International Union for Conservation of Nature

Global

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Project (LDN TSP)

Brief description of the project

Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) worldwide by 2030 is included as target 15.3 in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015. At the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP.12), held in Ankara in October 2015, country Parties endorsed LDN as "a strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the Convention".

Building on the experience gained during the LDN pilot project, carried out in 14 countries from May 2014 to October 2015, the present GEF project will support LDN target setting in 70 countries from all continents, representing a diversity of socio-economic and ecological contexts. The project objective is to support/enable countries to establish national voluntary targets for LDN with the overall goal to achieve LDN by 2030 as a mean to sustainably increase food security, reduce biodiversity losses and contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The project will provide critical support to countries for the application of the LDN response hierarchy to avoid, minimize and reverse land degradation.

The project is structured in three main components:

- **Component 1: National LDN baseline – National LDN baselines defined and validated by 70 countries;**
- **Component 2: National LDN measures and target setting - National LDN measures and targets defined by 70 countries;**
- **Component 3: LDN target setting knowledge management – Country parties and international organizations and stakeholders engage in the LDN target setting process in a synergistic and coherent manner.**

The project will enhance countries preparedness to achieve LDN by 2030. It will ensure strong Government leadership and active involvement of all stakeholders and sectors impacting and benefitting from the land based natural capital in order to achieve project objectives and related expected results.

List of Acronyms

AFR100	African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
COP	Conference of Parties
COP11	11th Session of the Conference of Parties (UNCCD)
COP12	12th Session of the Conference of Parties (UNCCD)
COP13	13th Session of the Conference of Parties (UNCCD)
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the UNCCD
CSO	Civil society organizations
CST	Committee on Science and Technology of the UNCCD
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor of the TSP
DLDD	Drought, Land Degradation and Desertification
ERPA	UNCCD External Relations and Public Awareness department
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMS	Environmental and Social Management System
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration
GDP	Gross domestic product
GDPRD	Global Donor Platform for Rural Development
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Green House Gases
GIS	Geographic Information System
GM	The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD
GSP	Global Support Programme
HWSD	Harmonized World Soil Database
IFS	Integrated Financing Strategies
IIF	Integrated Investment Frameworks
ILM	Integrated landscape management
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LD	Land degradation
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
LDN TSP	Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Project
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PAT	Project administration team
PCT	Project coordination team
PDT	Project data management team
PGS	Project Guidelines and Standards
PIF	Project Identification Form
PMET	Project monitoring and evaluation team

POT	Project outreach team
PRT	Project regional team of the TSP
RCU	UNCCD regional coordination unit
Rio+20	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SLM	Sustainable land management
SOC	Soil Organic Carbon
SPI	Science-Policy Interface of the UNCCD
TEEB	The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity
ToR	Terms of references
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies

Table of contents

1 Project Profile

1.1	**Project title**	**Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Project (LDN TSP)**
1.2	**Project Number (GEF ID / IUCN ID)**	**9365**
1.3	**Project type (FSP or MSP)**	……
1.4	**Trust Fund**	……
1.5	**GEF strategic objectives and focal areas**	Enabling activities in the area of land degradation
1.6	**IUCN programme priority**	Nature-based solutions to global challenges
1.7	**Geographical scope**	Global
1.8	**Project executing agency/ies**	The Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
1.9	**Duration of project (including expected start and end dates)**	24 months

1.10 Project cost (Summary)

Item	USD
A. GEF financing	2,752,294
B. Co-financing	
- Global Mechanism of the UNCCD	50,000
- Government of Turkey	1,250,000
- Government of Korea	1,073,680
- Government of Trinidad and Tobago	250,000
- Government of Luxemburg	110,000
- UNDP	250,000
C. Sub-total co-financing	2,983,680
D. Total (A+C)	5,735,974

2 Project Results Framework

	Objective/Outcome	Indicators	Baseline	Target(s)	Source of verification	Assumptions / Risks
	Overall objective: By 2030, countries affected by desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) achieve LDN by avoiding, minimizing and reversing land degradation trends in such a way that the overall balance of biologically and economically productive land remains stable or increases in relation to the current situation	The extent to which countries undertake action to achieve national LDN targets The extent to which investments in LDN action increase	Situation as reported in 2018 national reports to the UNCCD		National reports submitted to the UNCCD in 2022, 2026 and 2030	Assumption/s: Countries have political will to commit to LDN Donors and other stakeholders, including the private sector, are willing to invest in LDN action

	Immediate project objective: Country Parties commit to establish national voluntary targets for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)	LDN targets defined and validated by 70 countries 3-5 characteristic sites for LDN action identified	LDN targets preliminary defined by 14 countries Scattered baseline information on LDN priority sites available	LDN targets defined and validated by 70 countries Characteristic LDN sites identified in 70 countries	• LDN country reports submitted to the Project • LDN statements made at UNCCD COPs and CRICs	<u>Assumption/s</u>: Most participating countries have a sincere commitment to set voluntary national LDN targets prior to COP 13 <u>Risk/s:</u> Some countries may not be able to finalize LDN target setting process prior to COP13

Component 1 National LDN baselines	*Outcome 1:* National LDN baselines defined and validated by 70 countries	*Output 1.1:* LDN baseline established and mapped	LDN preliminary targets defined by 14 countries Different levels of data availability on current state and trends in land degradation	LDN baselines defined and validated by 70 countries	• LDN country reports submitted to the Project • LDN statements made at UNCCD COPs and CRICs • Meeting/work shop reports	<u>Assumption/s</u>: Governments incorporate LDN concept in national policies All ministries and national agencies involved in land management or impacting on land are actively engaging in LDN target setting process <u>Risk/s</u>: Insufficient country ownership of LDN process

Component 2 National LDN measures and target setting	*Outcome 2* National LDN targets and associated measures defined	*Output 2.1:* National LDN targets and associated measures established *Output 2.2:* Transformative LDN projects/programmes and innovative financing mapped out	Preliminary LDN measures and targets set by 14 countries Weak UNCCD/LDN related coordination mechanisms existing in many countries Investment opportunities known in selected countries, e.g. through NAP/UNCCD and integrated investment frameworks for sustainable land management	National LDN targets and associated measures defined by 70 countries LDN working groups functioning in 70 countries ensuring a balanced and effective participation of all stakeholders LDN priority areas identified Investment opportunities to implement action to achieve LDN identified in each participating country	• Final Project report • ToR and list of members of LDN working groups • Minutes of national LDN target setting working group meetings • Map of LDN priority areas • Draft LDN investment proposals	<u>Assumption/s</u>: Government endorses LDN target setting exercise at the highest level in order to facilitate the involvement of all ministries and private industry National focal point has the relevant political leverage to secure the above <u>Risk/s</u>: Insufficient country ownership of LDN process Limited capacities of national UNCCD focal point institutions related to LDN target setting) Weak national LDN related monitoring systems in place

Component 3 LDN target setting knowledge management	*Outcome 3* Country Parties as well as international organizations and stakeholders engage in the LDN target setting process in a synergistic and coherent manner	*Output 3.1* LDN Target Setting Partnership(s) established *Output 3.2* Country peer learning on LDN target setting facilitated *Output 3.3* Global outreach/advocacy on LDN target setting carried out	Draft Technical Guide for LDN target setting available No existing specific partnerships on LDN target setting No existing platform to facilitate peer learning on LDN target setting No systematic analysis of LDN data at global level available Limited information available on LDN target setting	Technical Guide for LDN target setting applied in 70 countries Key international organizations and initiatives engaged in LDN target setting 70 countries actively sharing among themselves information and lessons-learnt on LDN target setting LDN learning events organized at global and national levels Regional/global level LDN data provided by countries analysed Outreach material produced and disseminated, including public LDN target setting website	• Number of formal/informal partnerships established with international organizations and initiatives • Workshop reports, including list of participants • Reports to COP and CRIC • LDN target setting website • Project progress reports	<u>Assumption/s</u>: Quality of and access to LDN related data from national and global sources improved Effective cooperation among all LDN partners <u>Risk/s</u>: Organizations not always willing to share LDN related data Key international organization do not engage in LDN target setting process Countries are not interested in sharing information and experiences

3 Background and situation analysis (Baseline course of action)

3.1 Background and context

20 years after the establishment of the Rio Conventions during the Earth Summit in 1992, the outcome document of the Rio+20 process "The future we want" was adopted in June 2012, reconfirming the global commitment to i) strive for a land-degradation neutral world; ii) take coordinated action nationally, regionally and internationally in the context of the UNCCD; and iii) to monitor, globally, land degradation and restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas.

Following the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the declaration of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification 2010-2020, the global community agreed in September 2015 on "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", including 17 SDG and 169 targets. Goal 15 urges countries to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Target 15.3 aims to "combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world" by 2030. The indicator adopted to measure the achievement of SDG target 15.3 is "Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area". The computation of this indicator is based on the combined use of three sub-indicators, namely land cover and land cover change, land productivity and carbon stocks above and below ground, in conjunction with other nationally relevant indicators and contextualized with information at the national and sub-national level.

Target 15.3 complements a variety of global and regional initiatives dedicated to promote sustainable land management (SLM) and the restoration/rehabilitation of degraded land, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Bonn Challenge on Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR), the New York Declaration on Forests, the 4 per 1000 Initiative as well as related regional initiatives such as the 20x20 Initiative for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100).

At the 12th session of the COP of the UNCCD, held in Ankara, Turkey in October 2015, the Parties endorsed SDG target 15.3, which includes the concept of LDN, as a strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the Convention. Furthermore, COP.12:

- invited all country Parties to "formulate [national] voluntary targets to achieve LDN" and to incorporate them in their UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAPs);
- requested UNCCD bodies i) to provide "guidance for formulating national LDN targets and initiatives"; and ii) to facilitate "the use of UNCCD indicator framework as a contribution to the monitoring, evaluation and communication of progress towards the national LDN targets";
- decided "that affected country Parties should provide timely feedback where possible on the default data and the proposed methodology to formulate national voluntary LDN targets using the monitoring and assessment indicators framework, and complete the reporting and target-setting exercise for review by the CRIC at its intersessional session that will take place after January 2018" … "provided that countries have sufficient national

official data/information to report or validate national estimates derived from global data sources and that reporting should be provided primarily from official national data";
- invited affected country Parties to include voluntary national LDN targets in their national reports, as appropriate; and
- decided, "as a means to understanding the status of land degradation and the potential for land restoration, that reporting is required for the following three UNCCD progress indicators", which correspond to the SDG sub-indicators for target 15.3: 'trends in land cover' (metric: vegetative land cover), 'trends in land productivity or functioning of the land' (metric: land productivity dynamics); and 'trends in carbon stocks above and below ground' (metric: soil organic carbon stock).

COP.12 also endorsed the definition of LDN as "a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security remain stable or increase within specified temporal and spatial scales". It furthermore requested the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) of the UNCCD to propose a conceptual framework to scientifically underpin the implementation of LDN.

Key elements of the scientific conceptual framework for LDN proposed by the SPI are:

- *LDN vision* – to sustain the natural capital of the land and associated land-based ecosystem services;
- *LDN frame of reference* – to set a baseline based on agreed indicators, which becomes the (minimum) target with the intention to maintain (or improve) this state;
- *LDN balancing mechanism* – to categorise and account for land-use decisions with respect to neutrality and establish principles to limit unintended outcomes;
- *LDN implementation pathways* – to provide guidance on the pathways towards achieving neutrality;
- *LDN monitoring & evaluation* – to provide guidance on assessing progress towards neutrality.

The Executive Secretary of the UNCCD responded to the decisions taken by COP.12 by tasking the Global Mechanism to set up a multi-donor global initiative on voluntary national target setting for LDN. The proposed GEF-funded LDN Target Setting Project (LDN TSP) provides the foundation for this initiative, attracting contributions from other donors. It also contributes to the UNCCD work plan 2016-19 and its outcome indicator 2.1 "The extent to which affected country Parties establish targets for addressing land degradation and rehabilitation".

The LDN TSP will support beneficiary countries to define national LDN targets, building upon previous GEF investments in national sustainable development programmes and, more specifically, previous investments in UNCCD enabling activities (i.e., NAPs, NAP alignment and reporting processes). Furthermore, the LDN TSP will create synergies with LDN related processes, including global and regional initiatives promoting SLM and land(scape) restoration and build on/complement GEF-funded interventions, as GEF has supported and is supporting most countries in LDN related areas (e.g. watershed management, management of protected areas, agroforestry, restoration, enabling activities).

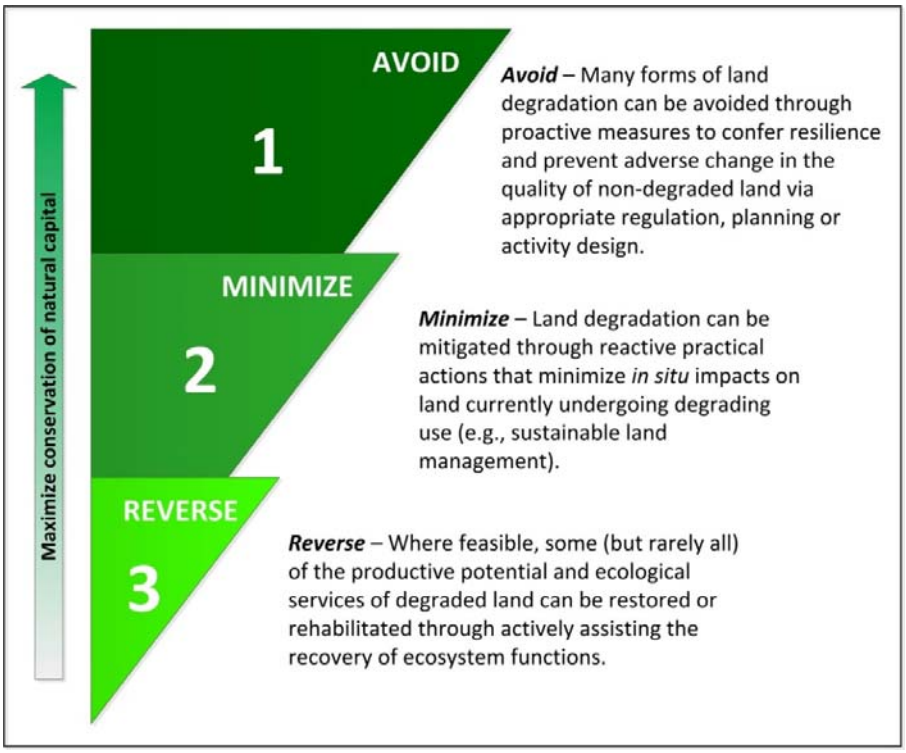
It will build on the LDN pilot project, which was implemented by the UNCCD Secretariat and funded by the Republic of Korea from May 2014 to October 2015 in 14 countries.

3.2 Global environment problem

The LDN TSP aims at supporting countries to

- **Avoid** land degradation through proactive measures to prevent land degradation;
- **Minimize** land degradation through practical action, e.g. integrated landscape management (ILM) or sustainable land management (SLM);
- **Reverse** the productive potential and ecological services of degraded land, e.g. through the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded land.

Figure 1. The land degradation neutrality (LDN) response hierarchy



Source: SPI, 2016.

According to the convention text of the UNCCD (United Nations, 1994):

- **Land degradation** "means reduction or loss, in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, of the biological or economic productivity and complexity of rainfed cropland, irrigated cropland, or range, pasture, forest and woodlands resulting from land uses or from a process or combination of processes, including processes arising from human activities and habitation patterns, such as: (i) soil erosion caused by wind and/or water;

(ii) deterioration of the physical, chemical and biological or economic properties of soil; and (iii) long-term loss of natural vegetation"

- **Desertification** "means land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities".

A global land degradation analysis of the period 1981-2003 using remotely sensed data showed that 24% of the land area had been degrading during that 22 year period. In this assessment, cropland and forest land were disproportionately degraded: 19% of degrading land was cropland even though cropland only accounts for 12% of the global land area and a further 4% in mosaics; 43% of degrading land was forestland even though forest occupies only 28% of the world's land surface. The study found that during the period assessed 78% of degradation by area was to be found in humid regions whereas 22% was in the dry lands (Bai *et al.,* 2008).

An analysis of long-term trends (25 years) using an inter-annual vegetation index as an indicator of biomass production decline or increase found that land degradation hotpots cover about 29% of the global land area and occur in all agro-ecologies and land cover types. Anthropogenic declines in biomass productivity were found on 25% of croplands and vegetation-crop mosaics, 29% of mosaics of forests with shrub- and grasslands, 25% of shrub lands, and 33% of grasslands, as well as 23% of areas with sparse vegetation. The study also identified improvement of biomass productivity on 2.7% of the global land mass (Le *et al.,* 2014). The various studies appear to converge on a global estimate of between one quarter and one third of all land suffering from some form of degradation (IUCN, 2015).

Table 1. Estimates of global extent of dryland degradation (million km²)

Source	Dregne (1983)	Mabbutt (1984)	Oldeman et al. (1991)	Dregne and Chou (1992)
Africa	10.7	7.4	3.2	10.5
Europe	0.2	0.3	0.4	1
Asia	12	7.5	4.3	13.4
North America	2.2	1	0.6	3
South America and Mexico	4.4	2.1	1	4.3
Australia and Oceania	3.1	1.1	0.9	3.8
Total	32.5	19.4	10.3	35.9
% of total dryland	**64%**	**38%**	**20%**	**71%**

Source: Zika and Erb, 2009

Recognizing that desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) are major global environmental and developmental concerns, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was established in 1994 and is ratified by 194 member-states of the United Nations and one regional economic integration organization (the European Union). The main mission of the Convention, as indicated by the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the Convention (2008-18) is "to provide a global framework to support the development and implementation of national and regional policies, programmes and measures to prevent, control and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought through scientific and technological excellence, raising public awareness, standard setting, advocacy and resource mobilization, thereby contributing to

poverty reduction". Table 1 provides a range of global estimates of land degradation in drylands, highlighting the great variance in estimates (Zika and Erb, 2009).

