



Strengthening Civil Society Role in Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

Project Type

MSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT No

NGI No

Project Title

Strengthening Civil Society Role in Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality

Countries

Global

Agency(ies)

IUCN

Other Executing Partner(s)

Drynet

Executing Partner Type

CSO

GEF Focal Area

Land Degradation

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Biomes, Grasslands, Forest, Drylands, Influencing models, Demonstrate innovative approaches, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Stakeholders, Private Sector, SMEs, Financial intermediaries and market facilitators, Type of Engagement, Participation, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Communications, Awareness Raising, Behavior change, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Local Communities, Indigenous Peoples, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Women groups, Beneficiaries, Gender-sensitive indicators, Capacity,

Knowledge and Research, Enabling Activities, Capacity Development, Knowledge Generation, Workshop, Learning

Sector

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 1

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 1

Duration

36 In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

94,500.00

Submission Date

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
LD-2-5	GET	1,050,000.00	1,000,000.00
Total Project Cost (\$)		1,050,000.00	1,000,000.00

B. Indicative Project description summary

Project Objective

LDN policies and investments adhere to agreed LDN principles through increased influence and engagement of Civil Society Organizations

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
Component 1: Influencing LDN	Technical Assistance	Outcome 1.1: LDN actions (local) and agreements (international) are better aligned with established principles and practices	Output 1.1: 200 Civil Society Organizations have greater capacity and increased opportunity to influence LDN decisions and actions	GET	600,000.00	580,000.00
Component 2: Leveraging LDN	Technical Assistance	Outcome 2.1: CSO capacities in leveraging funds for LDN are increased	Output 2.1: CSOs catalyze finance for LDN actions in partnership with public and private partners	GET	354,546.00	325,000.00
Sub Total (\$)					954,546.00	905,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
			GET	95,454.00	95,000.00	
			Sub Total(\$)	95,454.00	95,000.00	
			Total Project Cost(\$)	1,050,000.00	1,000,000.00	

Please provide justification

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(\$)
GEF Agency	IUCN	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	300,000.00
Civil Society Organization	Drynet Network	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	700,000.00
Total Project Cost(\$)				1,000,000.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

NA

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(\$)
IUCN	GET	Global	Land Degradation	LD Global/Regional Set-Aside	1,050,000	94,500	1,144,500.00
Total GEF Resources(\$)					1,050,000.00	94,500.00	1,144,500.00

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)

50,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

4,500

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
IUCN	GET	Global	Land Degradation	LD Global/Regional Set-Aside	50,000	4,500	54,500.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					50,000.00	4,500.00	54,500.00

Core Indicators

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	60,000			
Male	40,000			
Total	100000	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

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

Summary

This project is designed to increase the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in delivering Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), and in promoting adherence to LDN principles, including environmental and social safeguards, in public and private investments. The project has a global scope and will strengthen the capacity and the level of engagement of CSOs in the 5 regional annexes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), namely: Africa (Annex I), Asia (Annex II), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) (Annex III), Northern Mediterranean (Annex IV), Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V). The project consists of 2 components: 1) Influencing LDN and 2) Leveraging LDN.

The 2 year project will ?influence LDN? by increasing the recognition of CSOs as partners in delivering LDN, and strengthening the capacity of CSO actors to implement and to monitor LDN projects. The project will ?leverage LDN? by developing CSOs capacities to develop LDN projects that include innovation in private sector engagement and to access suitable funding opportunities.

a. The global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in September 2015, include Goal 15: ?Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss?. Under SDG15, Target 15.3 is ?By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world?. Within one month of adopting the SDGs, Parties to the UNCCD had adopted Target 15.3 and embarked on an ambitious program of national Voluntary Target Setting process. As of November 2021, 128 countries have set, or are in the process of setting national voluntary targets for LDN under SDG Target 15.3. Many of these countries have secured high-level government commitment to achieve LDN.

