



# REQUEST FOR CEO APPROVAL<sup>1</sup>

PROJECT TYPE: Medium-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

## PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: MENA- DESERT ECOSYSTEMS AND LIVELIHOODS KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COORDINATION PROJECT			
Country(ies):	Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia	GEF Project ID: <sup>2</sup>	
GEF Agency(ies):	WB (select) (select)	GEF Agency Project ID:	P130343
Other Executing Partner(s):		Submission Date:	2012-10-03
GEF Focal Area (s):	Land Degradation	Project Duration(Months)	48
Name of Parent Program (if applicable): For SFM/REDD+ <input type="checkbox"/>	MENA-Desert Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program (MENA-DELDP)	Agency Fee (\$):	80,000

### A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK<sup>3</sup>

Focal Area Objectives	Expected FA Outcomes	Expected FA Outputs	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Cofinancing (\$)
(select) LD-4	Improved GEF portfolio monitoring using new and updated tools and methodologies	GEF-Financed projects contribute to SLM/SFM/INRM knowledge base	GEF TF	955,000	487,500
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
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(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)	Others		(select)		
Subtotal				955,000	487,500
Project management cost <sup>4</sup>			(select)	45,000	
<b>Total project costs</b>				<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>487,500</b>

### B. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective:						
Project Component	Grant Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Confirmed Cofinancing (\$)
Component 1: Knowledge management and	TA	Outcome 1.1: Improved knowledge of the linkages	Output 1.1: Knowledge products produced and disseminated in	GEF TF	800,000	391,500

<sup>1</sup> It is important to consult the GEF Preparation Guidelines when completing this template

<sup>2</sup> Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the [Focal Area/LDCF/SCCF Results Framework](#) when filling up the table in item A.

<sup>4</sup> GEF will finance management cost that is solely linked to GEF financing of the project. PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project grant amount.

sharing		existing between ecosystems and livelihoods in desert areas  Outcome 1.2: Improved systems of knowledge sharing on issues related to desert ecosystem and livelihoods	MENA-DELP countries (number and types)  Output 1.2: Stakeholders better informed on issues related to desert ecosystems (Number and types of workshops, study tours.)			
Component 2: Monitoring and evaluation	TA	Outcome 2.1: Improved networks and program level information flow on desert ecosystems at national and international level	Output 2.1.1: M&E systems and harmonized indicators in place  Output 2.1.2: Desert Information System established and used as platform for virtual networking and knowledge dissemination	GEF TF	155,000	46,000
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
<b>Subtotal</b>					955,000	437,500
<b>Project management Cost<sup>5</sup></b>				GEF TF	45,000	50,000
<b>Total project costs</b>					1000000	487500

**C. SOURCES OF CONFIRMED COFINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME (\$)**

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier (source)	Type of Cofinancing	Cofinancing Amount (\$)
National Government		(select)	
Others	Sahara and Sahel Observatory	In-Kind	300,000
National Government		(select)	
National Government	Jordan	In-Kind	62,500
National Government	Morocco	In-Kind	62,500
National Government	Tunisia	(select)	62,500
(select)		(select)	
(select)		(select)	
(select)		(select)	
(select)		(select)	
<b>Total Co-financing</b>			487,500

<sup>5</sup> Same as footnote #4.

**D. GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA AND COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>**

GEF Agency	Type of Trust Fund	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	(in \$)		
				Grant Amount (a)	Agency Fee (b) <sup>2</sup>	Total c=a+b
World Bank	GEF TF	Land Degradation		1,000,000	80,000	1,080,000
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
<b>Total Grant Resources</b>				1,000,000	80,000	1,080,000

**E. CONSULTANTS WORKING FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPONENTS:**

Component	Estimated Person Weeks	Grant Amount (\$)	Cofinancing (\$)	Project Total (\$)
Local consultants*	365.00	365,000	206,000	571,000
International consultants*	30.00	45,000	30,000	75,000
<b>Total</b>		410,000	236,000	646,000

\* Details to be provided in Annex C.

**F. PROJECT MANAGEMENT COST**

Cost Items	Total Estimated Person Weeks/Months	Grant Amount (\$)	Co-financing (\$)	Project Total (\$)
Local consultants*	45.00	45,000	50,000	95,000
International consultants*				0
Office facilities, equipment, vehicles and communications*				0
Travel*				0
Others**	Specify "Others" (1)			0
	Specify "Others" (2)			0
<b>Total</b>		45,000	50,000	95,000

\* Details to be provided in Annex C.

\*\* For others, to be clearly specified by overwriting fields \*(1) and \*(2).

**G. DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A “NON-GRANT” INSTRUMENT? No**

(If non-grant instruments are used, provide in Annex E an indicative calendar of expected reflows to your Agency and to the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Trust Fund).

**H. DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M & E PLAN:**

The project will : (i) Establish a Programmatic level monitoring system for the MENA-DELP program based on aggregating national project level indicators and results, and (ii) Establish a specific M&E system for the regional project. The implementing regional organization, the OSS, will be responsible to develop these 2 M&E systems and will elaborate a comprehensive annual progress reports on program level results OSS, to be disseminated to all the stakeholders, including the Bank and GEF.

