community to district and national levels, including not only individual stakeholders and their already existing community-level organizations, but also strongly encouraging the foundation of new resource management associations to act as mediators and catalysts for localized sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation . The project strategy builds on a strong capacity development component to provide knowledge and means for local resource users to engage in sustainable land management, and to further learn about monitoring and assessing change in the broader ecosystem landscape so as to provide government agents with much needed data and insight for a well-informed M&E system on land use planning and management.

The key Government Ministries who will be project executing agencies are: Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation (MFRSC) and Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC). The other ministries which will implement some activities and thus is not at the same level as the two co—executing agencies are: Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs (MLGC); Ministry of Water (MoW) - Department of Water Affairs; Ministry of Development Planning (MDP); and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS). In recognition of the cross-sectoral nature of landscape management issues, the project will adopt an inclusive approach, bringing together multi-disciplinary expertise for a common purpose through regular consultations, workshops and seminars.

Stakeholder	Responsibility	Role in Project
Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation (MRFSC)	MFRSC is composed of three-line departments: Forestry, Range Resources Management and Soil and Water Conservation. Its core mandate is to protect and rehabilitate the physical environment through forestry, management of rangeland resources, of soil erosion and harvesting of water. The Ministry also ensures an enabling legal and regulatory framework to enhance sustainable natural resource management and food security. There is a three-tier structure: National Grazing Association committee (eNGA) at the national level; District Grazing Association Committee (DGA) at the district level and Grazing Association Committee (GA) at community level.	The MFRSC is an executing agency together with the Ministry of Tourism Environment and Culture (MTEC). MFRSC will lead the baseline and the GEF project in close coordination with MTEC. MFRSC will house a Project Management Unit that will focus on the coordination of effort and effective project delivery on a daily basis.
Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC)	The MTEC has a coordinating role in ensuring and addressing environmental issues in Lesotho and will be a critical partner in ensuring this proposed project will achieve the intended environmental benefits.	The MTEC is a co-executing agency together with MRFSC that will lead on the GEF aspects and ensure the mainstreaming of sustainable management and the generation of global environmental benefits
Ministry of Development Planning (MDP)	The MDP is the chairing Ministry of the National Steering Committee for the implementation of the sustainable development agenda. It has a coordination role towards line ministries and development partners on development projects and thereby an important player to move towards integrated landscape management approaches and actions. The MDP furthermore houses the Bureau of Statistics.	The MDP will play a coordination role among line Ministries and development partners on approaches and activities for landscape management.

Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs (MLGC)	The Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs promotes, deepens and consolidates a sustainable and effective system of local governance for improved service delivery. The ministry supports and strengthens local councils in providing quality services which include sustainable land management and administration. At district level there are District Councils (DCs), and Community Councils (CCs). The functions of the local Councils include the regulation, control and administration of natural resources, land allocation, grazing rights, fire protection, environment, forestry and agricultural improvement and village water supplies. Councils can establish committees, including a Finance Committee.	The MLGC will act as one the principal technical partners will provide expertise in terms of sustainable land management and administration. MLGC will also play a project coordinating role together with MoW and MAFS for the local level implementation.
Ministry of Water (MoW)	The Ministry of Water comprises of the Departments of Water Affairs (Wetlands Unit), the Rural Water Supply (DRWS) and the Water Commission. MoW is responsible for developing national policies on Water and management of water resources. The DWA is responsible for general administration of the water sector, as well as data collection, and analysis. The Department of Rural Water supply (DRWS) is mandated to supply water to rural communities in Lesotho. The Commissioner of Water is mandated to promote coordination of programs and activities within the water sector.	The MoW will play a role in supporting the project activities as well as provision of advisory and technical knowledge on development on water and management of water resources

