



PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: MEDIUM-SIZED PROJECT

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF TRUST FUND

PART I:

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Title:	Reducing GHG emissions through community forestry and the promotion of sustainable biomass energy		
Country(ies):	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	GEF Project ID:	5610
GEF Agency(ies):	FAO	GEF Agency Project ID:	623884
Executing Support Partner(s):	National Environmental Protection Authority (NEPA), Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW) and the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development (MRRD)	Submission Date:	January 09, 2014
GEF Focal Area (s):	Climate Change	Project Duration (months):	36
Name of parent program (if applicable): • N/A	N/A	Agency Fee (\$):	164,840

A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK:

Focal Area Objectives	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Co-Financing (\$)
CCM -1 Promote the demonstration, deployment, and transfer of innovative low-carbon technologies.	GEFTF	815,525	4,000,000
CCM-3 Promote investment in renewable energy technologies	GEFTF	555,251	1,500,000
CCM-5 Promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through sustainable management of land use, land-use change and forestry	GEFTF	364,384	1,500,000
Total project costs		1,735,160	7,000,000

B. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective: To reduce GHG emissions by promoting community forestry, and removing barriers to sustainable biomass energy, while laying the groundwork for climate change mitigation in Afghanistan.						
Project Component	Grant Type[1]	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Co-financing (\$)
Component 1. Strengthening the national policy environment to support the adoption of sustainable biomass energy systems (SBES), based on community-	TA	1 The CBNRM approach and SBES (see 3.1) have been mainstreamed into the national renewable energy policy and framework, including access to further climate mitigation financial resources. <i>Indicator:</i>	1.1 The draft Renewable Energy Policy includes measures to promote SBES with a CBNRM approach. 1.2 An operational Renewable Energy Development Authority (REDA) that includes a focus on SBES. 1.3 A roadmap that	GEFTF	373,024	750,000

based natural resource management (CBNRM)), laying the groundwork for future access to carbon markets.		<p><i>-Extent to which SBES-related policies and regulations are adopted and enforced (measured using the CCM tracking tool)</i></p> <p>(Baseline and targets to be assessed during project preparation.)</p>	<p>promotes investment in SBES and access to carbon markets, in line with the National Forest Plan and National Priority Programme on Natural Resource Management and Conservation.</p> <p>1.4 A biomass energy information system that collects, analyses, and disseminates data on resources and technologies for sustainable energy production and utilisation as a basis for an accounting system for pilot biomass carbon projects.</p>			
Component 2. Developing community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) plans and establishing community forest management associations (FMAs) in 3 project areas	TA	<p>2.1 The CBNRM and community-based forest management (CBFM) approaches have been incorporated into planning in targeted areas, creating a favorable local policy environment for sustainable forestry.</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i> <i>- FMAs established and forest use rights agreements officially recognised and approved at CDC, district, provincial and central (MAIL) levels</i></p> <p>2.2 Quantifiable reduction in GHG emissions through community adoption of sustainable forest management (SFM) principles and methods in 3 pilot areas.</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> <i>-Tons of CO₂e emissions avoided</i> <i>-Tons of additional wood supplied from sustainable sources</i></p> <p>(Baseline and targets to be assessed during project preparation.)</p>	<p>2.1.1 District-scale CBNRM and CBFM plans for 3 pilot areas in Herat/Baghdis, Central Region and Eastern Forest Complex, which promote the sustainable production of biomass through SFM principles and methods and provide additional livelihood benefits.</p> <p>2.2.1 Three CBFM plans implemented in 300 km² in the 3 pilot areas, increasing the wood supply for SBES and enhancing local livelihoods. Estimated emissions reductions of up to 87,000 t CO₂e per year.</p> <p>2.2.2 Forty-five communities trained in CBNRM, with an emphasis on SFM and the sustainable production and harvesting of wood and biomass fuels.</p> <p>2.2.3 Nine national planning and governmental agencies trained in integrated CBNRM planning and implementation.</p>	GEFTF	414,872	2,950,000
Component 3. Promoting the demonstration and deployment of sustainable biomass energy	INV	<p>3.1 Innovative SBES tested and deployed in 3 pilot areas.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Two SBES technologies (e.g. 10,000 locally-produced improved combustion stoves for rural households) tested and deployed in 3 pilot areas,</p>	GEFTF	689,522	2,700,000

systems with a CBNRM approach.		<p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of technology demonstrations conducted -Tons of CO₂e emissions avoided <p>3.2 National knowledge management and capacities to deploy SBES enhanced.</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of specialists and key local stakeholders trained in introduced SBES and CBNRM (see 3.1.1) -National biomass energy information system in place to share low-carbon technology demonstrations <p>(Baseline and targets to be assessed during project preparation.)</p>	<p>incorporating a CBNRM approach (in coordination with Kabul University, Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit, and other high-level national institutions). Estimated emissions reductions of 1–2 t CO₂e per improved stove per year, i.e. 10,000–20,000 t CO₂e per year.</p> <p>3.1.2 Forty-five (45) communities trained on CBNRM as well as on the installation, use and maintenance of SBESs in 3 pilot areas.</p> <p>3.2.1 Research findings and appropriate technology innovations with respect to CBNRM and SBES integrated into the biomass energy information system (see Outout 1.4) for dissemination among national and regional research networks, relevant policy-makers and the general public.</p> <p>3.2.2 Nine specialised training sessions conducted for local engineers, skilled workers and entrepreneurs on the design, construction and marketing of SBES in the 3 pilot areas.</p>			
Component 4. Awareness raising on CBNRM and SBES, and monitoring and evaluation	TA	<p>4.1 Strategy for awareness-raising and communication regarding CBNRM and SBES developed and implemented.</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of guides on best practices and lessons learned published <p>4.2 Project implementation based on results-based management, and application of project findings and lessons learned in future operations, facilitated.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Strategy for awareness-raising and communication regarding CBNRM and SBES designed, developed, and delivered at pilot sites and nationally.</p> <p>4.1.2 Project-related best practices and lessons learned published.</p> <p>4.2.1 Project monitoring system providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcome and output targets.</p> <p>4.2.2 Final evaluation.</p>	GEFTF	100,000	100,000
Sub-Total					1,577,418	6,500,000
Project management Cost (PMC)				GEFTF	157,742	500,000

Total project costs		1,735,160	7,000,000
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C. INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME IF AVAILABLE, (\$)

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount (\$)
National government	National Environment Protection Agency (NEPA)	In-kind	500,000
National government	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)	In-kind	1,000,000
National government	Ministry of Rural rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)	Grant	4,000,000
GEF Agency	FAO	In-Kind	1,000,000
Other Multilateral Agency	UNEP	In-kind	500,000
Total Co-financing			7,000,000

D. INDICATIVE TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA(S) AND COUNTRY¹

GEF Agency	Type of Trust Funds	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	Grant Amount (\$ (a)	Agency Fee (\$) (b) ²	Total (\$) c=a+b
FAO	GEF TF	Climate Change	Afghanistan	1,735,160	164,840	1,900,000
Total Grant Resources				1,735,160	164,840	1,900,000

¹ In case of single focal area, single country, single GEF Agency project, and single trust fund project, no need to provide information for this table. PMC amount from Table B should be included proportionately to the focal area amount in this table

² Indicate fees related to this project.

E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Please check on the appropriate box for PPG as needed for the project according to the GEF Project Grant:

PPG AMOUNT REQUESTED BY AGENCY (IES), FOCAL AREA(S) AND COUNTRY(IES) FOR MFA AND/OR MTF PROJECT ONLY

Type of Trust Funds	GEF Agency	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	PPG (\$) (a)	Agency Fee (\$) (b)	Total (\$) c=a+b
GEFTF	FAO	Climate Change	Afghanistan	91,324	8,676	\$100,000
Total Grant Resources				91,324	8,676	\$100,000

ACRONYMS

ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
BERA	Building Environmental Resilience in Afghanistan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFM	Community-based forest management
CBNRM	Community-based natural resource management
CCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
CDC	Community development committee
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
COAM	Conservation Organisation of Afghan Mountains
COP	Conference of the Parties (of the Convention on Climate Change)
DAIL	Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DDA	District development authority
ERDA	Energy for Rural Development, National Priority Programme of Government
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FMA	Forest management association
GoIRA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IGO	Implementing government organisation(s)
INC	Initial National Communication on Climate Change
IPFSLA	Initiating Participatory Forestry for Sustainable Livelihoods in Afghanistan
LULUCF	Land use, land-use change and forestry
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MEW	Ministry of Energy and Water
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NABDP	National Area Based Development Program
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action for Climate Change
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NPP	National Priority Programme of the Afghan Government
NRM	Natural resource management
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
NTFPs	Non-timber forest products
PDC	Provincial Development Council
POWPA	Programme of Work on Protected Areas
SAISEMA	Strengthened Approach for the Integration of Sustainable Environmental Management in Afghanistan
SBES	Sustainable biomass energy systems
SFM	Sustainable forest management
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A.1. Project description

A.1.1 The global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

Lack of sustainable sources of electricity in rural areas

Afghanistan currently has the second lowest Human Development Index in the world (UNDP 2012). This limited development is reflected in the country's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which originate mainly from agriculture (51%) and land-use change/forestry (32.7%)¹. Commercial activities and energy production, by contrast, are relatively minor sources of GHG emissions in Afghanistan.

With just 4–6% of the population on the national grid (US State Department 2012), electricity supply in Afghanistan is substantially less than the demand. This shortfall persists despite significant investment in renewable energy (especially hydropower generation) in the last ten years. Furthermore, less than 4% of rural households (~75% of the entire population) have access to electricity². The limited access to electricity in rural areas is a barrier to Afghanistan's economic growth, particularly in light of the fact that over half of Afghanistan's 2012 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was generated by rural communities (MRRD).