Target 15.3 has therefore become a strong vehicle for driving UNCCD implementation, while at the same time contributing to the achievement of multiple SDGs, including those related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, food and water security, disaster risk reduction, and poverty reduction. According to the UNCCD, ?the LDN targets address SDG target 15.3 and many other SDGs in a synergistic and cost-effective manner, and in accordance with countries? specific national contexts and development priorities. These targets also strengthen the implementation of the countries? UNCCD National Action Programs?.

Following the strong support for LDN from Parties, attention is shifting towards action to deliver these ambitious targets, through Transformative Projects and Programs and through other interventions

involving public and private investment. This process demonstrates commendable momentum and is helping to demonstrate LDN as an aggregator that connects contributions to restoration and sustainable land management across a range of sectors and actors (e.g. landscape restoration under the Bonn Challenge, sustainable agriculture, protected areas, implementation of United Nations Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, and others).

Despite the strong momentum for LDN, not all actors are fully supportive of the growing action to combat desertification and reverse land degradation, with particular concerns raised over the perceived ?top-down? nature of desertification policies and initiatives (Behnke & Mortimore, 2016). Large scale NGOs are also not aware of the huge potential that the UNCCD represent as a means to address global challenges like combating climate change and protecting the biodiversity. A small number of Civil Society Organizations have been involved in the UNCCD process over the past decade, during which the LDN concept was developed and adopted. Representatives of some of these CSOs, organized through the Drynet network, have contributed to developing the broader vision, principles and practice of LDN as a vehicle for transformative change that contributes to meeting multiple SDGs in synergic ways. However, many CSO - including many that are involved in restoration and sustainable land management - are poorly informed of the concept of LDN, the commitments to LDN made by their government, and the role civil society can play in implementing LDN and upholding LDN principles. This includes a number of principles that Civil Society has collectively fought for over many years, including principles of participation, equity, ecosystem management and others (IUCN, 2015). Viewed in this light, LDN can be seen as an opportunity for achieving the goals of many civil society organizations, rather than a threat.

A stronger engagement of civil society in LDN implementation will bring a number of benefits. CSOs have an important watchdog role to play, ensuring accountability of LDN investments and adherence to the principles that have been adopted by governments under the UNCCD. Many CSOs have a responsibility to ensure that future commitments and actions under the UNCCD respond to the needs of their constituencies. Many CSOs also implement action on the ground that contributes to LDN attainment and they can influence public and private investments to support scale-up of local innovations, and use LDN as a lever for more responsible land-based investments.

b. The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects

Defining the national baseline scenario is challenging due to the low level of coordination of civil society in some countries, and the low prioritization of LDN by civil society in others. An IUCN report on policy convergence between forest landscape restoration and land degradation neutrality found cross-sectoral incongruity in many countries, with restoration initiatives and LDN initiatives coordinated by different public institutions competing over resources. In such countries, many actions that contribute towards LDN go un-reported, including substantial contributions of civil society organizations to forest landscape restoration and sustainable agriculture (Gichuki et al., 2019).

In several countries CSOs play the role of de facto leaders in UNCCD engagement and in some countries these CSOs play a role in national coordination, and may be officially recognized by their government (see paragraph below under the CSO Panel). However, many CSOs that are active in the

UNCCD process face resource constraints in coordinating with other CSOs in their country and regionally, and may face challenges in gaining recognition for the work they do. In many countries it is not possible to identify a clear CSO leader in the UNCCD process. Even in the best-case scenarios, CSOs rarely have the luxury of reaching out actively country-wide to connect different CSOs contributing to LDN through sustainable land management, restoration and conservation initiatives. This creates an obstacle to identifying common opportunities and constraints for LDN attainment and misses opportunities for building popular support for LDN.

