



**REQUEST FOR LAND DEGRADATION ENABLING ACTIVITY
PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING UNDER THE GEF TRUST FUND**

PART I: PROJECT IDENTIFIERS

EA Title:	Support to The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for development of National Action Program aligned to the UNCCD 10 Year Strategy and Reporting Process under UNCCD		
Country(ies):	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	GEF Project ID: ¹	
GEF Agency(ies):	UNEP	GEF Agency Project ID:	01054
Other Executing Partner(s):	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning in collaboration with UNEP Regional Office for Europe	Submission Date:	20/02/2013
GEF Focal Area (s):	Land Degradation	Project Duration(Months)	24
• Check if applicable		Agency Fee:	13,014

A. EA FRAMEWORK

EA Objective: To facilitate access to GEF funding by The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for Enabling Activities to meet its obligations under the UNCCD: a) NAP development in line with 10 – Year Strategy and b) Reporting and review process					
EA Component	Grant Type (TA/INV)	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs^{2,3}	Grant Amount (\$)	Confirmed Cofinancing (\$)
1. Preparation of NAP in line with the 10-year Strategy and national development policies	TA	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia develops its first National Action Plan in line with the UNCCD 10-year strategy, national development policies and is institutionalized within the future government frameworks.	Output 1.1 Framework and supporting tools/documents (Assessment of DLDDD, Guidelines for CSO and Project website for advocacy, awareness raising, education and capacity building (OO1) addressing DLDD developed	22,600	45,000
			Output 1.2 Reports of	30,500	50,000

¹ Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC.

² The UNEP-UNEP-GEF “Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in GEF project – Sept 2010” scorecard will be used to monitor project achievement at countries level.

³ Please refer to Part II Section C for a detailed overview of specific outputs

			socioeconomic, policies and institutional assessment that will build the foundation for participative first NAP development and Policy framework to support national efforts on DLDD established (OO2)		
			Output 1.3 Scientific, technology and knowledge gaps assessments, baseline information reports to support efforts on DLDD are available, including national monitoring and vulnerability assessment, and other relevant biophysical and socio-economic data, and are used to develop NAP.	32,500	33,000
			Output 1.4 Financial Mechanism and technology need for NAP implementation established	3,000	5,000
			Output 1.5 NAP validated by national bodies, regional and provincial technical and administrative institutions and its provisions mainstreamed in other national, local strategic state-level documents and/or	20,500	16,000

			plans		
2. Reporting and review process	TA	Improvement and empowerment of the institutional mechanism for reporting to UNCCD in particular focus on data collection by different institutes and stabilization of the implementation framework	Output 2 Improved and functioning institutional framework mechanism for long term data collection, validation and reporting to UNCCD	15,433	11,000
Subtotal				124,533	160,000
EA Management Cost				12,453	10,000
Total project costs				136,986	170,000

B. INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME IF AVAILABLE, (\$)

Sources of Co-financing for baseline project	Name of Co-financier	Type of Cofinancing	Amount (\$)
National government	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	In-kind	150,000
GEF Agency (UNEP)	UNEP Regional Office for Europe	In-kind	20,000
Total Co-financing			170,000

C. GEF/LDCF/SCCF RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA AND COUNTRY

GEF Agency	Type of Trust Fund	Focal area	Country name/Global	Project amount (a)	Agency Fee (b) ²	Total c=a+b
UNEP	GEF TF	Land Degradation	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	136,986	13,014	150,000
Total Grant Resources				136,986	13,014	150,000

D. EA MANAGEMENT COST

<u>COST ITEMS</u>	<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED PERSON</u>	<u>GRANT AMOUNT</u>	<u>CO-FINANCING</u>	<u>EA TOTAL</u>

	<u>WEEKS/MONTH</u>			
<u>PROJECT MANAGER</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>	
<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>4,500</u>		
<u>TRAVEL</u>		<u>2,953</u>		
<u>MEETINGS</u>			<u>5,000</u>	
<u>CONSULTANTS</u>				
<u>MOUS</u>				
<u>PUBLICATIONS</u>				
<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>12,453</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>22,453</u>