In order to create a positive feedback loop between M&E and knowledge management, the regional project M&E system will incorporate a dedicated information system which will: (i) allow for the collection of data and information on desert ecosystems, livelihoods and sustainable management practices; (ii) disseminate information through a dedicated website; (iii) provide a link and a platform for exchange of information between partners; (iv) include a centralized GIS database; (v) include a monitoring evaluation with predefined indicators to facilitate analysis, consistency and monitoring of activities; and (vi) moderate virtual discussions through existing or new web-based networks.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities would include elaboration of harmonized indicators, works, surveys, progress reporting, a midterm evaluation and a final completion report to document results and outputs.

The M&E activities will be conducted in close collaboration with national partners to record, measure, and verify results.

## **PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

### **A. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:**

#### A.1.1. The [GEF focal area/LDCF/SCCF strategies/NPIF Initiative](#):

The proposed project is in line with the general objective of the GEF-5 Focal Area in Land Degradation to contribute to arresting and reversing current global trends in land degradation, specifically desertification and deforestation. The project will mainly contribute to the Land Degradation objective 4 related to Increase capacity to apply adaptive management tools in SLM. The project expected outcomes are:

- Outcome 1.1: Improved knowledge of the linkages existing between ecosystems and livelihoods in desert areas;
- Outcome 1.2: Improved systems of knowledge sharing on issues related to desert ecosystem and livelihoods;
- Outcome 2.1: Improved networks and program level information flow on desert ecosystems at national and international level.

The achievement of these outcomes will highly contribute to setting up of new and updated tools and methodologies that will contribute to improve the GEF portfolio monitoring. This is the aim of the selected LD4 outcome in table A.

The project specific outputs and indicators are:

- Output 1.1: Number of knowledge products related to desert ecosystems issues developed through the study tours and disseminated;
- Output 1.2: Number of Workshops organized on issues related to desert ecosystems
- Output 2.1.1: Number of monitoring reports issued from the Program and regional project M&E systems
- Output 2.1.2: Number of virtual meetings held through the dedicated Desert Information System.

These outputs will contribute to SLM/SFM/INRM knowledge base as expected by the LD4 selected output.

A.1.2. For projects funded from LDCF/SCCF: the LDCF/SCCF eligibility criteria and priorities:

A.1.3 For projects funded from NPIF, relevant eligibility criteria and priorities of the Fund:

A.2. National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NAPAS, NAPs, NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE.

The proposed project is consistent with general and specific priorities of key environmental and social policies of the participating countries, particularly the following:

- *Algeria*: Support to the integration of climate change adaptation into the current Five Year Agricultural Plan (2010-2014), (including food security and the creation of employment for vulnerable rural communities); and the National Territorial Planning Scheme to 2030.
- *Egypt*: Support to the objectives of the 2002-2017 National Environmental Action Plan.
- *Jordan*: Support the objectives of the Enhanced Productivity Program, an integrated package of interventions aiming to alleviate poverty in Jordan’s poverty pockets, as well as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2002) and National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Desertification (2005), among others.
- *Morocco*: Enhance the sustainability of the national agricultural strategy, the *Plan Maroc Vert* (PMV), which is supported by the World Bank through an ongoing programmatic Development Policy Loan (DPL) series and a GEF project on Integrating Climate Change in the implementation of the PMV (PICCPMV).
- *Tunisia*: Support the objectives of the Ecotourism and Conservation of Desert Biodiversity project

The project will benefit from the Sahara and Sahel Observatory knowledge and ongoing programs and projects, mainly those related to the : (i) Environment program: Long term ecological monitoring observatories network project which objective is to build capacities in ecological surveillance and environmental monitoring in circum-Saharan Africa; the project on the establishment and strengthening of national mechanisms for environmental surveillance and the Drought Early warning project in Maghreb countries; (ii) the shared water resources program, mainly with the North-Western Sahara Aquifer System (NWSAS) project which is in its 3th phase; and (iii) the activities of the Information and communication program.

The project is also aligned with MENARID and DELP programs as per the table below:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Proposed Project Expected Outcome</b>
<b>MENARID</b>	<b>The linkages between desert ecosystem services and desert livelihoods are better understood and inform decision making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved knowledge of the linkages existing between ecosystems and livelihoods in desert areas;</li> <li>- Improved systems of knowledge sharing on issues related to desert ecosystem and livelihoods;</li> </ul>
<b>MENA-DELP</b>	<b>Sustainable livelihood systems are promoted in investment areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved networks and program level information flow on desert ecosystems at national and international level.</li> </ul>

Furthermore, the project is aligned with the objectives of the ‘*Arab World Initiative*’, which has been jointly launched by the World Bank and the League of Arab States. It aims at producing the first body of knowledge addressing adaptation to a changing climate for all the Arab countries and assessing the ways climate change threaten the economic development and may exacerbate the vulnerability of the poor. Employment creation is of paramount importance for national policies in the MENA region. The environment agenda intersects with the larger job creation agenda in the following three ways: (i) promoting environmentally friendly technologies (such as those related to renewable energies or energy efficiency) could generate new “green” jobs; (ii) optimizing underutilized environmental goods and services could result in new “classical” jobs, for example, ecotourism jobs, if cultural tourism routes are better linked with natural attractions around protected areas; and (iii) improving environmental management and governance helps to shift unsustainable practices towards greater sustainability or allows for greater access to markets for clean industry products, thus ensuring that “classical” are durable and are not reduced in number over time (The design of the MENA-DELP focuses primarily on the last two points, with this proposed regional project contributing in providing a forum for discussion to share the knowledge generated between participating countries).