Pressure to increase private as well as public investment to achieve LDN is growing in many countries, which is expected to catalyze major financial flows in the coming years. Civil Society Organizations are poorly involved in these negotiations, or excluded entirely, creating a gap in accountability. An IUCN conference on promoting private investment in the Great Green Wall held in 2021 emphasized the importance of engaging civil society more strongly to achieve responsible investment, and the need to strengthen the capacity of civil society and create opportunity for civil society groups to influence investment dialogue. CSOs can work with the new private sector strategies of large funding agencies like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the GEF as these funding partners provide funds for large scale LDN projects. This includes addressing investment ?aggregators?, such as land tenure and public policy, as well as monitoring investments against LDN principles.

Civil Society Organizations have pursued opportunities to influence global restoration discourse through the Global Landscape Forum (GLF), which pursues goals that are compatible with LDN, but has historically placed more emphasis on forests (and therefore humid lands) and pursuit of the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The GLF has placed more emphasis on land degradation in recent years, including at the 2021 Africa forum called ?Restoring Africa?s Drylands: Accelerating Action on the Ground?. While the GLF does not directly feed into policy, it does provide space for increase civil society coordination and networking and the opportunity to advance policy discourse.

The international scenario mirrors the national baseline, with a small number of CSOs actively engaging in the UNCCD process, compared with a large number of CSOs engaging in complementary processes that contribute to LDN but do not generally demonstrate the connection (e.g. NGOs involved in forest restoration or sustainable agriculture). The number of CSOs accredited to the UNCCD has increased over the past decade, with more than 600 CSOs currently accredited with observer status to the UNCCD Conference of Parties (CoP). The number of CSOs that actively participate in the UNCCD process, particularly at the global level, nevertheless remains relatively low compared to other international processes.

CSO Panel

Decision 5/COP9 established the UNCCD CSO [Panel](#) to ensure the participation and engagement of the civil society organizations at the meetings and processes of the UNCCD. Further decisions defined the role of the panel creating de facto a mechanism that coordinates the work of the civil society accredited to the UNCCD, facilitate the communication and enhance the collaboration among all of them. The role of the Panel is to promote active involvement of CSOs on the implementation of the Convention and the negotiations undertaken at the COP including to: encourage local, national and

regional CSOs to seek their accreditation; increase communication and knowledge exchange among CSOs and; raise awareness of UNCCD activities.

The UNCCD CSO Panel consists of five members democratically elected by the observer organizations and mandated to liaise with their constituencies and ensure that their voices are heard at all levels. The present panel identified the following priorities for the current biennium:

1. Recognition by policy makers, financial institutions and others, that community-led initiatives are contributing to Land Degradation Neutrality.
2. Land tenure security of communities in general, and of women, young people and vulnerable groups through implementation of Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land fisheries and forests.
3. Participation of civil society and especially women, youth, children throughout the decision-making processes regarding LDN to guarantee sustainability.
4. Finances must be accessible and appropriate for CSOs supporting communities especially women and young people in achieving LDN and/or monitoring the implementation of LDN projects.
5. Transform our society so as to achieve greater sustainability and equity, especially gender equity.

The panel decided to produce regular publications and newsletters that could inform everybody on the implementation of the UNCCD and their program of work.

CSO Networks

The civil Society Network called Drynet (<https://dry-net.org/>) has been actively involved in influencing the UNCCD process since 2007. The network was founded by 14 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) distributed globally. The network is guided by the understanding that, to effectively counter degradation, local organizations and communities living in drylands should be at the heart of the effort, but their involvement in the national and international arenas of decision-making is often very marginal. By directly linking with local groups and engaging them in broader debates, Drynet seeks to redress the current imbalance. Drynet is a self-funded network that shares information, develops common positions of civil society organizations on issues relating to sustainable livelihoods and land use in the drylands and engages in the international discourse via the UNCCD the UNFCCC and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). Drynet was instrumental in the establishment of the CSO Panel and its members have played a crucial role as regional representatives on the Panel and as elected Observers to the UNCCD Science Policy Interface.

Among the 600 CSOs accredited to the UNCCD are 37 regional organizations, some of which may act as networks within their region or sub-region. The UNCCD database of CSOs does not include detail on the roles of these organizations in networking on LDN or on the role of national CSOs in LDN implementation and national level coordination and outreach. A desirable situation will be deeper understanding of which CSOs have the capacity and the intention to play these roles in LDN implementation, in order to channel capacity building and awareness raising through the most effective and appropriate channels.