PART II: ENABLING ACTIVITY JUSTIFICATION

A. ENABLING ACTIVITY BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT (Provide brief information about projects implemented since a country became party to the convention and results achieved):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (in further text fYR of Macedonia) ratified the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 2002. Since then, several important efforts were made in the country towards the implementation of the Convention. However, the country still lacks a National Action Program (NAP) under the UNCCD. 2. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has submitted Reports to UNCCD in 2006, 2010 and 2012. Nevertheless, the collection of data for reporting purposes lacks of homogeneity and collaboration among relevant institutions needs to be strengthened by introducing a framework system of data collection and sharing.
B. ENABLING ACTIVITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIVITIES (The proposal should briefly justify and describe the project framework. Identify also key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable. Describe also how the gender dimensions are considered in project design and implementation.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The fYR of Macedonia has gained independence in 1991, after which it carried out regulatory and structural reforms in order to fight its difficult economic situation. The 2005 Law on Environment contains the fundamental environmental protection principles, which provide a basis for determining procedures for management of the environment. According to the 2005 Law on Environment, fYR of Macedonia manages it's environment at the state level through the action of government entities. The main actor in management of environmental issues in fYR of Macedonia is the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, which performs environmental tasks related to the legal harmonization process; the preparation of national strategies and action plans; inspection and enforcement including intervention and nationwide monitoring, information systems and cadastres. Other key governmental institutions are Ministry of Defense which deals with civil protection, Ministry of Interior which has jurisdiction over the system of public security, production trade etc, Ministry of Economy which has jurisdiction over geological research, raw minerals etc and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transport and Communication and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All these ministries have their role in the environmental management, however, fYR of Macedonia still does not have an Environmental Protection Agency which represents a drawback on the implementation of environmental laws and liaising with other institutions and EEA. Although the country has made considerable progress in environmental

	<p>legislation, policies, national strategies and plans, and has adopted most international standards by ratification of major UN Conventions, much remains to be done especially with regard to implementation.</p> <p>4. Being a country in transition, FYR of Macedonia is faced with numerous social, economic and environmental problems, among which the issue of land degradation stands out as one of the most crucial. Land management in FYR of Macedonia is different than in most other countries, because the property owner is the owner of the soil, namely the arable layer, and has the right to use it, while all natural and other resources (water, forests, pastures, mineral resources, etc.) are state property. Practically, in FYR of Macedonia the concept of integrated resources management, understood under 'land management' does not exist in practice.</p> <p>Agricultural land covers about 37% of the country, but not all can be used because of topography and relief, as well as a significant area of shallow eroded land of low fertility. Arable land is around 17% of the agricultural land. Land cover changes during period 1990-2006, according to Corine, Land Cover contributes to an increase of artificial surfaces (2.239ha), decrease of agricultural surfaces (2.907 ha), decrease of forest and semi-natural areas (844ha) and an increase in wetlands (24ha). Such large loss of agricultural land happened because of land abandonment, low level or absence of support and subsidies for agriculture, but also emergence of artificial surfaces resulting from construction of residential and industrial facilities, exploitation of mineral resources, forest fires, dump sites etc.</p> <p>5. Drought is also a common phenomenon in FYR of Macedonia, which causes many problems in agriculture, forestry, and water management. In FYR of Macedonia in the period 1999-2005 a total of 1,191 forest fires were recorded, with a burned area of 59,500 ha. and over €28 million total economic loss. In the summer of 2007 FYR of Macedonia experienced extended wildfires, which severely affected forests and other vegetation over an area exceeding 40,000 hectares. One of the contributing factors was climate conditions, i.e. a dramatic heat wave and the highest temperatures ever recorded along with the prolonged dry period pushed the usual summer forest-fire season drastically beyond its usual pattern. It is evident that forest fires not only destroy the biodiversity, change the micro-climate, and create potentials for erosion and landslides, but also cause enormous economic losses which will take decades to be recovered</p> <p>Despite the obvious presence of damaged land there are insufficient data on land degradation and desertification in the country. In addition, there are neither advanced researches nor data at scientific level. The salinization, its intensity, dimension, and state cannot be exactly defined due to absence of monitoring or any research. For the same reason no exact data exist on soil pollution with nitrates, phosphates, sulphates, pesticides, organic pollutants, heavy metals, and oil.</p> <p>Therefore the country lacks (i) systematic soil monitoring, (ii) soil/land informational system, (iii) information on soil/land contamination to ensure healthy food production, (iv) of an adequate</p>
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system of land assessment (land classification), (v) unified land inventory, (vi) of implementation of rehabilitation and remedial measures, (vii) low level of awareness regarding the significance of soil and land for sustainable development and survival of the population, low level of land use planning, of land maps that would serve for better physical and land use planning.