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS)	The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security comprises of the Departments of Livestock Services, Crops, Research and Agricultural Planning. The Ministry's core mandate is to develop national policies on agriculture and food security, management of crop and livestock issues, promote irrigation efficiency and water conservation in crop production, and manage agricultural research, information and extension services. The Department of Agricultural Planning serves as the National Livestock Policy Focal Point (or the hub). The Agronomy and Horticulture Divisions of the Crops Department of MAFS also have direct links to irrigation development.	The MAFS will contribute to knowledge management, the development of policies related to the land management and technical advice on land and water management practices.
Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA)	LHDA, which has jurisdiction over certain catchment areas directly feeding into the water reservoirs, is overseen by the Lesotho Highlands Water Commission, a bi-national body representing the GOL and Government of South Africa. The LHDA was set up as an implementing body for the Lesotho Highlands Development Project in Lesotho, including the social, environmental and economic developments of the project. They have recently engaged in projects to better manage the catchments to preserve water resources and prevent soil erosion leading to siltation of the dams they manage.	The LDHA will play a role as a major implementing partner and will assist in the management of catchments.
Villages, smallholders, pastoralists	The community members, smallholders and pastoralists are the target group who will benefit from the project. They can be affected directly or indirectly by the project.	The community members, smallholders and pastoralist will play a role in selection of activities, designing and implementation of interventions for restoration and management of landscapes.
Community-based Organizations (CBOs)	The community based organizations are nonprofit organizations on a local and national level facilitating community efforts for community development	The CBOs will assist with planning implementation, monitoring social and economic development activities and provide technical support to the project strategy to catalyze behavioral change.

IFAD	The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is an international financial institution and a specialized agency of the United Nations dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries	IFAD as the GEF Agency will supervise the overall implementation of the project
Private sector		See section 2 on Private Sector below.

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).

Access to and control over natural resources has a strong gender dynamic to it. In the context of Lesotho, where land degradation is widespread and has obvious direct impacts on people's ability to make a living, the costs of a less productive environment are significant. This is complicated by the fact that poverty is particularly acute among women and female-headed households, and inequality between the sexes is largely rooted in a culture of patriarchy. The project incorporates gender mainstreaming into project activities, and will implement activities (gender-sensitive sustainable land use schemes, homestead gardens, the provision of alternative energy sources etc.) that ensure the gender dynamics of natural resources management in the Lesotho context are fully integrated into the project.

The project document and CEO Endorsement Request will include a full gender action plan, ensuring that the project results framework has clear gender-disaggregated indicators and targets, and that the M&E plan and budget include activities and items that contribute directly to the implementation of the gender action plan. By the end of the project, it is expected that women will be better empowered with knowledge and skills gained through training and capacity development, and have an improved legal basis to land tenure, hence more certainty for engaging in sustainable land management.

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

closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes

improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or Yes

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes

Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes
4. Private sector engagement

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes
Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.

The private sector in Lesotho has to play an important role in this project, at three levels. The first level is that of the various rural entrepreneurs that need to adopt better management practices. These comprise the smallholder farmers and herders, but equally the larger cattle owners who are often not locally present and can be regarded as proper medium and larger sized businesses in the Lesotho context. The current extensive enterprise systems, e.g. for livestock based on grazing, need to evolve into sustainably intensified systems. This requires a thorough understanding of the implications on the business model, but also on the needs for training and inputs to make that transition. Furthermore, new business opportunities are expected to arise from the project, such as fodder production enterprises or higher-value crop sales.

A second level is that of private service providers linked to extension. Though GoL has a strong mandate and significant presence on the ground to provide extension services, there are naturally limitations to the system, as well as that there are solid reasons for relying on private service providers in certain cases. Particularly in landscapes impacted by hydropower development, there are new opportunities arising that require specific and intensive technical support that is best provided by private service providers.

A third level is that of private sector usage and payment for the ecosystem services secured by this project, particularly water resources. The project will explore the potential to raise private sector contributions to the Fund, in line with funds established elsewhere and in partnership with experienced organizations in this space. The realistic application of PES elements within the ROLL set-up and particularly the mechanisms of the Fund, tailored to the local situation, will have to be further analyzed during the project preparation phase, before it is fully integrated into the intervention strategy and the results framework.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the Project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the Project design (table format acceptable)

The overall risk rating for project implementation is medium. The main risks confronting the project are described below:

Risk	Risk rating	Mitigation measures
Weak implementation capacity	High	Technical capacities for INRM are low at all levels, from national government institutions to communities and their structures. The project implementation strategy is therefore developed around a decentralized graduation model to allow for continuous learning and feedback circles in local SLM coalitions to be set up. The project M&E framework will be integrated into GoL agencies' approaches and SLM coalitions be trained to apply and to contribute to M&E elements.
Low community participation and failure to adopt improved practices	High	The experience of other projects demonstrates that ensuring the long-term sustainability of the activities promoted remains a challenge in the country. Level of participation of all relevant stakeholders during project planning and designing is of paramount importance as a consultative process. The project will adopt demand-driven and participatory approaches at all levels.
Overlapping or conflicting land use interests slow down project implementation	Medium	The establishment of SLM coalitions with community participation will ensure an inclusive process of formulating and negotiating interests and uses among coalition partners. The project's focus on ensuring the improvement of ecosystem services as well as alternative livelihoods will mitigate exising challenges, e.g. among herders, farmers and conservation aims.