Key current policies of the MENA region are also placing emphasis on social and economic inclusion and

sustainable growth. In that regard, environmental assets (oil, gas, water, land) have been the basis for strong growth in the region. Focusing on policy levers will ensure that this growth is sustainable and long-lasting.

## **B. PROJECT OVERVIEW:**

B.1. Describe the baseline project and the problem that it seeks to address:

### **Desert Ecosystem Goods and Services**

On a global scale, deserts play an important role through their regulating ecosystem services namely air quality, atmosphere composition, and climate regulation. In the MENA region, deserts encompass unique and highly adapted ecosystems that continue to provide life-supporting services to the environment and the communities inhabiting them, linked with several productive sectors, including tourism and agriculture. Ninety percent of the region lies within arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas.<sup>6</sup>

**Agriculture.** From a land use and natural resource management perspective, desert populations have developed a range of traditional social, cultural and technological adaptations to their arid environment, which have resulted in sustainable land management practices, over generations. Such local knowledge and practices are invaluable, particularly as MENA countries face increased climate variability and change and associated desert livelihoods are disproportionately affected.

Traditional knowledge of agro-biodiversity, in particular the adaptive properties of desert landraces, can contribute to sustaining livelihoods in the face of adverse environmental and climatic events. For example, participatory plant breeding for the selection of drought tolerant crop genotypes has been encouraged successfully by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) in the MENA region. This process leverages the knowledge, needs, and labor of the local community through a participatory approach to generate improved crop germplasms that are well adapted to the stressors of desert environments.

The careful use of plants in the recovery of degraded areas can also provide forage, food, or marketable products. Barbary fig in particular, has been used for the stabilization of degraded soils, as well as livestock feed and cogeneration, and export as dyes, food, and cosmetics. Cultivation of Barbary fig leverages traditional knowledge, and provides for increasing economic control in local communities, especially during drought. Another emerging example is the reuse of byproducts from olive cultivation, which can reduce the environmental impacts of olive waste disposal, while obtaining value from the entire olive agro-food chain. Byproducts are treated as resources in other production systems, namely livestock feed, fertilizing compost and/or for cogeneration. Co-benefits include the reduction of livestock pressure on natural rangelands, improvements to soil-based carbon stocks, and the replacement of non-renewable energy sources in rural areas.

Markets for plant materials from the MENA region may also be valued for their herbal or aromatic properties or the presence of secondary plant metabolites that can be used for medicinal or other purposes. The cultivation, processing, and marketing (labeling, etc.) of such plants can add substantially to local community revenues, especially as an activity for women, and can also benefit from local knowledge.

**Tourism.** The location of the MENA region, with its warm climate and rich and varied culture, within easy reach of Europe, has been the major source of the development of the tourism industry, one of the biggest in the world.<sup>7</sup> International tourism represents today an important economic resource for many MENA countries. However, the tourism industry has been severally affected by recent events and is perceived as contributing to natural resource challenges in the region, particularly in terms of water use and the degradation of natural areas. A new model is now needed, which would intrinsically link desert ecosystem integrity with socioeconomic benefits flowing to communities and would increase opportunities for smaller businesses to engage in the sector through a more transparent business environment.<sup>8</sup>

The development of 'ecotourism' and 'cultural tourism' thus has the potential to provide concrete revenue opportunities for local populations and the private sector. Ecotourism, for example, can create local community

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<sup>6</sup> Balgis Osman Elasha (2010) *Mapping of Climate change threats and Human development impacts in the Arab region* (UNDP).

<sup>7</sup> Mohamed Beriane (1999) *Tourism, Culture and Development in the Arab Region* (UNESCO).

<sup>8</sup> Source: United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2011.

support for nature and biodiversity conservation, especially around protected areas, while providing alternatives to hunting, overgrazing, or other activities which continue to pose threats to biodiversity.<sup>9</sup>

Considering the arid and hyper-arid conditions of desert ecosystems, the fauna is relatively rich. In the Sahara desert, for instance, there are 70 mammalian species, 20 of which are large mammals; 90 species of resident birds, and around 100 species of reptiles. Desert biomes currently hold an abundance average of endemic species of 68 percent.<sup>10</sup> Many desert species in the MENA region are listed as vulnerable or worse on the IUCN Red List.

## **Natural and Anthropogenic Pressures on Desert Ecosystems**

Deserts ecosystems are not the final stage of a desertification process, but many deserts and their communities are currently under threat from both natural and anthropogenic pressures, particularly land and natural resources degradation and projected climate change impacts.