3.3 Threats and drivers of land degradation

3.3.1 Threats

The main threats caused by land degradation and undermining the achievements of LDN are:

- Food insecurity due to a lack of arable lands;
- Persistent loss of ecosystem services;
- Loss of biodiversity due to ecological changes by factors as acidification and depletion of soil organic carbon;
- Water reserves depletion and decline in drinking water quality e.g. salinization;
- Global warming due to emission of GHGs and reduced soil carbon sequestration;
- Increase in disasters such as droughts, floods and landslides;
- Environmental migration caused by a multitude of factors, among others, desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD).

Desertification has been described as "the greatest environmental challenge of our time" and "a threat to global wellbeing"[1]. Land degradation also translates into a persistent reduction of biological and economic productivity, making it a global challenge that affects millions of citizens in both developed and less developed countries (Adeel *et al.*, 2005). **Land degradation decreases global food yields**, contributes to climate change and natural hazards like droughts and floods, and causes losses of biodiversity and ecosystem services like water provision. Globally, land quality is declining; croplands are being lost through loss of soil fertility, range and forest lands continue being converted to croplands, and land under crop cultivation is losing fertility and productivity (Bruinsma, 2003). Approximately 2,000 hectares of land is reported to be lost every day due to **salinization** caused by irrigation in drylands (Qadir *et al.*, 2014), a problem that is increasingly affecting productive land outside drylands, where irrigation is used. 40% of global food supply is dependant of irrigation and 20% of the water used for irrigation is fossil waters (Levesque, 2014).

Land degradation contributes to **the loss of biodiversity**, to climate change, poverty and food insecurity. It is a global problem with ramifications far beyond the boundaries of degraded lands. Significantly more carbon is stored in soils worldwide than the combined total of atmosphere or biomass (Lal, 2008). Land degradation both releases huge quantities of greenhouse gases and diminishes the capacity of land to continue sequestering carbon. Land degradation also has a major impact on hydrological cycles, reducing infiltration and increasing run-off that contribute to cycles of flood and drought. Vegetation cover and soil microorganisms play vital roles in water infiltration and therefore in maintaining soil moisture and aquifer recharge. As a consequence of land degradation, groundwater resources and especially those of the shallow unconfined aquifers can be seriously affected (FAO, 1993).

Drought has caused more deaths during the last century than any other physical hazard. Since 1900, more than 11 million people have died as a consequence of and more than two

[1] (http://inweh.unu.edu/canada-kenya-3rd-eld-scientific-meeting/ and http://www.herald.co.zw/africa-day-ministers-reconfirm-africas-commitment-to-ensure-sustainable-development-through-sustainable-land-management/)

billion people have been affected by drought (UNISDR, 2011). Since the early 1970s, land areas affected by droughts increased from 10-15 per cent to more than 30 per cent, which is contributing to the growing global water crisis. Assessments indicate that in 2025, 2.4 billion people may be living in areas affected by intense water scarcity, which could increase to 40 per cent of the projected global population by 2050. By 2030, as many as 700 million people may be displaced due to the scarcity of water resources (UNCCD, 2014).

Desertification and the associated loss of vegetation have significant impacts on **biodiversity**. Drylands support many unique plant groups such as the cacti and succulents, and are home to large number of endemic fauna: one third of all Endemic Bird Areas are found in the drylands. Overall an estimated 10,000 mammals, birds and amphibian species can be found in the drylands worldwide. Drylands are also home to 35% of the global hotspot area, i.e. areas with high number of endemic species, extreme threats and over 70% of original natural vegetation already lost (Davies *et al*., 2012).

Massive **deforestation and rangeland clearance**, motivated by extending cropping areas both for subsistence and commercial purposes, are generating considerable losses of biomass and depleting soil carbon stocks, significantly contributing to climate change and undermining the possibility of conserving biodiversity.

Induced by booming urban expansion, large portions of fertile lands used for agriculture are changed to urban/residential use and therefore lost, decreasing available land for food production and biodiversity conservation, heightening the demand for new land, and generating further tension on global food security and deepening on going biodiversity collapse. In addition to local impacts, land degradation produces major negative externalities that are felt regionally and globally, including dust storms, floods, disruption of hydrological cycles, and **emission of greenhouse gasses**.

A growing number of countries are voicing concerns about the combined challenges of DLDD, particularly in Africa, where food security challenges may be greatest and therefore land degradation represents a particularly alarming risk, which contributes to **environmental migration**. Estimates suggest that by 2020, 60 million people could have moved from degraded parts of sub-Saharan Africa towards Europe and North Africa, and this figure is highly likely to increase by 2045.[2] Achieving LDN in the driest regions of the world represents an even greater challenge than in other ecological zones as biological recovery processes are slower and species diversity is lower (Dixon *et al.*, 1989).

3.3.2 Drivers of land degradation

Land degradation is caused by a multitude of direct (proximate) and indirect (underlying) drivers and the result of complex interactions among these drivers. The main direct and indirect drivers of land degradation, as identified by WOCAT (undated), are summarized in table 2.

Table 2. Main direct and indirect drivers of land degradation

[2] Speech of Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, March 2014, http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/secretariat/2014/ES%20Statements/Vienna%20Speech%20210314.pdf

Direct drivers of land degradation	Indirect drivers of land degradation
• Improper management of the soil • Improper management of annual, perennial, scrub and tree crops • Deforestation and removal of natural vegetation • Over-exploitation of vegetation for domestic use • Overgrazing • Industrial activities, waste deposition and mining • Urbanisation and infrastructure development • Discharges • Release of airborne pollutants • Disturbance of the water cycle • Over-abstraction of water • Natural causes	• Population pressure • Land tenure • Poverty/wealth • Labour availability • Inputs (including access to credit/financing) and infrastructure • Education, access to knowledge and support services • War and conflict • Governance, institutional settings and policies (including taxes, subsidies, incentives)

Source: WOCAT, undated[3] (adapted)

A review carried out by a group of researchers (Geist and Lambin, 2004)[4] on a sample of 132 reported cases of land degradation in arid zones from different continents and socio-economic contexts have shown the multiple patterns driving to land degradation, identifying four main clusters of proximate drivers and six main clusters of underlying drivers leading to land degradation:

Clusters of proximate drivers:

1. *Agricultural activities*, including competition between nomadic pastoralism and development of croplands;
2. *Infrastructure, industries and urban extension*, including irrigation, roads and mines;
3. *Wood extraction* and related activities, including harvesting of fuelwood and poles, over-exploitation of non-timber forest products;
4. *Increased aridity*, including decreased rainfall and loss of vegetation cover due to prolonged droughts and intense fires as well as due to drivers 1-3.

Clusters of underlying drivers:

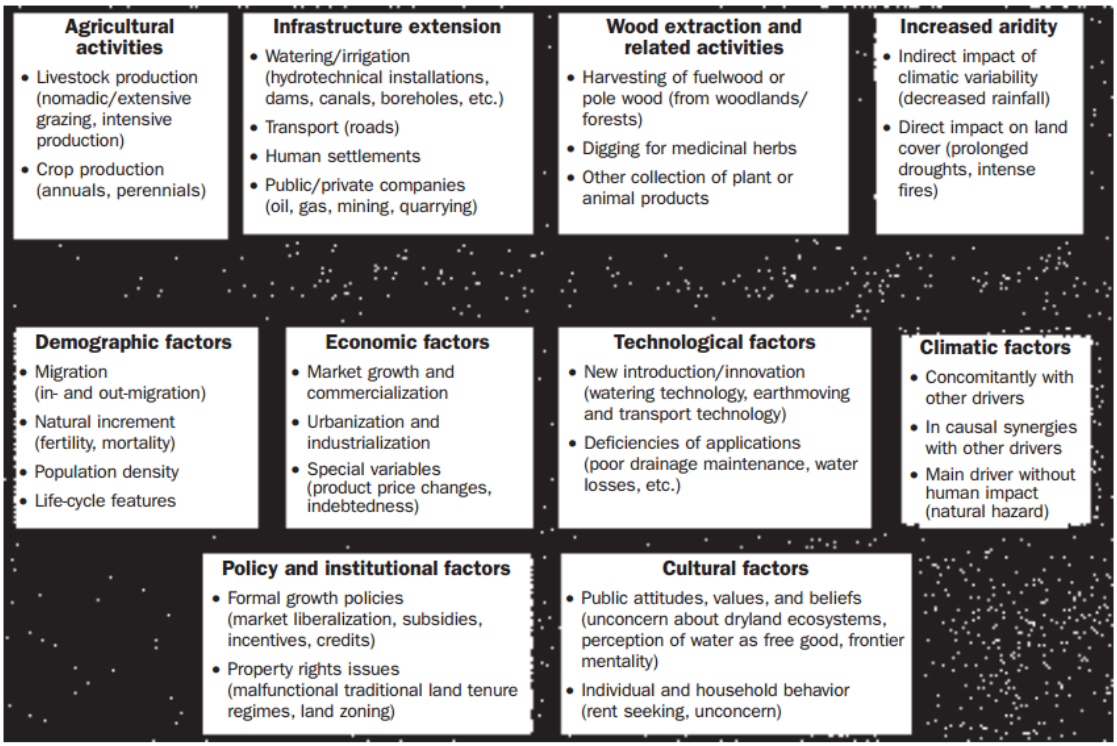
1. *Demographic factors*, including migration, population density, life-cycle features;
2. *Economic factors*, including market growth, urbanisation and industrialisation, price changes and resulting indebtedness of farmers;

[3] https://www.wocat.net/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/QT_and_QA/CategorisationSystem.pdf
[4] http://bioscience.oxfordjournals.org/content/54/9/817.full.pdf+html

3. *Technological factors*, mainly related to increasing use of heavy machinery in fragile soils and deficiency of application of irrigation techniques (excessive watering, poor drainage and water losses);
4. *Climatic factors*, mainly related to natural hazards and concomitant and in synergy with other man-made drivers;
5. *Cultural factors*, including public attitudes, values and beliefs and individual behaviour;
6. *Policy and institutional factors*, including market liberalisation, short-term-oriented governance of agriculture and subsidies, incentives, credits as well as property rights issues and land use planning.

The complex interactions of direct and indirect drivers, which are causing land degradation/desertification, are shown in figure 2. The understanding of the interactions among these drivers is a precondition, in order to identify adequate targets and associated measures to achieve LDN.

Figure 2. Causes of desertification: Underlying driving forces and proximate causes



Source: Geist and Lambin, 2004

3.4 Institutional, sectoral and policy context

The LDN target setting process is consistent with international policies (SDGs, UNCCD, see chapter 3.1). It should build on and leverage national initiatives and be integrated into national policy processes, including:

- National land use planning processes;
- The National SDG process;
- Relevant policy processes at national and sub-national levels; including national action related to the UNFCCC (climate action and commitments) and CBD (Aichi targets);
- NAP/UNCCD implementation and national UNCCD alignment process, including associated Integrated Investment Framework (IIF);
- Other relevant land-based initiatives such as TerrAfrica or AFR100 in Africa, Initiative 20x20 in Latin America;
- United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

The LDN TSP will strive for highest-level political commitment and strong cross-sectoral collaboration at national level as a key success factor for the project. In this context, a project leverage plan will be elaborated in each participating country in order to identify specific entry points for the upscaling of project activities at technical and political levels.

3.5 Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder participation will be ensured through the establishment of national LDN working groups. The working groups will be inclusive in its composition in order to incorporate all relevant stakeholders that have a direct relation with land degradation processes and can therefore contribute to the achievement of LDN.

The establishment and facilitation of the LDN national working group will be coordinated by the national institution coordinating the LDN target setting process with support of the LDN TSP. The composition of the working group will vary from country to country taking into account national specificities. A rapid stakeholder mapping will be carried out in the initial phases of LDN TSP implementation, and included in the above-mentioned leverage plan, in order to identify key stakeholders to be involved in the process.

Some of the targeted key stakeholder groups, to be included in the national LDN working groups and the LDN TSP activities will include:

1. *Ministries and Governmental agencies:* In most countries, UNCCD implementation is coordinated by the Ministry in charge of environment or agriculture. Other ministries must be included in the discussions on LDN, in order to ensure that LDN targets are mainstreamed in all relevant policy frameworks or sectoral plans. There are no restrictions on the participation of ministries to the working group, but a number of them are essential, including Ministries or governmental agencies in charge of agriculture, forestry, rural development, mining, energy, transports, public infrastructure, urban planning, economy and finance, interior and local governments and justice. These institutions are in direct relation with land degradation processes and or prerogatives on planning, financing and control LDN targets and corresponding measures.

2. *Civil society organizations:* The engagement of relevant civil society organizations in the LDN target setting process is of critical importance. Civil society has an important role as bridging organisation and provides opportunity to integrate suggestions and concerns from local communities in discussions. Such organizations can range from community unions, cooperatives, as well as non-governmental and not-profit organizations active in rural and urban social and economic development, gender equity (including women), indigenous rights protection and promotion, environment protection *etc*.
3. *Private sector:* Most land degradation process originates as unexpected consequences of economic activities. Low food prices, market competition, lack of compliance to established land and water management regulations are often originating land degradation processes, typically in the agricultural and forestry sectors practices. Also, mining activities, infrastructure building and urbanization are frequently causing land degradation. Economic actors of all concerned sectors must therefore be closely associated to the LDN discussion and target setting process, to provide useful insights on constraints, opportunities and conditions for engaging in land degradation avoidance, minimization and compensation of the damages on land. Their participation is also essential to achieve degraded land restoration in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.
4. *Scientific and academic organizations:* LDN requires the development of new science-based knowledge to better detect and understand land degradation at the earliest stage possible, to generate appropriate technological alternatives to current unsustainable practices causing degradation and to elaborate enhanced monitoring systems and regulatory measures. Land degradation results from a complex set and interaction of economic, social and ecological causes, so it needs to be analysed from different disciplines and perspectives, depending on a specific state of land degradation in a country. Feedbacks and insights from specialists from the mentioned disciplines as appropriate will be invited.
5. *Development partners:* International bilateral and multilateral organizations can provide an important financial and technical support to the LDN target setting process as well as to the implementation of measures to achieve the LDN targets set. Therefore, key development partners, which are active in the land-based sectors should be associated from the beginning in the work of the LDN working groups.

It is important to engage each main stakeholder group in the LDN target setting process as much as possible, taking into account their respective influence (power) and (possibly competing) interests as outlined in figure 3.

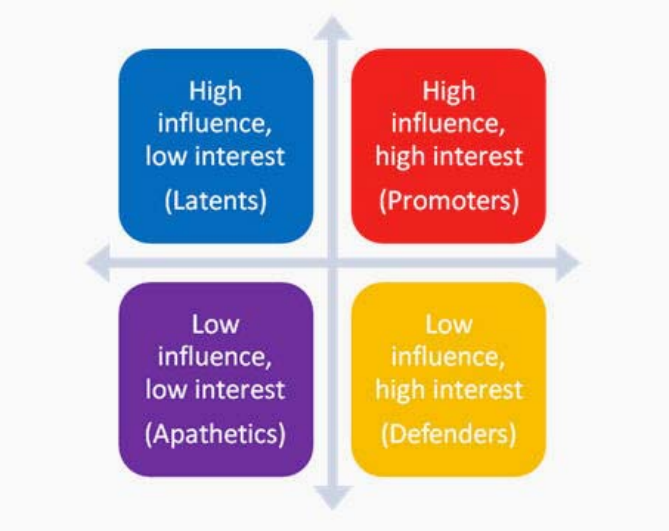


Figure 3. Influence and interest of stakeholders

Source: University of Kansas, 2015

Draft of generic ToR for national LDN working groups are presented in annex 1 and can be adapted as appropriate to the national context.

3.6 Baseline analysis and gaps

LDN as a concept has emerged from the Rio+20 and SDG process and has been taken up by the UNCCD as "strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the Convention". While UNCCD COP.12 took numerous decisions with regard to LDN (see annex 2) and the scientific literature is growing[5], limited experience has so far been made on the ground with regard to LDN target setting.

The UNCCD Secretariat carried out in 2014/15 a LDN Pilot Project, funded by the Government of the Republic of Korea in 14 countries.[6] This project tested a methodological approach to guide countries in setting tangible targets, which could be incorporated in their respective UNCCD NAPs. The methodology applied defined measures to achieve LDN against three of the progress indicators adopted by COP 11/Decision 22[7], using national official data as well as data from publicly available global databases.

At the concluding meeting of the LDN Pilot Project (Ankara, 7-8 October 2015), a number of issues and lessons learned were identified by participating countries in terms of data and methodology used in the target-setting exercise, including:

- While in general data resolution was considered sufficient for target setting at the national level, higher resolution data sets are required for land use planning and monitoring of land degradation hotspots.
- For some countries, the datasets provided by the Project were not suitable for the identification and analysis of land degradation processes because of the size (small island country), the highly fragmented landscapes (patchiness of different land use/cover types),

[5] See Science Policy Interface (SPI) of the UNCCD (2016) for relevant references.
[6] Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Bhutan, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Grenada, Indonesia, Italy, Namibia, Senegal, Turkey. Country reports are available at http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/RioConventions/RioPlus20/Pages/LDN-Project-Country-Reports.aspx
[7] These three core indicators were: (i) Trends in land cover (Metric: vegetative land cover); (ii) Trends in land productivity or functioning of the land (Metric: land productivity dynamics); and (iii) Trends in carbon stocks above and below ground (Metric: soil organic carbon stock).

and/or the morphology of the country (hilly/mountains areas). Higher resolution datasets from alternative sources (national, global) were made available for such countries.