Climate change may undermine the sustainable development efforts to increase the capacity for integrated landscape management, and livelihood improvement. Lesotho is extremely vulnerable to climate change, with high exposure to climate variability and extremes such as drought, high temperatures and heat waves, floods, hail, and frost. Climate change simulations at national level show temperatures increasing by 1.5°C-2°C and reductions to total monthly precipitation throughout the rainy season (October–March) by ~5.5%, from ~570 mm/season to ~540 mm/season. These changes are expected to be evident by 2050. The impacts of climate change will have adverse impacts on the productivity of the agricultural landscape and rangelands. The droughts will result in reduced water availability for agricultural production and livestock as well as feed availability.	Medium	The thrust of the program in terms of landscape regeneration has significant potential for climate change mitigation co-benefits that contribute to the resilience of both natural resource-dependent livelihoods as well as the natural landscapes. The project will therefore build practical skills and knowledge for understanding of environmental dynamics and landscape management and designing solutions for addressin land degradation and adapting livelihood practices to the changes in the environment and those imposed by climate change and variability. Extensive awareness iniatives and capacity developmental campaigns will result in increased understanding of the climate-ecological dynamics and interactions. With improved knowledge and skills for responding to these dynamics, communities and land users stand a better chance of building resilience and can adjust land use practices to better respond to the negative impacts of climate change.
Disruption of or impediments for project activities due to the ongoing COVID 19-pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic may result in more public resources being directed towards addressing the situation and thus limit the Government co-financing of the project. The pandemic, or future ones of similar nature, is also likely to adversely impact livelihoods through income generation activities, which will undoubtedly impact investment by the smallholders	Medium	Wherever possible, meetings with project partners will be conducted virtually as a precautionary measure and also for cost-saving reasons. Whenever face-to-face meetings are unavoidable, the project will adhere to the standardized measures to reduce infection risks (social distancing, masks, disinfectant lotion). The decentralized approach via local SLM coalitions will keep meeting sizes at a low level. Also. analytical work, capacity development and production of knowledge management materials will be conducted in small groups or through virtually connected teams to reduce COVID 19 infection risks.

In cases were the government co-funding fails to materialise as the government's resources are more focused on the pandemic the project can still proceed with implementation as core/ critical path activities are financed through GEF and through the baseline investment (IFAD and OFID). The focus on landscape and agricultural productive systems restoration provides opportunities for building the resilience of the communities and also building back better after shocks through promotion of green jobs will be implemented to reduce the impact of loss of income due to the pandemic. |

Weak governance resulting in misappropriation of funds	Medium	A governance framework with measures for accountability, transparency, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness, will be put in place. Also capacity building of stakeholders on transparency, financial management, leadership and procurement; audit of the account of coaliation groups will be conducted. Confidential reporting of corruption allegations to the relevant GoL anti-corruption organisation and the IFAD Office of Audit will be encouraged.
The regeneration fund is not established	Medium	Establishment of the regeneration fund is a key aspect for innovation and sustainability of the project. In case the fund will not materialize, more traditional methods, of financing plans developed under component 1 through a Project Management Unit approval-process can be instituted. These would build on lessons from other countries and GEF-financed projects in Lesotho (LASAP). Partnership will be forged from the design stage of the project with other development partners (World Bank), IFAD-assisted grant projects (WAMPP), other projects, financial institutions (OFID) and communities (for community contributions) for additional funds.

In the project design the potential impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic will be addressed through the elaboration and sequencing of project activities and the sources of funds. The protocols already established during the current pandemic will be adhered to including remote conducting of activities and resources being allocated from the baseline project to improve capacity (connectivity, data capture and reporting) of remote activity delivery. Resources will be set aside for this eventuality in the project costs and budget. The potential shift in focus and priorities by Government will be mitigated through the use of community based organisations and in particular the coalitions being created and strengthened under Component 1.