6. Present issues relevant for sustainable use of natural resources (including land use) in FYR of Macedonia along with challenges connected to the efficient land use are given in the National Strategy of Sustainable Development (NSSD) for the period 2010 - 2030. For the land management, primary goals defined in the strategy are the improvement of soil management and the prevention of the causes of land degradation and damages. According to the NSSD, one of the first measures for achieving these goals is the ratification of the UNCCD and implementation of measures envisaged by the Convention – establishment of a National Action Plan. However, FYR of Macedonia still lacks a National Action Plan in line with the Convention 10 Year's Strategy.
7. The development of NAP to combat land degradation and its integration into relevant national strategies and documents in FYR of Macedonia was highlighted in the First National Report on the implementation of the UNCCD, as one of the urgent measures in addressing the problem of land degradation. The project will put an emphasis on the activities aimed at supporting mainstreaming NAP recommendations into relevant national strategic documents and donors cooperation programmes. Due to specificity of the country morphology, the NAP will be developed using ecosystem approach in order to design specific measures to combat land degradation in different geographical areas such as the Vardar river valley and watershed as well as the mountainous parts of the country.
8. Based on Decision 3/COP 8, parties to the UNCCD adopted the 10-year strategy (2008-2018) to enhance the implementation of the Convention. The Decision urged Parties to implement the Strategy in accordance with their national priorities, including the alignment of their action programmes and other relevant implementation activities relating to the Convention with the Strategy.
9. The Strategy's Operational Objective 2 (OO2) urges affected Country Parties to revise their NAPs into strategic documents supported by biophysical and socio-economic baseline information and include them in integrated investment frameworks. The OO2 also encourages affected Country parties to integrate their NAPs as well as SLM and land degradation issues into their national development plans and relevant sectoral and investment plans and policies.
10. Decision 3/COP8 also calls on the CRIC to facilitate the implementation, monitoring and application of new reporting guidelines as well as develop an indicator system that should go hand in hand with the alignment of NAPs. Furthermore, the Decision urges the CST to make use of and contribute to the best practices database and to economical and biophysical baselines.

	<p>11. Decision 1/COP.8 reaffirms that the focus on the Convention is on protecting threatened ecosystems and eradicating poverty. The decision further calls for increased and sustained efforts in (i) capacity building in all areas relevant to the implementation of APs; (ii) participatory NRM (in particular SLM and IWM approaches) in coherence with national policies; (iii) promoting effective and sustained participation of all stakeholders and in particular civil society and private sector; and (iv) information sharing and technology transfer.</p> <p>12. Para. 86 of the CRIC recommendations facilitate the implementation, monitoring and application of the new reporting guidelines. Furthermore, Para. 109 notes that development of an indicator system should go hand in hand with the alignment of APs, reflecting knowledge of DLDD drivers and their interactions, and of the interaction of DLDD with climate change and biodiversity.</p> <p>13. The project aims to assist FYR of Macedonia in formulating the first NAP which would be in line with the UNCCD 10-Year Strategy resulting in improved planning and monitoring of UNCCD implementation at the national level for better decision making on DLDD and sustainable land management issues.</p> <p>14. UNCCD National Coordination Body was established since 2005, however it still lacks capacity in guiding implementation of the convention and therefore needs improvement and strengthening, which is one objective of this project. The NCB coordinates interdisciplinary and inter-ministerial efforts to run the forthcoming implementation of UNCCD activities under the National Strategies of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the obligations deriving from it. The NCB includes representatives from a variety of stakeholders ranging from government and non-governmental institutions, from civil society representatives to academia, and the private sector, in line with the complex and interdisciplinary nature of desertification and other forms of land degradation and their diverse impacts.</p> <p>15. The established National Coordination Body takes into account full integration of human-rights based approaches which are assured by addressing all cross-cutting issues in the planning and organization process (primarily gender sensitivity and participation of all ethnic groups of FYR of Macedonia).</p> <p>16. The proposed project will be inclusive, involving participation of all stakeholders, including government ministries, departments and agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, scientific community and local communities. These will be assigned roles in project implementation depending on their comparative advantages. Gender balance will also be a key ingredient of the project, ensuring participation of men, women, youths and other groups in all stages of the project.</p> <p>17. More specifically, the project will ensure all norms regarding social and environmental safeguards including gender considerations by ensuring (i) inclusiveness of both men and women in project</p>
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	<p>formulation and implementation of the national consultation processes; (ii) ensuring inclusiveness for marginalized and poor communities in the consultations; (iii) collecting of gender disaggregated data and information where possible, and (vi) analysis and articulation of relationship of DLDD to human well being and poverty reduction, through the impact indicators and the anticipated socioeconomic impacts of the aligned NAPs on the national development agenda.</p> <p>18. In order to enable UNEP to track how consideration of socio-economic benefits, ethnic groups, gender dimensions are addressed by FYR of Macedonia, the Small Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) which will be the contractual document between UNEP and Government of FYR of Macedonia, will include a provision that these considerations including CSO participation to the process at national level, should be reflected in the NAPs and/or reporting process. In addition, the UNEP Help Desk will assist in ensuring social/gender issues are integrated in the NAPs and reports.</p> <p>19. The key national stakeholders represented in the NCB will be closely involved in the project implementation that include relevant departments of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning which is also an executing partner and a hosting institution of the National UNCCD Focal Point as well as hosting institution of the GEF focal point. - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Ministry of Interior - Ministry of Economy - Ministry of Transport and Communication - Ministry of Foreign Affairs - National Hydro-meteorological Service - Movement of Environmentalists of Macedonia -DEM (NGO)
<p>C. DESCRIBE THE ENABLING ACTIVITY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION (discuss the work intended to be undertaken and the output expected from each activity as outlined in Table A).</p>	<p>20. The objective of this project is to support Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for development of National Action Programs aligned to the UNCCD 10 Year Strategy and Report process under UNCCD.</p> <p>21. The project will have 2 components as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Preparation of NAP in line with the 10 year Strategy B. Reporting and review processes <p>The project will support:</p> <p>22. Component A: Preparation of NAP in line with the 10 year Strategy</p> <p>1.1 Advocacy, awareness raising and education activities. The current</p>