- A number of countries used their own national statistical data, particularly for the analysis of land use/cover changes, which is the dataset more easily available at national level. The use of national dataset is welcome and could be further encouraged in order to ensure ownership of LDN targets. However, in some cases, moderate differences/contradictions were found between national and global datasets, which have required closer analysis of compatibility among the different data sets, data collections systems and norms of interpretation.
- Monitoring SOC stock on large spatial scales is challenging with regard to both baseline setting and trend detection. In terms of baseline setting, only few global datasets on SOC stocks are available and even less are presented as spatial data. The most recent and complete dataset is the Harmonized World Soil Database (HWSD). During the LDN project, model-derived data from the HWSD was used to define SOC baselines. Trend analysis was not possible.
- Despite the fact that SOC trends were not commonly available, coarse estimates of SOC stock changes can be produced with the help of modelling techniques. As part of its methods for greenhouse gas inventories in the land sector (IPCC, 2006), the IPCC offers a relatively simple approach to model stock changes in SOC based on land use/cover change (for more information on the IPCC approach to estimate trends in SOC stock changes see Annex IV). During the LDN project, Italy already successfully used this approach to derive broad estimates for trends in SOC stock change based on land use/cover change and using national SOC data (i.e. Tier 2)
- In the absence of data to estimate trends in SOC stock, land use/cover change combined with land productivity dynamics was sufficient for most countries to obtain a synoptic view of on-going land degradation processes over the period 2000-2010, necessary for practical LDN target setting.
- Caution must be used in data interpretation, particularly for land productivity dynamics. Southern Africa countries have identified improvements of LPD in grassland as negative trend since they are due to bush encroachment. Where possible, national or local data should be used to corroborate remote sensing assessments.
- Ad-hoc technical assistance was provided throughout the data evaluation, interpretation and target setting process. Inter-disciplinary expertise and capacity building is required to tackle complexity involved in data processing and to increase confidence and ownership of results.
- A certain level of heterogeneity has been observed in the formulation of national LDN targets. The need of a specific analysis of such targets was recognized, to be conducted within the framework of an ex-post internal evaluation of the Project.

Above lessons learned have been addressed by the UNCCD Secretariat and the GM by preparing a draft Technical Guide for LDN target setting (UNCCD, 2016a). The guide proposes the following steps in order to provide operational and technical guidance on how to define national baselines and identify voluntary targets and associated measures:

- Step 1: Government leadership and stakeholder engagement
- Step 2: Setting the LDN baseline
- Step 3: Analysing land degradation trends
- Step 4: Identifying drivers of land degradation

- Step 5: Defining national voluntary LDN targets
- Step 6: Mainstreaming LDN in land use planning
- Step 7: Articulating measures to achieve LDN
- Step 8: Facilitating action towards LDN
- Step 9: Monitoring progress towards LDN
- Step 10: Reporting on LDN

The LDN TSP is currently the only global initiative specifically dedicated to facilitate the engagement of all countries in defining voluntary national LDN targets and to mainstream LDN in national development agendas as contribution to the SDG process. The project can therefore pave the ground for a global reversal of land degradation process by facilitating the LDN target setting in 70 countries and inducing similar engagement from other non-participating countries.

4 Intervention strategy

4.1 Project rationale and expected global environmental benefits

The LDN TSP aims to support countries to engage in achieving LDN, which implies avoiding, minimizing and reversing land degradation trends in such a way that the overall balance of biologically and economically productive land remains stable or increases in relation to the current situation.

As indicated in Technical Guide for LDN Target Setting (UNCCD, 2016), “LDN provides multiple environmental and societal benefits, which help to address issues such as food security, income equality, poverty, and resource availability. Applying SLM can increase crop production and generate up to USD 1.4 trillion of economic benefits (ELD, 2015a).

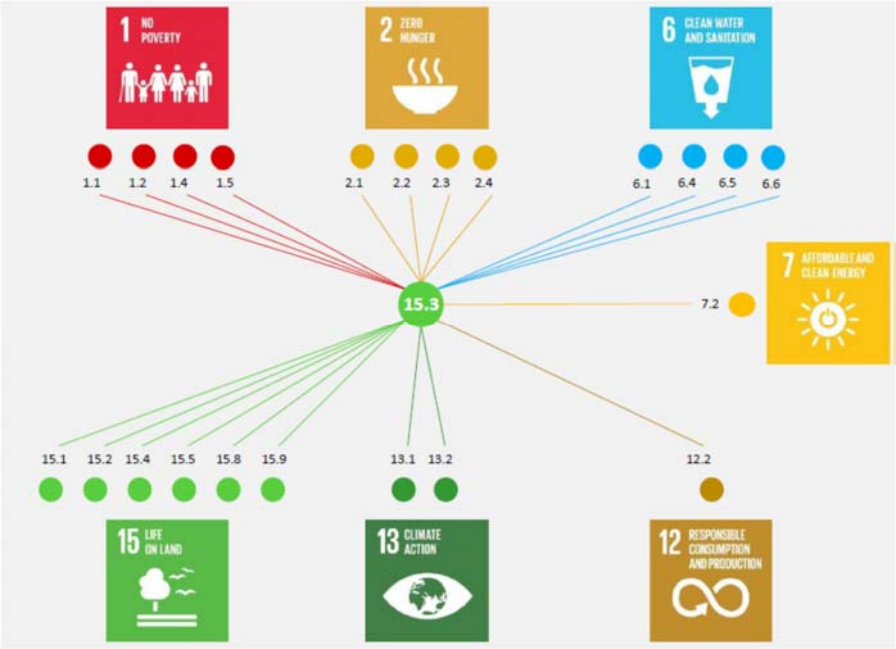
Furthermore, LDN provides significant benefits for the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. Halting and reversing land degradation can transform land from being a source of greenhouse gas emissions to a sink by increasing carbon stocks in soils and vegetation. Soils alone can sequester around 1–3 billion tonnes of CO_2 per year while the whole land sector has mitigation potential of around 7–11 billion tonnes of CO_2 per year, which equals around one third of all fossil fuel CO_2 emissions (UNCCD, 2015). Simultaneously, LDN plays a key role in strengthening the resilience of rural communities against climate shocks by securing and improving the provision of vital ecosystem services.

These links between land and climate are well reflected in the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) that countries developed to implement the new Paris agreement to fight climate change. More than 100 of the INDCs submitted land-based activities for mitigation as well as adaptation. In this sense, LDN targets and measures contribute directly to the implementation of national climate plans and vice versa. Such synergies should be taken into due account when developing national plans for LDN and climate action.

LDN is also closely related to many other SDGs. There are direct linkages between LDN and SDGs in the area of poverty, food security, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources (see figure 1). To meet the SDGs, it will be vital to manage these linkages

and harness the synergies between them. Implementing LDN creates multiple benefits and will, therefore, make a direct contribution to achieving these and other SDGs (UNCCD, 2016)".

Figure 4. The relationship between SDG 15.3 and other SDGs



Source: Akhtar Schuster *et a*l. (in prep)

4.2 Project goal and expected impact

The overall objective of the project is that by 2030, countries affected by DLDD achieve LDN by avoiding, minimizing and reversing land degradation trends in such a way that the overall balance of biologically and economically productive land remains stable or increases in relation to the current situation. The immediate project objective is that countries commit to establish national voluntary targets for LDN. This will contribute to the implementation of the global SDG target on LDN at country level.

4.3 Project components and their expected outcomes and outputs

The Project has three components and associated expected outcomes respectively:

- Component 1: National LDN baseline – National LDN baselines defined and validated by 70 countries;
- Component 2: National LDN measures and target setting - National LDN measures and targets defined by 70 countries;
- Component 3: LDN target setting knowledge management - Country parties and international organizations and stakeholders engage in the LDN target setting process in a synergistic and coherent manner.

Implementation of the LDN TSP at county level will be aligned to country priorities and the national development agenda, including SDGs. National LDN TSP work plans will be prepared taking into account the steps outlined in the draft Technical Guide for LDN Target Setting (see above).

As ultimate outcome of the Project, it is expected that countries will validate and possibly politically endorse national LDN targets.

The Project will carry out the following key activities per project output:

Output 1.1. LDN baseline established and mapped

- *Provide countries with suitable LDN data sets.* The project will cooperate with international organizations, including members of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) such as space and specialized agencies to access suitable data sets with regard to the LDN indicators. Furthermore, the project will support countries to identify suitable (sub)national data sets, which can complement available global data.

  The LDN TSP will follow a tier approach for the identification and computation of LDN related data, from tier 1 (the default method) to tier 3 (the most detailed method):

  - Tier 1: Global/regional Earth observaton, geospatial information and modelling; special attention will be drawn on the possible use of higher resolution satellite imagery for araes such as small islands, mountainous regions and highly fragmented ecosystems;
  - Tier 2: National statistics based on data acquired for administrative or natural reference units (e.g. watersheds);
  - Tier 3: Field surveys, assessments and ground measures.

  Default tier 1 data will be provided to countries derived from data sources for their use and validation in the absence of national data.[8] The global (and [sub]national) data sets identified may also be used by UNCCD national focal points and reporting officers in order to inform the UNCCD national reporting process, and to provide more accurate data on the UNCCD progress indicators for national reporting purposes. See the annex for the proposed method of computation and data sources used by the LDN TSP.

- *Define national LDN baselines.* In line with the adoption of the SDGs, the default baseline is recommended to cover a 10-15 year epoch ending in 2015 in order to provide information on the current situation and conditions related to land degradation. However, the exact definition of the baseline period will depend upon the availability of data series at the national level.

  The project will support the definition of LDN baselines using LDN indicators, including i) land cover; ii) land productivity; and iii) soil organic carbon. Above indicators could be supplemented, as appropriate, with (sub) national indicators.

[8] Default global data will be provided in cooperation with the GEF funded Global Support Programme (GSP) "Increasing the quantity and quality of information for the review of implementation of the UNCCD".

- *Analyse land degradation trends and drivers.* It is important to carry out an assessment of historic land degradation trends in order to understand the current situation, reveal anomalies and identify degraded areas. In this context, the project will support the
    - identification of significant trends in land degradation in the context of the local conditions;
    - identification of types of land degradation for specific land cover classes;
    - identification of the direct and indirect causes of land degradation;
    - strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats (SWOT analysis on the legal and institutional framework related to LDN.

Output 2.1 National LDN targets and associated measures established

- *Define national voluntary LDN targets and associated measures.* The project will provide technical support to the country to define LDN targets, which describe what a country wants to achieve in terms of LDN. It defines the degree of comprehensiveness and ambition related to LDN. The associated measures describe key intervention areas identified to achieve LDN by addressing the drivers of land degradation. Identified measures should take into account the LDN response hirarchy: avoid, minimise and reverse land degradation. The project will support this process through the recruitment of a national expert as well as the support to the national LDN working group and national LDN data processing units.

- *Identify priority areas for LDN implementation.* The analysis of the LDN indicators will enable each country to identify possible priority areas for LDN implementation.
- *Support/establish national LDN working groups*. These national working groups bring together key UNCCD stakeholder groups that should be involved in the LDN target setting process.
    - *Support organization of national consultation workshops.* The project will support the organization of national multi-stakeholder consultations, including a launching workshop related to LDN target setting process, a technical validation workshop on the status of land degradation at national level (LDN baseline) and a technical validation of national LDN targets and associated measures, including the identification of opportunities for LDN implementation.
    - *Support mainstreaming of LDN in selected policies and commitments.* The project will support the preparation of “Leverage Plan”, which will help identifying *country specific* opportunities for LDN mainstreaming in selected policies and commitments.

Examples of possible targets include (UNCCD, 2016a):

- **LDN at the national scale**
    - LDN is achieved by 2030 as compared to 2015 (no net loss)
    - LDN is achieved by 2030 as compared to 2015 and an additional 10% of the national territory has improved (net gain)
    - LDN is achieved by 2025 as compared to 2015 (earlier target year)
- **LDN at the sub-national scale complementing national targets**

- LDN is achieved in the western province of country X by 2030 as compared to 2015 (no net loss)
- LDN is achieved in the southern province of country X by 2030 as compared to 2015 and an additional 25% of the province territory has improved (net gain)

- **Specific targets to avoid, minimize and reverse land degradation complementing national targets**
  - Improve productivity and SOC stocks in cropland and grasslands by 2030 as compared to 2015
  - Rehabilitate X million hectares of degraded and abandoned land for crop production by 2030
  - Halt the conversion of forests and wetlands to other land cover classes by 2020
  - Increase forest cover by 20% by 2030 as compared to 2015
  - Reduce the rate of soil sealing (conversion to artificial land cover) by 50% by 2030 as compared to 2015

Possible measures include (WOCAT, undated):

- **Agronomic measures:** measures that improve soil cover (e.g. green cover, mulch), measures that enhance organic matter/soil fertility (e.g. manuring), soil surface treatment (e.g. conservation tillage), subsurface treatment (e.g. deep ripping).
- **Vegetative measures:** plantation/reseeding of tree and shrub species (e.g. live fences, tree crows), grasses and perennial herbaceous plants (e.g. grass strips).
- **Structural measures:** terraces (bench, forward/backward sloping), bunds, banks (level, graded), dams, pans, ditches (level, graded), walls, barriers, palisades.
- **Management measures:** change of land use type (e.g. area enclosure), change of management/intensity level (e.g. from grazing to cut-and-carry), major change in the timing of activities, control/change of species composition.

The project will support the functonning of the LDN working group and will carry out a capacity-building needs assessment with the members of the LDN working group in order to identify and address capacity building needs on selected topics emerging throughout the LDN target setting process.[9]

Output 2.2 Transformative LDN projects/programmes and innovative financing mapped out

- *Map out potential LDN investment opportunities.* The project will support the pre-identification of selected investment opportunities that could be turned into financeable proposals for transformative LDN projects/programmes through innovative financing mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund established under the UNFCCC or the LDN Fund spearheaded by the UNCCD Global Mechanism. The transformative LDN projects/proposals should address the identified measures for LDN implementation at (sub)national level and thus contribute to the achievement of the national LDN targets set.

[9] The capacity building needs assessment is carried out in cooperation with the Soil Leadership Academy:http://www.unccd.int/en/Stakeholders/private_sector/Pages/Soil-Leadership-Academy.aspx.

Output 3.1 LDN Target Setting Partnership(s) established

- *Identify and engage with relevant international and (sub)regional organizations.* The Project will contribute to partnerships with key international organizations involved in the LDN targets setting process, including i) global service/knowledge providers as well as ii) financing partners for the LDN target setting process at country level (e.g. multilateral and bilateral organizations). In addition, the project will organize LDN TSP Partner Meetings, bringing together donors and other partners directly involved in the implementation of the project at the operational level.

Output 3.2 Country peer learning on LDN target setting facilitated

- *Finalize and disseminate Technical Guide for LDN Target Setting.* The Guide, which is prepared by the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism taking into acount the lessons-learnt from the LDN Pilot Project, the conceptual framework of LDN by the Sience Policy Interface (SPI) of the UNCCD and the SDG indicator framework, will be finalized and disseminated to the participating countries and interested stakeholders.
- *Organize peer learning events.* The project will organize and support the organization of international meetings and workshops to share experience on LDN target setting and to strengthen capacities on selected topics of interest to stakeholders involved in LDN target setting. If possible, these meetings will be held in conjunction with other events such as UNCCD COPs and CRICs. A capacity building needs assessment will be carried out by the project, in cooperation with the Soil Leadership Academy[10] and other interested partners, to identify and address key gaps.

Output 3.3 Global outreach/advocacy on LDN target setting carried out

- *Analyse LDN data provided by countries at regional/global level.* The project will analyse all available data collected at national level by the participating countries at regional/global level. These data will be made available during relevant COP and CRIC sessions
- *Establish and maintain a LDN target setting website accessible to the public.* The Project will support the establishment of a public web site on LDN target setting, hosted by the UNCCD Secretariat/Global Mechsanism. The web site will disseminate all relevant information on the LDN target setting process.
- *Establish and maintain help-desk platform for internal communication with participating countries.* The Project will also establish and facilitate an help-desk platform, which will facilitate communication on technical enquiries from participating countries and the technical advisory team of the GM.

[10] http://www.unccd.int/en/Stakeholders/private_sector/Pages/Soil-Leadership-Academy.aspx

4.4 Risk analysis and risk management measures

Risks and mitigating measures as identified in the project logframe are presented in table 3.

Table 3. Risk analysis and mitigating measures

Risks	Risk level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
Some countries may not be able to finalize target setting process prior to COP13	M	• Provide timely support to countries • Monitor country work plans • Recruit national consultants for each country to support the process
Weak national LDN related monitoring systems in place	H	• Establish partnerships with specialized institutions to mobilize additional country support • LDN targets will drive future investments, including GEF initiatives, which will continue to strengthen monitoring capacities
Limited capacities of national UNCCD focal point institutions related to LDN target setting	M	• Identify national LDN champions to support LDN target setting process • Strengthen capacities of national UNCCD focal point (institution) • Project activities explicitly address capacity, through inception process and the Technical Guide for LDN Target Setting
Insufficient country ownership of LDN process	M	• Preparation and implementation of LDN TSP Leverage Plan to ensure governmental leadership at the highest possible political level • Each county submitted request to participate in LDN target setting process • Each country to sign MoU outlining cooperation in the context of the LDN TSP • Ensure good communication with national UNCCD focal point institution
Key international organization do not engage in LDN target setting process	M	• Ensure country ownership and leadership, which will further facilitate the mobilization of additional partners

		• Identify and establish strategic partnerships at all levels (national, regional, global) with key partner organizations
Countries are not interested in sharing information and experiences	L	• Carry out specific project activities targeting information exchange and exchange of experiences • Recruit regional consultants to facilitate exchange of information/experiences
Organizations not always willing to share LDN related data	L	• Establish strategic partnerships with data providers
Assumptions		
Most participating countries are sincere in their ambition to set voluntary national LDN targets prior to COP13		
Governments incorporate LDN concept in national policies		
All ministries and national agencies involved in land management or impacting on land are actively engaging in LDN target setting process		
Government endorses LDN target setting exercise at the highest level in order to facilitate the involvement of all ministries and private industry		
National focal point has the relevant political leverage to secure the above		
Quality of data from nationally and globally available sources will be improved thanks to LDN Partnerships		
Effective cooperation among all LDN partners		

4.5 Consistency with international and national priorities and plans

The LDN TSP is fully aligned to UNCCD COP Decisions as well as agreements made in the context of the SDG process. The Project specifically addresses the 2016-19 multi-year work plan of the UNCCD institutions and subsidiary bodies under outcome indicator 2.1 “The extent to which affected country Parties establish targets for addressing land degradation and rehabilitation” (UNCCD Decision 1/COP.12).