As a result of the limited distribution and supply of electricity, the majority of Afghan households are dependent on solid biomass fuels (defined as wood, other woody vegetation such as shrubs, crop residues and dried animal dung, hereafter referred to as 'biomass fuels') to supply energy for domestic and industrial energy³. The dynamics of household use of biomass fuels, such as total household consumption and fuel preference, are variable between provinces. However, it is estimated that biomass fuels provide ~90% of total domestic energy in Afghan households, of which 65–75% is provided by firewood^{4,5}. A study of the fuel economy of mountain villages in Ishkamish and Burka in the northeast of Afghanistan estimated that the total annual household consumption of biomass fuels included 7.8 tonnes, 7.8 tonnes, and 7.1 tonnes of firewood, shrubby biomass and manure, respectively⁶.

The harvesting of biomass fuels has resulted in substantial deforestation and land degradation. This process has been ongoing throughout the last century, but was particularly severe during the recent decades of political instability and conflict. The total effect of domestic biomass fuel consumption on forest resources and other vegetation is difficult to quantify as a result of the lack of baseline data and the complexity of land use dynamics in Afghanistan. However, the abovementioned study in the northeast found that traditional biomass fuels have become increasingly scarce, particularly at a local scale, indicating that biomass fuel demand is met primarily by net non-renewable resources. For example, the availability of certain traditional firewood species was found to have declined significantly as a result of overexploitation. The use of animal manure, crop residues and shrubby biomass fuels is reportedly increasingly as a result of the scarcity of preferred woodfuel species. Furthermore, the time spent and distance travelled to collect woodfuel has increased⁷. In Afghanistan, the collection of these fuels, as well as cooking, are typically conducted by women. Consequently, the reduction in available fuel and any changes in fuel-burning efficiency have a particularly strong impact on women's lives and health.

¹ GoIRA, 2012. Initial National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

² GoIRA, 2007. Energy Sector Strategy for the Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

³ Hassan, Z. and P. Kant, 2011. REDD in Afghanistan: Empowering Women and Increasing Access to Energy. IGREC Working Paper IGREC-20: 2011, Institute of Green Economy, New Delhi.

⁴ Milbrandt, A., Overend, R. 2011. Assessment of Biomass Resources in Afghanistan. National Renewable Energy Laboratory, United States Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy.

⁵ Sustainable Energy Regulation Network (2012). Energy Institute, University College of London. <http://www.reegle.info/policy-and-regulatory-overviews/AF>.

⁶ Yarash, N., Smith, P., Mielke, K. 2010. The fuel economy of mountain villages in Ishkamish and Burka (Northeast Afghanistan). Rural subsistence and urban marketing patterns. Amu Darya Project Working Paper No. 9. Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung (Center for Development Research), University of Bonn. http://www.zef.de/fileadmin/webfiles/downloads/zef_wp/wp73.pdf.

⁷ Yarash, N., Smith, P., Mielke, K. 2010. The fuel economy of mountain villages in Ishkamish and Burka (Northeast Afghanistan). Rural subsistence and urban marketing patterns. Amu Darya Project Working Paper No. 9. Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung (Center for Development Research), University of Bonn. http://www.zef.de/fileadmin/webfiles/downloads/zef_wp/wp73.pdf.

Forest Degradation

Forest cover in Afghanistan has decreased from 3.1 million hectares in the middle of the 20th century to less than 1.3 million hectares in 2000 (FAO 2003). The rate of deforestation over 2005–2010 was estimated to be 2.9% per annum⁸. In addition, shrub and tree cover in rangelands, including areas previously identified as “wasteland”, have decreased substantially as a result of overgrazing, fuel gathering and transformation to crop cultivation⁹. As a result, land-use change and degradation are Afghanistan’s greatest sources of GHG emissions at present, despite recent increases in emissions from the energy sector¹⁰.

The extent and rate of deforestation in Afghanistan has been accelerated by the disruption of socio-economic structures and widespread environmental damage caused by decades of instability and violent conflict. Illegal logging is endemic in forested areas close to the Pakistani border¹¹ and this problem is exacerbated by the limited capacity for governance and law enforcement in remote areas. In addition, the traditional community-based structures for forest management have been disrupted by conflict and it has become increasingly difficult for communities to exert their traditional rights of use to forest resources. New national forest and energy plans that demonstrate the power of community forestry, especially in areas with minimal government influence, are therefore urgently required. According to Afghanistan’s National Forest Management Plan (NFMP) and the draft Forest Law (FL), all forests are owned by the state and managed by public administration units. MAIL is responsible for implementing reforestation and afforestation projects in public forests, however the FL includes provision for communities to be engaged in the management of public forests through the granting of Forest User Rights to Community Forestry Associations (CFAs). Forestry practices such as tree-felling and thinning of forested areas are to be undertaken only with the supervision and permission of MAIL technical support. The FL recognises the rights of private individuals to undertake afforestation and reforestation on their own private land or leased areas, however the FAO’s Forest Resource Assessment for Afghanistan (2010) reports that there are no significant areas of privately owned forests. The NFMP notes that the lack of clarity on land tenure legislation and the disintegration of traditional institutions for natural resource management are barriers to sustainable management of forest resources because there is a lack of incentive to manage resources sustainably to generate long term benefits. The lack of secure land tenure is exacerbated by inconsistencies between the various legal classifications of ownership. For example, the Civil Code, Law on Land Management, Presidential Decrees, Agricultural Master Plan, Law on Managing Land Affairs and Sharia all classify land differently¹². The lack of clarity on land tenure is reportedly particularly problematic in rural areas, where rights of use to pastoral rangelands and forests is frequently a source of local conflict¹³.

The loss of vegetation cover in deforested and degraded areas presents a major challenge to Afghanistan’s economic and social welfare. For example, soils tend to become compacted in the absence of sufficient vegetation cover, which reduces the rate of water infiltration and groundwater recharge. This is particularly problematic in Afghanistan, where groundwater is an important source of water for domestic and agricultural needs. The compacting of soil also reduces the recruitment rate of natural vegetation, which means that regrowth is slow. Finally, raindrop impact on exposed ground increases erosion of fertile topsoil, thereby reducing the productivity of forests and agricultural areas as a result of decreased soil fertility.

Community-based natural resource management and sustainable biomass energy systems

The introduction of viable community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) systems that secure legal control over resources is recognised as an urgent priority to address deforestation and degradation of natural resources by various land use activities in Afghanistan and is emphasised in the objectives of the NFMP. CBNRM is an approach to decentralising the responsibility for management of natural resources to local community-based structures. This approach gives communities full or partial control over the use of natural resources such as water, forests, pastures, communal lands, protected areas and fisheries. The extent of control involved ranges from community consultations, establishing joint management arrangements, or allocating full responsibility for decision-making and benefit collection to local communities. The CBNRM approach may include the use of tools such as joint management plans, community management plans,

⁸ FAO. 2010. Forest Resource Assessment – Afghanistan. Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome.

⁹ FAO. 2010. Forest Resource Assessment – Afghanistan. Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome.

¹⁰ Initial National Communication on Climate Change. Afghanistan.

¹⁶ UNEP. 2013. Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan. United Nations Environment Programme

¹² Hilhort, T., Porchet, N. 2012. Food security and land governance factsheet – Afghanistan. LANDAC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands

¹³ Hilhort, T., Porchet, N. 2012. Food security and land governance factsheet – Afghanistan. LANDAC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands

stakeholder consultations and workshops, and formalisation of communal land tenure rights. The active participation of stakeholders in decision making regarding the use of natural resources increases their sense of ownership of and responsibility for these resources. CBNRM systems generally lead to improved environmental governance and information management, which has both economic and environmental benefits.

The establishment of representative, empowered community-based institutions are key to the success and sustainability of CBNRM initiatives. The most appropriate structure of a community-based institution should be identified based on the local context, including consideration of factors such as institutional capacity, adequate mandate, interests of local communities and degree of participation. The process by which priority areas and communities are selected to participate in CBNRM should emphasise principles of transparency, accountability, and minimisation of conflict. It should also be done in accordance with decentralisation reforms¹⁴.

This project will support the establishment of CBNRM structures at local and national levels, with a particular focus on addressing the negative impacts of biomass fuel use by promoting sustainable biomass energy systems (SBES), sustainable forest management (SFM) and sustainable land-use management. An SBES can be any system that increases the efficiency or sustainability of use of agricultural, forestry and waste biomass for heating, lighting and cooking. Traditional biomass energy systems are generally inefficient, however the efficiency of certain traditional technologies have been improved by recent technological developments¹⁵.

There are many different ways of using biomass for energy, and the form and properties of the biomass, together with the needs of the user, will determine which are the most appropriate. In this project, forest biomass will be utilised more effectively as a result of the introduction of fuel-efficient SBES technologies to replace inefficient traditional technologies at pilot sites in three districts. These fuel-efficient SBESs will be promoted as a replacement for the traditional use of animal dung and unsustainably collected forest biomass and will result in quantifiable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). The project will also support the development of policies for renewable energy, including the promotion of appropriate SBESs with a CBNRM approach. This policy development process will include a review of the regulatory framework, including current and anticipated national laws. The process will also involve the development of best practice guidelines for SBES use. The project will undertake an energy needs assessment study to identify the most appropriate SBES technologies for demonstration sites, including consideration of SBES technologies which have previously been demonstrated by previous and ongoing initiatives. The findings of this study will be freely accessible as a reference to guide other related initiatives and support upscaling of SBES and CBNRM.