institutional and policy environments in FYR of Macedonia are complex and do not favour adequate MEA implementation in the country. As a long neglected and complex issue of land degradation has not been properly addressed in the post-independence FYR of Macedonia so far, emphasis here will be placed on the increasing awareness on the anthropogenic causes of land degradation, at both local and national level. In this light, it might become more obvious that serious human and financial resources are necessary to prepare a policy framework for supporting national efforts on combating land degradation, as well as to assess all aspects of land degradation and drought. Limited activities have been done in past years on awareness raising and capacity building in the country in this regard. Relevant information and messages will be designed and communicated to the general and professional public through the project website, established at the beginning of the project, as well as during the launch workshop. In addition, the efforts of FYR of Macedonia to address land degradation and drought issues in relevant sectors and international forums, including those pertaining to agricultural trade, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, rural development, sustainable development and poverty reduction will be supported by the project through technical support. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and the scientific community in the entities and at the state level will be encouraged to engage as stakeholders in the Convention processes. Activities and programs of active national CSOs with regards to degradation and drought addressed through advocacy, awareness-raising and education initiatives will be supported by the project through increased visibility and promotion of such activities as well as providing advisory on how to include the recommendations of UNCCD processes into CSOs activities.

Outputs:

- Introductory paper on land degradation and drought issues with identified synergies with climate change adaptation/mitigation and biodiversity conservation prepared and effectively communicated among key stakeholders at both entities and national level.
- Establishment of the project website and an introductory workshop
- Guidelines for CSOs on including the DLDD issues and UNCCD recommendations in their Programme of Work (POWs).

1.2 Policy framework development.

The assessment of policy, institutional, financial and socio-economic drivers of land degradation and barriers to sustainable land management will be prepared within the project, along with appropriate measures to remove these barriers. This will be used as a gap analysis for the preparation of NAP, alongside drafting official procedures and guideline that will formalize adequate institutional set up including the role of NFP, which is a prerequisite recognized in the National Capacity Self-Assessment for FYR of Macedonia Action plan for UNCCD. All

activities to prepare NAP in line with the 10 Year Framework Strategy will be implemented in a manner to reflect on the main national issues and to be carried out in a highly participatory manner. A series of workshops will be organized to facilitate NAP preparation and validation of relevant findings and the aligned NAP document by relevant stakeholders. Link to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation will be addressed and/or strengthened in NAP and consultations/communication with stakeholders.

Outputs:

- The assessment of policy, institutional, financial and socio-economic drivers of land degradation and barriers to sustainable land management in fYR of Macedonia.
- Defined institutional setting and legal framework for UNCCD implementation in fYR of Macedonia.
- NAP mainstreamed in relevant national strategies, policies and plans and synergy ensured with other complementary processes (CBD, UNFCCC, Bilateral donors frameworks, etc.)
- National stakeholders are consulted and consensus reached at national level on NAP validation, implementation and reporting.