4.6 Project alignment with IUCN Programme

As the world’s oldest and largest global environmental organisation, with almost 1,300 government and NGO Members, more than 15,000 volunteer experts in six commisions and 185 countries, and with staff in 45 offices worldwide, IUCN is ideally placed to convene the necessary partnerships for effective LDN target setting. IUCN focuses on valuing and conserving nature, ensuring effective and equitable governance of its use, and deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development.

IUCN has observer status at the United Nations and supports the development and implementation of the UNCCD through a MoU and Joint Work Plan. IUCN has dedicated programmes of work on Forests, Water and Wetlands, Ecosystem Management, and Drylands

that are highly relevant to the achievement of Land Degradation Neutrality. The red list of endangered species is probably the most valuable scientifically grounded metric of the loss of biodiversity. IUCN is a major partner of the implementation of the global network of protected areas and therefore a key player in the needed establishment of biological corridors that must interconnect all protected areas to allow the free migration of species, in order to avoid massive extinctions in the context of climate change and correlative modifications of bio-geographical boundaries.

IUCN has included Land Degradation Neutrality under Result Area 3 of its 2016-2020 quadrennial programme. Thus, IUCN is among the best-positioned organisation to ensure that LDN measures and targets will take into account the imperatives of biodiversity conservation (IUCN, undated).

4.7 Incremental[11] cost reasoning

The LDN TSP provides a unique opportunity to support countries in a systematic way and at global scale to define national LDN targets and associated measures in order to achieve LDN by 2030 as agreed under the SDGs. This can provide substantial support to the implementation of the SDG agenda at country level and provide an additional momentum for UNCCD implementation.

Without the project, national processes to achieve LDN as outlined under SDG target 15.3 would be substantially slower and would risk to be fragmented and uncoordinated at global scale, which would hinder sound reporting to the respective global processes.

Through the Project, GEF provides a critical and unique impulse towards the implementation of the SDGs with focus on SDG target 15.3. However, target 15.3 is considered as a key SDG accelerator, which provides a direct contribution to achieving several SDGs (UNCCD, 2016b). The project will lay the foundation at country level to achieve LDN by addressing the essential planning stage, including the establishment of an enabling environment. Setting clear targets is critical to address the complex and often historical land degradation processes that have led to the current critical global situation, where land degradation is a major direct and indirect cause of both climate change and loss of biodiversity.

The inclusion of LDN targets by a substantial number of countries is an important incremental value of the GEF investment. Furthermore, as part of the target setting process, priority areas for immediate transformative measures and corresponding investments will be identified.

The national LDN working groups will provide a unique opportunity to build consensus around LDN, which can build pathways for increased investments for LDN measures.

[11] For climate change adaptation projects to be financed under the GEF, this section will be replaced by an analysis of the "additional cost reasoning".

4.8 Sustainability

4.8.1 Financial and economic sustainability

The project will capitalize and complement previous GEF investments, including support to enabling activities such as NAP alignment and UNCCD reporting. In this context, it will take into account existing Integrated Investment Frameworks (IIF) for SLM, as called upon by the 10 Year Strategy of the UNCCD. More than 60 countries have already established Integrated Investment Frameworks (IIF) for SLM as a means to help “leverage national, bilateral and multilateral resources with a view to increasing the effectiveness and impact of interventions” (UNCCD, Dec.3/COP.8).

Follow-up of the project will be ensured through the integration of the project results in the national planning processes, including UNCCD NAPs, IIFs/IFSs and UNCCD reporting. The LDN TSP will help guiding action of cost-effective land-based solutions and increase the synergy between all land-based investments undertaken for climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation, disaster resilience and water and food security, by promoting sustainable land management at appropriate spatial and temporal scales.

The project will blend financial contributions received from various funding sources, including multilateral and bilateral donors. This will enable the GM/UNCCD as executing agency, to use funds in a complementary and effective way.

At global level, existing outreach and communication platforms from both, implementing and executing agencies, can be used for global advocacy.

At regional and national level, existing UNCCD and IUCN-related platforms can be used to support the LDN TSP.

The organization of LDN TSP partner meetings will further strengthen cooperation and coordination among all actors directly involved in the LDN target setting process at the operational level.

4.8.2 Institutional sustainability

Institutional sustainability will be secured at all level, i.e. at global, regional and national levels.

At global level, the IUCN-UNCCD partnership facilitated by the GEF as Implementing and Executing Agencies will ensure engagement of a wide range of stakeholders in the LDN target setting process. Outreach activities at major events such as the IUCN World Conservation Congress and UNCCD COPs and CRICs will further strengthen the dissemination of information related to the project.

At regional level, the UNCCD Regional Coordination Units and IUCN Regional Offices, with the support of regional advisors recruited by the project, will ensure liaison with relevant regional and sub-regional institutions and initiatives, including the Regional Economic Communities.

At national level, the effective leadership of the national UNCCD focal point institutions and a functioning LDN working group will be a key to ensure institutional sustainability.

4.9 Replication

The project builds upon the LDN Pilot Project and responds to requests submitted to the UNCCD Secretariat and Global Mechanism by 95 countries (as of 21 June 2016) to provide technical and financial support for LDN target setting. Taking into account the positive outcome of the LDN Pilot Project, which covered 14 diverse countries from all continents (all ecosystems and economic systems were represented) and the high number of requests received, it is expected that the LDN target setting approach spearheaded by the LDN TSP will be further replicated by other countries.

Furthermore, the identification of LDN priority areas for intervention as part of the national LDN target setting process is not only a modality to address the most pressing priorities but also a way to encourage increased investments in measures to achieve LDN and to mobilize development partners to support and replicate the process.

4.10 Communication and knowledge management

Communication and knowledge management are integral part of Project component 3.

UNCCD Secretariat/Global Mechanism and IUCN will inform their constituencies regularly through targeted communication products on the status and lessons-learned of the LDN target setting process.

The LDN TSP will inform GEF, IUCN and UNCCD and their constituencies with insights from country-level experiences related to the LDN target setting process. The project will put special emphasis on showing the linkages between SLM, landscape restoration, climate change adaptation (including disaster risk reduction) and mitigation (carbon storage) as well as food security. With this in mind, the communication and visibility strategy will be built strongly around the evidence gathered by the feedback from the field.

The Technical Guide for LDN target setting will be widely disseminated in order to further promote action to achieve LDN at global scale and across sectors and initiatives.

In the participating countries**,** the project will support, through national advisors and in cooperation with the national LDN working group, the elaboration and dissemination of outreach products on the LDN target setting process. This will include the full documentation of the national LDN consultation process, including related workshops.

The Project will also inform the general public by communicating best practice and lessons learned from the project through a global public awareness campaign, which promotes international visibility of LDN in the context of the SDG debate.

Main outreach products by the Project are:

- LDN TSP web site hosted by the UNCCD Secretariat/Global Mechanism;
- Posting of news items and event announcements;
- Regular E-newsletters to key stakeholders;
- Targeted corporate UNCCD publications;
- Dissemination of key information through the UNCCD online marketplace;
- Official reports to UNCCD COPs and CRICs;
- Reports on major events;
- Special thematic reports on emerging topics; and
- Media placements on social media.

All communication products elaborated or supported by the Projects will ensure visibility of all main Project partners, i.e. GEF, IUCN and UNCCD.

4.11 Environmental and social safeguards

The project guides a process of target setting and identification of measures for achieving land degradation neutrality at national levels and does not involve activities on the ground. National target setting, if accompanied by appropriate stakeholder involvement (especially during specific target setting exercises) and using credible technical tools, is considered a low risk project because it will not impact directly on specific areas of land or communities, will have no immediate implications for tenure and access rights, and will not lead to negative changes in ecosystems and resulting negative livelihood impacts. On the contrary, it is expected that the discussions on possible LDN targets will address issues such as land tenure/access to land and that the implementation of measures to reach the targets will lead to major ecosystem improvements with benefits for people's livelihoods.

It needs to be pointed out, though, that the implementation of the identified measures for achieving land degradation neutrality might involve certain social or environmental risks as explained in the IUCN ESMS Questionnaire and Screening Report. While the implementation of the measures is outside the managerial responsibility of the project, the Executing Agency will sensitize the national stakeholders about the need to avoid negative livelihood impacts on indigenous people and other marginalized groups, risks associated with restricting access to land and natural resources, risks related to cultural resources and to restoration and SLM actions (including alien invasive species).

5 Institutional framework and implementation arrangements

This project proposed for funding by the GEF is prepared in partnership between IUCN[12] as Implementing and the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD as Executing Agency.

The GM is an institution of the UNCCD, which aims to facilitate "actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources, including for the transfer of technology, on a grant, and/or on concessional or other terms, to affected developing country Parties" (Article 21, para. 4, UNCCD). It provides technical assistance to affected country Parties to access and mobilize financial resources for UNCCD implementation.

The LDN-TSP will ensure that the LDN concept, which was endorsed by UNCCD COP.12 in the SDG context, will be translated into action following the principles of:

- *Coherence*, by providing a coherent methodological approach with regard to LDN data sourcing and assessment in cooperation with relevant global data providers.
- *Leverage*, by ensuring the effective use of multi-donor funding in a synergistic and consistent way, while facilitating the transition from strategic planning of LDN targets to LDN implementation. In this context, the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and IUCN are providing complementary work streams to support country Parties in LDN implementation, including the pre-identification of transformative LDN projects (Global Mechanism of the UNCCD) and the implementation of the Global Drylands Initiative (IUCN).
- *Joint learning*, by facilitating the sharing of experiences and lessons-learnt across countries as well as between the national, (sub)regional and global level. Meetings organized by the UNCCD (e.g. COP, CRIC, Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and IUCN (e.g. World Conservation Congress Forum) will provide excellent opportunities to share lessons-learnt at an international level.
- *Global analysis*, by providing coherent information on regional and global LDN trends based on internationally agreed indicator frameworks.

5.1 National decision making and planning

Following the UNCCD COP.12 Decisions related to LDN, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD has informed all Ministers in charge of the national UNCCD focal point institutions in two letters sent in November/December 2015 and April 2016 on the engagement of the UNCCD Secretariat/Global Mechanism in LDN target setting. During UNCCD COP.12 the Chief Executive Officer of the GEF Secretariat announced GEF's commitment to support countries in their efforts to define national LDN targets.

As of 21 June 2016, 95 countries expressed interest to the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism to define national LDN targets. Out of these countries, 70 GEF eligible countries will be invited to participate in the LDN TSP taking into account the date of submission (first come, first serve) and regional balance among participating countries. MoUs will be prepared with all participating countries.

[1212] See chapter 4.6 on the alignment of the Project to the IUCN Programme.

National decision making and planning in the context of the LDN TSP will be coordinated by the UNCCD national focal point institution as main national project counterpart and the national LDN working group as main national coordination body.

5.2 Project coordination and management

Project coordination and management will be ensured by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD as Executing Agency in close cooperation with IUCN as GEF Implementing Agency. A project steering committee will be established by both institutions in order to agree on operational and policy aspects related to the implementation of the LDN TSP.

Project management will be ensured through the establishment of the following project teams:

1. *LDN TSP Coordination Team (PCT):* The PCT will include all UNCCD Secretariat and Global Mechanism staff and the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), who are supporting the implementation of the project. Overall coordination of the PCT will be ensured by the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism (+/- 5% time allocation), who will assign technical responsibility for LDN TSP Coordination to one Global Mechanism staff, who will ensure the position of Team Lead of the LDN TSP (+/- 80% time allocation). Draft ToR for the CTA are available in the annex.
2. *LDN TSP Regional Teams (PRT):* PRT will be established according to the UNCCD regional annexes covering Africa (distinguished in Anglophone and Francophone Africa), Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Central and Eastern European (including the Northern Mediterranean region). Each regional team will include a member of the PCT, as well as regional and country consultants. Draft ToR for the regional and country consultants are available in the annex. Main national counterparts for the regional teams will be the UNCCD national focal point (institution) and the national LDN working groups.
3. *LDN TSP Outreach Team (POT):* Embedded in the communication team of the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism, and coordinated by a member of the PCT, the POT will coordinate the production of all outreach materials, which will be provided by LDN TSP team as well as from stakeholders involved in the LDN target setting process. It will also coordinate the internal communication flows, including the project help desk and the data repository to be developed by the project.
4. *LDN Data Management Team (PDT):* In cooperation with the GSP, the project will establish a PDM, which will ensure quality control with regard to the collection, processing of LDN related data.
5. *LDN Monitoring & Evaluation Team (PMET):* One member of the PCT will be in charge of coordinating the M&E of the project activities in cooperation with the UNCCD Evaluation Office and Administrative Services, including the preparation of the project mid-term and final reports. The PMET will closely liaise with IUCN as Implementing Agency in order to take into account IUCN's M&E standards.
6. *LDN Administrative Team (PAT):* The PAT will be in charge of securing smooth project implementation through the effective delivery of administrative support, including contracting of experts, facilitating travel and supporting procurement. Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) will be prepared with each participating country, which will outline the administrative arrangements with the countries.

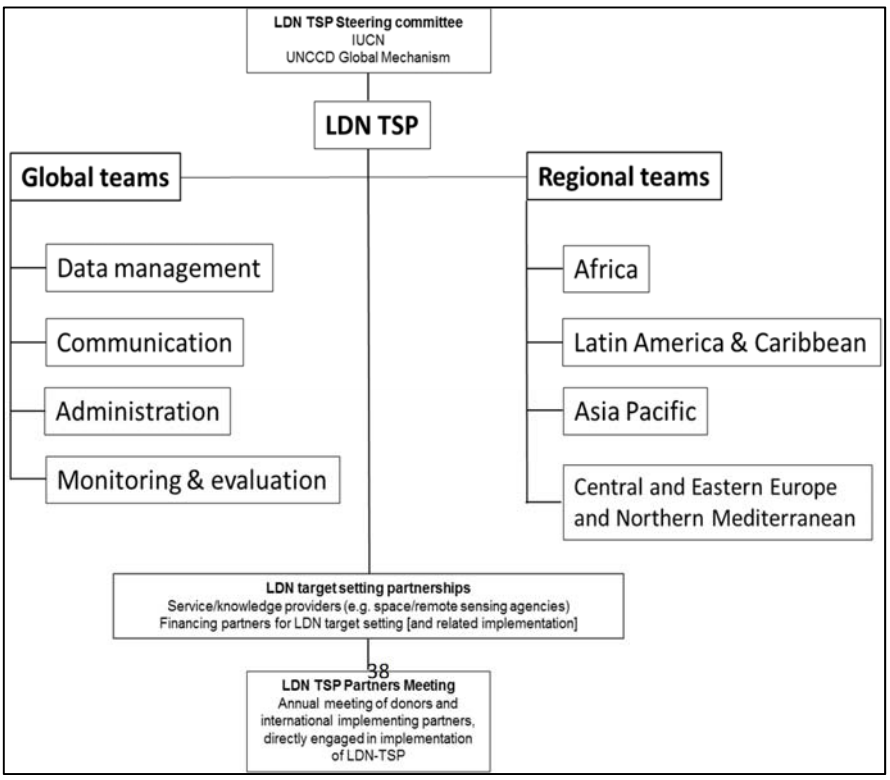
LDN target setting partnerships will be sought at all levels with service/knowledge providers (e.g. space/remote sensing agencies) and financing partners for LDN target setting and related implementation. LDN Partner Meetings will be organized at least once per year inviting all donors and other partners directly supporting the LDN TSP at national and/or global level.

The project is implemented in three main phases:

- *Launching phase (3 months):* During the launching phase, the project team will be established, global data on LDN collected and pre-processed for national level use in cooperation with the Global Support Programme (GSP), and the Technical Guide for LDN Target Setting finalized and disseminated. The LDN target setting web page will be fuctional. The launching phase will be concluded through a series of events to be organized during UNCCD CRIC.15.
- *Implementation phase (15 months):* The implementation phase will focus on country level project activities, including participatory and scientific sound processes related to the assessment of LDN baselines and the definition of LDN targets. Finally, the development of draft investment proposals will be supported to identify opportunities for resource mobilization to achieve the proposed target and implement the identified measures, linking the LDN target setting process with future LDN implementation and taking into account existing IIF for SLM and other relevant frameworks.
- *Consolidation phase (six months):* During the final phase of the LDN TSP, country reports will be finalized, the project terminal report will be elaborated and results will be analysed and disseminated at regional/global level. A global workshop to share lessons-learned will be organized, possibly back to back with the UNCCD COP.13.

The organigram on the LDN TSP structure is presented in figure 5.

Figure 5. LDN TSP organigram



5.3 Procurement plan

The project procurement consists in the following items:

- Recruitment of technical experts, including one CTA, five regional advisors and up to 70 country consultants;
- Signature of MoU with all participating countries outlining the technical and financial support. Financial support will include the organization of three national consultation workshops (i.e. launching workshop, validation of LDN baseline, validation of LDN targets/associated measures) and field visits to the identified LDN hotspots.
- Outreach activities at all level will require the procurement of technical support to prepare the various printed and online outreach products.

The costs and dates of the planned procurements are detailed in table 4.