Several barriers need to be addressed before the envisioned low-carbon technologies and sustainable land management practices are introduced. The following are the main challenges and barriers that have been identified.

- Policy and regulatory barriers. There is no legal framework for government to promote investments in the renewable energy sector. Low-carbon policies are not included in the national energy policy framework. There is no mention of a CBNRM approach or SBES in the national renewable energy policy or framework; neither are there measures to increase access to financial resources to fund CBNRM and SBES. Land tenure systems which describe forest user rights and ownership of revenues from sale of forest-based carbon credits are unclear and are a disincentive to sustainable natural resource management and investment in carbon credit-generating initiatives.
- Institutional (capacity) barriers. There is a lack of experience with comprehensive integrated energy planning processes at district and village level. Furthermore, there is inadequate capacity within district and local governments to promote, develop, implement and monitor projects. More specifically, there is also a lack of national knowledge management and capacities to deploy SBES and develop CBNRM systems.
- Financial barriers. Introduction of new technologies such as low-carbon SBESs is expensive and requires sustained investments in monitoring, training and awareness raising. The government of Afghanistan is partially reliant on financial support from external donors and has insufficient resources to increase allocation of budget to developing the energy sector. There is also a general lack of local expertise to develop viable financing/incentive schemes to support the implementation of low-carbon SBES

¹⁴ The World Bank (2004) "Sourcebook: Agricultural Investment", Module 5 - Community-Based Natural Resources Management

¹⁵ Erik Christian Daugherty (2001) "Biomass Energy Systems Efficiency: Analyzed through a Life Cycle Assessment"

technologies. Local financial institutions have relatively limited knowledge related to market opportunities in the low-carbon SBES sector and currently are not engaged in developing appropriate loan products to expand the sector.

- Technical barriers. There is a lack of detailed information on potential implementation sites for and feasibility of low-carbon SBES technologies. There is also limited experience with the technical, economic and environmental aspects of SBES, and a lack of knowledge on the installation, management, operation and maintenance of such systems. In addition, there is limited knowledge of CBNRM and CBFM. Finally, there is limited knowledge of approaches to creating a favourable local policy environment for investment in renewable energy technologies such as SBES.
- Information and awareness barriers. There is limited awareness and a lack of information on the costs and benefits of various systems. There is also inadequate capacity to compare different low-carbon SBES options and to select the most feasible option for the local situation.

A.1.2 The baseline scenario and associated baseline projects

The development of renewable energy systems is an important approach to addressing poverty and environmental degradation and supporting socio-economic development in Afghanistan. This is particularly the case in rural areas where access and supply of electricity is very limited and biomass fuels are the primary source of domestic energy. The inadequate supply of energy to support socio-economic development combined with unsustainable uses of biomass energy has multiple negative impacts on the environment and on the livelihoods of rural communities. The negative environmental impacts of the removal of woody biomass for domestic fuel use, including trees as well as shrubby plant species, include:

- increased soil erosion and resultant siltation of surface waters;
- reduced soil fertility and resultant decline in productivity of forests, rangelands and agricultural areas;
- reduced infiltration and increased runoff of rainwater, resulting in reduced availability of groundwater and increased vulnerability to flooding in downstream areas; and
- reduced production and harvestable area of economically important non-timber forest products (such as pistachio nuts, *Pistacia vera*).

The removal of biomass such as livestock dung and crop residues from agricultural lands for use as domestic fuel results in the depletion of nutrients from agricultural soils, thereby limiting agricultural productivity and household income. The cumulative effect of the ongoing degradation of Afghanistan's natural ecosystems is to limit the effectiveness of ongoing investments in rural, environmental and socio-economic development. Furthermore, the degradation and deforestation of Afghanistan's natural ecosystems has negative global implications as the increased emission of GHGs from various land use sectors will contribute to the severity of climate change.

The Government of Afghanistan has acknowledged the importance of adopting improved practices for natural resources management and increasing access to sustainable, affordable energy. The potential for natural resource management to be decentralised to representative community-based organisations through a CBNRM approach is acknowledged and prioritised in important national documents such as the NFMP and the FL. However, there are multiple institutional, technical and financial barriers and information gaps which have limited the progress in establishing and replicating CBNRM and SBES initiatives. At present, no formal national policies or strategies have been established to support the development of renewable energy and SBES technologies. Although a draft Renewable Energy Policy (REP) has been developed for Afghanistan, this document has not been adopted and does not include provision for SBES in its current format. The REP calls for the establishment of a Renewable Energy Development Authority (REDA) to support the establishment of appropriate policies and practices, however this initiative has not been implemented at present.

The introduction of sustainable alternatives to traditional practices, for example improved forest management techniques or alternative cooking fuel techniques, requires sustained technical support and investments in research, monitoring, capacity building and awareness raising. In addition, the consent and active participation of communities in the management of natural resources, including forests and woodlands, must be secured in order to support the sustainability of investments. In the absence of the project (baseline scenario), the Government of Afghanistan (GoIRA) will continue to rely on small, isolated projects that do not address the larger issues of renewable energy use or the development of policies related to renewable energy and SFM at

the national level. There will also be continued dependence on unsustainably harvested biomass fuels to supply energy for cooking and heating, which will lead to further deforestation and land degradation.

This project will build on past and present initiatives which are addressing the abovementioned baseline scenario, including the projects detailed below.

The **Initiating Participatory Forestry for Sustainable Livelihoods in Afghanistan (IPFSLA)** project was implemented in 2009–2011, and was based on formulating participatory forest management practices in three provinces of Northern and Eastern Afghanistan. The IPFSLA project was part of an umbrella programme coordinating complementary development activities in selected provinces, promoting food security, nutrition and livelihoods with a strong focus on sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity. It contributed to existing decentralised planning and programme development by enabling key stakeholders to participate in the elaboration, improvement and implementation of relevant provincial, district and community development plans. In terms of policy support, the project and its partners contributed to developing and reviewing the participatory forest law. It also contributed to mobilising the relevant government departments and the technical group of parliament's lower house to consider the essence and importance of a forestry law that embraces the concept of participation. Furthermore, the project worked with government to develop a regulatory framework based on existing law and experiences gained through pilot participatory forestry projects. The planning and management capacity of stakeholders was also built into the Participatory Rural Appraisal, the forest management plans developed and the strengthening of stakeholder participation. The proposed FAO project will benefit from engaging with stakeholders from the IPFSLA and will apply the lessons, protocols and best practices learned from this project. The FAO project will also engage with representatives of Forest Management Committees (FMCs) established by the IPFSLA in order to support the establishment of FMCs in the FAO project pilot areas. Other participants in the IPFSLA project, such as those community members and public technical staff who benefited from capacity-building and training in specific practices such as nursery management and participatory forestry will also be identified and encouraged to participate in the development of the FAO project's activities.

The **Strengthened Approach for the Integration of Sustainable Environmental Management in Afghanistan (SAISEMA)** project, which finished in 2012. This project focused on strengthening the various natural resource management strategies of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). Important strategic documents including the NFMP and the National Environmental Mainstreaming Guidelines (NEMG) were developed under this project. In addition, the project also undertook extensive training and capacity-building measures, including through the development of participatory environmental management practices through CBNRM in rangeland areas. The capacity built and knowledge generated by SAISEMA project will be an important foundation for the FAO project to build on.

Other ongoing projects such as **Developing Core Capacity for Decentralised MEA Implementation and Natural Resources Management in Afghanistan (2012–2015)** and **Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in Afghanistan (2012–2016)** will have synergies with the FAO project. The first is designed to build national management and coordination capacity for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and to promote the formation of a centralised GEF and MEA coordination entity housed within NEPA. This entity will allow Afghanistan to properly coordinate the implementation of GEF projects, build knowledge of the effects of climate change, and develop implementation capacity for MEAs within key national agencies. The second project will focus on the development of national adaptive capacity to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities to the effects of climate change. The project also has a strong focus on ecosystem management approaches to climate change adaptation at local and national levels.

During the project preparation grant phase, the project will engage closely with other relevant ongoing and developing initiatives related to strengthening of Afghanistan's rural and renewable energy sectors. The Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded project "**Supporting the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Energy**" is currently in preparation and has the objective of improving coordination between energy sector stakeholders in Afghanistan through the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Energy (IMCE). The IMCE was formerly an effective and coherent mechanism for establishing energy investment and governance agendas, however the activities of the IMCE were not sustained due to funding constraints. The ADB project will support coordination, harmonization, and collaboration between development partners and energy sector ministries and agencies in Afghanistan for a coherent strategy and implementation of investment plans, as well as

provide capacity and analytical support to strengthen energy sector investments in Afghanistan. The proposed FAO project will benefit from the improved coordination and sharing of information between stakeholders established by the ADB project. Furthermore, the FAO project will support the ADB project by raising awareness of and demonstrating sustainable, community-based approaches to generating renewable biomass energy.

Project activities will complement and build on existing project initiatives to enhance outcomes and broaden the project scope. There are three current initiatives that will be used as baseline projects.