1.3 Science, technology and knowledge activities. National monitoring and vulnerability assessment on biophysical and socio-economic trends will be carried out. In order to improve knowledge on biophysical and socio-economic factors and on their interactions in affected and enable better decision-making by relevant national authorities the results of the findings will be communicated to the state-level public officials, especially those dealing with the relevant sectors for sustainable land use management. This will be achieved through consultative meetings and training. Collection of data for building knowledge on the interactions between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation and restoration of degraded land in affected areas will be supported mainly through technical support to establish research programs and defining the “hot topics” with university and research centers. Preliminary discussion on the knowledge-sharing, at the Western Balkan sub-regional level and national levels to support policymakers and end users, including through the identification and sharing of best practices and success stories.

Outputs:

- National land degradation monitoring and vulnerability assessment on biophysical and socio-economic trends carried out and communicated to decision makers.
- Databases on vulnerability of ecosystems to climate change, droughts and degraded land established/networked and operational for research programmes.
- Initiated sub-regional and national level dialogue on land degradation and drought issues.

1.4 Financing and technology transfer. Development of an integrated investment framework for leveraging national, bilateral and multilateral resources with a view to increasing the effectiveness and impact of interventions. Development of a strategic plan to improve FYR of Macedonia's capacity to mobilize financial resources from international financial institutions, facilities and funds, including the GEF, by promoting the UNCCD/Sustainable land management (SLM) agenda within the governing bodies of these institutions. Identification of innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms to combat land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, including from the private sector, market-based mechanisms, trade, foundations and CSOs, and other financing mechanisms for climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and poverty reduction.

Outputs:

- Integrated investment framework for leveraging national, bilateral and multilateral resources and a national strategy on funds mobilization
- Identification of innovative funds to combat land degradation and drought.

1.5 Revision and validation of the NAP by national bodies. The NAP document will be translated into official languages of FYR of Macedonia; Macedonian and Albanian and submitted to the national authorities for adoption. In addition, all relevant documents, such as NAP, assessments, papers and policy papers will be made available through internet tools and events to be organized in the country particularly at local level. In addition, the policy paper on behalf of Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning will be prepared and disseminated throughout the country, to all local, state and entity-level ministries as well as UN bodies and other relevant international organizations present in the country. This paper will contain key messages and issues covering land degradation, as elaborated in NAP, which need to be considered and included in strategic documents and or plans of FYR of Macedonia.

Outputs:

- NAP document aligned to the 10 Year UNCCD Strategy, adopted by national authorities, and submitted by FYR of Macedonia.
- A policy brief summarizing NAP findings and recommendations created and distributed to all relevant stakeholders, and mainstreamed in corresponding national strategic documents.

Component B: Reporting and review processes

2.1 Reports preparation through participatory process. Empowerment of National Coordination Body as an administrative and institutional framework and technical base line for the long term national reports preparation. Strengthening the existing mechanisms and activities related with the UNCCD implementation Emphasis will be put on strengthening the preparatory process for the national reporting securing

the participation of stakeholders at different levels e.g., governmental authority involved in decision making process, scientists, as well as natural resources management and nature conservation, private sector, and NGOs active in the field of land management.

Outputs:

- Strengthening of the existing mechanisms related to the UNCCD continual implementation
- Strengthening continuous quality reporting process through a participatory approach.
- Strengthening of an existing framework including design of a long term protocols through appropriate consultative process in preparation of the next UNCCD reporting cycles.

2.2 Validation of reports at the national level. Second phase of work will consist of a series of workshops, which will comment, review and validate the reporting before its submission of the UNCCD bodies.

Outputs:

- Appropriate consultative process during and after the reporting process.
- A national report from FYR of Macedonia on the measures taken to implement the UNCCD submitted.

EA IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

23. **UNEP/GEF** is the Implementing Agency for this GEF project. UNEP/GEF shall in its role as GEF Implementing Agency provide project oversight to ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner. Project supervision is entrusted to the Director of UNEP/DEPI who discharges this responsibility through the assigned Task Manager who represents the Director on the project steering committee. Project supervision missions if any, by the Task Manager and/or Fund Management Officer shall constitute part of the project supervision plan. UNEP/GEF would perform the liaison function between UNEP and the GEF Secretariat and report on the progress against milestones outlined in the CEO approval letter to the GEF Secretariat. UNEP shall inform the GEF Secretariat whenever there is a potentially substantive co-financing change (i.e. one affecting the project objectives, the underlying concept, scale, scope, strategic priority, conformity with GEF criteria, likelihood of project success, or outcome of the project). It shall rate, on a periodic basis, progress in meeting project objectives, project implementation progress, risk, and quality of project monitoring and evaluation. In order to ensure overall coherence with the Convention process and taking into consideration the fact that this project is meant to increase capacities of the FYR of Macedonia vis-a-vis the Convention, UNEP/DEPI through the EA, will also work in close consultation with the UNCCD secretariat and GM through the National Focal Point on all issues