**Climatic conditions.** The MENA region is one of the driest regions on earth, with wide seasonal climatic and precipitation variations, which is typical of dryland ecosystems. Average annual temperatures vary from freezing to over 50 degrees Celsius, depending on the season and location. Rainfall distribution also varies between countries. However, even in areas with more significant rainfall, a large portion of rainwater is lost to evaporation and surface runoff (the highest losses occur in the desert and semi-desert zones).<sup>11</sup> In desert ecosystems, even moderate changes in precipitation and temperature may create severe impacts by shifting the intensity and frequency of extreme periods, and subsequently creating catastrophic effects on plants, animals, and human livelihoods.<sup>12</sup>

**Water scarcity.** The MENA region is being increasingly affected by water scarcity, both economically and socially.<sup>13</sup> MENA is home to 5 percent of the world's population, with only 0.7 percent of the world's available freshwater resources (CEDARE, 2006). The increasing demands for water and the rapid population growth in the region are putting significant pressures on the resource. These pressures are the result of a number of factors including: shortages in the supply of natural renewable water resources, a deterioration in the quality of surface and groundwater, decreased capacity to provide food, dependency on rivers and groundwater reserves shared with other countries outside of the region, low water use efficiencies, as well as inadequate institutional and legislative frameworks and improper centralization and governance (CEDARE 2006 and 2007). In addition, the impact of water scarcity on rural livelihoods has increased migration to urban areas placing increasing pressure on these. It is projected that up to 100 million people could be under water stress by 2050, as a result of existing pressures exacerbated by projected climate change impacts.<sup>14</sup> Further, because of its reliance on rainfed agriculture, the region's agricultural output could decrease 20-40 percent by 2080 with decreased rainfall.<sup>15</sup>

**Land degradation.** Desert margins and key production systems namely oases, rangelands and other agricultural systems constitute a hotspot for land degradation, with common challenges across the MENA region. In oases for example, soil salinization due to over-pumping of groundwater and vegetation degradation due to drought, coupled with sand dune encroachment, are major challenges to be addressed. Further, the expansion of traditional cultures that may not be adapted to arid conditions put additional pressure on groundwater resources for irrigation. A general decline in the rate of expansion of irrigated areas is expected in the next decades due to increasing water scarcity issues, together with increased investments in drainage to fight salinization.

Pastoralist livelihoods and associated rangelands have been a critical part of traditional livelihoods in the MENA region. However, natural rangelands are also under threat from overgrazing, habitat encroachment for urban and agricultural development, and illegal collection. Grazing pressure on the desert, and especially on the desert margin, is considered the most extensive agent of land degradation.<sup>16</sup> In addition, population pressure and recent changes in administrative structures have altered traditional desert pastoralism, often resulting in a situation where land tenure

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<sup>9</sup> Wild Jordan, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Source: Global Desert Outlook (<http://www.unep.org/geo/gdoutlook/>).

<sup>11</sup> B. O. Elasha (2010) op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Global Desert Outlook ([www.unep.org/geo/gdoutlook/](http://www.unep.org/geo/gdoutlook/)).

<sup>13</sup> Source: Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Source: <http://arabworld.worldbank.org>

<sup>15</sup> Source: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

<sup>16</sup> Source: Global Desert Outlook (<http://www.unep.org/geo/gdoutlook/>).

is poorly defined and resources are not well allocated and poorly controlled.

There is an urgent need to address the gaps and opportunities resulting from the lack of a global and regional management strategy for deserts. It is a strategic effort to understand, raise awareness, and harness the ecosystem, livelihood, and economic services provided by deserts, in order to increase both ecosystem and community resilience to the challenges faced by deserts and to enable them to better adapt to these changes.

There is currently no regional or global response strategy addressing deserts systems and livelihoods, as tightly interconnected human and natural ecosystems. Furthermore, much attention thus far has been centered on the process of desertification, at the expense of the valuation and promotion of services and livelihoods provided by true desert ecosystems. In terms of the business as usual scenario, national-level initiatives to promote, value and conserve desert ecosystem services and livelihoods has thus far been *ad hoc*, and only recently have development strategies begun to be specifically focused on deserts and they communities that inhabit them.

Initiatives to promote knowledge on desert ecosystem services, support information exchange and sharing of experiences between countries are few. This is also true for initiatives for networking specialized agencies of the desert in order to better enhance their knowledge.

The development objective of this regional project (PDO) is to strengthen networks among selected organizations in MENA-DELP countries by sharing experiences and knowledge on the sustainable management of desert ecosystems. It will contribute to achieve the goal of the MENA-DELP program in capturing and harnessing the value of desert ecosystems in order to optimize the flow of desert goods and services for the environmentally and socially sound development of desert systems

This project is designed as a first step towards strengthening long-term capacity and coordinated knowledge sharing in the MENA region to sustainably harness and manage desert ecosystem services for the benefit of associated livelihoods. By consolidating findings and outcomes of the national projects at a regional level and drawing on lessons learned, the project will increase ownership and durability of outcomes in the long term, and subsequently inform future investments in subsequent phases of the Program. It is expected to generate a broader policy level debate in the region on frameworks for sustainable land management approaches in desert ecosystems in the context of different production sectors and to encourage replication of successful approaches, in the context of a regional dialogue, which could potentially lead to application of approaches at the level of spatial or geographical areas that potentially transcend national boundaries for transformational impact.