IUCN and UNCCD

IUCN has engaged in the UNCCD process since 2000 (adoption of resolution WCC 2000 RES 018: ?Strengthening actions for implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification?), and more proactively since the first joint workplan was established in 2011. Under this joint workplan IUCN has canvassed the opinion of its 1200 CSO members (as well as 200 state members) over the LDN concept, and has strongly influenced the LDN Scientific Conceptual Framework (Orr et al., 2017). IUCN has also coordinated Civil Society input to the UNCCD process, including through Civil Society events in West Asia and North Africa and in the Sahel. IUCN is an International Organization and a union of both state and non-state members, including more than 1100 Non-Governmental Organizations, a number of which are engaged in the UNCCD process.

c. The proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

Through this project the number of Civil Society Organizations actively engaged in LDN implementation and influence will increase, leading to an increase in the number of LDN projects and investments and an increased adherence of LDN initiatives to agreed principles and good practices. A wider range of CSO actors will engage in sharing knowledge and experiences and acting collectively to influence the Convention globally, and its implementation nationally.

A larger number of CSOs will be connected through national coordination mechanisms, reporting on their contributions to LDN on the ground and influencing public and private investment practices. CSOs will be prepared to be more actively involved in monitoring LDN investments and will have greater opportunity to influence how companies and government agencies adhere to LDN principles, and to highlight non-compliance. CSOs will also be more effectively represented in international dialogue, through a stronger CSO Panel. This will strengthen the UNCCD process to reflect a wider range of perspectives and will generate increased confidence in the UNCCD process overall.

Vulnerable population such as indigenous peoples, women, youth and local communities will be further engaged in the implementation of the convention and the achievement of LDN.

The project objective is: **?LDN policies and investments adhere to agreed LDN principles through increased influence and engagement of Civil Society Organizations?**. This will be delivered through capacities and support to CSOs to ensure that LDN is better aligned with established principles and practices and to lead investments in LDN.

Project Components, expected Outcomes and Outputs

The project consists of two components:

Component 1: Influencing LDN

Component 1 will increase recognition of CSOs and their opportunities to be involved in designing, implementing, and evaluating LDN transformative projects. This will include support for public engagement of CSO networks in international fora, and convening meetings between CSO partners, private businesses and government actors. Component 1 will strengthen CSO capacities to play a supporting / advisory role in LDN projects, with training and knowledge sharing on: LDN awareness; promoting public and private accountability for LDN investment, with focus on inclusivity and gender-

responsive approaches and elements related to land tenure (decision 26/COP14); monitoring and evaluating LDN interventions against LDN indicators and principles and; implementing good practices and approaches from CSO-led projects, including novel approaches to LDN, such as ICCAs and CSO initiatives related to sustainable production or consumption and how it links to LDN. Training modules will be designed to be compatible with the UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace and the IUCN Academy (<http://www.iucnacademy.org/>), to create opportunities for institutionalizing the training and maintaining access to the training packages after the project. The criteria to select CSOs (including Drynet and IUCN members) that will be involved in the training include: CSOs that are currently active, and willing to engage to benefit from the impacts of the funding; CSOs that have some evidence of competence and engagement, e.g. portfolio of past training, case study developed; CSOs that are trained are susceptible to generate more impact from the training.

Outcome 1: LDN actions (local) and agreements (international) are better aligned with established principles and practices

Output 1.1: 200 Civil Society Organizations have greater capacity and increased opportunity to influence LDN decisions and actions

Activity 1.1.1: Self-learning, online modular training packages to build CSO capacity on LDN and translate into relevant languages are created. Training packages will include modules on: LDN awareness; promoting public and private accountability for gender responsive and inclusive LDN investment; land tenure; monitoring and evaluating LDN interventions against LDN indicators and principles and; implementing good practices and approaches to LDN. The PPG phase will help further identify where gaps need to be filled.