Table 4. LDN TSP procurement plan

Procurement Plan										
			Year 1				Year 2			
Quarter			**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Item	**Procurement method**	**Responsible**	**Procurement action**							
1. Personnel										
1.1 International experts	UNCCD recruitment process	GM								
1.2 National experts	UNCCD recruitment process	GM								
2. Workshops										
2.1 International										
Meeting at UNCCD COP 13	UNCCD procedures	GM								
Meeting at UNCCD CRIC 15	UNCCD procedures	GM								
2.2 National										
National consultation workshops	UNCCD procedures/service provider	GM								
3. Miscellanea										
3.1 International										
Production of outreach material	UNCCD procedures	GM								
3.2 National										
Support to LDN working group	UNCCD procedures/service provider	GM								
4. Travel										
4.1 International										
UNCCD staff & CTA	UNCCD procedures	GM								
Regional consultants	UNCCD procedures	GM								
4.2 National										
Country consultants	UNCCD procedures/service provider	GM								

6 Stakeholder engagement and participation

The roles and involvement of key stakeholders in the LDN TSP is described in table 5.

Table 5. Key stakeholders involved in the LDN TSP

No.	Stakeholder	Role/ involvement in project
1	Ministries and Governmental agencies	• UNCCD national focal point institutions are the main national counterparts of the project • Other Ministries involved such as agriculture, forestry, water, rural development, mining, energy, transports, public infrastructure, urban planning, economy and finance, interior and local governments and justice will be involved through the national LDN working groups • All UNCCD national focal point institutions will be informed on progress made of LDN TSP during UNCCD CRIC and COP sessions as well as related meetings
2	Civil society organizations	• At national level, key CSO will be involved in the project through national LDN working groups • At international level, CSO will be involved through UNCCD and IUCN cooperation mechanisms with CSO as well as through LDN target setting partnerships
3	Private sector	• At national level, the private sector will be involved in the project through national LDN working groups • Selected private sector initiatives expressed interest to support the achievement of LDN
4	Scientific and academic organizations	• At national level, key scientific organizations will be involved in the project through national LDN working groups • At international level, scientific and academic organizations will be involved through UNCCD and IUCN cooperation mechanisms with scientific and academic organizations (e.g. CST, SPI) as well as through LDN target setting partnerships • The UNCCD SPI prepared the draft LDN Conceptual Framework, which underpins scientifically the LDN target setting process
5	Development partners	• At national level, development partners will be involved in the Project through national LDN working groups

		• At international level, selected development partners committed to support LDN related processes, including LDN TSP • Selected development partners committed technical and financial support for the LDN target setting process and provided feedback to the LDN TSP proposal

7 Monitoring and evaluation plan

Monitoring will be carried out primarily by the executing entity, i.e. the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD in close consultation with IUCN and main project counterparts in each country. It will include a quantitative measurement of the rate of progress of delivering the planned commitments, the review of budget allocations/spending and the status of output delivery.

One member of the PCT will be responsible for the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the Project work plan ("M&E Officer"), which will follow the principles of result-based management, applied by the UNCCD institutions since 2008.

The total budget for monitoring and evaluation of the project is estimated at USD 35.000 USD (excluding staff costs), which is included in Project component 3 on "LDN target setting knowledge management".

In addition to a thorough monitoring of budget commitment and output delivery, project performance will be monitored qualitatively through the active involvement of the national LDN working groups: the participatory monitoring carried out throughout the project through the active involvement of the LDN working groups will provide valuable documentation on the different stages of progress made by the project. To this purpose, the national working plans and timeline for the implementation of the LDN TSP at country level will be aligned with the outputs, indicators and targets of the project.

A project progress report will be elaborated after one year of project implementation (project mid-term report). The report will include a summary of activities carried out by the project at national and global level. The report will also include the assessment of risks and other constraints for delivery and determine what lessons can be learned from implementation experiences. The reports shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final project report will cover the entire project period.

The GEF may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the GEF for independent monitoring reviews.

A final evaluation of the Project will be carried by an independent consultants contracted by the UNCCD Evaluation Office. IUCN will approve the Terms of Reference for the consultant and will participate in the selection process. The final evaluation report will be shared with the participating countries and other key stakeholders. The implementing partners shall analyse

the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. In addition, the Global Mechanism will submit progress reports on the LDN TSP to UNCCD COP and CRIC meetings.

Table 6. Draft M&E plan of the LDN TSP

M&E activity	Frequency	Responsible	Budget (GEF funded)
Prepare M&E plan	Once during LDN TSP launching phase	M&E Officer	Co-financing
LDN TSP mid-term Project report	Once after 12 months of LDN TSP implementation	M&E Officer CTA Regional Experts National Experts	Staff time of CTA, regional experts, national experts
LDN TSP Terminal Report	Once after 22 months of LDN TSP implementation	M&E Officer CTA Regional Experts National Experts	Staff time of CTA, regional experts, national experts
LDN TSP Final Evaluation	Once immediately after LDN TSP termination	UNCCD Evaluation Office IUCN Task Manager	Recruitment of independent evaluator

8 Project financing and budget

The LDN-TSP will be funded by various funding sources amounting to a total of USD 5,735,974.

Funding sources are summarized in table 7, budget allocation per cost items and project components is shown in tables 8 and 9.

Table 7. LDN TSP funding sources

Item	USD
Government of Turkey (Ankara initiative)	1,250,000
Government of Korea (Changwon Initiative)	1,073,680
Global Mechanism of the UNCCD	50,000
Government of Trinidad and Tobago	250,000
Government of Luxemburg	110,000
UNDP	250.000
Sub-total co-financing	**2,983,680**

Budget allocation will be distributed among the national, regional and global level as follows:

- *At country level*, the LDN TSP will allocate funds for the
  - recruitment of up to 70 country consultants;
  - provision of financial resources for the national consultation process, including support to national LDN working groups, multi-stakeholder consultation workshops, and the identification of possible LDN “hot spots”.
- At *regional level*, the LDN TSP will allocate funds for the
  - recruitment of five regional advisors, coordinating project activities in Anglophone/Francophone Africa, Asia Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe/Northern Mediterranean and Latin America and the Caribbean;
  - travel of the regional experts and UNCCD RCU staff.
- At *global level*, the LDN TSP will allocate funds for the
  - recruitment of technical experts;
  - organization of peer learning events;
  - travel by LDN TSP experts;
  - production of communication material.

The budget per cost items and project component is presented in tables 8 and 9.

Table 8. LDN TSP Budget per cost item (USD)

Expenditures	GEF	Co finance	Total
1. Staff			
GM staff	0	50,000	50,000
2. Non staff resources			
2.1 International experts	220,861	264,818	485,679
2.2 National experts	1,050,000	1,050,000	2,100,000
3. Workshops/meetings			
3.1 International	40,927	49,073	90,000
3.2 National	1,050,000	1,050,000	2,100,000
4. Communication			
Global outreach	44,149	52,937	97,086
5. Travel			
5.1 International	26,148	31,352	57,500
5.2 National	70,000	70000	140,000
Sub-total	**2,502,085**	**2,618,180**	**5,120,265**
6. Project Management Costs	**250,209**	**365,500**	615,709
TOTAL	**2,752,294**	**2,983,680**	**5,735,974**

Table 9. LDN TSP budget per project component (USD)

Component	Output	GEF	Co-finance	Total	%
1. National LDN baselines	1.1 LDN assessment	687,847	675,175	1,363,022	22.8
2. National LDN measures and target setting	2.1 LDN target setting	1,586,366	1,626,746	3,213,112	53.7
	2.2 LDN investment opportunities				
3. LDN target setting knowledge management	3.1 LDN TS partnerships	227,872	316,259	544,131	9.1
	3.2 LDN peer learning				
	3.3 LDN global analysis				
4. Project Management Costs		250,209	365,500	863,415	14.4
Total		**2,752,294**	**2,983,680**	**5,735,974**	**100**

9 References

Abdi, O.A., Glover, E.K., Luukkanen, O. 2013. Causes and Impacts of Land Degradation and Desertification: Case Study of the Sudan. International Journal of Agriculture and Forestry. 3(2): 40-51. doi:10.5923/j.ijaf.20130302.03. See http://article.sapub.org/10.5923.j.ijaf.20130302.03.html

Adeel, Z., U. Safriel, D. Niemeijer, R. White. 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Desertification Synthesis, World Resource Institute, Washington, D.C.

Akhtar Schuster, M et al.: Operationalizing land degradation neutrality: unravelling the semantics to support action and synergies among the Rio Conventions. Environmental Management. (submitted manuscript)

Anonymus. 2013. Africa Day: Ministers reconfirm Africa's commitment to ensure sustainable development through sustainable land management. In: The Herald, 28 September 2013. See http://www.herald.co.zw/africa-day-ministers-reconfirm-africas-commitment-to-ensure-sustainable-development-through-sustainable-land-management/

Anonymus. 2014. From Canada to Kenya: The Eld Initiative. In: UNU-INVEH, See http://inweh.unu.edu/canada-kenya-3rd-eld-scientific-meeting/

Bai, Zhanguo, D. Dent, Y. Wu, R. de Jong. 2013. Land Degradation and Ecosystem Services. In Ecosystem Services and Carbon Sequestration in the Biosphere, pp 357-381, Springer. http://www.geo.uzh.ch/microsite/rsl-documents/research/publications/book-chapters/Bai2013_LandDegradation-2663146755/Bai2013_LandDegradation.pdf

Bai, Zhanguo, D. Dent, L. Olsson & M.E. Schaepman. 2008. Proxy global assessment of land degradation. Soil Use and Management, September 2008, 24, 223–234. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1475-2743.2008.00169.x/abstract

Barbut, M. 2014. Speech Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary UNCCD. See http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/secretariat/2014/ES%20Statements/Vienna%20Speech%20210314.pdf

Bardy, Marion and all. 2014. La qualité des sols et son évolution, Cahier Demeter. http://www.clubdemeter.com/pdf/cahier/15/la_qualite_des_sols_et_son_evolution.pdf

Bruinsma, 2003. World Agriculture: Towards 2015/2030: An FAO Perspective. http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y4252E/y4252e00.htm#TopOfPage

Chasek, Pamela, U. Safriel, S. Shikongo, V.F. Fuhrman. 2014. Operationalizing Zero Net Land Degradation: The next stage in international efforts to combat desertification?, Journal of Arid Environments, 2014 1-9. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263508270_Operationalizing_Zero_Net_Land_Degradation_The_next_stage_in_international_efforts_to_combat_desertification

Cornelis WM, Gabriels D., 2009. Human-Induced Land Degradation. Land Use, Land Cover and Soil -Volume 3. ISBN: 978-1-84826-237-9.

Davies, Jonathan, L. Poulsen, B. Schulte-Herbrüggen, K. Mackinnon, N. Crawhall, W.D. Henwood, N. Dudley, J. Smith and M. Gudka. 2012. Conserving Dryland Biodiversity. xii +84p.

http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/Publications/drylands_bk_2.pdf

Dixon, J.A., D.E. James, P.B. Sherman. 1989. Economics of dryland management. London

FAO, 1993. Land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas: rainfed and irrigated lands, rangelands and woodlands. http://www.fao.org/3/a-x5308e/x5308e00.htm#Contents

FAO, 2009. Global Agriculture Towards 2050. Paper presented to High-level Expert Forum on "How to feed the world in 2050", Rome, 12-13 October 2009. FAO, Rome.

Geist, H.J., Lambin, E.F. 2004. Dynamic Causal Patterns of Desertification. Bioscience. Vol. 54 No. 9. See http://bioscience.oxfordjournals.org/content/54/9/817.full.pdf+html

Gisladottir, G. & M. Stocking. 2005. Land degradation control and its global environmental benefits, 2005, Land degradation and development, 16 : 99-112. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ldr.687/abstract

Higginbottom, Thomas & E. Symeonakis. 2014. Assessing Land Degradation and Desertification Using Vegetation Index Data: Current Frameworks and Future Directions, 2014, Remote Sensing 6, 9552-9575. http://www.mdpi.com/2072-4292/6/10/9552

IUCN. 2015. Land Degradation Neutrality: implications and opportunities for conservation Nature Based Solutions to Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought. Draft Technical Brief 08/10/2015. http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/tech_brief_land_degradation_neutrality.pdf

IUCN. Undated. IUCN Global drylands initiative.

http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/ecosystem_management/about_work_global_prog_ecos_dry/

Lagi, Marco, K.Z. Bertrand, Y. Bar-Yam. 2011. The Food Crises and Political Instability in North Africa and the Middle East. New England Complex Systems Institute. Cambridge. http://necsi.edu/research/social/food_crises.pdf

Lal, R. 2008. Carbon sequestration. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences, 363(1492), 815–830. http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/363/1492/815

Le Quéré C. & al. 2014. Global carbon budget 2014. Earth System Science Data Discussion, 7, 521-610, 2014. http://pubman.mpdl.mpg.de/pubman/item/escidoc:2058666:4/component/escidoc:2058691/BGC2125D.pdf

Levesque, R., 2014. La question foncière renouvelée – Cahier Demeter. http://www.clubdemeter.com/pdf/cahier/15/presentation_et_sommaire.pdf

Nachtergaele, Freddy, R. Biancalani, S. Bunning, H. George. 2010. Land Degradation Assessment: the LADA approach, FAO 2010 19th World Congress of Soil Science, Soil Solutions for a Changing World1 – 6 August 2010, Brisbane, Australia. http://www.iuss.org/19th%20WCSS/Symposium/pdf/1730.pdf

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis. Island Press, Washington, DC. http://www.millenniumassessment.org/documents/document.356.aspx.pdf

Mortimore, M. with contributions from S. Anderson, L. Cotula, J. Davies, K. Faccer, C. Hesse, J. Morton, W. Nyangena, J. Skinner, and C. Wolfangel. 2009. Dryland Opportunities: A new paradigm for people, ecosystems and development, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland; IIED, London, UK and UNDP/DDC, Nairobi, Kenya. x + 86p.

Nobre, A. Donato. 2014. O Futuro Climático da Amazônia Relatório de Avaliação Científica, 2014, Instituto de Pesquisa Ambiental do Amazonas. http://www.ccst.inpe.br/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/El_Futuro_Climatico_de_la_Amazonia.pdf

Qadir, M., E. Quillérou, V. Nangia, G. Murtaza, M. Singh, R.J. Thomas, P. Drechsel, A.D. Noble. 2014. Economics of Salt-induced Land Degradation and Restoration. Natural Resources Forum. A United Nations Sustainable Development Journal.

Reed, Mark S., M. Buenemann, J.R. Atihoopheng, M. Akthar-Schuster, F. Bachmann, G.N. Bastin. 2011. Cross-scale monitoring and assessment of land degradation and sustainable land management: a methodological framework for knowledge management, 2011, Land degradation and development, 22 : 261- 271. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227530616_Cross-scale_monitoring_and_assessment_of_land_degradation_and_sustainable_land_management_A_methodological_framework_for_knowledge_management

RIO+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. 2012. The future we want. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. See http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/Rio+20/TheFutureWeWantRIOplus20.pdf

Seto, Karen C., M. Fragkias, B. Güneralp, M.K. Reilly. 2011. A Meta-Analysis of Global Urban Land Expansion. PLoS ONE 6(8): e23777. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0023777. http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0023777

Science Policy Interface of the UNCCD. 2016. LDN Conceptual Framework (under preparation)

TEEB, 2008. The Economics of ecosystems and Biodiversity, An Interim Report: European Communities. http://www.teebweb.org/publication/the-economics-of-ecosystems-and-biodiversity-an-interim-report/

United Nations. 1994. Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa. Final text of the convention. http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/conventionText/conv-eng.pdf

United Nations. 2015. Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300

United Nations University. 2007. Overcoming One of the Greatest Environmental Challenges of Our times: Re-thinking Policies to Cope with Desertification. By Z. Adeel, J. Bogardi, C. Braeuel, P. Chasek, M. Niamir-Fuller, D. Gabriels, C. King, F. Knabe, A. Kowsar, B. Salem, T. Schaaf, G. Shepherd, R. Thomas. H. Onntario. http://inweh.unu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Re-

thinkingPolicietoCopewithDesertification.pdf

UNCCD. Undated. DLDD – some global figures. See http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/WDCD/DLDD%20Facts.pdf

UNCCD. 2014. Desertification – The invisible frontline. Bonn. http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/Publications/Desertification_The%20invisible_frontline.pdf

UNCCD, 2016a. Land Degradation Neutrality Target setting – A Technical Guide. Draft for consultation during the LDN Target Setting Programme inception phase. Bonn

UNCCD. 2016b. A natural fix. Sustainable Development Goals, a joined-up approach to delivering the global goals for sustainable development. Bonn, Germany. http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/Publications/4_2016_Land_SDGs_ENG.pdf

UNISDR. 2011. Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction. See http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/gar/2011/en/home/index.html

University of Kansas. 2015. Section 8. Identifying and Analyzing Stakeholders and their Interests. Community Tool Box and frameworks for guiding, supporting and evaluating the work of community and system change. http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main

von Braun JR. Meinzen-Dick. 2009. Land grabbing by foreign investors in developing countries, risks and opportunities. IFPRI Policy Brief 13. April 2009. http://www.landcoalition.org/sites/default/files/documents/resources/ifpri_land_grabbing_apr_09-2.pdf

White R., D. Niemeijer, Z. Adeel, U. Safriel. 2005. Millennium ecosystem assessment. Ecosystems and human well-being: desertification synthesis. Millennium ecosystem assessment. Ecosystems and human well-being: desertification synthesis 2005 Vol 0. http://www.millenniumassessment.org/documents/document.291.aspx.pdf

WOCAT. Undated. WOCAT-Categorisation System. See https://www.wocat.net/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/QT_and_QA/CategorisationSystem.pdf