In the wake of the social upheavals that are spreading across the region, a new approach to harnessing livelihood opportunities for marginalized desert communities and to conserving and managing the fragile desert ecosystems on which they depend, is needed more than ever.

To this end, the World Bank, in partnership with several countries and the Global Environment Facility, has launched the “MENA-Desert Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program” (MENA-DELP), a 10-15 year program, which aims to contribute to the enhancement of livelihoods in desert ecosystems by harnessing their value in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner so that the flow of desert goods and services can be optimized. This goal includes the (1) conservation of desert biodiversity, (2) improvement of production systems, (3) enhancement of desert livelihoods, and (4) the development of enabling policy frameworks to ensure the success and sustainability of these endeavors (see Figure 1).

The Program will focus on piloting enabling economic opportunities specific to deserts that integrate the health and diversity of the desert biome with the vast potential for innovative livelihood opportunities that also sustain valuable repository knowledge linked to adaptive practices. It is intended that such an approach ultimately enhance desert livelihood opportunities and increase the resilience and adaptation responses of desert communities and ecosystems to projected pressures, in particular climate change impacts.

The MENA-DELP program is designed for multiple phases, with the first phase being a World Bank-GEF program to support investment projects in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco, as well as knowledge sharing and coordination among these four countries, for which a US\$ 21 million grant was approved by the GEF in November 2011. Tunisia will benefit from MENA-DELP Program, through the Ecotourism and Conservation of Desert Biodiversity project which implementation will start by March 2013, and the Oasis ecosystem management project under preparation.



While national projects will focus on pilot investments to optimize the provision of desert goods and services for enhanced livelihoods through different production sectors (see table 1 below and in Annex F for more details), from ecotourism to agriculture to oasis and rangeland management, and on improving the sustainability of these investments through an integrated ecosystem management approach, the regional project will help foster regional information exchange and knowledge and help build a community of practitioners among the participating countries, drawing on the expertise and capacity of technical ministries, regional centers of excellence, NGOs, the private sector, and communities themselves (see figure 2).

## Regional Project

The proposed regional umbrella project aims to enhance knowledge and experience sharing on opportunities for enhancing desert livelihoods among the participating pilot countries. The design of this project has benefitted greatly from MENARID lessons, MENA’s shared seas programs, and shifts the focus to other shared natural resources, in this case desert ecosystems.

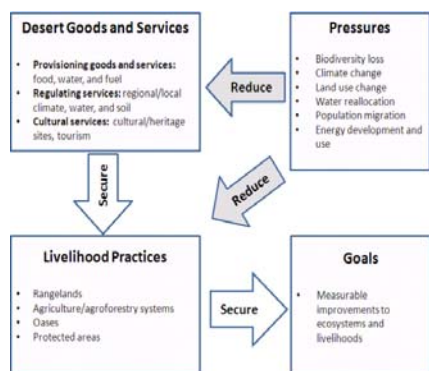


Figure 1: MENA-DELP Strategy

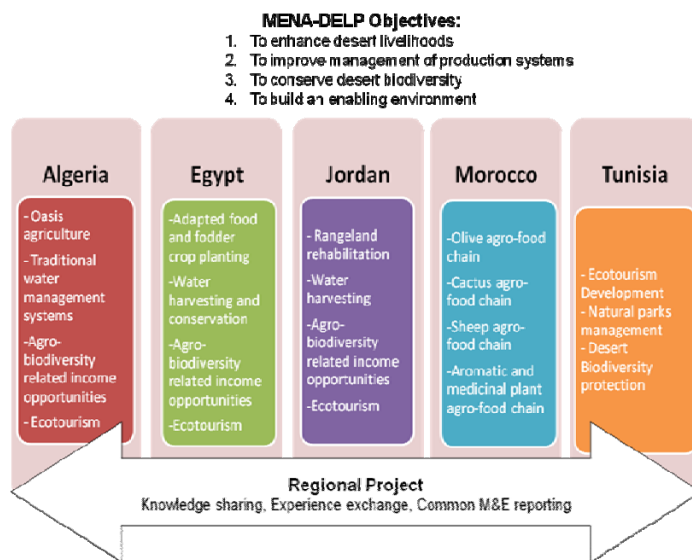


Figure 2: MENA-DELP WB-GEF Program structure

Table 1: MENA DELP Projects Descriptions

Country	Project description
Algeria - Improve Desert Ecosystems and Climate Resilient Oases Project	The proposed project aims to improve livelihoods of oasis communities through the piloting of a combined approach of conservation, agricultural development, and adaptation to climate change impacts at a network of intervention sites.
Egypt	The proposed project aims to improve the livelihoods of the disadvantaged Bedouin and other local communities and enhance their resilience to projected climate change impacts, through an integrated and participatory approach to sustainable ecosystem management.
Jordan - Badia Ecosystems and Livelihoods	The proposed project will aim to support sustainable livelihoods and enhance ecosystem services through participatory approaches in selected areas of Jordan Badia
Morocco - Social and Integrated Agriculture Project	The proposed project will aim to promote the mainstreaming in the <i>Plan Maroc Vert</i> of an approach based on solidarity among small farmers and horizontal integration among agro-food chains, in marginal arid and semi-

	arid regions of Morocco.
Tunisia: Ecotourism and Conservation of Desert Biodiversity	This project Objective is to contribute to the conservation of desert biodiversity in the three targeted National Parks. This will be achieved through the piloting of a new approach to protected areas management that integrates ecotourism development and community engagement.