Activity 1.1.2: CSO networks conduct training and south-south learning exchanges for CSOs in their sub-regions using the training packages developed in Activity 1.1.1. National CSOs learn and exchange experiences on best practices and challenges in LDN implementation.

Activity 1.1.3: Civil Society Organizations participate and actively contribute in international fora to promote LDN synergy (including UNCCD COP preparation, CBD, UNFCCC, FAO-Committee on World Food Security (CFS), UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and others)

Activity 1.1.4: The role of CSOs in LDN attainment is communicated and promoted through the CSO Panel's outreach and an online platform to strengthen CSO legitimacy with government and private investors. Communication material such as audios and visuals from the CSOs will be developed and shared through an online platform that will be developed building on the CSO Panel website and other platforms.

Activity 1.1.5: CSO representatives are engaged in the development of large-scale land restoration projects supported by UNCCD and the LDN fund. The project will support CSOs to develop project ideas and action plans through the organization of mini-project development workshops.

Component 2: Leveraging LDN.

Component 2 will increase the potential to deliver an increased number of LDN investments through innovative CSO-led projects, by building CSOs capacities and providing technical support to CSOs to leverage funds and convening fund raising meetings with donors and private companies. The component will thus contribute to develop projects that will implement actions on the ground, and will further increase the role of and empower CSOs in LDN actions in their respective countries.

Outcome 2: CSOs capacities to leverage funds for LDN are increased

Output 2.1: CSOs catalyze finance for LDN actions in partnership with public and private partners

Activity 2.1.1: Develop and publish a guidance on innovative private investment mechanisms and opportunities for knowledge sharing, scaling up LDN actions, such as impact investors

Activity 2.1.2: Conduct capacity building sessions and provide technical assistance to CSOs to develop business plans for transformative LDN investment actions

Activity 2.1.3: Convene national/regional LDN donor round tables and stakeholders' meetings to promote LDN actions and present business plans

CSO Networking

The project will invite UNCCD accredited CSOs to participate through an online forum to access resources, exchange experiences, and participate in capacity building. The project will be initiated through a series of regional online dialogues convened in partnership with the CSO Panel and the UNCCD Secretariat, through which accredited CSOs will be given the opportunity to sign up for specific project activities and non-accredited CSOs will be encouraged to gain accreditation. Capacity building and south-south learning actions will continue to be delivered regionally throughout the project, through partnership with regional CSOs active in the UNCCD process. Elected members of the CSO Panel will play a role in mobilizing CSOs in their region and strengthening regional networking and outreach. The project will aim for a minimum of 40 CSOs actively participating in key project activities in each region.

UNCCD capacity building marketplace

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Capacity Building Marketplace is an exchange platform for those seeking and offering knowledge, training and opportunities related to the UNCCD's mandate regarding the issues of capacity building. These resources are helpful for anyone working toward land degradation neutrality. The Capacity Building Marketplace supports students, grassroots movements, professionals, researchers, civil society organizations, farmers' organizations and the general public to develop their full potential regarding sustainable land management practices to address drought and land degradation. The Marketplace addresses the creation, strengthening and building of capacity as it relates to mitigation and adaptation to drought and desertification in concrete ways.

The IUCN Academy

Training tools will be developed following the pedagogical approach of the IUCN Academy, to enable future institutionalization of CSO training on LDN. This will help improve the quality of training and allow for certification and validation of participants. The IUCN Academy is one of the IUCN Director General's Initiatives and the first training packages were developed and rolled out in 2021.

d. Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies

The project outlined in this concept is aligned with the GEF LD Focal Area strategy, and specifically Goal 1, "aligning GEF support to promote UNCCD's Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) concept through an appropriate mix of investments". The primary aim of the project is to increase the role of CSOs to influence LDN and their capacities to leverage LDN investments.