Zika, M., and K.H. Erb. 2009. The global loss of net primary production resulting from human-induced soil degradation in drylands. Ecol. Econ. 69:310–318. doi:10.1016/j.ecolecon.2009.06.014

10 Appendix

10.1 Signed co-financing letters

10.2 List of participating countries

	Country
	CEE
1	Azerbaijan
2	Bosnia Herzegovina
3	FYR Macedonia
4	Georgia
5	Kyrgyzstan
6	Moldova
7	Montenegro
8	Serbia
9	Ukraine
10	Uzbekistan
	Africa
11	Benin
12	Burkina Faso
13	Cameroon
14	Central African Republic
15	Côte d'Ivoire
16	Democratic Republic of Congo
17	Egypt
18	Equatorial Guinea
19	Eritrea
20	Gambia
21	Ghana
22	Guinea
23	Guinea-Bissau
24	Kenya
25	Lesotho
26	Madagascar
27	Malawi
28	Mali
29	Mauritania**
30	Mauritius
31	Morocco
32	Niger
33	Nigeria
34	Republic of Congo
35	Sao Tome et Principe
36	Seychelles
37	Sierra Leone
38	South Africa
39	Swaziland
40	Togo
41	Uganda
	LAC
42	Argentina
43	Dominica
44	Dominican Republic
45	El Salvador
46	Guyana
47	Haiti
48	Jamaica
49	Nicaragua
50	Paraguay

51	Peru
52	St. Kitts and Nevis
53	St. Lucia
54	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
55	Suriname
56	Trinidad and Tobago
57	Uruguay
	Asia
58	Bangladesh
59	Cambodia
60	China
61	Jordan
62	Lebanon
63	Nepal
64	Niue
65	Philipines
66	Samoa
67	Sri Lanka
68	Thailand
69	Timor Leste
70	Viet Nam

10.3 Draft terms of reference of a national Land Degradation Neutrality Working Group

Objective: Steer the LDN target setting process and promote LDN mainstreaming into national policies and plans

Tasks:

1. Provision of information to the stakeholders
2. Representation of stakeholders at national level
3. Provision of a platform for negotiation among stakeholders
4. Review and endorsement of a national LDN target setting road map
5. Identification of key stakeholders and resource persons relevant for the LDN target setting process
6. Review and validation of national reports related to LDN target setting, including national LDN baselines, land degradation trends and drivers assessments, LDN targets and associated measures
7. Support for the organisation of national stakeholder consultations related to LDN target setting
8. Support for national outreach and communication activities related to LDN target setting
9. Support for mainstreaming of LDN target setting in national policy processes, including Sustainable Development Goals
10. Awareness creation among stakeholders on LDN
11. Monitoring and evaluation of the LDN target setting process

Composition: +/- 30 members representing:

- Governmental organisations (e.g. national land use planning, agriculture, environment/forestry, trade, statistics, finance)
- The private sector (e.g. farmer organisations, trade unions, chambers of commerce, land-based companies, including mining, energy, urbanization)
- Academia and research organisations
- CSOs
- Development partners

Secretariat: Institution coordinating the national LDN TSP(e.g. UNCCD Focal Point Institution)

10.4 Relevant paragraphs of decisions related to land degradation neutrality taken by the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth session

Decision 1/COP.12: Multi-year workplans of the Convention institutions and subsidiary bodies

Outcome indicator 2.1: The extent to which affected country Parties establish targets for addressing land degradation and rehabilitation

Decision 2/COP.12: Formulation, revision and implementation of action programmes in view of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

3. Invites affected country Parties, in accordance with decision 22/COP.11, to establish baselines and national-level voluntary land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets within their NAPs and to address ecosystem aspects at their discretion in their subregional and regional action programmes, making use of scientific and knowledge-based diagnostic tools at the national level;

4. Also invites Parties, other governments and other development partners to establish and increase partnership agreements for technical support to affected country Parties according to their bilateral priorities – giving special attention to the implementation of NAPs – and to assist them in monitoring progress towards achieving national targets;

5. Further invites affected country Parties to include voluntary national LDN targets in their national reports, as appropriate;

6. Requests the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) secretariats to continue consultations on the arrangements for the delivery of funding enabling activities for the sixth GEF Replenishment Phase (GEF-6) with a view to securing technical and financial support for the next reporting exercise, including in the area of progress reporting and national target setting towards achieving LDN;

7. Invites Parties and technical and financial institutions to provide support to affected country Parties in establishing, aligning and implementing NAPs, including, as appropriate, target 15.3 of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, and LDN national voluntary target setting;

8. Requests Parties at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to consider adding the first review of LDN voluntary targets and their implementation so far to the agenda of the intersessional meeting of the CRIC/CST prior to the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties;

9. Invites affected country Parties to develop and implement strategies through their NAPs to achieve the objectives of the Convention in the light of target 15.3 of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development;

10. Requests the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to:

(a) Enhance their assistance to country Parties in terms of technical and financial support for the implementation of target 15.3 of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development through the NAPs, including the LDN approach at national level;

(b) Engage with international organisations and funds, as well as other multilateral and bilateral donors, in order to mobilise additional resources for the implementation of target 15.3 of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development through the NAPs, including the LDN approach at national level;

11. Also requests the secretariat to report to the next session of the CRIC on the implementation of this decision.

Decision 3/COP.12: Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Intergovernmental Working Group report on land degradation neutrality

1. Welcomes the report of the IWG contained in part two of document ICCD/COP(12)/4;

2. Endorses the IWG science-based definition of LDN as follows: "Land degradation neutrality is a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security remain stable or increase within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems";[13]

5. Invites Parties to:

(a) Formulate voluntary targets to achieve LDN in accordance with their specific national circumstances and development priorities, taking into account the list of options for operationalising LDN at the national level as outlined by the IWG;

(b) Use the monitoring and evaluation approach adopted in decision 22/COP.11, including the progress indicators as listed in the annex to this decision, where reliable data is available pursuant to paragraph 7 of that decision and taking into consideration national circumstances and, as needed, add additional indicators to monitor, evaluate and communicate progress towards achieving the LDN target;

(c) Explore options on how to integrate the voluntary LDN targets in their NAPs as part of their overall discussion on the implementation of the SDGs;

(d) Promote the use of LDN targets and projects and other SLM initiatives as an effective vehicle for mobilising additional sustainable financing and responsible and sustainable investments that address DLDD issues;

6. Encourages developed country Parties to actively support the efforts of developing country Parties in promoting SLM practices and in seeking to achieve LDN, by providing substantial financial resources, facilitated access to appropriate technology and other forms of support;

[13] The IWG definition of LDN is included here as contained in document ICCD/COP(12)/4 as amended and with the deletion of the text in square brackets.

7. Also encourages developed country Parties and invites other countries in a position to do so, multilateral financial institutions, the private sector, civil society organisations, and technical and financial institutions to:

(a) Provide scientific, technical and financial assistance to help affected country Parties requesting assistance to set and achieve LDN targets as well as to implement SLM practices and LDN initiatives;

(b) Establish equitable partnerships that encourage responsible and sustainable investments and practices by the private sector, which contribute to achieving LDN that supports the health and productivity of the land and its people;

8. Further encourages Parties requesting assistance to include this request for support in their priorities in discussions with bilateral, multilateral and other donors, based on their national development plans or strategies;

9. Directs the secretariat of the UNCCD, as the lead organisation for DLDD, to take the initiative and invite other relevant agencies and stakeholders such as United Nations agencies, international organisations, financial institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector to seek cooperation to achieve SDG target 15.3;

10. Requests the secretariat and appropriate UNCCD bodies, within the scope of the Convention, to:

(a) Develop options for scaling up and scaling out successful LDN initiatives and other SLM practices;

(b) Explore how they could further develop partnerships with other organisations to provide scientific and technical support to the Parties by, inter alia, developing a ‘user guide’ for implementing LDN at the country level;

(c) Develop guidance for formulating national LDN targets and initiatives, including the identification, development and implementation of policy reforms, investment and incentive mechanisms, and capacity-building initiatives to address DLDD;

(d) Make options available to Parties for the integration of national LDN targets and initiatives in their NAPs;

(e) Further develop, keep under review and facilitate, including through pilot projects, the use of the UNCCD indicator framework as a contribution to the monitoring, evaluation and communication of progress towards the national LDN targets;

(f) Improve the effectiveness of collaboration with the other Rio conventions and other partners at national and, as appropriate, subnational levels to support the implementation and monitoring of LDN targets and initiatives;

11. Also requests the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, to develop options for increasing incentives and financial support, including assisting in the possible creation of an independent LDN fund, to be made available for the full realisation of LDN initiatives;

12. Further requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth session on progress made in implementing this decision.

Decision 8/COP.12: Addressing particular regional and national conditions

1. Recognises that Parties may use the UNCCD to guide their policies relating to DLDD and voluntary targets when striving to achieve LDN at national and subnational levels;

2. Invites the secretariat, relevant Convention bodies, and bilateral and multilateral partners to provide assistance to Parties in that regard;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary to report to the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of the present decision.

Decision 9/COP.12: Leveraging of synergies among the Rio conventions and promoting partnerships with other international agencies and bodies

1. Proposes the use of the three land-based progress indicators as set out in decision 15/COP.12 for reporting under the Rio conventions, which are coherent with the progress indicators/metrics adopted in decision 22/COP.11, namely:

(i) Trends in land cover;

(ii) Trends in land productivity or functioning of the land;

(iii) Trends in carbon stock above and below ground;

2. Requests the secretariat:

(a) To promote further harmonisation of indicators and reporting procedures, including the land-based progress indicators across the Rio conventions;

(b) To continue working with the Interagency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) in order to define indicators for SDG target 15.3;

3. Also requests both the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to continue to fulfil their respective roles in the established partnerships and to seek new partnerships according to their respective mandates in order to further enhance the implementation of the Convention and, if appropriate, to bring them to the attention of the Conference of the Parties for any necessary action;

Decision 12/COP.12: Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

1. Welcomes the continued support for the implementation of the Convention and the increase of resources for the land degradation focal area under GEF-6 as compared to GEF-5;

2. Invites the GEF to continue its support for the implementation of the Convention under GEF-6 in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular target 15.3;

3. Also invites the donors to the GEF to consider providing increased support to address country priorities relating to the implementation of the Convention, in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular target 15.3, during the planning process for GEF-7;

4. Encourages Parties to engage in South–South cooperation under GEF-6 and invites the GEF to continue its support to Parties in this regard;

5. Also invites the GEF to consider enhancing its support to the GEF Small Grants Programme under GEF-7;

6. Further invites donors to the GEF to give due consideration to the concerns expressed with regard to the allocation of resources across the different focal areas and encourages Parties, through the GEF and the Convention's focal points and their constituencies, to advocate for a balanced allocation of funds among the Rio conventions;

7. Also invites the GEF to continue its GEF Country Support Programme, including GEF workshops aimed at strengthening the capacity of Parties to utilise GEF resources for the effective implementation of the Convention;

8. Invites the GEF, in the context of enabling activities under GEF-6, to consider technical and financial support for voluntary national land degradation neutrality target setting;

9. Invites the GEF to report on the implementation of this decision as part of its next report to the Conference of the Parties.

Decision 15/COP.12: Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties

Refinement of the set of progress indicators relating to the strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 and associated methodologies

1. Decides, as a means to understanding the status of land degradation and the potential for land restoration, that reporting is required for the following three progress indicators: 'trends in land cover', 'trends in land productivity or functioning of the land' and 'trends in carbon stocks above and below ground', provided that countries have sufficient national official data/information to report or validate national estimates derived from global data sources and that reporting should be provided primarily from official national data;

2. Requests the secretariat, in cooperation with relevant specialised institutions, inter alia those included in the annex I to this decision, to:

    (a) Compile and make available to affected country Parties national estimates of the metrics/proxies associated with these indicators from the global datasets, inter alia those indicators included in the annex I to this decision, as default data for validation in accordance with the procedure established in decision 22/COP.11;

(b) Prepare methodological guidelines and provide technical assistance to affected country Parties on the compilation and use of such default data, including for the preparation of national voluntary targets using the progress indicators;

(c) Undertake measures aimed at strengthening the capacities of affected Parties to validate, replace or reject the default data;

3. Decides, taking into consideration national circumstances and the availability of methodological guidelines, capacity building and financing, that affected country Parties should provide timely feedback where possible on the default data and the proposed methodology to formulate national voluntary LDN targets using the monitoring and assessment indicators framework, and complete the reporting and target setting exercise for review by the CRIC at its intersessional session that will take place after January 2018;

4. Invites relevant specialised institutions, inter alia those included in the annex I to this decision, to provide access to data and methodologies and assist the secretariat in the compilation and provision of global datasets, as mentioned in paragraphs 2 and 3 above;

5. Requests the secretariat to develop a user guide for practitioners and decision-makers in order to operationalize The Strategy progress indicators with respect to national monitoring and reporting, to be submitted for consideration to the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth session;

Decision 16/COP.12: Programme of work for the fifteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

1. Decides that the fifteenth session of the CRIC (CRIC 15) should, in the form of a special intersessional session, review and discuss the following items:

(a) Inputs from regional meetings in preparation for CRIC 15;

(b) The land degradation neutrality target setting exercise and pilot projects;

(c) Initial findings from the Intergovernmental Working Group on the future strategic framework of the Convention with the aim of assisting its work;

(d) The report by the secretariat on the overall reporting procedures and modalities for reporting by Parties, including, as needed, proposals of guidelines and reporting tools for progress and performance indicators;

Decision 21/COP.12: Work programme of the Science-Policy Interface

Follow-up on collaboration activities included in the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2014–2015

6. Encourages the SPI to:

(c) Consider, as part of its work programme 2016–2017, how the resilience-based assessment frameworks approach can be applied in its future work on developing guidance for the UNCCD on operationalising the voluntary land degradation neutrality target;

(d) Consider how the resilience-based assessment frameworks approach could contribute to the development of quantitative and narrative indicators at the national/subnational level to complement the UNCCD progress indicators;

Decision 34/COP.12: Programme of work for the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties

Decides to include the following items on the agenda of its thirteenth session and, if necessary, its fourteenth session:

(a) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: implications for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification:

(i) Integration of the sustainable development goals and targets into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Land Degradation Neutrality;

(ii) The future strategic framework of the Convention;

10.5 Proposed method of computation and data sources used by the LDN TSP

Land cover

Definition

Land cover refers to the observed physical cover of the Earth's surface (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2003).

Meas. unit

Hectares (ha)

Relevance

Land cover is a fundamental land surface parameter that assists with the interpretation and stratification of the other two indicators.

Changes in land cover are also important indicators in their own right as they provides a first indication of a reduction or increase in vegetation, habitat fragmentation and land conversion.

Method of computation

Most often derived from Earth observation, the indicator requires geospatial mapping of land cover classes using comparable methodologies at regular time intervals. A common ontology (i.e. the formal naming and definition of the types, properties, and interrelationships) should be used to enable global comparisons. The use of the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Land Cover Meta Language (LCML) is recommended (FAO, 2016).

The following hierarchical classification is proposed as a reference. Level 1 is based on IPCC land categories (IPPC, 2006). Level 2 is based on land cover classes provisionally used by the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) which uses the FAO LCML (United Nations, 2014). Countries should use this hierarchical classification as a reference and at the level consistent with the amount of information available to describe each land cover class. If a country's national land-use classification system does not match classes in level 1 or 2, the land-use classifications should be combined or disaggregated in order to represent the classes presented here.

Level 1	**Level 2**
Forest Land	Forest tree cover
Grassland	Pasture and natural grassland
	Shrubland, bushland, heathland
	Sparsely vegetated areas
	Natural vegetation associations and mosaics
Cropland	Medium to large fields of rain-fed herbaceous cropland
	Medium to large fields of irrigated herbaceous cropland
	Permanent crops, agriculture plantations
	Agriculture associations and mosaics
Wetlands	Open wetlands
Settlements	Urban and associated developed areas
Other Land	Barren land
	Permanent snow and glaciers
Water bodies (inland water bodies, coastal water bodies, sea)	

Default tier 1 data source

The European Space Agency's Climate Change Initiative Land Cover dataset (CCI-LC).[14] The dataset has global coverage and spatial resolution of 300m. Three epochs are available centred around 2000, 2005 and 2010; the 2015 epoch is expected to become available shortly. The dataset uses a hierarchical classification system based on the FAO LCML: the 37 CCI-LC classes were aggregated into the level 2 classes listed above.

Interpreting trends

Changes in land cover may be characterised as positive or negative when contextualised with national or local information. Some critical transitions are generally considered as negative, for instance those from natural or semi-natural land cover classes to cropland or settlements, from forest land to other land cover classes (i.e. deforestation), as well as those from natural or semi-natural land cover classes and cropland to settlements (i.e. urbanisation). However, the interpretation of changes in land cover is ultimately the responsibility of national and

[14] http://www.esa-landcover-cci.org/

	local authorities who should provide explanations as to why changes are evaluated to be positive (gains) or negative (losses) in the given context.
	Land productivity
Definition	Land productivity refers to the total above-ground net primary productivity (NPP) defined as the energy fixed by plants minus their respiration (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).
Meas. unit	Tonnes of dry matter per hectare per year (tDM/ha/year)
Relevance	Land productivity refers to the biological productive capacity of the land, the source of all the food, fibre, and fuel that sustains humans (i.e. provisioning ecosystem services). Maintaining and enhancing the productivity of agro-ecosystems in a sustainable manner reduces the pressure for expansion and thus minimises the loss and degradation of natural ecosystems.
Method of computation	The indicator can be calculated across large areas from Earth observation data on net primary productivity (NPP). In terms of maturity and "operational readiness", vegetation indexes as proxies for NPP are most realistic to use routinely at this time (Yengoh et al. 2015). The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) is by far the most commonly used vegetation index. The following sources of NDVI time series are accessible at low cost or no cost, inter alia: • AVHRR: 1982-present, 8 km resolution; 1989-present, 1km resolution • MODIS: 2000-present, 250m resolution • SPOT Vegetation: 1999-present, 1 km Proxies to measure NPP, such as NDVI and other vegetation indices, are influenced in the short-term by crop phenology, rainfall, nutrient fertilisation and other variables which must be corrected to accurately interpret trends. Land productivity data should be disaggregated by land cover.
Default tier 1 data source	The Joint Research Centre's Land Productivity Dynamics dataset (LPD).[15] The dataset has been derived from a 15-year time series (1999 to 2013) of SPOT Vegetation NDVI observations composited in 10-day intervals at a spatial resolution of 1 km.
Interpreting trends	Areas with increasing NPP should be interpreted as improving, unless assessed otherwise at country level. For example, bush and tree encroachment (i.e. land cover change from grassland to shrub-dominated) in the drylands often leads to a loss of natural capital with less forage for grazing animals and wildlife. It is therefore considered to be land degradation, even though the NPP and soil organic carbon (SOC) may both be increasing. In cases where a "false positive" has been identified, countries should report the anomalies backed by evidence as a means of providing a more accurate assessment of LDN.