- MAIL is running the forestry sub-component of the **National Priority Programme on Natural Resource Management and Environment**. The majority of the activities in this national programme are focused on forest production in government facilities at centralised provincial Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL) sites in Herat, Eastern Region and Central Region. The components of the National Forest Plan and associated activities of the National Priority Programme for 2014–2018 lack a significant emphasis on renewable energy.
- At the local level, many actions and programmes are taking place in the three target areas in the Herat, Central and Eastern regions. They involve key international NGOs, Afghan civil society organisations, the Afghan Red Crescent Society, and the French MADERA organisation. These organisations have extensive experience in working with renewable energy, biomass fuels, and soil and land stabilisation, and in using these to address the lack of development, chronic poverty and natural and man-made disasters in remote areas. For example, the MADERA project “Forestry and Fruit Tree Development Project in Afghanistan” included a strong focus on community participation in selecting and undertaking project activities such as nursery management, ecosystem restoration and grazing management.
- In addition, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and FAO are working to link the Government of Afghanistan, UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, civil society and community groups in developing capacities in Afghanistan for sustainable environmental management. The UNEP programme **Building Environmental Resilience in Afghanistan (BERA)** has the technical capacity to apply community forestry approaches that are both technically feasible and realistic in areas that are remote and challenging with respect to access and security. However, this project lacks a specific climate change mitigation approach.

A.1.3 Proposed alternative scenario, with brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

The overall objective of the proposed FAO project is to develop appropriate SBES for rural communities, based on the principles of CBNRM and CBFM. This objective will be achieved using a participatory and inclusive approach which builds upon the work of current and past initiatives. The project will follow GEF-5 guidance in promoting low-carbon technologies that are appropriate to the implementation sites. Land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) are pivotal to integrating technology transfer and sustainable land-use management, in this case CBNRM. Following the directives of COP 12, the project will explore options for LULUCF initiatives based on present and past experience. Project interventions will be designed taking into account Afghanistan’s current level of development and technical and institutional capacity. To develop SFM and reduce carbon emissions, activities will be aimed at conserving, restoring, enhancing, and managing the carbon stocks in forest and non-forest lands. The project will also enhance technical capacity to implement strategies and policies, and to monitor and assess carbon stocks and emissions.

The project will integrate SFM practices with renewable energy (specifically SBES) use and policy development. Specific outcomes will include increased forest area, rehabilitation of degraded forests and the implementation of improved SBES for cooking, heating and lighting in isolated rural communities without access to the national energy grid. Cleaner bioenergy systems, such as fuel-efficient stoves, will facilitate more efficient use of forest resources. This will allow for a reduction in the use of animal dung, because fuel needs will be satisfied using vegetation-based fuels. Dung will therefore be increasingly available to be used for fertilisation of crops, which will result in greater agricultural productivity and improved food security for communities. The biomass energy sources most commonly used are wood, charcoal, and kerosene. Wood and charcoal, which are currently generally harvested unsustainably, are used mainly for cooking and heating; kerosene is the main source of lighting. Project interventions will combine improved natural resource management with implementation of SBES such as fuel-efficient stoves and heating systems. The use of these fuel-efficient SBESs will reduce the rate of degradation/deforestation of forested areas and the emission of GHGs from burning biomass fuels. The project will complement the demonstration of these fuel-efficient

technologies by introducing several measures to support the establishment of integrated energy planning and development of renewable energy policies.

Outputs:

Capacity development will allow communities to adapt simple, cost-effective technologies to local conditions, drawing on lessons learned in other projects and initiatives. The project will engage with relevant ministries to deliver its outcomes. It will work with the Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW) to develop capacity for upscaling and knowledge transfer, and with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) to enhance local planning and management capacity, as well as promote rural livelihoods in Afghanistan. In this way: i) technologies will be successfully demonstrated, deployed, and transferred; ii) an enabling policy environment will be created; iii) mechanisms for technology transfer will be developed; and iv) GHG emissions will be reduced. Activities will generate multiple global environmental benefits as well as the local social and economic benefits such as participatory decision making, increased empowerment of women and the maintenance of ecosystem services. This will lead to improved management practices in LULUCF both within the forest land and in the wider landscape, and the restoration and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests and non-forest lands. The capacity building activities will include education, training, and public awareness on climate mitigation actions, in line with COP guidance on strengthening human and institutional capacity.

The project will provide an environment in which innovative low-carbon technologies are demonstrated and deployed on the ground. The implementation of these technologies will be sustainable and upscaled primarily through capacity development and information exchange among communities and institutions. The CBNRM approach is based on the landscape as a whole, and aims to maintain and enhance ecosystems connectivity, resilience and stability. Watershed and landscape management through CBNRM practices will increase groundwater recharge and forest and tree cover. Sustainable livelihoods depends on reducing pressure on natural resources through integrated planning of the use and management of local and regional natural resources. This reduces the vulnerability of communities to climate change and other hazards. Through increasing forest area and improving land-use practices, food security and the availability of fuelwood will be improved, soil erosion will be reduced and water systems will be protected. This will also lead to reduced GHG emissions.

The proposed FAO project will promote community-based SFM and will investigate potential opportunities to upscale and incentivise investment in SFM, including the use of carbon credit finance to fund mitigation activities in land-based sectors. This is in accordance with guidelines from COP 15 and the Bali Action Plan. The project will also support the upscaling of successful project activities by advocating for policies which include consideration of SBES and CBNRM at the national level and the promotion of project activities at the community level.

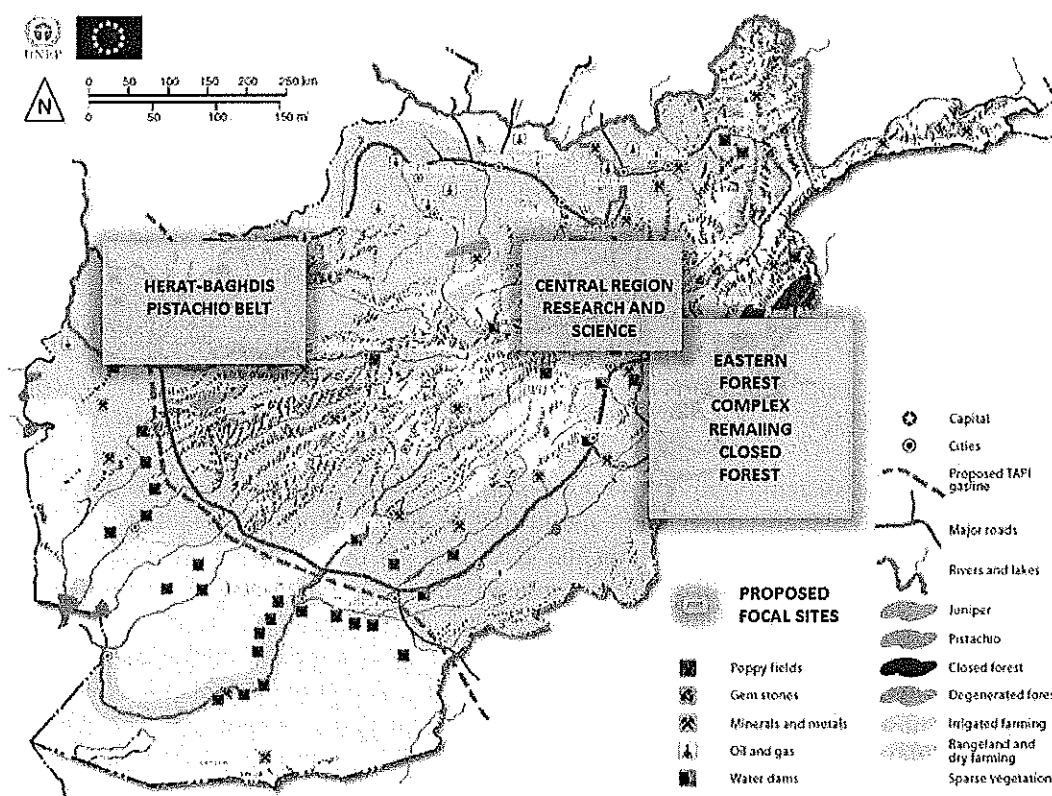
A.1.4 Incremental cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF/SCCF and co-financing

The proposed FAO project will focus on: i) the promotion of SBES, including policy development to encourage uptake of these systems; ii) concomitant national and community-level capacity-building and training; and iii) the establishment of community forests and the development of CBNRM plans to ensure their proper governance. In its activities the project will build on the baseline initiatives described in Section A.1.2. The IPFSLA project, for example, developed community nurseries that are ecologically and socially appropriate, and the proposed FAO project will build on initiatives such as these to promote CBNRM. It will also guide the government in its implementation of the National Priority Programme, which will run from 2014–2018. Furthermore, the project will facilitate the incorporation of SBES into the draft national renewable energy policy, and CBNRM practices into the national forest project activities, as part of the National Budget (Ministry of Finance), delivered through MAIL's Division of Natural Resources Management.

By promoting the establishment of community forests and the use of SBES, the project will help Afghanistan to reduce the rate of land degradation and deforestation, while facilitating sustainable production and use of biomass fuels. The project will therefore directly enhance the effectiveness of the agriculture and water management in the baseline projects, in particular the forest and watershed management components of the National Priority Programme (NPP 16). The project will reduce GHG emissions from land degradation and deforestation, as well as from biomass burning, and therefore provide global benefits through climate change

mitigation. Furthermore, a shift from direct burning of animal dung to the use of SBES will reduce methane emissions from agriculture, while also increasing the availability of animal dung for use as organic fertilisers, creating the potential to enhance agricultural productivity. The project's local, village-led approach will improve planning and management through the development of CBNRM plans and the promotion of SBES.

Figure 1:
Map of Project Intervention Areas



Source: Own elaboration, 2013

The proposed project will be implemented through the following four components.

Component 1: Strengthening the national policy environment to support the adoption of sustainable biomass energy systems (SBES), based on community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), laying the groundwork for future access to carbon markets.