This project will help to create an enabling environment to support voluntary LDN target implementation (Objective 2 of the GEF7 Land Focal Area) by strengthening the capacity of Civil Society Organizations to implement LDN principles, established safeguards, and good practices and supporting policy decisions that enable countries to meet international commitments under the UNCCD. The project will enable CSOs to promote LDN principles at multiple levels: in local land use planning; to address national obstacles to LDN attainment; to promote good governance and respect for land tenure; and to align private and public investments with LDN principles. The project will support CSOs to strengthen the inclusion and representation of smallholders in LDN actions, including actions funded by the GEF and other donors as well as private investments in LDN. Improved CSO networking and dialogue internationally will also contribute to enhancing south-south cooperation. The project will also provide capacity and serve as a platform for vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples, youth and women to participate more actively in the UNCCD process.

e. Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF and co-financing

Civil Society Organizations are formally engaged in the UNCCD process via their elected representatives on the CSO Panel, both influencing dialogue at the international level and supporting efforts to implement the convention nationally. Many more CSOs carry out work that contributes to LDN progress, but are disconnected from the LDN process, missing opportunities to coordinate approaches and scale up action.

Civil society has an important role to play in representing the interests of local land users in international negotiations and in national actions. While support for addressing land degradation and desertification has historically been low, CSOs placed importance on raising demand for public action, through policy and investment. In some countries this pressure is still required. However, with the upsurge in support for addressing land degradation since countries started setting LDN targets, the role of civil society has expanded to include a role in monitoring action and upholding principles of LDN that civil society has been instrumental in securing.

Civil society also has a major role to play in demonstrating good practice in implementing LDN principles, for example in strengthening land tenure, upholding the rights of vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples and youth, and ensuring gender-responsive investments and policies.

Co-financing

Co-financing includes co-funding from Drynet member organizations, and specifically current and anticipated funding dedicated to UNCCD/LDN-related work. The 2023-2025 Drynet member organization budget is estimated at: \$9,409,975 USD

f. Global environmental benefits (GEFTF)

The global environmental benefits of advancing towards LDN include reducing rural poverty and promoting food and water security. They include risk reduction and climate change adaptation as well as contributing to climate change mitigation. Progress towards LDN targets will also contribute to restoring and protecting biodiversity, including soil biodiversity, habitat rehabilitation, and ecosystem health.

g. Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up

The project will develop new training materials using a range of media and made available online to promote self-learning. The training materials will also be usable for group training and the project will also work with CSO representatives to develop their capacity to roll out training in their regions. The project will emphasize south-south learning, working with LDN champions to exchange experiences and approaches and to focus on the specific challenges CSOs face around representation and access to public fora. As a result, capacity building will be CSO-led and will be better received and more relevant to target groups.

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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

NA

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

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

The PIF has been developed in close consultation between Drynet members and current members of the UNCCD CSO Panel. During the PPG phase, a wider consultation will be conducted with CSOs to refine capacity development needs and ensure coherence in the project approach to engaging with LDN investments. Drynet and CSO Panel Members will remain closely involved in developing the full project document in the PPG phase.

Some project activities will be delivered through regional Civil Society actors in each of the five UNCCD annexes (regions). Those actors will be defined and consulted during the PPG phase and their roles will be agreed in the full project document. Selection criteria will be agreed with Drynet and the CSO Panel, and will include having the technical capacity to deliver training packages and having an established regional network and ambit. Selected CSO partners will be required to undergo a due diligence process according to IUCN's policies before being confirmed as project partners.

The project will provide support to the Desertif?actions 2022 summit that will gather stakeholders from around the world in promoting LDN actions and will help translating the COP15 decisions into deliverable actions for the civil society organizations.

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).