[15]http://www.stapgef.org/stap/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Michel-Cherlet-Remote-sensing-products-and-global-datasets.pdf

	Carbon stocks above and below ground (metric: soil organic carbon)
Definition	Carbon stock is the quantity of carbon in a pool (i.e. a system which has the capacity to accumulate or release carbon). Terrestrial carbon pools are biomass (above-ground biomass and below-ground biomass); dead organic matter (dead wood and litter); and soil (soil organic matter) (IPCC, 2003). SOC should be used as metric to assess carbon stocks, to be replaced by the total terrestrial system carbon stock (above and below ground carbon) once operational.
Meas. unit	Tonnes of carbon per hectare (t/ha C)
Relevance	SOC is an indicator of overall soil quality associated with nutrient cycling, water holding and its aggregate stability and structure. SOC stocks are therefore of local importance, but also of global importance because of their role in the global carbon cycle: the SOC pool can be both a source and sink of carbon and is thus fundamental to the estimation of carbon fluxes. SOC stocks are largely influenced by anthropogenic activities such as land use change and management practices, which affect the productive potential of the soil.
Method of computation	Coarse estimates of SOC stock changes can be produced with the help of modelling techniques. As part of its methods for greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories in the land sector, the IPCC offers a relatively simple approach to model stock changes in SOC (IPCC, 2006). For estimations at tier 1 level, the IPCC provides default reference values for SOC stocks under different climate/soil combinations for a reference depth of 30cm (see table 2.3 in IPCC 2006) as well as carbon stock change factors for different land use (6 IPCC land use/cover classes) and land management regimes. In the absence of national data, this allows for broad estimates on SOC changes in areas where land cover has changed. To a more limited extent, this approach also allows for estimates on SOC changes in areas where the land cover class did not change but where substantial management changes (e.g. restoration, irrigation, fertilisation) have occurred. This requires clear information on the spatial extent of the management practice.
Default tier 1 data source	The International Soil Reference and Information Centre's SoilGrids250m (2016, in prep.)[16] SOC stocks are computed from SOC content, gravel content, soil depth and bulk density data estimated for each depth layer and aggregated to SOC content for topsoil (0-30 cm depth) and subsoil (below 30 cm). The accuracy of prediction can be improved by incorporating more shared soil profile data. To improve predictions for country, consider contributing soil profile data via the ISRIC (World Soil Information) data portal can be considered.[17]
Interpreting trends	Areas with increasing SOC should be interpreted as improving, unless assessed otherwise at country level. For example, bush and tree encroachment (i.e. land cover change from grassland to shrub-dominated) in the drylands often leads to a loss of natural capital with less forage for grazing animals and wildlife. It is therefore considered to be land degradation, even though the SOC and net primary productivity may both be increasing. In cases where a "false positive" has been identified, countries should report the anomalies backed by evidence as a means of providing a more accurate assessment of LDN.

[16] http://www.isric.org/content/soilgrids
[17] http://www.isric.org/data/wosis

10.6 Draft ToR of CTA

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Chief Technical Advisor
of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme

Consultancy reference number: CCD/15/GM/###

Background

Desertification, along with climate change and the loss of biodiversity were identified as the greatest challenges to sustainable development during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found. In the 10-Year Strategy of the UNCCD (2008-2018) Parties to the Convention further specified their goals: "to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability".

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, including goal 15, which aims to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”. As main expected results it defines under target 15.3 to “combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world” by 2030.

In October 2015, the 12th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNCCD, organized in Ankara, Turkey, agreed to:

- Define Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and endorse the concept as a strong vehicle for driving implementation of the UNCCD;
- Invite country Parties to formulate national voluntary targets to achieve LDN and to integrate LDN targets into UNCCD National Action Programmes;
- Establish LDN partnerships recognizing the unique role of UNCCD in addressing target 15.3 and the contributions required from other bodies, agencies and Conventions to achieve LDN.

The Global Mechanism is an institution of the UNCCD, mandated to assist countries in the mobilization of financial resources from the public and private sector for activities that prevent, control or reverse desertification, land degradation and drought. As the operational arm of the convention, the Global Mechanism supports countries to translate the Convention into action and to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality at the national level.

The Global Mechanism provides advisory services, promotes partnerships and demonstrates innovations at the country level. It aspires to be a trusted international partner that translates cutting-edge knowledge into tailored, country-level action. As scale and impact can only be achieved through partnerships - knowledge partnerships, implementation partnerships, and funding partnerships – the Global Mechanism puts a particular emphasis on strategic partnerships.

The Global Mechanism is currently working on three flagship initiatives:

1. *The Great Green Wall:* The Global Mechanism is one of the many partners of the Great Green Wall, a major African-led initiative with the bold ambition to restore the productivity and vitality of the Sahel region, whilst 'growing solutions' to the Continent's most urgent development challenges. An increasing number of migrants moving to Europe are from sub-Saharan Africa and in particular the Sahel. There is an urgent need to create 'green jobs' along the Great Green Wall that help boost sustainable agricultural production, restore productive community assets and implement key measures against natural disasters. A more sustainable, food secure and climate resilient Sahel will help slow the rural exodus and subsequent migration to Europe.
2. *The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund:* In order to achieve LDN, substantial amounts of private sector resources need to be mobilized. The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund aims at channeling resources from impact investors and institutional investors into projects contributing to land degradation neutrality – from sustainable agriculture to large-scale rehabilitation of degraded land. Development of this fund is spearheaded by the Global Mechanism, in collaboration with a private sector fund-structuring partner. It is a public-private partnership in the making. The Fund is expected to be launched by December 2016.
3. *Land Degradation Neutrality target setting program*: The objective of the LDN target setting program (TSP) is to help countries in establishing national voluntary targets for LDN and identify transformative projects to achieve these targets.

The above-mentioned flagship activities are complemented by work on two themes:

- Transformative LDN projects: Support is provided to countries to develop land-based climate action projects and to tap into climate financing for these projects. As sound "triple bottom line" projects to achieve LDN are a major bottleneck, the Global Mechanism is also spearheading the development of an intensive training program on how to design transformative LDN projects
- Bringing LDN into the economic mainstream at country level: Achieving LDN at country level requires major policy and resource allocation decisions. In order to support decision making, the Global Mechanism engages in economic valuation of LDN projects and public policy choices and supporting countries in setting up innovative financial mechanisms for forest and landscape restoration.

The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) will support GM in the implementation of the LDN Target Setting Programme (TSP).

CONSULTANT'S TASKS

Under the overall supervision of the Managing Director of the GM, the direct supervision of the GM Officer in charge of the LDN TSP and in close cooperation with GM and UNCCD Secretariat colleagues, the CTA will:

1. Support the overall coordination and management of the GM LDN TSP;
2. Provide technical advice and operational support for the implementation of the LDN TSP;
3. Provide technical guidance to the regional and national experts recruited by the LDN TSP;
4. Provide technical backstopping to UNCCD Secretariat and GM officers involved in LDN TSP implementation;
5. Support the communication and outreach activities of the LDN TSP;
6. Support the organization of and participate in workshops organized by the LDN TSP;
7. Represent the GM in international meetings and conferences;
8. Support to the engagement of relevant stakeholders in the national LDN target setting process;
9. Provide backstopping to national counterparts on the target setting approach and methodology at country level, including LDN baseline assessments and the definition of LDN targets and associated measures;
10. Support the establishment of strategic partnerships related to the LDN target setting process;
11. Support the acquisition, processing, and transfer to countries of remote sensing data related to LDN indicators;
12. Perform other duties as requested.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Expected outputs will be discussed and agreed with the CTA on a monthly basis based on the overall work plan of the Programme.

REQUIREMENTS

- Advanced university degree in environmental engineering, natural resource management, development economics, or related disciplines
- A minimum of 10 years working experience related to natural resource management (NRM)
- Extensive knowledge on NRM monitoring, including methodologies on monitoring and assessing land use change, land productivity and soil organic carbon
- Demonstrated technical knowledge of GIS and remote sensing applied to natural resources monitoring and assessment at (sub)national level
- Profound knowledge on project management and monitoring, including result based management and result based budgeting
- Extensive knowledge on the UNCCD or related Conventions processes
- Experience working with UNCCD country Parties and in different regions an asset

- Professional knowledge of English, with solid command of French and/or Spanish. Additional UN languages an asset
- Demonstrated ability to work independently, handle multiple tasks, work under pressure and deliver assignments on time

10.7 Draft ToR for regional consultants

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Regional Experts - Support to the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Process in Africa (Anglophone / Francophone) / Asia / Central and Eastern Europe / Latin America and the Caribbean

Consultancy reference number: ###

Background

Desertification, along with climate change and the loss of biodiversity were identified as the greatest challenges to sustainable development during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found. In the 10-Year Strategy of the UNCCD (2008-2018) Parties to the Convention further specified their goals: "to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability".

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, including goal 15, which aims to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”. As main expected results it defines under target 15.3 to “combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world” by 2030.

In October 2015, the 12th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNCCD, organized in Ankara, Turkey, agreed to:

- Define Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and endorse the concept as a strong vehicle for driving implementation of the UNCCD;
- Invite country Parties to formulate national voluntary targets to achieve LDN and to integrate LDN targets into UNCCD National Action Programmes;
- Establish LDN partnerships recognizing the unique role of UNCCD in addressing target 15.3 and the contributions required from other bodies, agencies and Conventions to achieve LDN.

The Global Mechanism is an institution of the UNCCD, mandated to assist countries in the mobilization of financial resources from the public and private sector for activities that prevent, control or reverse desertification, land degradation and drought. As the operational arm of the convention, the Global Mechanism supports countries to translate the Convention into action and to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality at the national level.

The Global Mechanism provides advisory services, promotes partnerships and demonstrates innovations at the country level. It aspires to be a trusted international partner that translates cutting-edge knowledge into tailored, country-level action. As scale and impact can only be achieved through partnerships - knowledge partnerships, implementation partnerships, and funding partnerships – the Global Mechanism puts a particular emphasis on strategic partnerships.

The Global Mechanism is currently working on three flagship initiatives:

1. *The Great Green Wall:* The Global Mechanism is one of the many partners of the Great Green Wall, a major African-led initiative with the bold ambition to restore the productivity and vitality of the Sahel region, whilst 'growing solutions' to the Continent's most urgent development challenges. An increasing number of migrants moving to Europe are from sub-Saharan Africa and in particular the Sahel. There is an urgent need to create 'green jobs' along the Great Green Wall that help boost sustainable agricultural production, restore productive community assets and implement key measures against natural disasters. A more sustainable, food secure and climate resilient Sahel will help slow the rural exodus and subsequent migration to Europe.
2. *The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund:* In order to achieve LDN, substantial amounts of private sector resources need to be mobilized. The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund aims at channeling resources from impact investors and institutional investors into projects contributing to land degradation neutrality – from sustainable agriculture to large-scale rehabilitation of degraded land. Development of this fund is spearheaded by the Global Mechanism, in collaboration with a private sector fund-structuring partner. It is a public-private partnership in the making. The Fund is expected to be launched by December 2016.
3. *Land Degradation Neutrality target setting program*: The objective of the LDN target setting program is to help countries in establishing national voluntary targets for LDN and identify transformative projects to achieve these targets.

The above-mentioned flagship activities are complemented by work on two themes:

- Transformative LDN projects: Support is provided to countries to develop land-based climate action projects and to tap into climate financing for these projects. As sound "triple bottom line" projects to achieve LDN are a major bottleneck, the Global Mechanism is also spearheading the development of an intensive training program on how to design transformative LDN projects
- Bringing LDN into the economic mainstream at country level: Achieving LDN at country level requires major policy and resource allocation decisions. In order to support decision making, the Global Mechanism engages in economic valuation

of LDN projects and public policy choices and supporting countries in setting up innovative financial mechanisms for forest and landscape restoration.

The five (5) Regional Experts will support the implementation of the LDN Target Setting Project (TSP) by providing technical backstopping to the LDN target setting process in Africa (Anglophone/francophone) / Asia / Central and Eastern Europe / Latin America and the Caribbean respectively.

CONSULTANT'S TASKS

Under the overall supervision of the Managing Director of the GM and the Team Leader of the LDN TSP, the direct supervision of the LDN TSP Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), and in close collaboration with the Coordinator of the UNCCD Regional Coordination Unit and other UNCCD Secretariat and GM colleagues, the Regional Consultants will provide direct coordination and technical support to the Country Consultants of the participating countries in Africa (Anglophone/Francophone) / Asia / Central and Eastern Europe / Latin America and the Caribbean (respectively) throughout the program implementation as per the MoU established between the participating countries and the GM, including in particular:

1. Ensuring the coherent and comprehensive application of the LDN methodology and approach and aggregating LDN data and target analysing at regional level;
2. Supporting country consultants in drafting country-specific work plans and detailed budgets;
3. Guiding country consultants in supporting LDN National Working Groups, ensuring a balanced representation and effective participation of government, science, private sector, development partners and civil society, focusing on land-related sectors.
4. Liaising with regional institutions and partner organizations supporting the LDN target setting process in the respective regions.
5. Supporting country consultants in the country analysis (desk review) to assess the enabling environment with regard to UNCCD implementation, including links to other relevant processes (e.g., UNCCD's NAP SWOT analysis and alignment process, Integrated Investment Frameworks for Sustainable Land Management, National Development Plans, UNFCCC's INDC, CBD's NBSAPs, and national DRR, FIP, PPCR and FLR portfolios) and LDN mainstreaming into the national SDG agenda.
6. Providing guidance to country consultants to
    a. support technical data processing units in charge of standardizing the LDN country databases;
    b. extract data from global and national databases and the identification of higher resolution data needs as appropriate;
    c. set baselines on LDN at national and subnational levels in order to enable the LDN target setting process;
7. Providing assistance to country consultants in identifying priority areas for immediate LDN actions, covering all the land degradation processes significantly present in the country;

8. Supporting country consultants in articulating national voluntary targets and associated measures;
9. Supporting country consultants in drafting relevant technical and analytical reports (e.g., regular update reports in particular related to the LDN country working group support, composition and further meetings and consultations; SWOT analysis of the NAP; national and local monitoring frameworks for LDN targets; comprehensive report on possible LDN implementation strategies and means to achieve LDN targets set; LDN targets synthesis reports to be shared at UNCCD COP13; regional synthesis report on the LDN target setting process to be shared at UNCCD CRIC15 and COP13).
10. Perform other duties as requested.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Expected outputs will be discussed and agreed with the CTA on a monthly basis based on the country-level work plan of the Programme.

REQUIREMENTS

- Advanced university degree in environmental engineering, natural resource management, development economics, or related disciplines
- A minimum of 7 years working experience related to natural resource management (NRM)
- Extensive knowledge on NRM monitoring, including methodologies on monitoring and assessing land use change, land productivity and soil organic carbon
- Demonstrated technical knowledge of GIS and remote sensing applied to natural resources monitoring and assessment at (sub)national level
- Substantial knowledge on project management and monitoring, including result based management and result based budgeting
- Demonstrated team leadership skills for the effective coordination of decentralized teams of multidisciplinary professionals operating simultaneously in different countries
- Demonstrated ability to work independently, handle multiple tasks, work under pressure and deliver assignments on time
- Extensive knowledge on the UNCCD or related Conventions processes
- Experience working with UNCCD in the countries of the region of assignment an asset
- Successful experience working in national LDN processes a critical asset
- Language requirements:
    i. Africa (Anglophone): Professional knowledge of English. Additional UN languages, particularly Spanish, an asset.
    ii. Africa (Francophone): Professional knowledge French. Additional UN languages, particularly English and Arabic, an asset.
    iii. Asia: Professional knowledge of English. Additional UN languages, particularly Chinese or Arabic, an asset.
    iv. Central and Eastern Europe: Professional knowledge of English and Russian. Additional UN languages an asset.
    v. Latin America: Professional knowledge of English and Spanish. Additional UN languages, particularly French, an asset.

10.8 Draft ToR for country consultants

TERMS OF REFERENCE

National Experts – Support to the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Process in selected countries[18]

Consultancy reference number: ###

Background

Desertification, along with climate change and the loss of biodiversity were identified as the greatest challenges to sustainable development during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found. In the 10-Year Strategy of the UNCCD (2008-2018) Parties to the Convention further specified their goals: "to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability".

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, including goal 15, which aims to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”. As main expected results it defines under target 15.3 to “combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world” by 2030.

In October 2015, the 12th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNCCD, organized in Ankara, Turkey, agreed to:

- Define Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and endorse the concept as a strong vehicle for driving implementation of the UNCCD;
- Invite country Parties to formulate national voluntary targets to achieve LDN and to integrate LDN targets into UNCCD National Action Programmes;
- Establish LDN partnerships recognizing the unique role of UNCCD in addressing target 15.3 and the contributions required from other bodies, agencies and Conventions to achieve LDN.