The identified opportunities such as landscape restoration, livelihood diversification and capacity building activities capture the concept of green recovery and building back better. The land restoration activities will result in GEBs, improve the food security situation given the inclusion of agricultural land and also improve the climate resilience of the communities. The off-farm activities provide opportunities for livelihoods diversification and job creating, which improve the resilience of the communities being targeted. Further opportunities of green businesses will be explored for the targeted 200 farming enterprises.

6. Coordination

Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

ROLL-GEF will be fully blended into the ROLL project that includes substantial funding from IFAD, OFID and the GoL. Neverthless, for reporting, monitoring and accounting purposes, expenditure records will be kept separate for specific donors, including the GEF. Given the multi-faceted nature of the proposed project, it will need to rely on close

coordination and consolidated effort with a range of partners. The Executing agencies for these efforts is therefore the Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation (MFRSC) and , Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC). The MFRSC will house a Project Management Unit that will focus on the coordination of effort and effective project delivery. The principal technical partners from Government side will include the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) and the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftain Affairs (MLGC) who will implement some activities and thus will not at the same level as the two co—Executing agencies.

Project delivery will be focused at the local level, strongly directed by local councils, and in close collaboration with traditional authorities (Principal and Area Chiefs). In selected landscapes of direct relevance to the protection of reservoirs, the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) will be a major implementing partner. In addition, as outlined above, partnerships beyond Lesotho's national borders will be explored to mobilize additional resources and technical support, as well as to prevent political capture of the fund and facility at national level.

The Fund, to be launched in year 2 of the project, will be hosted by a separate legal entity, with a dedicated governance structure. While experiences with the establishment of environment-oriented funds exist in other countries across Africa, Lesotho-specifics need to be agreed upon with project partners during project preparation. Therefore, proposed legal status and governance structures can only be presented in the full project proposal. During the lifetime of the project, the Project Steering Committee (or a sub-committee thereof) will be part of the Fund's steering committee and will have direct input into its programming. Gradually and depending on the additional funding mobilized, the Fund will operate more independently as it moves towards project exit, while reporting against project objectives. It is intended to establish the Fund as a sustainable funding entity for integrated SLM beyond project lifetime.

IFAD as the GEF Agency will supervise the overall implementation of the project. Details of the implementation arrangements and responsibilities, including for Lesotho partner institutions and the project steering committee will be agreed upon during project preparation, according to the partners' respective fields of expertise and comparative advantages.

Coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives

The ROLL-GEF project will collaborate closely with a number of ongoing GEF and LDCF initiatives in Lesotho, including:

- **Lesotho Adaptation of Small-Scale Agriculture (LASAP).** This project, which is funded by the LDCF and supervised by IFAD, aims to increase the resilience of small-scale agriculture to climate change impacts by promoting climate-proofed investments for agriculture-based development, as well as by enhancing the resilience of agricultural productivity under increased climate variability. The project includes a component aimed at increasing awareness and capacity for government and local stakeholders for reducing risks of climate induced losses in the agriculture sector, which will feed into the ROLL project.

- **Strengthening Capacity for Climate Change Adaptation through Support to Integrated**

- **Watershed Management.** This LDCF project (FAO implemented), which is still in its development phase is focused on implementation of adaptation measures related to sustainable land management and integrated water management. While the project will primarily focus on community level activities, it will also include a component on data, tools and methods for assessment of climate change impacts on land suitability and livelihoods. The ROLL project will work with FAO as partner, making use of the developed tools and approaches.

- **The Reducing vulnerability from climate change in Foothills, lower Lowlands and Senqu River project funded by GEF-LDCF and implemented by UNDP** aims to mainstream climate risk considerations into the Land Rehabilitation Programme of Lesotho for improved ecosystem resilience and reduced vulnerability of livelihoods to climate shocks. The project will support the integration of climate change adaptation into national and sub-national land use planning and decision-making. Consequently, the project will reduce the vulnerability of local communities in the Foothills, Lowlands and the Lower Senqu River Basin to climate change through the implementation of climate-smart ecosystem rehabilitation and management measures. The project activities include capacity-building of youth, women and CBOs to enable them to prepare more effectively for the risks and natural hazards associated with climate change. Furthermore, the adaptation interventions in this project will focus on implementing Priority 2 of Lesotho's NAPA, which focuses on promoting sustainable crop based livelihood systems in the Foothills, Lowlands and the Senqu River Valley. The ROLL project will enable a scaling up of the implementation of the climate change adaptation measures developed in this project.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assesments under relevant conventions

Yes

If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc

UNCCD NAP. The main objective of the Lesotho NAP is to structure and guide the implementation of the UNCCD and define the elements of strengthening environmental capacities, enhance public awareness and mobilize active participation in order to better manage the natural resources, and combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD). The objective also contains elements of strengthening the policy, legal and institutional foundations for environmental management. The program approach endeavors to ensure collaboration and coordination among government institutions, NGOs, the donor community and the public in order to minimize duplication and fragmentation of efforts and maximize impact. Of considerable importance is the need for accountability and transparency of institutions, organizations and agencies that are involved with the implementation of the NAP.