The project primarily focuses on the role of CSOs in influencing the LDN process and implementing LDN actions on the ground. The project will include training on gender-responsive approaches, and will be aligned with IUCN's LDN Gender Helpdesk and will facilitate exchanges with the UNCCD Gender Action Plan, with the UNCCD gender focal point on inclusive LDN policy and implementation. All training packages will include guidance on ensure gender responsiveness of LDN actions and all training events and other project activities will endeavor to achieve gender parity. The Project will provide capacities to develop new project proposals for LDN implementation by CSOs and will prioritize actions that promote inclusion of women representatives in national and international dialogue.

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;

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

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

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 project will play a convening role between private investors and CSOs, to build relationships and champion the role of CSOs in promoting LDN principles. The project will include a training component on the role CSOs can play in monitoring and evaluating LDN interventions by private and public investors. Specific training will be provided to enable CSOs to engage with private companies on an equal footing and to demystify investment innovations that can enable LDN.

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)

Description of risk	Impact	Probability	Mitigation actions	Responsible
Low level of participation, collaboration, coordination and information sharing between stakeholders	High	Low	Participation and engagement of the civil society organizations UNCCD and LDN related processes is ensured by the coordination of the CSO Panel involved in this project. Through this panel, CSOs communicate and exchange information on specific issues and drive sustainable land management processes in their respective regions. Participation of CSOs in trainings, south-south learning exchanges and international fora will facilitate connections, collaboration and information sharing. An online forum will also increase information sharing.	IUCN/CSO networks/CSO panel

Description of risk	Impact	Probability	Mitigation actions	Responsible
Weak institutional capacity or credibility of CSO partners	High	Low	The project will strengthen the capacities of CSO partners in understanding, influencing and leveraging LDN actions through training sessions online.	IUCN/CSO networks
Limited interest to trainings at the regional level due to inaccessibility of online modules	High	Low	CSO networks/partners will conduct training and learning exchanges events for CSOs in their respective sub regions. The COVID 19 pandemic has accelerated the use of virtual platforms for organizing events of this nature and the project will continue to deliver training and other events in this format	CSO networks/CSO panel
Global health situation	Moderate	Low	The ongoing global COVID-19 crisis may affect the overall implementation of the project due to limited interactions among the different stakeholders. Delays in project implementation will be limited through the establishment of virtual platforms for trainings that will be accessible to all stakeholders. Other activities will be reviewed during project inception meeting and the necessary adjustments will be made based on how the situation evolves. The definition of activities will consider this risk.	IUCN
Low level of engagement of the private sector	High	Low	Component 2 of the project will establish networks with private sector partners and CSOs will have gained capacities to influence and create interest in private sector engagement in LDN actions through training session in component 1. The project has designed actions to reach out to private companies and engage with them to enhance their LDN actions. The CSO Panel, with the support of the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism, will be able to facilitate connections through TPPs (Transformative Programs and Projects)	IUCN

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.

Outcome 1 will be delivered by accredited CSO's and CSO networks in the 5 UNCCD regional annexes, and by Drynet for specific global actions, including development of training materials. An essential component of the regional actions is to diversify and increase the number of CSOs in each region that are active in the UNCCD process, engaging internationally as well as promoting LDN domestically. This will require outreach to both accredited and non-accredited CSOs. The partners will take advantage of IUCN's membership network to connect with leading CSOs in related fields (such as Forest Landscape Restoration, Ecological Restoration and other areas) that do not currently connect with UNCCD and LDN target setting.

Outcome 2 will be delivered by the IUCN Conservation Action Centre with support from other Centres, e.g. the Centre on Finance and Economics, the Centre on Society and Governance. It will take advantage of IUCN's technical expertise in private sector engagement, and in building capacities on resource mobilization and fund management. IUCN will also support actions under Outcome 1 by actively reaching out to members to mobilize new actors in the UNCCD process.