[18] See annex for the preliminary list of countries participating in the LDN Target Setting Programme.

The Global Mechanism is an institution of the UNCCD, mandated to assist countries in the mobilization of financial resources from the public and private sector for activities that prevent, control or reverse desertification, land degradation and drought. As the operational arm of the convention, the Global Mechanism supports countries to translate the Convention into action and to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality at the national level.

The Global Mechanism provides advisory services, promotes partnerships and demonstrates innovations at the country level. It aspires to be a trusted international partner that translates cutting-edge knowledge into tailored, country-level action. As scale and impact can only be achieved through partnerships - knowledge partnerships, implementation partnerships, and funding partnerships – the Global Mechanism puts a particular emphasis on strategic partnerships.

The Global Mechanism is currently working on three flagship initiatives:

1. *The Great Green Wall:* The Global Mechanism is one of the many partners of the Great Green Wall, a major African-led initiative with the bold ambition to restore the productivity and vitality of the Sahel region, whilst 'growing solutions' to the Continent's most urgent development challenges. An increasing number of migrants moving to Europe are from sub-Saharan Africa and in particular the Sahel. There is an urgent need to create 'green jobs' along the Great Green Wall that help boost sustainable agricultural production, restore productive community assets and implement key measures against natural disasters. A more sustainable, food secure and climate resilient Sahel will help slow the rural exodus and subsequent migration to Europe.
2. *The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund:* In order to achieve LDN, substantial amounts of private sector resources need to be mobilized. The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund aims at channeling resources from impact investors and institutional investors into projects contributing to land degradation neutrality – from sustainable agriculture to large-scale rehabilitation of degraded land. Development of this fund is spearheaded by the Global Mechanism, in collaboration with a private sector fund-structuring partner. It is a public-private partnership in the making. The Fund is expected to be launched by December 2016.
3. *Land Degradation Neutrality target setting program*: The objective of the LDN target setting program is to help countries in establishing national voluntary targets for LDN and identify transformative projects to achieve these targets.

The above-mentioned flagship activities are complemented by work on two themes:

- Transformative LDN projects: Support is provided to countries to develop land-based climate action projects and to tap into climate financing for these projects. As sound "triple bottom line" projects to achieve LDN are a major bottleneck, the Global Mechanism is also spearheading the development of an intensive training program on how to design transformative LDN projects
- Bringing LDN into the economic mainstream at country level: Achieving LDN at country level requires major policy and resource allocation decisions. In order to

support decision making, the Global Mechanism engages in economic valuation of LDN projects and public policy choices and supporting countries in setting up innovative financial mechanisms for forest and landscape restoration.

The National Experts will support the implementation of the LDN Target Setting Project (TSP) by providing technical backstopping to the national LDN target setting process in selected countries (see annex).

CONSULTANT'S TASKS

Under the overall supervision of the Managing Director of the GM and the Team Leader of the LDN TSP, the direct supervision of the LDN TSP Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and the LDN-TSP Regional Expert, and in close cooperation with GM and UNCCD Secretariat colleagues, the national experts will support the National Focal Point of the UNCCD throughout the implementation of the LDN target setting process at national level as per the MoU established between the country/ies and the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, including in particular:

1. Drafting country-specific work plan and detailed budget;
2. Supporting the establishment/functioning of the LDN National Working Group, including
    a. ensuring a balanced representation and effective participation of government, science, private sector, development partners and civil society, focusing on land-related sectors;
    b. ensuring the alignment of the LDN target setting process to the national SDG process.
    c. acting, as appropriate, as secretary of the LDN National Working Group during meetings and consultations with multiple stakeholders, performing relevant facilitation support services on demand.
3. Leading the country analysis (desk review) to assess the UNCCD implementation enabling environment, linking to other relevant processes (e.g., UNCCD's NAP SWOT analysis and alignment process, Integrated Investment Frameworks for Sustainable Land Management, National Development Plans, UNFCCC's NDC, CBD's NBSAPs, and national DRR, FIP, PPCR and FLR portfolios) and mainstreaming LDN into the national SDG agenda.
4. Effectively supporting the
    a. technical data processing unit in charge of standardizing the LDN country database;
    b. extraction of data from global and national databases, and the identification of higher resolution data needs as appropriate; and
    c. establishment of LDN baselines at national and subnational levels in order to enable the LDN target setting process;
5. Identifying priority areas for immediate LDN actions, covering all land degradation processes significantly present in the country;
6. Articulating, as appropriate, national voluntary targets and associated measures for review and validation by the LDN National Working Group;
7. Drafting technical and analytical reports as requested (e.g., NAP SWOT analysis; national and local monitoring frameworks for LDN targets for consideration by

the LDN National Working Group; comprehensive report on possible LDN implementation strategies and means to achieve LDN targets set; synthesis report on the LDN target setting process to be shared at UNCCD CRIC15 and COP13);

8. Perform other duties as requested.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Expected outputs will be discussed and agreed with the CTA and the LDN-TSP Regional Expert on a monthly basis based on the country-level work plan of the Programme, including

- Country work plan
- Country analysis of the UNCCD implementation enabling environment
- Report presenting the LDN baseline
- Report presenting the proposed LDN targets and associated measures
- Synthesis report summarizing the national LDN target setting process

REQUIREMENTS

- Advanced university degree in environmental engineering, natural resource management, development economics, or related disciplines
- A minimum of 5 years working experience related to natural resource management (NRM)
- Extensive knowledge on NRM monitoring, including methodologies on monitoring and assessing land use change, land productivity and soil organic carbon
- Demonstrated technical knowledge of GIS and remote sensing applied to natural resources monitoring and assessment at (sub)national level
- Substantial knowledge on project management and monitoring, including result based management and result based budgeting
- Demonstrated knowledge in the effective facilitation of complex multi stakeholder processes
- Knowledge on the UNCCD or related Conventions processes and experience in working with UNCCD stakeholders in the country an asset
- Professional knowledge of English as well as the official UN language in the country/ies of assignment (see annex). Additional UN languages an asset
- Demonstrated ability to work independently, handle multiple tasks, work under pressure and deliver assignments on time

	Year	Year 1				Year 2			
	Quarter	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
	Activity description								
1	**Component 1**								
1.1	**Output: LDN baseline established and mapped**								
1.1.1	Provide countries with suitable LDN data sets								
1.1.2	Define national LDN baselines								
1.1.3	Analyse land degradation trends and drivers								
2	**Component 2**								
2.1	**Output: National LDN measures and targets identified**								
2.1.1	Define national voluntary LDN targets and associated measures								
2.1.2	Identify priority areas for LDN implementation								
2.1.3	Support/establish national LDN working groups								
2.1.4	Support organization of national consultation workshops								
2.1.5	Support mainstreaming of LDN in selected policies and commitments								
2.3	**Output: Selected investment opportunities to scale-up success to achieve LDN identified**								
2.3.1	Identify potential LDN investment opportunities.								
3	**Component 3**								
3.1	**Output: LDN Target Setting Partnership(s) established**								
3.1.1	Identify and engage with relevant international and (sub)regional organizations.								
3.2	**Output: Country peer learning on LDN target setting facilitated**								
3.2.1	Finalize and disseminate Technical Guide for LDN Target Setting								
3.2.1	Organize peer learning events								
3.3	**Output: Global outreach/advocacy on LDN target setting carried out**								
3.3.1	Analyse LDN data provided by countries at regional/global level								
3.3.2	Establish and maintain a LDN target setting website accessible to the public								
3.3.3	Establish and maintain help-desk platform for internal communication with participating countries								

Procurement Plan												
				Year 1				Year 2				
Quarter				1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Item	Procurement method	Estimated GEF contribution	Responsible	Procurement action								
1. Personnel												
1.1 International experts	UNCCD recruitment process	220,861	GM									
1.2 National experts	UNCCD recruitment process	1,050,000	GM									
2. Workshops												
2.1 International												
Meeting at UNCCD COP 13	UNCCD procedures	9,095	GM									
Meeting at UNCCD CRIC 15	UNCCD procedures	31,832	GM									
2.2 National												
National consultation workshops	UNCCD procedures/service provider	525,000	GM									
3. Miscellanea												
3.1 International												
Production of outreach material	UNCCD procedures	44,149	GM									
3.2 National												
Support to LDN working group	UNCCD procedures/service provider	525,000	GM									
4. Travel												
4.1 International												
UNCCD staff & CTA	UNCCD procedures	15,961	GM									
Regional consultants	UNCCD procedures	10,232	GM									
4.2 National												
Country consultants	UNCCD procedures/service provider	70,000	GM									

	Year	Year 1				Progress (to be completed with Progress Monitoring report)		
	Quarter	1	2	3	4	Mid-year % completed	End-year % completed	Notes (for next AP)
	Activity description					(add comments)	(add comments)	
1	**Component 1**							
1.1	**Output: LDN baseline established and mapped**							
1.1.1	Provide countries with suitable LDN data sets					80	20	
1.1.2	Define national LDN baselines					30	70	
1.1.3	Analyse land degradation trends and drivers					75	25	
2	**Component 2**							
2.1	**Output: National LDN measures and targets identified**							
2.1.1	Define national voluntary LDN targets and associated measures					0	20 (process starting)	
2.1.2	Identify priority areas for LDN implementation					0	50 (process starting)	
2.1.3	Support/establish national LDN working groups					25	50 (ongoing process of supporting LDN working groups)	
2.1.4	Support organization of national consultation workshops					25	50 (ongoing process)	
2.1.5	Support mainstreaming of LDN in selected policies and commitments					0	25	
2.3	**LDN identified**							
2.3.1	Identify potential LDN investment opportunities.					0	0	
3	**Component 3**							
3.1	**Output: LDN Target Setting Partnership(s) established**							
3.1.1	Identify and engage with relevant international and (sub)regional organizations.					25	50	
3.2	**Output: Country peer learning on LDN target setting facilitated**							
3.2.1	Finalize and disseminate Technical Guide for LDN Target Setting					100		
3.2.1	Organize peer learning events					25	50	
3.3	**Output: Global outreach/advocacy on LDN target setting carried out**							
3.3.1	Analyse LDN data provided by countries at regional/global level					0	20	
3.3.2	Establish and maintain a LDN target setting website accessible to the public					25	50	
3.3.3	Establish and maintain help-desk platform for internal communication with participating countries					25	50	

IUCN TSP GEF Budget (USD)

	Unit	Quantity	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Component 1: LDN baselines						
Non staff resources						
International experts	Person month	10		45,000	0	45,000
National experts	Person month	70		400,000		400,000
Travel						
National				19,000		19,000
International				3,847		3,847
Workshops/meetings						
International						0
National				220,000		220,000
Outreach						
SUB TOTAL				**687,847**	**0**	**687,847**
Component 2: LDN measures and target setting						
Non staff resources						
International experts	Person month	10		71,000	26,000	97,000
National experts	Person month	70		515,000	100,000	615,000
Travel						
National				28,213	5,000	33,213
International				6,153	5,000	11,153
Workshops/meetings						
International						0
National				680,000	150,000	830,000
Outreach						0
SUB TOTAL				**1,300,366**	**286,000**	**1,586,366**
Component 3: LDN KM						
Non staff resources						
International experts	Person month	10		44,061	34,800	78,861
National experts	Person month	70		25,000	10,000	35,000
Travel						
National				12,787	5,000	17,787
International				6,000	5,148	11,148
Workshops/meetings						
International				9,095	31,832	40,927
National						0
Outreach				20,000	24,149	44,149
SUBTOTAL				**116,943**	**110,929**	**227,872**
Etc.						
Component 4: Project management						
Project Management Costs				125,105	125,105	**250,209**
Total GEF financing				**2,230,261**	**522,034**	**2,752,294**

GEF-6 GEF SECRETARIAT REVIEW FOR FULL-SIZED/MEDIUM-SIZED PROJECTS
THE GEF/LDCF/SCCF TRUST FUND

GEF ID:	**9365**		
Country/Region:	**Global**		
Project Title:	**Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Project**		
GEF Agency:	**IUCN**	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Type of Trust Fund:	**GEF Trust Fund**	GEF Focal Area (s):	**Land Degradation**
GEF-6 Focal Area/ LDCF/SCCF Objective (s):		**LD-EA;**	
Anticipated Financing PPG:		Project Grant:	**$2,752,294**
Co-financing:	**$2,983,680**	Total Project Cost:	**$5,735,974**
PIF Approval:	**March 15, 2016**	Council Approval/Expected:	**April 19, 2016**
CEO Endorsement/Approval		Expected Project Start Date:	
Program Manager:	**Ulrich Apel**	Agency Contact Person:	**Jonathan Davies**

PIF Review

Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
Project Consistency	1. Is the project aligned with the relevant GEF strategic objectives and results framework?[1]	01/14/2016 UA: Yes. This Enabling Activity is fully aligned with LD programming directions for GEF-6. Cleared	
	2. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?	01/14/2016 UA: Yes. The project is fully aligned with UNCCD COP12 guidance to all parties. Cleared	
Project Design	3. Does the PIF sufficiently indicate the	01/14/2016 UA:	

PIF Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
	drivers[2] of global environmental degradation, issues of sustainability, market transformation, scaling, and innovation?	Yes. The project, through addressing Land degradation Neutrality (LDN) indirectly addresses drivers of environmental degradation. Each country will tailor the implementation measures accordingly to address specific drivers. Cleared	
	4. Is the project designed with sound incremental reasoning?	01/14/2016 UA: Yes. Cleared	
	5. Are the components in Table B sound and sufficiently clear and appropriate to achieve project objectives and the GEBs?	01/14/2016 UA: The following comments refer to all tables in the EA project template. Part I: Please insert the abbreviations "TSP" in brackets after the title. Table A: Please insert "Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)" in the project objective Table B: Please select the appropriate "sources of Co-financing" from the drop down menu. Table C: Please leave "Programming of funds" blank.	

[1] For BD projects: has the project explicitly articulated which Aichi Target(s) the project will help achieve and are SMART indicators identified, that will be used to track the project's contribution toward achieving the Aichi Target(s)?
[2] Need not apply to LDCF/SCCF projects.

PIF Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
		Part II: - Paragraph 6 should start by indicating the technical support by UNCCD and the financial support by South Korea (which follows later in paragraph 8). - Paragraph 10: The mention of 30 countries to be funded by GEF should logically move to paragraph 11. Please refer to "GEF eligible countries". In this context, the proposal does not clarify why the total number of countries is 60 and why the number of GEF supported countries is 30. What is the justification? Are there any selection criteria? What is the strategy for scaling up support to all countries and in which timeframe? - Paragraph 41 and 42: The M&E plan would need to be budgeted. Please include at least a total figure budgeted for M&E and clarify where the budget will come from. Part III: - please enter "n/a for global project" in OFP table - please enter "n/a for global project in the Convention Participation Table under UNCCD.	

PIF Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
		- please enter the correct date in MM/DD/YYYY format in C. GEF Agencies Certification. 02/03/16 UA: All comments addressed except: - Table B: Sources of Co-financing: Please check if Governments are better categorized as "Government" instead of "donor agency". - MM/DD/YYYY format in C. GEF Agencies Certification. (It's not yet August) - Please also enter GEF project ID, Agency ID in Part I. - Please enter (n/a) for "expected Report Submission to Convention" in Part I. 02/09/16 UA: All comments addressed. Cleared	
	6. Are socio-economic aspects, including relevant gender elements, indigenous people, and CSOs considered?	01/14/2016 UA: Yes. These aspects have been adequately considered at PIF stage. More details are expected at CEO endorsement stage. Cleared	
Availability of Resources	7. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply):		

PIF Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
	• The STAR allocation?	n/a	
	• The focal area allocation?	n/a	
	• The LDCF under the principle of equitable access	n/a	
	• The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?	n/a	
	• Focal area set-aside?	01/14/2016 UA: Yes. LD set-aside funds are available as per GEF-6 LDFA Programming Directions. Cleared	
Recommendations	8. Is the PIF being recommended for clearance and PPG (if additional amount beyond the norm) justified?	01/14/2016 UA: No. Please address comments in this review and resubmit. 02/08/2016 UA: No. Please correct typo's as indicated in box 5 and re-submit. 02/09/2016 UA: Yes. Program Manager recommends project for CEO clearance. Please note that this PIF is a non-expedited Enabling Activity (EA) and therefore uses the EA template. If the PIF is approved by Council, the project will need to be submitted for CEO endorsement along with a fully developed project document.	
Review Date	Review	January 26, 2016	

PIF Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment	Agency Response
	Additional Review (as necessary)	February 08, 2016	
	Additional Review (as necessary)	February 29, 2016	

CEO endorsement Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
Project Design and Financing	1. If there are any changes from that presented in the PIF, have justifications been provided?	07/22/2016 UA: No changes. For a global project, OFP endorsement is not applicable.	
	2. Is the project structure/ design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
	3. Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
	4. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	

CEO endorsement Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
	enhance climate resilience)		
	5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
	6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?	n/a for global EA project.	
	7. *Only for Non-Grant Instrument:* Has a reflow calendar been presented?	n/a	
	8. Is the project coordinated with other related initiatives and national/regional plans in the country or in the region?	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
	9. Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
	10. Does the project have descriptions of a knowledge management plan?	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
Agency Responses	11. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments at the PIF[3] stage from:		
	• GEFSEC	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
	• STAP	none received - EA	
	• GEF Council	07/22/2016 UA: Yes.	
	• Convention Secretariat	none received	

[3] If it is a child project under a program, assess if the components of the child project align with the program criteria set for selection of child projects.

CEO endorsement Review			
Review Criteria	Questions	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
Recommendation	12. Is CEO endorsement recommended?	07/22/2016 UA: Yes. The PIF is recommended for CEO endorsement.	
Review Date	Review	July 22, 2016	
	Additional Review (as necessary)		
	Additional Review (as necessary)		