	<p>relating to deadlines and deliverables under the project.</p> <p>24. UNEP cooperates with multilateral environmental agreements, and support collaboration among such agreements, in order to facilitate their effective implementation. UNEP's baseline of work enhances the full implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, promotes Rio Convention synergies, and promotes a Green Economy paradigm, through e.g., building home-grown (national) expertise, sub-regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and environmental leadership; and Linking processes and outputs from GEF funding for Enabling Activities with cross-cutting capacity development projects, for greater synergies, cost effectiveness and impact.</p> <p>25. The project is fully in line with the UNEP role of catalysing the development of scientific and technical analysis and advancing environmental management in GEF-financed activities. UNEP provides guidance on relating the GEF-financed activities to global, regional and national environmental assessments, policy frameworks and plans, and to international environmental agreements. UNEP signed and MOU with UNCCD secretariat implemented the UNCCD Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation project (PRAIS) project alongside the first leg of the 4th UNCCD reporting and review project⁴, the piloting integrated processes and approaches to facilitate national reporting to Rio Conventions project (FNR_Rio) and has implemented the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership project. Together, these initiatives will provide GEF with a range of relevant experiences, proof of concept, testing of ideas and access to the best available science and knowledge. In relation to the land degradation focal area, the project is fully in line with UNEP comparative experience in reference with GEF/C 31/5 Annex H. UNEP will primarily focus on the areas of its mandate, will continue to provide scientific and technical advice to the Facility on its policies and programmes.</p> <p>26. UNEP has history of working with national authorities in FYR of Macedonia and in the region on UN conventions, projects and activities. On UNCCD, UNEP is currently supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro on the alignment of the NAP Strategy to UNCCD 10 Year's Strategy. To support the FYR Macedonia to achieve the goals of becoming a modern democracy and an EU member state, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) together with non-resident UN Agencies with activities in the Country, in accordance with its <i>Mission Statement</i>, and in close cooperation with the Government of the FYR of Macedonia, civil society stakeholders, and the international community, has prepared the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period 2010-2014. In addition, UNEP office in Vienna is supporting implementation of GEF financed National Strategy on Biological Diversity and projects related to the Environmental Security Initiative related to forestry and climate change. All of the previous UNEP experience on the field shows that the agency has a strong national</p>
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⁴ Most activities finalised; still awaiting terminal evaluation.