The project team conducted a desk review of national and regional institutions related to desert topic in order to identify an implementing agency for this regional project. The analysis concluded that the best regional institution that could ensure the role of the regional project coordination, thanks to its capacities and knowledge on monitoring and evaluation, desertification and land degradation, dedicated information systems on environment and strong fiduciary capacities is the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) based in Tunisia.

The choice of the OSS is due to a number of reasons: (i) OSS has over 20 years of experience promoting environmental regional cooperation, mainly on desertification and desert issues; (ii) its mandate is to give impetus to the combat against desertification and the mitigation of drought by providing member countries and organizations with a forum where they can share experiences and harmonize the ways in which data is collected and processed to feed into decision-support tools, thus entirely aligned with the Project objective; (iii) its geographical scope is similar, and goes beyond, the Project; (iv) it has well known economic-analytical capacity on environmental issues and environmental policy discussions; (v) it has broad experience with other development agencies to conduct similar work (i.e. AfDB, FFEM, AFD, EU, GIZ, CIDA, FAO, ...) and have adequate institutional capacities and experience (M&E and fiduciary capacity); (vi) it is one of the Regional Activity Centers for the implementation of the UNCCD regional action plan, (vii) it has a network of focal points in the DELP countries and beyond, and (viii) it is located in the region, in proximity with participating countries.

The proposed project would consist of the following components:

### **Component 1: Knowledge Management and Sharing.**

The aim of this component is to establish and strengthen existing networks between national institutions to encourage management and sharing of knowledge on key issues related to sustainable desert ecosystem management and their associated livelihoods. It will contribute to respond to main the questions related to desert issues as presented in Table 2 below. This will help build community of practice aimed at providing guidance to policy-makers on matters related to the sustainable development of desert ecosystems.

Institutions in the five participating countries will submit eligible activities for financing to the OSS, among them the following:

**Workshops or training sessions:** Organize workshops (with a sectoral or a multi-sectoral focus with deserts as a central theme) bringing together relevant stakeholders from MENA-DELP participating countries to share knowledge and information about pilot MENA-DELP country projects, other relevant desert ecosystem and livelihood enhancement experiences (in participating countries as well in other countries), as well as emerging knowledge on related policy guidance.

**Study tours:** Organize study tours to share information on pilot MENA-DELP country projects or other similar projects (in participating and/or other countries).

**Web-based Networks:** Organize moderated internet discussions through web-based networks between sectoral experts on key issues, emerging lessons and related policy implications related to the sustainable use of desert goods and services in the context of a given productive sector.<sup>17</sup>

The organization of the project workshops as well as the steering committee meetings will be, when possible, associated international conferences such as UNCCD or UNCCC or UNCBD COP.

The decision making process for this component will be elaborated deeply in the project Implementation manual,

<sup>17</sup> Such as the network on ecotourism in desert environments administered by RSCN in Jordan.

the main steps are as follow:

- The national Implementing Institutions will consolidate eligible proposals for study tours, workshops as well as discussion forum through the Desert information system and submit them to the OSS;
- The OSS will analyze the submitted proposals from the National Implementing institutions based on the criteria to be established in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM). The main ones will relate to Desert issues as summarized in the DELP PDF and insert 1 below, at least to 2 countries will benefit from the activity. Based on this analyze, the OSS will produce a summary report describing the received proposals and suggesting, with obvious justification, the ones to be retained and those to be rejected.
- The OSS will submit the summary report to the upcoming meeting of the PSC
- The PSC make decisions on activities to be funded
- The OSS with support from national implementing Institutions will elaborate the TORs of the activities to be achieved, identify consultants and contract them based on the WB procurement guidelines.
- Consultants will work in close collaboration with the OSS and the national implementing institution to finalize the agreed activity
- The OSS will be responsible for the dissemination of the results

An additional responsibility of the OSS would be to prepare a short summary report of the activity and publish it for broader dissemination.

**Table 2: Key issues related to sustainable desert ecosystems**

<p>Key questions to be addressed include, among others, the following;</p> <p>What are the relationships between a democratic society and a sustainable approach to eradicate poverty and create growth in desert areas?</p> <p>Who are ‘the winners’ and ‘the losers’ of current policies concerning deserts ecosystems and livelihoods?</p> <p>What are the negative impacts and spillovers of current development policies and programs on desert ecosystems and livelihoods?</p> <p>What are the main aspects of climate risks on local production systems?</p> <p>What are the main forms of adaptation to climate change and variability that have to be supported in desert ecosystems in a sustainable manner?</p> <p>What are the main aspects of innovative policies aimed at supporting the diversification of livelihoods in desert areas?</p> <p>How can environmental policies and regulations be better designed to allow for the sustainable use of natural resources in order to generate employment and improved livelihoods while preventing the degradation of the resource?</p> <p>What policy levers are important to encourage ecotourism and cultural tourism?</p> <p>What is the current experience in incorporating a focus on ecotourism in a country’s tourism strategy, and what elements are important to increase the market share of ecotourism?</p> <p>What are different income generation options for desert communities that use desert goods and services optimally and what policies and actions are needed to make sure these are realized in a sustainable way?</p> <p>How can policies and related regulations be designed to encourage better water management and protection of biodiversity?</p>
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## **Component 2: Monitoring and Evaluation.**