National support for CBNRM and community forestry is likely to slowly improve through the actions of pilot projects (both within the baseline projects and other donor-funded projects) occurring in the country. However, the creation of an overarching policy promoting such activities to reduce GHG emissions, slow the rate of land degradation and provide sustainable alternative energy options is not likely to occur in the near future. In addition, there is currently no process facilitating the development of a national dialogue around community forestry and the associated sustainable development benefits. Therefore, in the absence of the FAO project, it is likely that Afghanistan will take a considerable time to successfully integrate such activities into national policy.

This component will help to integrate planning for SBES into national policies, as a viable strategy for assisting rural development. This will enhance the current policy development processes, resulting in globally-beneficial reductions in GHG emissions as a result of, *inter alia*, a reduction in rates of deforestation and land degradation and reduced combustion of biomass fuels. Studies have shown that some of the biggest barriers to widespread uptake of low-cost alternative energy solutions, such as improved stoves and biogas digesters, are

social and educational^{16,17}. The proposed FAO project aims to strengthen national structures that facilitate the mass production and widespread implementation of SBES and other alternative energy systems, in order to overcome these barriers. This component builds upon the draft Renewable Energy Policy developed by the Energy for Rural Development Afghanistan (ERDA) unit of the National Area-based Development Programme (NABDP) to facilitate the mainstreaming of renewable energy policies. It contributes to the upcoming National Priority Programme on Energy for Rural Development (NPP2) of the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS).

Component 1 will promote and assist in mainstreaming the CBNRM approach and SBES into the draft national Renewable Energy Policy (Output 1.1). This includes providing support for the establishment of the “Renewable Energy Development Authority” mooted in the draft Renewable Energy Policy (output 1.2), as well as developing understanding and implementation capacity within relevant national agencies. It is possible that the national endorsement of the Renewable Energy Policy may take longer than the project duration as a result of the slow national process for approval of policies. As a consequence, Component 1 will develop a roadmap for the implementation of CBNRM and SBES (Output 1.3) that includes a strategy to promote access to carbon markets and investments to upscale SFM and SBES. This will include an analysis of guidelines, regulations and financial incentives, to assist in the integration of CBNRM and SBES into national policy frameworks and action plans such as NPP2. CBNRM plans (see Component 2) will provide a framework for community engagement in this roadmap. Finally, the roadmap will include an upscaling strategy for ensuring the long-term sustainability of CBNRM and SBES. This strategy will build upon lessons learned and information collected under Components 2, 3 and 4. The relationship between FAO and MEW will facilitate institutional capacity building.

A biomass energy information system (Output 1.4) that collects, analyses, and disseminates data on resources and technologies for sustainable energy production and utilisation will support the roadmap. The lack of such a system has been identified as a shortcoming in the INC, and its establishment will allow information dissemination to national partners, and will serve as a transparent and publicly accessible accounting system for GHG emission reductions achieved by the pilot biomass energy projects. It is envisaged that this information system would ultimately facilitate the development of a national carbon accounting system, although this is unlikely to be achievable within the timescale of the FAO project. A plan for this development will be included in the upscaling strategy in the roadmap developed under Output 1.3. The Afghan Energy Information Centre (AEIC), which provides information related to energy production and energy demand at the national level, and may be an appropriate entity to host and manage the biomass energy information system. Alternatively, a division with MAIL or MEW may be the most appropriate stakeholder to host this information system. The institutional arrangements describing the hosting of the biomass energy information system will be clarified in the PPG Phase. The results of the scoping study conducted under Output 3.1.1 will also be included in this information system, and this study will build on work done by the baseline and aligned projects. In this way synergy between all related initiatives in Afghanistan will be enhanced.

Component 2: Developing community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) plans and establishing community forest management associations (FMAs) in 3 project areas

The project will build upon the activities of the baseline projects to establish CBNRM plans for the project areas (Outcome 2.1). This approach will include the establishment of community FMAs (Outcome 2.2), which will provide a more sustainable supply of wood to supplement current biomass sources. This is necessary to ensure the viability of SBES approaches in the long term (under Component 3), and will be undertaken through extant community and district-level structures (*shuras*, community development councils (CDCs) and district development authorities (DDAs)). This approach will promote sustainable management of resources and community participation in the scheme. This will be complemented by a process of mainstreaming CBFM practices into national strategies, as well as the continued development of the National Renewable Energy Policy, under Output 1.1.

CBNRM has had mixed success internationally, but it is a valuable means of avoiding the “tragedy of the commons” through promoting community understanding and ownership of valuable shared resources, e.g. water, forage and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The community forests will be selected such that they

¹⁶Inayat, J. (2011) What makes people adopt improved cookstoves? Empirical evidence from rural northwest Pakistan. Working Paper 012, the Governance of Clean Development Working Paper Series. School of International Development, University of East Anglia UK.

¹⁷Lewis, Jessica J., and Subhrendu K. Pattanayak. (2012) “Who Adopts Improved Fuels and Cookstoves? A Systematic Review.” *Environmental Health Perspectives* 120, 637–645.

maximise the potential for improving ecosystem service provision (in terms of the potential for reducing soil erosion, increasing water filtration and stabilising slopes). Appropriate management interventions and recommendations will be developed based on lessons learned in the baseline projects and other relevant initiatives discussed in Section A.1.2. However, they will probably include the development of local nurseries to provide seedlings for planting in forests. The species selected for forest restoration will generate multiple benefits (such as fruits and nuts, or forage), in addition to the provision of wood for biomass fuel to be used in SBES. The introduction of SBES, such as fuel-efficient stoves, under Output 3.1, will lead to a reduction in biomass collection pressure on the surrounding areas and subsequently improved biophysical integrity of those ecosystems. This will result in an improvement in the provision of ecosystem services, and the livelihood diversification through provision of NTFPs will increase overall community resilience. Such community-based solutions are essential in Afghanistan, where government access to many districts is regularly hampered by security issues and unrest.

Within the strictures of Afghan culture, the role of fuel-gathering and housekeeping falls largely to women. In addition, it has been demonstrated in neighbouring countries that the tending of woodlots and nurseries by women is often actively endorsed by local communities. The project activities undertaken by the proposed project within this component therefore represent a valuable means of empowering women in Afghanistan and will be developed in consultation with representatives of previous and ongoing initiatives which have successfully engaged women in project activities.

The success and long-term sustainability of these interventions will be enhanced by conducting training sessions at a local level for communities in the pilot areas (Output 2.2.2), and at a national level for planning and governmental agencies (Output 2.2.3). This training will focus on CBNRM planning and implementation, with an emphasis on SFM. These training and capacity building activities will be guided by the outcomes of previous projects such as IPFLSA and SAISEMA, including the use of protocols and best practice guidelines developed as well as actively engagement stakeholders and beneficiaries of the aforementioned projects.

Component 3: Promoting the demonstration and deployment of sustainable biomass energy systems with a CBNRM approach

Component 3 will address the technical, social and market barriers that currently prevent the widespread adoption of SBES in Afghanistan. Outcome 3.1.1 will facilitate increased implementation of SBES by improving confidence in their feasibility, affordability and performance, as well as their environmental and economic benefits. Financial and technical support will be provided to test low-cost energy alternatives in rural areas. An energy needs assessment and scoping study, taking into account the type of energy systems currently used and local social characteristics, will be undertaken in target areas to identify solutions best suited to the local situation. It will also assess the potential for expanding the market and developing the local production of SBES as a sustainable livelihood option. This study will build upon lessons learned in the baseline projects and other aligned initiatives, particularly those that have trialled improved combustion stoves and other SBES already, to ensure maximum efficacy of the interventions selected.

Some projects in Afghanistan have already targeted the small-scale development of SBES, and have met with moderate success and good community support. The UNEP *Koh-e-Baba Partnership for Women and Natural Resources* is a good example of this, and is a key partner for the development of community-based SBES. Other organisations that have trialled SBES in rural areas in Afghanistan include Conservation Organisation for Afghan Mountain Areas (COAM) and Groupe Energies Renouvelables, Environnement et Solidarités (GERES). The FAO project will build on these organisations' achievements by incorporating their lessons learned into the biomass energy information system developed under Output 1.4 and in the scoping study conducted under Output 3.1.1. The latter scoping study will be undertaken early on in the development of the project and will be used to identify the most appropriate technologies for the local context to be introduced and demonstrated in the three pilot areas. In the baseline situation, it is anticipated that additional small areas will access sustainable biomass and alternative energy production systems through some national investment and donor support. However, it is not likely that a large-scale rollout of a SBES or alternative small scale energy systems will be achieved, because of the lack of investment support and the low level of awareness within government agencies.

SBES considered for deployment will include, *inter alia*, improved combustion stoves (in at least 10,000 households), wood and dung briquetting, small-scale biomass digesters and biomass gasification (in areas with a suitable climate). Systems deployed will be selected based on their suitability for the local market, environmental conditions and sociological situation, and based on their cost/effectiveness in reducing GHG

emissions. Testing and deployment will be conducted in three pilot study areas. Local communities in the pilot areas will be trained in the installation, use and maintenance of SBES (Outcome 3.1.2). This training will be combined with that conducted under Output 2.2.2, and will incorporate a strong focus on CBNRM as it relates to the use of SBES.

Component 3 will also help to address the low levels of government and public awareness, technical knowledge and capacity relating to improved alternative energy approaches, including SBES (Outcomes 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). The general perception of SBESs as less valuable than grid-supplied electricity systems will be addressed, including a clear articulation of the cost-effectiveness and multiple benefits associated with these systems. This will be done through the dissemination of knowledge captured in the biomass energy information system (Output 1.4). Results of the study conducted under Output 3.1.1 will also be incorporated into the information system. Finally, specialised training on the design, construction and marketing of SBES will be conducted for local engineers, skilled workers, entrepreneurs and others likely to be involved in the production and marketing of such systems (Output 3.2.2). This will increase local technical capacity to upscale the use of SBES in rural areas of Afghanistan, and as such will be part of the upscaling plan developed under Output 1.3.