LDN: Lesotho joined the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Target Setting Programme (TSP) and committed to achieving LDN by 2030, recognizing the importance of land as a vital resource for human health and wellbeing. Specific targets until 2030 as outlined in its LDN report (2019) include:

· Improve productivity and soil organic carbon stocks to 1% in all land classes;

· Rehabilitate 600,000 hectares of degraded land to functionality;

· Halt the conversion of forests and wetlands to other land cover classes (by 2022);

· Increase forest cover by 61,325 ha;

· Reduce the rate of soil erosion and sealing (conversion to artificial land cover) by 20%.

National Communication. Lesotho's first national communication (NC1) reiterated that despite both short- and long-term training that had taken place in climate-related fields, the country required additional financial resources and greater coordination skills to build institutional capacity and take the subject of climate change to a broader audience, including

rural communities. The second national communication follows up on the NC1 in analyzing critical climate impacts and providing updates on what policies and measures the country has taken and envisaged to implement the Convention.

NDC. Lesotho's NDC of 2017 highlights several adaptation needs to which the proposed ROLL project will contribute, among these chiefly a) the need to improve data and information gathering, analysis and monitoring capacities so as to mainstream CC approaches into natural resource management across sectors, and b) the creation of a systemic enabling working environment. With regard to specific adaptation actions, the NDC refers to the earlier established NAPA.

NAPA. The Lesotho NAPA identifies 11 priority adaptation options including the one in the water sector, whose activities have been identified. Activities under this project, included under the NAPA, include capacity building of communities and promotion of catchment management. The proposed project also contributes to Option 3 "Capacity Building and Policy Reform to Integrate Climate Change in Sectoral Development Plans" and 4 "Improvement of an Early Warning System against Climate Induced Disasters and Hazards" defined in the Lesotho NAPA.

National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP). The NDMP aims at: reducing its vulnerability to climate related disasters such as sustained and severe droughts; increasing its capability to prevent, alleviate, contain, or minimize the effects of climate-related disasters; enhancing readiness or preparedness to deal with climate related disasters; and ensuring the country's full recovery from the impacts of disasters. GEF assistance will therefore not only support the overall objectives of disaster management, due to severe erosion, but also strengthen and capacitate the process of planning for disaster mitigation.

Lesotho's Poverty Reduction Strategy advocates for building capacity in environmental education in order to break this link. In particular, the strategy calls for the augmentation of public awareness campaigns, the inclusion of environmental issues in school curricula, and the intensification of the awareness of the importance of integrating environmental impact assessments into the country's planning process. In this respect, interventions in climate change, which is a major component of environmental management, are bound to have a direct impact on poverty alleviation. The latter occupies the highest priority on Lesotho's development agenda.

Lesotho's Vision 2020, a document that embodies the country's development aspirations up to the year 2020, advocates for the strengthening of institutions that are responsible for natural resources and environmental management, environmental advocacy and awareness campaigns as the main challenge for the implementation of global agreements for sustainable development. As part of the implementation strategy for Vision 2020 (and succeeding the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Interim National Development Framework (INDF)), Lesotho developed the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) of 2012/13 – 2016/17.

UNDAF 2019-2023, the UN Development Assistance Framework was developed and finalized in 2018 with a validity of five years. The UNDAF 2019-2023 outlines the strategic direction and results expected from cooperation between the GoL and the UN Country Team (UNCT). This strategic planning instrument serves as a collective response of the UN System to support the national development initiatives of the GoL as per the NSDP II as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African Union Agenda 2063 and other strategies and international instruments. The project will align with and contribute to the UNDAF stipulated three strategic areas, specifically to (SO 2) sustainable human capital development; and (SO3) Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Reduction.

The project responds directly to 4th and 5th strategic Goals of the NSDP by improving national resilience to climate change through undertaking vulnerability assessments and strengthening capacity for disaster risk and sustainable land management.