The proposed objectives of this component are *two-fold*: (i) ***Establish a Programmatic level monitoring system for the MENA-DELP program*** based on aggregating national project level indicators and results, (ii) ***Establish a specific M&E system for the regional project***. The implementing regional organization, the OSS, will be responsible to develop these 2 M&E systems and will elaborate a comprehensive annual progress reports on program level results, to be disseminated to all the stakeholders, including the Bank and GEF.

In order to create a positive feedback loop between M&E and knowledge management, the regional project M&E system will incorporate a *dedicated Desert information system* which will: (i) allow for the collection of data and information on desert ecosystems, livelihoods and sustainable management practices; (ii) disseminate information through a dedicated website; (iii) provide a link and a platform for exchange of information between partners; (iv) include a centralized GIS database; (v) include a monitoring evaluation with predefined indicators to facilitate analysis, consistency and monitoring of activities; and (vi) moderate virtual discussions through existing or new web-based networks, as proposed under Component 1.

The dedicated desert information system will benefit from and establish linkages with similar knowledge management existing platforms such as WOCAT and TerrAfrica Knowledge base. This will support national reporting needs for best practices and further enhance the wider dissemination and knowledge sharing of desert ecosystem technical and approach solutions. The proposed Information system will also contribute to the learning of the GEF-5 land degradation, biodiversity, and climate change portfolios, and help shape these future focal area strategies by enhancing the knowledge base on global environmental benefits generated by GEF investments on desert ecosystems and livelihoods.

B. 2. [Incremental /Additional cost reasoning](#): describe the incremental (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or additional (LDCF/SCCF) activities requested for GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF financing and the associated [global environmental benefits](#) (GEF Trust Fund) or associated adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF) to be delivered by the project:

With the additional financing from GEF, the proposed project will expand and strengthen the scope of some of the activities of the 'MENA/DELP', considered here as 'the baseline project'. More particularly: (i) *in terms of Knowledge Management and Sharing*, it will strengthen synergy between stakeholders at all levels to place the importance of the desert as a cornerstone for long-term development prospects in the region and the necessity to improve the flow of desert ecosystem services for sustainable development in a positive feedback loop, and it will generate broad knowledge on desert ecosystem issues, by creating a forum for open discussion and integration, identification of key issues and agreed opportunities for collaboration; support enforcement institutions with similar mandates to protect Desert ecosystems; (ii) *in terms of Monitoring and Evaluation*, it will track regional level externalities and mobilize constituencies. In terms of Global environmental benefits, this approach will be conducive to more rational management of desert ecosystem, protection of the desert biodiversity, improvement of local population livelihood and to a stronger focus on desert issues in knowledge production and more concerted and cost-effective desert resources management activities, as well as to improved monitoring of desert MENA Region.

B.3. Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the Project at the national and local levels, including consideration of gender dimensions, and how these will support the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF). As a background information, read [Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF.](#):

A number of selected organizations of the five participating countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) will directly benefit from the interventions of the proposed project, because they will get adequate information on key issues related to desert ecosystems and livelihoods, through adequate channels and knowledge products.

The direct beneficiaries of the proposed regional project, which has an implementation period of 4 years, will be a number of selected national and regional organizations, involved in the implementation of the MENA-DELP national projects. The proposed project will contribute to fill the institutional and knowledge gaps that currently exist in terms of sustainable desert ecosystem management. These organizations and institutions include, but are not limited to:

- (i) [Algeria](#): World Desert Institute (IDM) and Ministry of Land Planning and Environment (MATE) ;
- (ii) [Egypt](#): Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA);
- (iii) [Jordan](#): National Center for Agriculture Research and Extension (NCARE), Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), and Hashemite Fund for the Development of the Jordan Badia (HFDJB);

- (iv) Morocco: Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries;
- (v) Tunisia: Ministry of Environment (MoE).

Indirectly, other potential beneficiaries of the regional project include community-based organizations, regional and local authorities, research institutions, and universities in the participating countries, that would participate in the thematic networks created and strengthened by the proposed project. Individual technical experts could also participate and thus benefit. Engagement with women's groups, youth groups, farmers' associations. will be prioritized during project preparation and implementation, where appropriate.

Furthermore, a number of national institutions of the participating countries will have the opportunity to fill the institutional and knowledge gaps that currently exist in terms of desert ecosystem management at their level. Finally, communities, NGOs, civil and local councils of the five participating countries will also benefit from knowledge on key issues on desert ecosystems and livelihoods.