	<p>support and is trusted by the government to lead important environmental governance processes.</p> <p>27. The UNEP in-kind contribution to this project is estimated at \$ 20,000 over the two years project duration. This amount represent (i) the staff time particularly of the Regional Office for Europe to develop the project document as no PPG resources will be requested from GEF Trust Fund, (ii) as it is clear the handling of Enabling Activity both in term of investment for communication and additional Staff time to manage to support the country will go beyond the Agency fee from this project.</p> <p>28. The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning shall take responsibility for the execution of the project in accordance with the objectives, activities and budget and deliver the outputs and demonstrate its best efforts in achieving the project outcomes. It shall also coordinate activities through the National UNCCD Focal Point and address and rectify any issues raised by UNEP with respect to project execution in a timely manner. It shall also support the project adaptive management tool and develop a management response to any review. The Ex.A shall host a coordinating committee (NCB) of experts and specialists and provide high level technical inputs and organize the tasks at national level as well as securing capacity building of the national team. The project team also serves as secretariat to the National Coordination Body (NCB). While devising a knowledge management system for national UNCCD reporting, Ex.A will liaise with the National UNCCD Focal Point in order to ensure that COP and CST guidance is reflected in the overall system to be devised for the national UNCCD implementation knowledge management tool.</p> <p>29. Ex.A will has requested technical, financial and administrative support from UNEP regional office for Europe and Vienna Office, which will assist the Ministry thought an MoU by facilitating access to resources and support the national stakeholders technically to conduct the process through (for example developing ToR for the international consultants, national consultants; support stakeholders dialogue and consultation, facilitating involvement of other donors, providing technical assistance in delivering on the output particularly the action plan). Considering budgetary and institutional constraints in fYR of Macedonia, UNEP ROE will support the financial management of the project in close consultation with the Ex.A, the UNCCD focal point and the national coordination body.</p> <p>30. National coordinating body (NCB) coordinates interdisciplinary and inter-ministerial efforts to run the forthcoming implementation UNCCD activities under the National Strategies of fYR of Macedonia and the obligations deriving from it. The NCB includes representatives from a variety of stakeholders ranging from government and non-governmental institutions, from civil society representatives to grassroots resource users, academia, and the private sector, in line with the complex and interdisciplinary nature of all forms of land degradation and their diverse impacts.</p>
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	<p>31. Under the SSFA, the UNEP and the National Executing Agency, obligations of the two parties will be as follow:</p> <p>Terms and obligations of UNEP</p> <p>UNEP agrees to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide, in its role as GEF implementing agency, project oversight (through the Task Manager and Fund Management officer). Specifically this will include: b) Timely feedback on all substantive and financial issues; c) Provide technical support and assistance to the project on a need basis and where required; d) Ensure communication and information exchange between the Executing Agency, UNEP, and all other relevant organizations, institutions, programmes and projects; e) Liaise with the GEF Secretariat, UNCCD and GM for all matters related to the UNCCD Reporting. <p>Terms and obligations of the Executing Agency</p> <p>The Executing Agency agrees to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide support to, and liaise with, the various project stakeholders based on guidance from UNEP Task Manager and UNCCD Secretariat; b) Implement the project activities in accordance with standard Executing Agency Rules and established business processes; c) Make available to the project the in-kind co-financing as set out in Annex 11 from the Executing Agency and make its best efforts to ensure that all pledged third party co-financing materializes or undertake resources mobilization efforts to compensate for any shortfall in co-financing; d) Report to UNEP in accordance with paragraphs 29 to 31 of this Agreement. e) Establish or use a National Coordinating Body / Committee in charge of UNCCD activities to direct the project activities and ensure the committee gains adequate capacity to direct the process; f) Ensure that CSO, ethnic groups participation and Gender issues are included in the process and reflected in aligned NAPs; g) Establish a long-term mechanism for UNCCD implementation at national level; h) Take and report on measures to mainstream NAP in relevant national sectors and policies. i) Take and report measures to mainstream NAP in United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and to engage dialogue with other donors for resources mobilization and the implementation
<p>D. DESCRIBE, IF POSSIBLE, THE EXPECTED <u>COST-EFFECTIVENESS</u> OF THE PROJECT:</p>	<p>32. The project will address at the same time performance and impact indicators for the UNCCD implementation which will enable sound, rigorous and scientific reporting at national levels on not only the convention implementation, but also on the land degradation trends</p>

	<p>and the impact of mitigation measures. Furthermore, the project will allow the country to formulate its first NAP in line with the UNCCD 10 Year Strategy. Such results will make the project very cost-effective in terms of GEF resources invested, as the capacity building element the project will facilitate and make it possible a long term planning and investment for SLM as well as enhance synergy with the other conventions (CBD, UNFCCC) and other environment processes as a whole since the indicators based approach will explore harmonization potentials. <u>The development of the NAP will enable identification of possible topics for the development of project proposals, to be financed by Macedonia's partners funding sources including the existing UNEP environment fund at the entity level.</u></p>
<p>E. DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M&E PLAN:</p>	<p>33. The project will follow UNEP standard monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes and procedures. Reporting requirements and templates are an integral part of the UNEP legal instrument to be signed by the executing agency and UNEP. The project M&E plan for the costed M&E and the plan is consistent with the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policy. The Project Results Framework presented includes SMART indicators for each expected outcome as well as end-of-project targets. These indicators along with the key deliverables and benchmarks will be the main tools for assessing project implementation progress and whether project results are being achieved.</p> <p>34. The M&E plan will be reviewed and revised as necessary during the project inception workshop to ensure project stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis project monitoring and evaluation. Indicators and their means of verification may also be fine-tuned at the kick-off meeting. Day-to-day project monitoring is the responsibility of the project management team but other project partners will have responsibilities to collect specific information to track the indicators. It is the responsibility of the Project Manager to inform UNEP of any delays or difficulties faced during implementation so that the appropriate support or corrective measures can be adopted in a timely fashion. Monitoring remains one of the main tasks of UNEP ROE support to fYR of Macedonia's Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning in this process, while evaluation will be undertaken by the Ministry and UNEP at appropriate levels. UNEP ROE will assist the executing agency in monitoring activities on a regular basis and provide all information requested by project partners and independent evaluators.</p> <p>35. The UNCCD National Focal Point will chair the NCB, ensure daily supervision of the project, and consultants, ensure necessary involvement of stakeholders, hired in the project implementation, coordinate the preparation of the report also participating as a an active member of the drafting team. He will receive periodic reports on progress and will make recommendations to UNEP concerning the need to revise any aspects of the Results Framework or the M&E plan. Project oversight to ensure that the project meets UNEP and GEF policies and procedures is the responsibility of the Task Manager in UNEP-GEF. The Task Manager will also review the</p>