Three target areas (western provinces such as Herat/Badghis, the highland areas of the eastern region provinces, and one area of the central region of Afghanistan) have been tentatively identified for demonstration of SBES. The selection of pilot areas, however, will be finalised during the project preparation phase, in conjunction with relevant national stakeholders. The choice of target areas will be based on both security concerns and vulnerability of local populations, and the presence of appropriate baseline activities upon which the project can build. Site selection will furthermore be informed by the presence of established and interested CDCs. However, if no such CDCs exist in the areas selected, they will be established as part of the implementation activities. All CDCs engaged with and established by the project will be officially recognised at district, provincial and central (MAIL) levels.

Component 4: Awareness raising on CBNRM and SBES, and monitoring and evaluation

This component will ensure that lessons learned and best practices are broadly disseminated, the project is well monitored, and external evaluations are conducted in a timely manner.

Site visits to the project areas and seminars on the project interventions will be organised, and the project experiences will be disseminated to various interested stakeholders. This will form part of the upscaling strategy developed under Output 1.3. Various tools such as leaflets, radio, community forums and a website will be used for effective dissemination of awareness-raising material. An annual report and periodical newsletter on best practices, information on country-level projects and key indicators of progress made under the project will be prepared and distributed to key stakeholders and agencies.

Methodologies/tools will be developed for use of collated information for better planning and decision-making, including data collection methods, analytical frameworks, performance indicators and types of evaluation and review. Case studies will be prepared and presented to raise awareness of policy developments, CBNRM related activities and appropriate SBES technologies. Through these activities stakeholders will be made aware of the full range of energy options available to provide a sustainable supply of renewable energy while conserving and enhancing the health and productivity of the nation's forest resource.

An independent final evaluation will be conducted three months prior to the end of the project. The final evaluation will look at the impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental benefit goals. The final evaluation will also provide recommendations to the follow-up activities.

After completion of the project, the project performance monitoring will be conducted to study the technical, financial, environmental and socio-economic performance of the projects.

A.1.5 Global benefits (GEFTF, NPTF)

The national government, the regional authorities, involved academia institutions, local forest communities, trained engineers and workers, and small-scale rural producers will help generate the following GEBs: i) "87,000 t CO₂e" emissions avoided due to improved natural resources management that leads to reduced land and forest degradation; reduced deforestation linked to better community-based forest management; and

reduced biomass burning; ii) “10,000–20,000 t CO₂e”¹⁸¹⁹ methane emissions avoided due to the shift from direct burning of animal dung to the use of SBESs in agriculture; iii) improved agricultural productivity and less pressures over land resources (increasing carbon sequestration) due to the increasing of animal dung availability to be used as organic fertilisers.; iv) increased capture of carbon in plant biomass and soil, through the reforestation activities; v) reduced GHG emissions from fuel consumption due to more efficient energy use (including SBESs)²⁰; and vi) establishment of policy and market frameworks, community forests management, and deployment of SBES, that will facilitate a gradual long-term decrease in CO₂ and methane emissions from LULUCF, combined with increased carbon sequestration in restored woodlands and community forests.

Through improved decision making in management of production landscapes ecosystem services will be protected which is important for the global environment and for peoples’ livelihoods. Multiple global environmental benefits, including those related to the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation and combating land degradation will be addressed through the project programming framework.

Given the critical national situation, all baseline data and project target will be calculated during full project preparation

A.1.6 Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up

Project sustainability will be addressed through: i) continued efforts to build the capacity of Afghan institutions, especially NEPA, MAIL and MEW as well as civil society organizations and nurturing environmental leaders; ii) building enhanced linkages between government institutions and communities; (iii) cross-fertilization and coordination with existing UN activities and other relevant stakeholders in the country (FAO and UNEP’s leading role in the UN Country Team policy contact groups for sustainable livelihoods and natural resources); (iv) integration of project outputs into long-term development planning, including the UNDAF, the Common Country Assessment, and the rest of the 22 government-led National Priority Programmes; and v) identification of potential strategies for financing SBES and CBNRM-related initiatives, including carbon credit finance.

In particular, Component 3 will ensure project sustainability by: i) delivering capacity-building to local communities running CBNRM and SBESs and supporting communities’ ownership; ii) training local engineers, skilled craft workers and entrepreneurs on the design, manufacture and marketing of SBESs and other alternative energy systems; iii) promoting local markets to overcome social and economic hurdles involved in the large-scale roll-out of alternative energy systems; and iv) providing with training and capacity building to national and local officials in relevant government agencies (NEPA, MAIL, MEW and MRRD) for integrated rural energy planning, including the potentials of CBNRM for rural development activities. Furthermore, Component 3 will ensure project sustainability by engaging both the MRRD and MEW and their baseline initiatives, essential for the long-term mainstreaming of sustainable biomass energy and alternative renewable energy systems in the country.

Project harmonization is required through an integrated sectoral approach taking into account the policy synergies required to create an environment where landscape management is promoted and enhanced leading to improved SFM and Sustainable Land Management and reduction in carbon emissions. This requires inter-governmental cooperation and access and use information and sharing of knowledge that strengthens the capacity of institutions to develop policy and legislative frameworks while enhancing capacities to monitor and evaluate environmental impacts and trends

Project Visibility: The project Communication strategy intends to maximize project visibility by using the communications resources of the Agriculture and Rural Development Division/ Ministry of Finance and Line Ministries, as well as the UN Country Team, in particular the well-resourced and very efficient Strategic

¹⁸ Carrie M. Lee, Chelsea Chandler, Michael Lazarus and Francis X. Johnson (2013) “Assessing the Climate Impacts of Cookstove Projects: Issues in Emissions Accounting, Stockholm Environment Institute Working Paper 2013-1

¹⁹ Policy Brief “Assessing the Climate Impacts of Cookstove Projects: Issues in Emissions Accounting, Stockholm Environment Institute

²⁰ This will be studied and measured as a component of the project together with UNEP, FAO and national university specialists to draw together a body of knowledge that seeks to use evidence to influence national policy for GHG reduction in both ERDA and NRM national priority programmes.

Communications Unit (SCU) of the UNAMA Peacekeeping mission. This will enable project messages to reach a far wider Afghanistan-relevant audience than FAO could reach on its own, and ensures common messaging across the GEF project activities in the country. By highlighting links between environment/natural resources and poverty, as well as high priority development and humanitarian themes the project communications strategy will promote awareness about benefits of environmental cooperation activities and environment as a cross-cutting issue in the broader development and peace-making framework. Links will be made with the Global Alliance for Clean Cook stoves.

A.2. Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Roles and responsibilities
United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)	The FAO is the GEF implementing agency for the project. It will provide technical support for the project as a whole through its global, regional and national expertise and in-country infrastructure. In addition, it will facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the project outcomes, and will sit on steering and management committees to provide project support.
National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA)	NEPA is Afghanistan's national GEF focal point. Formed in 2005, NEPA's function and roles are outlined in Afghanistan's first environmental law, which was passed in the same year. Its portfolio includes regulatory, coordination, monitoring and enforcement roles for all environmental issues in Afghanistan. It currently chairs the inter-ministerial Committee for Environmental Coordination and the National Climate Change Committees, which are responsible for the coordination of inter-ministry responses to cross-cutting and multi-sectoral issues. NEPA has been identified as the National Counterpart for this and other projects under multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and will therefore coordinate both the local and international stakeholders for project implementation.
Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)	MAIL has an execution role with respect to natural resource management within Afghanistan, complementing NEPA's regulatory and technical role. Charged with restoring Afghanistan's licit agricultural economy through increased production, efficient natural resource management and market development, MAIL has both a <u>Natural Resource Management</u> and a <u>Forestry Department</u> . MAIL also chairs the Agriculture and Rural Development cluster of the National Priority Programmes. In the long term, MAIL is the agency best situated to undertake CBNRM and alternative livelihood activities that will allow Afghanistan to access further international environmental funding. MAIL will therefore be a vital partner for implementation of all levels of this project.
UN Environment Programme (UNEP)	UNEP has over 10 years of operational experience in Afghanistan. UNEP has been consulted during the initial stages of the project design. UNEP Post Conflict and Disaster Management Branch in Kabul has provided considerable technical support to NEPA in the management of MEA obligations and implementation of other GEF and projects in Afghanistan. UNEP's Kabul Office is currently providing executing support to NEPA for three other GEF projects through direct assistance and extensive capacity building activities, and will be part of the project steering committee.
Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW)	MEW is the national department in charge of managing Afghanistan's energy needs. It chairs the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Energy (ICE), and has overseen significant improvements in national electricity production. The principle focus for energy is on hydro-electric generation, tapping into the large natural river courses extending from Afghanistan's central highland region, and on the extensions of the electrical grid infrastructure to allow load-sharing between different areas in the country. However, MEW does not currently have a strong focus on off-grid energy, and is an essential partner for this project to facilitate mainstreaming of efficient alternative energy systems. The MEW will be directly engaged with the GEF project in its up scaling and knowledge transfer capacity as well as in the National Steering Committee for the project.

Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development (MRRD)	The MRRD is the government agency mandated with improving infrastructure, building local planning and management capacity, and promoting rural livelihoods. It is currently undertaking the majority of the government's off-grid and local power generation activities, largely through the very large scale National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP), and to a lesser extent through the National Solidarity Programme (NSP). However, the rural energy projects such as the ERDP have focused primarily on micro-hydro power (MHP) small scale photovoltaic and solar water heating projects, without a significant integration of SBES alternatives. The NSP has established community development committees in many areas throughout Afghanistan, and these are the ideal structures through which the project will interact with the communities. The establishment of such structures will facilitate the ease of CBNRM planning for community forestry and integrated energy plans within the pilot areas.
The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS)	The IFRC is an international agency that is mandated with providing disaster support for humanitarian crises throughout the world. Operating in conjunction with its national partner, the ARCS, IFRC has members coordinating disaster response in every district of the country. At present the IFRC is undertaking community resilience activities in Herat and Kabul provinces, which are two of the intervention areas for this GEF project. It has been proposed by the GEF Operational Focal Point (GEF OFP) as a potential execution partner for the proposed project's on-the-ground intervention activities due to its large technical presence and good relationships with the communities in the project sites. Given the challenging social, political and security situation in Afghanistan working with actors such as IFRC with over 40 years' experience in these remote areas with poor security, is vital.
Village councils and Community Development Councils (CDCs)	<p>Local communities will be engaged early in the PPG process to identify relevant project implementation sites in Herat/Baghdis, Kabul and the Eastern Forest Complex region. Community consultation will continue throughout the project implementation, in order to ensure that project outcomes address real community needs. Planning and management of project activities such as CBNRM and SBES pilots, establishment of multiple-use community forests and associated sustainable land management plans will include direct participation of local communities in order to ensure community buy-in.</p> <p>Local communities in particular hold a wealth of traditional knowledge about natural resource management, and inside the communities there are valuable contributions to be made from different parts of the community: women's groups as custodians of community nurseries; older Shura elders with understanding for traditional agreements on forest and range management issues going back hundreds of years.</p>
Private sector	The proposed project will include private sector enterprises by promoting and training identified local small and medium enterprise businesses and communities in the establishment of suitable SBES solutions. The cultivation of private sector enterprises will facilitate the up scaling and rolling out of successful SBES activities to the broader community subsequent to project completion. The private sector will also be able to innovate and invest further resources into successful components of the clean tech and biomass solutions for adaptation and further up scaling in different areas of Afghanistan.

A.3. Risks

As a result of the current political situation and security concerns, all rural development projects in Afghanistan are vulnerable to a number of risks not common to many other least-developed countries. In addition, the lack of capacity within Afghanistan's young democracy is a very real challenge to national implementation of projects. Mitigation measures for these risks and other pertinent risks for the proposed project are highlighted in the table below:

Identified Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation Measures
Potential conflict and increased	High	Medium	The identified priority action areas are relatively low-risk at present, and have had a low incidence of conflict

internal security risks			<p>over the last ten years. Furthermore, a full security analysis will be undertaken before sites are finalised. Preference will be only given to secure and stable intervention sites with a good working relationship with the project executing agency or sub-contracted NGOs.</p> <p>Strong participatory stakeholder consultation will be undertaken to ensure reasonable project expectations, clarify roles and responsibilities and to ensure local buy in</p> <p>Continual engagement with local political structures (shuras, CDCs and community leaders) by the National Counterpart will enhance security and community ownership.</p> <p>Local authorities and community development organisations will be given suitable project responsibilities in order to ensure local ownership. Project will operate under United Nations minimum operational security standards (MOSS).</p>
Availability of sufficiently competent local technical expertise	High	High	<p>This is a real risk as a result of the low level of national technical expertise in the field of the project. A dynamic project coordinator will be hired to ensure good project motivation and interaction with government structures.</p> <p>To complement and strengthen national capacities, working relationships with NGOs with on the ground capacity such as the IFRC/ARCS will be sought. This will support the national structures in the pilot areas such as the MRRD-established CDCs and provincial and district-level governance structures.</p> <p>Both FAO and UNEP have years of operational experience in operating in challenging circumstances in Afghanistan.</p>
Low national and institutional priority given to climate change mitigation measures as a result of lack of knowledge	Medium	Medium	<p>Understanding of climate change within government structures is low, but is being addressed through several parallel projects.</p> <p>The project will provide training and information workshops to ensure that the mitigation component of climate change activities is sufficiently explained and understood.</p>
Climate change-induced extreme weather and associated phenomena (droughts, floods and sandstorms) may reduce effectiveness of project interventions or damage infrastructure	Medium	Medium	<p>Project interventions will be designed to reduce the potential impacts of climate change and to increase the resilience of local communities to climate impacts.</p> <p>The project will also build upon baseline interventions designed to reduce the vulnerability of communities.</p>
Low level of government engagement	Low	High	<p>The GoIRA has already expressed its commitment to the project.</p> <p>The project addresses specific priorities identified by the GOIRA (see Section A2), and has been developed in conjunction with project partners.</p> <p>Continued stakeholder engagement through the project lifetime and capacity building within relevant</p>

			government structures will maintain national support and enhance the capacity for project implementation within the relevant agencies.
Livelihood dependence of communities in pilot projects may be detrimental to plantation and biomass enhancement initiatives	High	Medium	A community-based management approach combining natural resource management and integrated energy planning will be undertaken to ensure that project activities directly address community desires and needs. Project activities will be designed to enhance livelihoods and reduce the dependence of local communities on certain natural resources, increasing resilience to the effects of climate change.
Sustainability and upscaling of project outcomes after project completion	Medium	High	Project activities include empowerment of private sector to undertake construction and marketing of appropriate alternative energy technologies, which will increase the long-term effectiveness of project impacts. Strong stakeholder ownership will be promoted through continual engagement, training and facilitation of strategic integration of project outcomes into national policy-making procedures. Sustainability will be further supported by facilitating the involvement of CDCs.

A.4. Coordination

The project will build upon the knowledge and institutional gains of several other FAO projects:

- A project entitled **“Initiating participatory forestry in support of sustainable livelihoods in Afghanistan”** was completed in December 2011, with a wrap up period extending to June 2012. This German funded US\$ 2.6 million project (officially entitled GCP/AFG/052/GER) implemented community forestry programmes in three different areas, and included a significant policy component. It carried out community forestry within the provinces of Balkh, Baghlan and Nangarhar; if possible, the proposed project will build directly upon these gains. In addition, the project highlighted challenges and benefits of CBNRM in rural Afghanistan, identified suitable participatory forest management methodologies for upscaling nationally, and provided FAO with additional experience in strategies for ensuring the success of community-based management approaches. The GCP/AFG/052/GER project provided the seed funding for development of the STAR CCM PIF in order to facilitate the further mainstreaming of community forestry into national policy. This is a core component of the development of a national approach to sustainable biomass energy systems, and the strategic gains of GCP/AFG/052/GER will therefore be enhanced through the action of the proposed project.
- The **Strengthened Approach for the Integration of Sustainable Environmental Management in Afghanistan** is a joint FAO-UNDP-UNEP project, completed in December 2012. The principal focus of this programme was the strengthening of the various natural resource management strategies of MAIL, NEPA and the MRRD. An important element of this process is the integration of environmental concerns into national planning processes. The institutional knowledge developed from this project will be leveraged to assist in the establishment of CBNRM plans (including community forestry) in the pilot project areas, as well as the integration of SBES practices into rural energy planning in order to enhance the success of selected renewable energy approaches.

Several GEF projects are currently underway in Afghanistan, and are being coordinated by NEPA. For all of these projects, coordination and planning will take place through the office of the Director General of the National Environmental Protection Agency (also the GEF Operational Focal Point). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNFCCC Focal Point, and the Ministry of Finance/World Bank (GEF Political Focal Point) will be closely involved in the National Steering Committee to ensure the project is tightly linked to national as well as GEF country priorities. The project coordination unit will meet regularly with these programmes in order to ensure that the identified synergies are fully developed, and to facilitate feedback of information between the respective projects:

- GEF Trust Fund project **“Developing core capacity for decentralised MEA implementation and natural resources management in Afghanistan”** 2012 – 2015 (UNEP – US\$ 910,000). This project is

designed to build national management and coordination capacity for the implementation of MEAs. An important outcome of this programme is the formation of a centralised GEF and MEA coordination entity housed within NEPA, which will allow Afghanistan to properly coordinate the implementation of GEF projects. In addition, through building knowledge of the impacts of climate change and implementation capacity for MEAs within key national agencies, it will assist in laying the groundwork for the proposed project's activities related to climate finance.