The project is also in line with key policies in Lesotho, chiefly including:

National Environment Policy (1998), National Climate Change Policy (2017); National Forestry Policy (1997); National Range Resources Management Policy (2015); Lesotho Water and Sanitation Policy (2007); National Decentralization Policy (2014); Soil and Water Conservation Policy (2014) or Food security policies and strategies. Equally important to mention in the project context are the Orange-Senqu River Basin/ORASECOM Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) (2013); the Lesotho IWRM Plan (2014) and the Regional Strategic Action Program (2014). It is expected that this project will generate valuable lessons, methodologies and approaches to strengthen these policies so as to promote resilience throughout sectoral and national planning and will therefore engage with its proponents.

8. Knowledge Management

Outline the Knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.

The project will support the transformation of landscape management in Lesotho toward evidence-based investments and decision making, based on global best practices. Best practices will thus include mechanisms for: (i) planning processes in which stakeholders have a voice and are able to agree on measures that can achieve both local and larger scale objectives; and, (ii) inter-agency collaboration and local-district level coordination. As such, this project will establish and strengthen an investment- and action-oriented knowledge network and associated tools across institutional and disciplinary boundaries, including an M&E approach in line with global tools and standards (e.g. LSDF or MPAT) that is equally applicable at local levels. This approach will connect relevant stakeholder groups to collaborate on investment-oriented knowledge and strengthen the ability of stakeholders to gather, process, and use data and information.

Component C has strong aspects of knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation following this integrated approach at multiple levels (see also the project description section 3). The project design for ROLL and start-up phase will develop a sound KM strategy and implementation plan with annual budgets financing activities. At this stage the following broad activity areas are defined. (i) Evidence based approach in monitoring and knowledge generation: the project will invest in monitoring, analysis and learning to improve the performance and use early success to leverage additional finance and support for the regeneration fund. K&M will hence play a critical role during the implementation. (ii) work on curricula of the local education institutions: the project will engage local level education (mostly primary at community level and tertiary at national level in sensitisation and capacity building). This includes potential up-date of the curricula at NUL and the Agricultural College (at national level) as well as school level competitions on improve landscape management and regeneration. (iii) the PMU will apply critical reflection session and K&M clinics – both on their own and during IFAD-led supervision missions – to tease out key factors of success and challenges, and foster learning and following improvements in processes. (iv) Communication work will utilise local media, such as radio, newspaper and online platforms. (v) the knowledge from other locations on landscape management will be facilitate through IFAD and its global partnerships. Early lessons include these from water funds in Kenya and South Africa, but also from the ICM project in Lesotho. This knowledge in-flow to ROLL will be part of design and support missions, but further exchanges, such as project visits /exchange visits are fore-seen, too. In that regard, there is a strong focus on South-South Triangular Cooperation and learning.

9. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE

Medium/Moderate

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Provide preliminary information on the types and levels of risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

The Project's potential negative environmental and social effects are limited, mostly reversible and site-specific. Given the environmental management thrust of the project, the expected environmental impacts are predominantly positive. Potential negative social impacts emanate from the temporarily or structurally reduced access to natural resources, particularly grazing land. The project is deploying participatory methods to ensure these effects are recognized and minimized and that alternatives are offered to affected populations.

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Submitted
Lesotho-Annex D- Environmental and social safeguard risks	

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

Name	Position	Ministry	Date
Mr Stanley M. Damane	Director of Environment and GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture	8/18/2020
Visual representation of the Theory of Change			9/28/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF			9/28/2020
GEF review comments-IFAD responses			10/28/2020
Mr Stanley M. Damane	Director of Environment and GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Tourism, Environment and culture	10/26/2020
Amended visual representation of the Theory of Change			10/28/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF amended tracked			10/28/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF amended clean			10/28/2020
GEF review comments-IFAD responses			10/30/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF amended tracked			10/30/2020

Name	Position	Ministry	Date
Lesotho FSP PIF amended clean			10/30/2020
GEF review comments-IFAD responses			11/2/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF amended tracked			11/2/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF amended clean			11/2/2020
GEF review comments-IFAD responses			11/4/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF amended tracked			11/4/2020
Lesotho FSP PIF amended clean			11/4/2020

ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project intervention takes place

Map: Distribution of the 74 micro catchments in Lesotho[1]

Map indicating the geographic location of the ROLL and ROLL-GEF projects

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