	<p>quality of draft project outputs, provide feedback to the project partners, and establish peer review procedures particularly with UNCCD technical units, to ensure adequate quality of scientific and technical outputs and publications.</p> <p>36. Project supervision will take an adaptive management approach. The Task Manager will develop a project supervision plan at the inception of the project which will be communicated to the project partners during the kick-off meeting. The emphasis of the Task Manager supervision will be on outcome monitoring but without neglecting project financial management and implementation monitoring. Progress vis-à-vis delivering the agreed project global environmental benefits will be assessed with the UNCCD Focal Point at agreed intervals. Project risks and assumptions will be regularly monitored both by project partners and UNEP. The quality of project monitoring and evaluation will also be reviewed and rated as part of the reporting process. Key financial parameters will be monitored quarterly to ensure cost-effective use of financial resources.</p>
F. EXPLAIN THE DEVIATIONS FROM TYPICAL COST RANGES (WHERE APPLICABLE):	N/A

TABLE: MONITORING AND EVALUATION BUDGET

M&E activity	Purpose	Responsible Party	Budget (US\$)*1	Time-frame
Inception workshop	Awareness raising, building stakeholder engagement, detailed work planning with key groups	Project team with the assistance of UNEP ROE - UNEP/DEPI	3000	Within two months of project start
Inception report	Provides implementation plan for progress monitoring	Project Manager with the assistance of UNEP ROE	0	Immediately following IW
Periodic Project Review by Steering Committee	Assesses progress, effectiveness of operations and technical outputs; Recommends adaptation where necessary and confirms forward implementation plan.	Project team with the assistance of UNEP ROE UNEP/DEP		Every six months
Project Implementation Review	Progress and effectiveness review for the GEF, provision of lessons learned	Project team with the assistance of UNEP ROE UNEP-GEF	0	Annually
Terminal report	Reviews effectiveness against implementation plan Highlights technical outputs Identifies lessons learned and likely design approaches for future projects, assesses likelihood of achieving design outcomes	Project team with the assistance of UNEP ROE	0	At the end of project implementation
Independent Financial Audit	Reviews use of project funds against budget and assesses probity of expenditure and transactions		2000	At the end of project implementation

A. EXPLAIN THE DEVIATIONS FROM TYPICAL COST RANGES (WHERE APPLICABLE): N/A

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

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


NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
Daniela Rendevska	GEF Operational Focal Point	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL PLANNING	09.11.2012

A. CONVENTION PARTICIPATION

CONVENTIONS	DATE OF RATIFICATION/ACCESSION	CONVENTION FOCAL POINT
UNCCD	18.02. 2002	VESNA INDOVA

B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

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

Agency Coordinator, Agency name	Signature	DATE (MM/dd/yy yy)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
Maryam Niamir-Fuller, Director, UNEP GEF Coordination Maryam.Nimir-Fuller@unep.org		02/20/2013	Adamou Bouhari Task Manager Biodiversity and Land Degradation	+ 254 20 762 38 60	Adamou.Bouhari@unep.org

Annex A: Consultants to be hired

Position Titles	\$/person week	Estimated Person week	Task to be performed
For EA Management			
Local			
National Project Manager	125	40	Manager will be responsible for the overall management and supervision of all aspects of the Project. She will also be responsible for coordination of the working groups, facilitation of meetings, progress reporting and qualitative evaluation of reports
Administration (Finance)	180	10	Oversee expenditures according to regulations, manage the funds, liaise with UNEP on financial issue, ensure regular financial reporting, conduct as necessary budget revision under the guidance of UNEP Fund and national project Manager.
For Technical Assistance			
Local Consultants			

1. Natural resources management specialist	500	48	1. Natural resources management specialist - participation in needs and capacity assessment of different stakeholders, - development of training materials, - participation in legal and institutional assessment, - participation in development of thematic chapters and NAP .
2. Policy/Institutional expert	500	30	2. Policy/Institutionla expert: - assessment of national legislation, policy and istitutional set-up - development of recommendations - participation in development of thematic chapters and NAP
3. Agricultural and grazing specialist	500	30	3. Agricultural grazing specialist - paticipation in developmmnet of thematic chapters and NAP - assessments of agricultural and pastures degradation
4. Land-use and degradation specialist	500	32	4. Land-use and degradation specialist - data gathering and analisis on land degardation - participation in development of thematic chapters and NAP
5. Specialist for GIS	400	5	5. specialist of GIS - prapration of land degradation maps
6. Administrative staff	300	10	6. Various administrative duties