Roles and responsibilities

Result 1.1: Action areas	Lead institution(s)
Activity 1.1.1: Self-learning, online modular training packages to build CSO capacity on LDN and translate into relevant languages are created	Drynet
Activity 1.1.2: CSO networks conduct training and south-south learning exchanges for CSOs in their sub-regions	Regional CSOs to be identified at PPG stage
Activity 1.1.3: Civil Society Organizations participate and actively contribute in international fora to promote LDN synergy (including UNCCD COP preparation, CBD, UNFCCC, FAO- Committee on World Food Security (CFS), UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and others)	Drynet
Activity 1.1.4: The role of CSOs in LDN attainment is communicated and promoted through the CSO Panel's outreach and an online platform to strengthen CSO legitimacy with government and private investors	CSO Panel members
Activity 1.1.5: CSO representatives are engaged in the development of large-scale land restoration projects supported by UNCCD and the LDN fund	CSO Panel members

Result 2.1: Action areas	Lead institution(s)
Activity 2.1.1: Develop and publish guidance on innovative private investment mechanisms and opportunities for knowledge sharing, and scaling up LDN actions, such as impact investors	IUCN
Activity 2.1.2: Conduct capacity building and provide technical assistance to CSOs to develop business plans for transformative LDN investment actions	IUCN
Activity 2.1.3: Convene national/regional LDN donor round tables and stakeholders? meetings to promote LDN actions and present business plans	IUCN

Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives

Actions under Component 1 will coordinate closely with established GEF-financed LDN projects, as well as with other LDN projects (e.g. GCF, bilaterally funded and publicly funded initiatives), as a way to share experiences and lessons. The project will convene LDN dialogue to strengthen CSO legitimacy with government and private investors, focusing on the existing GEF portfolio as a starting point to demonstrate the value of CSO engagement.

The project will advocate to those projects to support the role of CSOs to monitor & evaluate LDN interventions against LDN indicators and principles and will develop CSOs capacities to develop proposals. The CSO Panel will work with the UNCCD Secretariat to identify LDN Transformative Programs and Projects and to negotiate opportunities for CSO's to engage in those investments.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assessments 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

- National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)
- CBD National Report
- Cartagena Protocol National Report
- Nagoya Protocol National Report
- UNFCCC National Communications (NC)
- UNFCCC Biennial Update Report (BUR)
- UNFCCC National Determined Contribution
- UNFCCC Technology Needs Assessment
- UNCCD Reporting
- ASGM National Action Plan (ASGM NAP)
- Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA)
- Stockholm National Implementation Plan (NIP)
- Stockholm National Implementation Plan Update
- National Adaptation Program of Action Update
- Others

This project will support the role of the UNCCD CSO Panel, which was established by the Parties to the UNCCD.

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 prioritizes the mobilization of existing knowledge (as opposed to generation of new knowledge), as laid down in the LDN principles of the UNCCD. The knowledge management approach focuses on mass mobilization of CSOs and building their capacity to mobilize existing knowledge on LDN, including established LDN principles, and using it to enhance LDN investments by government and private actors. The project will also create opportunities for CSOs to deploy the knowledge and influence government and private investors, by convening and mediating in dialogue and by publicizing the roles of CSO in achieving LDN.

Under Component 1, the project will develop training packages to build CSO capacity on LDN and will support CSO networks to conduct training and promote south-south learning exchanges in countries and sub-regions. The project will also promote the role of CSOs in LDN delivery, through one publication on the roles of CSOs in LDN implementation, by convening dialogue with Governments and private investors to generate understanding of these roles, and by communicating knowledge of these roles globally. The publication will be designed to inform CSOs of the opportunities to implementing and influence LDN, and to inform donors and governments of the role CSOs can play in enhancing LDN attainment. The publication will include good practices and approaches from CSO-led projects at all levels, including actions in the policy and public awareness space. It will document novel approaches to LDN, such as Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas, Landscape Restoration approaches and others that are currently poorly connected to the LDN process.

Component 2 will provide training to CSOs on innovations for private investment and will build capacities of CSOs to develop business and investment plans. The project will generate guidelines to enhance capacity of CSOs to fund raise for LDN projects and will convene donor round table and stakeholders dialogues to create new opportunities for CSOs to pitch LDN project proposals.

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
Low			

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.

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title

Submitted

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
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ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

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

NA