- LDCF project **“Building adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change in Afghanistan”** 2012 – 2016 (UNEP – US\$ 5,390,000). The focus of this project is primarily on the development of national adaptive capacity to increase resilience of vulnerable communities under conditions of climate change. The project will develop Afghanistan's national capacity relating to planning for and dealing with the effects of climate change. Additionally, the project has a strong focus on ecosystem management approaches to climate change adaptation at local and national levels. This has strong overlaps with the establishment of multiple-benefit forest restoration projects coupled with the CBNRM approach to be undertaken for ensuring SBESs in the proposed project. The two projects will therefore regularly meet to exchange lessons learned, project successes and challenges, and to integrate these into on-going activities to enhance project success. The National Climate Change Committee will sit on the project steering committees for both these projects, ensuring that good oversight and understanding of the projects is provided from all necessary ministries.
- GEF Trust Fund project **“Establishing integrated models for protected areas and their co-management in Afghanistan”** 2013 – 2016 (UNDP – US\$ 7.25 million). This project has recently been approved by the GEF, and will be accessing the CBD and CCD components of the STAR allocation. It is currently in the PPG phase. The principal focus of this project is on the operationalization of a network of protected areas for Afghanistan, including the formation of a Parks and Wildlife Authority to administer them. Of particular relevance to the proposed project are the establishment of sustainable land management procedures with communities around the proposed protected areas, and the building of capacity within MAIL and NEPA to implement the project activities. There is no direct overlap in project activities between these two projects, but lessons learned during project implementation will be exchanged to facilitate increased efficiency and effectiveness. It is anticipated that the sustainable land management approaches undertaken through this project will provide useful input for the proposed project, whilst strategies for coordination of national and particularly local-level activities may be pertinent to the overall project.
- The **UNEP/Finland Koh-e-Baba Partnership for Women and Natural Resources** is a UNEP project working with a local Afghan NGO, the Conservation Organisation for Afghanistan Mountain Areas (COAM). The principle focus of this small project is on community-based natural resource management for communities situated in Bamyan Province around the proposed Koh-e-Baba national conservation area. The project has implemented a clean cookstoves initiative, as well as developed improved briquettes for burning, two models of locally-appropriate improved cookstoves, and a solar water heater. The project has distributed over 230 household stoves, set aside community conservation areas to protect local shrubs, established community woodlots and trained local communities. The total cost for this project was under US\$ 50,000. The very high cost effectiveness of this programme can provide valuable lessons for other potential biomass energy projects.
- The **USAID-funded Afghan Clean Energy Project (ACEP)** (Sep 2009 – Sep 2011) built some rural capacity for off-grid and local electric power options, including photovoltaic, solar water heaters, wind and micro-hydropower plants in 12 provinces. It also established the Kabul University Renewable Energy (KURE) Lab, which provides renewable energy education, research, component testing and evaluation for engineers. KURE specifically focuses on solar, wind and water-generated power solutions. Collaboration between the proposed project and KURE may facilitate the development of locally-adapted renewable energy solutions, and could strengthen the long-term integration of SBESs into national energy strategies as graduates of the system are taken up into civil service. The proposed project could also build on the momentum already established in the project regions to mobilise communities to implement SBES solutions.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:

B.1. National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NAPAS, NAPs, NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, Biennial Update Reports, etc.:

At present, Afghanistan does not have a national strategy on climate change or mitigation. However in February 2013 it did finalise its Initial National Communication on Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption (NEPA 2013) which contains extensive national reporting and consultation results.

Afghanistan submitted its **Initial National Communication (INC)** to the UNFCCC in June 2012. This document provides a rough inventory of GHG emissions, and highlights some of the capacity gaps in national structures for undertaking a comprehensive reduction strategy. The INC does not specify objectives or strategies related to regulation of GHG emissions. However, the **Second National Communication (SNC)** is currently under preparation and it is anticipated that this document will include priority actions to develop a strategy containing measures to mitigate climate change. The INC does include details on those sectors primarily responsible for Afghanistan's GHG emissions. The proposed FAO project is designed to address some of the key capacity gaps identified in the INC, as well as focus on the principal sectors responsible for national GHG emissions. Specifically, the project will facilitate the implementation of SBES and CBNRM, which will contribute to reducing GHG emissions from land-use change and degradation and energy production. The project activities will address capacity gaps and barriers that exist in the following sectors: i) buildings, households and services; ii) land-use change and forestry; iii) energy; and iv) agriculture and livestock. Project activities that will focus on the principal sectors responsible for national GHG emissions include those that will reduce emissions in the land-use change and forestry sector (emissions from the conversion of forests and grasslands to other land-uses will be reduced), the energy sector (emissions from residential fuel consumption will be reduced) and to some extent the agriculture sector.

Afghanistan's **National Development Strategy (ANDS, 2008–2013)** is the main strategic document that describes the country's development goals within various socio-economic sectors. The ANDS emphasises the importance of access to energy to support socio-economic development. The ANDS does not include specific details on strategies for reducing GHG emissions from the energy sector or for developing the biomass energy sector. However, part of the ANDS strategic vision and goal for the energy sector strategy is "the diversification of energy resources for long term low cost energy, energy security and clean energy use," which is aligned with the proposed FAO project's focus on developing sustainable, low-carbon options for domestic biomass energy.

As part of the national coordination process, Afghanistan is currently developing **National Priority Plans (NPPs)**. These NPPs have not yet been finalised, but represent the next stage in the articulation of national development strategies with a sector-specific focus. The project will interact with the NPP programmes, and assist in the realisation of relevant national priorities upon their completion through relevant project activities. The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock is the head of the ARD (Agriculture and Rural Development) NPP, and therefore an essential partner for the implementation of the proposed project.

Afghanistan's **Forest Law**, which came into effect in September 2012, provides for the management, conservation and sustainable use of forests and forest resources in Afghanistan. The law has specific guidelines for forest and forest resource management (Articles 5, 6 & 22), conservation (Articles 7, 12 & 17), use (Articles 13, 15 & 20) and rehabilitation (Article 21) in protected (Article 11) and unprotected (Article 10) areas. The **National Forest Management Plan (2012)**, drafted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), gives a framework for the management of forests and rangelands throughout the country. These two documents provide the essential structure within which community forests must be managed (through CBNRM), and through which sustainable biomass energy systems must be developed. The proposed project will therefore be designed in accordance with the guidelines laid out in these national documents during the project's PPG and implementation phases.

The **Energy Policy (2009)** articulates the laws and regulations regarding energy development in Afghanistan. This document has a strong focus on the development of national power generation capacity, including the role of renewable energy. A draft **Renewable Energy Policy (2009)** was prepared under the National Area-based Development Programme (NABDP). It has, however, not yet been ratified by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA). Nevertheless, this draft policy is a key document that articulates Afghanistan's proposed approach to incorporating renewable energy into national strategies. The draft policy calls for the formation of the Renewable Energy Development Authority, which has not yet been done. The proposed project will facilitate the ratification and mainstreaming of this policy, as well as the development of a clearer articulation of the role of sustainable biomass energy systems for diversification of rural energy options. Specifically, the proposed project will assist the **National Priority Programme on Energy for Rural Development** to incorporate climate change mitigation components into its operational plan.

The **National Action Plan for Women** clarifies the GoIRA plan to integrate women into national governance and coordination. It also highlights the current shortcomings of cultural practices with respect to the education and empowerment of women in Afghanistan. The proposed project outcomes take cognisance of this document, and gender-disaggregated monitoring indicators will track the success of the project in facilitating the empowerment of women through the project activities. The expected benefits for rural women as a result of the proposed project activities are highlighted in Section B.3.

B.2. GEF focal area and/or fund(s) strategies, eligibility criteria and priorities:

The proposed project is consistent with the CCM FA of GEF-5. In particular, Component 1 will address the objective CCM-3 by creating a favorable local policy environment for renewable energy investments incorporating the CNBRM and the community forestry approaches in targeted areas, promoting sustainable biomass developments. Component 3 will also support the objective CCM-5 by avoiding GHG emissions through the adoption of good management practices in community forests located in 3 pilot areas. Component 1 will address the objective CCM-1 by testing and deploying innovative and sustainable biomass energy technologies in 3 pilot areas (see description in sections A.3 and A.4); and by improving national knowledge management and capacities to deploy sustainable biomass energy technologies. Lastly, Component 2 will support the objective CCM-3 by mainstreaming the CBNRM approach and sustainable biomass energy systems into the national renewable energy policy and framework, including the access to further climate finance resources.

B.3. The GEF Agency's comparative advantage for implementing this project:

FAO is the United Nations Organization mandated to work on forestry, natural resource management and sustainable land management. The FAO Forestry Department has extensive expertise in supporting member countries to implement sustainable forest management through the provision of policy advice, technical assistance and capacity development. FAO has particular expertise in climate change mitigation in agriculture and forestry through carbon sequestration and monitoring, sustainable management of natural and planted forests, and capacity development. On climate change issues, the Climate, Energy and Tenure Division in the Natural Resources and Environment Department, in FAO Headquarters, has technical expertise and experience relevant to this project through its regular programme activities and several global, regional and national projects including:

- expertise in developing integrated sustainable rural biofuel programmes through the Bioenergy and Food Security (BEFS) programme piloted in Thailand, Tanzania and Peru;
- expertise in integrated energy farming through FAO-supported work by the Sustainable Renewable Energy Network (SREN);
- expertise in monitoring and reporting of forest stocks reflected in the frequent State of the Worlds Forest Reports (most latterly in 2011);
- expertise in integrated fuelwood supply and demand mapping for strategic planning through the Woodfuel Integrated Supply/Demand Overview Mapping (WISDOM) project; and
- Expertise in measurement, reporting and verification of forest carbon sinks as one of the FAO's major contributions to the UN-REDD Programme.

FAO has a fully fledged representation in Afghanistan that will carry out the day-to-day project execution with national counterparts. FAO has also a regional office in Bangkok with technical staff that will provide technical backstopping to the project. In addition the project will be provide technical guidance by a Lead Technical Officer from the Forestry Department (regional office) and officers from the Climate, Energy and Tenure Division - Natural Resources and Environment Department in FAO Headquarters. The project implementation will also be supported by the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit in Headquarters and a multidisciplinary Project Task Force will be set up to support the project implementation.

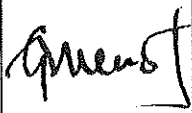
PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) AND GEF AGENCY (IES)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Points endorsement letter(s) with this template. For SGP, use this OFP endorsement letter).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)
Mostapha Zaher	Director General	NEPA	05/20/2013

B. GEF AGENCY (IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF criteria for project identification and preparation.

Agency Coordinator, Agency name	Signature	Date (MM/DD/YY YY)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
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