B.4 Indicate risks, including climate change risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design:

Risks that are likely to affect both project preparation and implementation are the following:

(a) Civil unrest and political situations: Because of current events in some countries (for instance, Egypt), project preparation and, eventually, implementation could be delayed. However, the Bank will closely monitor the situation in each participating country and identify openings and alternatives;

(b) Monitoring & Evaluation activities. National institutions of participating countries have expressed little interest in carrying out M&E activities (Component 2). Some of them also lack key technical expertise, especially in order to align national and regional M&E systems. However, additional consultations will be held during the preparatory phase. The Steering Committee and the OSS are likely to efficiently facilitate communication with core institutions. During implementation, adequate technical support will be eventually provided to concerned institutions in order to ensure efficiency and consistency:

(c) Institutional linkages. As the achievement of the regional project objective is partially linked to the success of the national projects under the MENA-DELP Program, the risks is that reporting national project outcomes and results will be simply aggregated at the programmatic level.

The overall project risks are rated 'Moderate'. A range of potential mitigation measures will be put in place to mitigate the impact of these risks.

B.5. Identify key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable:

One national agency (ministerial department) of each of the participating countries will be represented in the project Steering committee. The OSS will play the role of the Regional implementing institution. Other potential institutions are the 'Association for Agricultural Research Institutes for the Near East and North Africa' (AARINENA), based in Amman, Jordan, and the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) based in Aleppo, Syria. Regional M&E responsibilities could also be ensured by a separate institution (preliminary desk reviews indicate that the Institut des Déserts du Monde (IDM) (put in place in 2003 by the 'Fondation Déserts du Monde' in Ghardaïa, Algeria) could play an active role (provided it receives substantial technical support).

A specific effort will be made to specifically invite representatives from community-based organizations, NGOs, and private sector to participate to the study tours and / or workshops. This will also be influenced by their participation in the national projects.

B.6. Explain how cost-effectiveness is reflected in the project design:

The project design integrated several principles to make the project effective, the main ones are: (a) inherently limited resources may have relatively large benefits and spillovers; (b) a better understanding of key issues affecting desert ecosystems and livelihoods (in terms of constraints and potentials) may have a considerable

economic impact on key sectoral policies of each participating country; (c) proposed interventions may have not only positive impacts on one specific sector; but also translate into multi-sectoral changes; (d) given the limited resources, the merits of the different initiatives (or sub-projects) should be mainly measured against the extent to which they contribute to general national and regional objectives; and (e) the interventions of the proposed project will enhance the institutional capacity of the participating countries to make effective use of their limited human, financial and natural resources

#### B.7. Outline the coordination with other related initiatives:

The proposed project is a regional umbrella initiative aimed at enhancing knowledge and experience sharing on opportunities for enhancing desert livelihoods among the five participating pilot countries. It is part of a 10-15 year program (MENA-Desert Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program (MENA-DELP), launched by the WB in partnership the GEF and several countries), aimed at contributing to the enhancement of livelihoods in desert ecosystems by harnessing their value in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner so that the flow of desert goods and services can be optimized. The proposed Project would also build on previous relevant initiatives, particularly (i) the Resources Management in the Middle East and North Africa Region Program (MENARID Program) through developed approaches to harmonization and M&E and developed knowledge on INRM and disseminate information for up-scaling; (ii) the “Regional Initiative for Dryland Management” (led by ICARDA, in partnership with the World Bank and FAO, implemented between 1996 and 2006), the project will benefit from the developed approach for technical cooperation between countries experts. Moreover, the regional project will also capitalize on the:(i) Sahara and Sahel Observatory knowledge and programs, mainly those related to the Environment program: Long term ecological monitoring observatories network project which objective is to build capacities in ecological surveillance and environmental monitoring in circum-Saharan Africa; the project on the establishment and strengthening of national mechanisms for environmental surveillance and the Drought Early warning project in Maghreb countries; the shared water resources program, mainly with the North-Western Sahara Aquifer System (NWSAS) project which is in its 3th phase; and the activities of the Information and communication program; (ii) the regional - governance and knowledge generation project which objective is to foster the integration of environmental issues into sectoral and development policies of the Beneficiaries; (iii) the “Plan Maroc Vert” or Green Plan which is the country’s strategy to bring better opportunities to small and large-scale farmers by transforming its agri-food sector into a stable source of growth, competitiveness and broad-based economic development in rural areas; (iii)the Tunisian Ecotourism and Conservation of Desert Biodiversity Project.

#### C. GEF AGENCY INFORMATION:

##### C.1 Confirm the co-financing amount the GEF agency brings to the project:

The Project total cost is US\$ 1 million. It is a Specific Investment Loan financed through a GEF grant in the amount of US\$ 1.0 million and implemented over a period of 4 years. The World Bank will mainly contribute to the project through its technical support, other ongoing projects and mobilization of other partners.

This project will be delivered without any additional cash contribution. Minewile the ongoing RTA with Algeria will contribute and in kind contribution from OSS and beneficiaru countries.

##### C.2 How does the project fit into the GEF agency’s program (reflected in documents such as UNDAF, CAS, ...) and staff capacity in the country to follow up project implementation:

The proposed project is in line with key policies and strategies of the World Bank, namely the following ones:

***The World Bank’s strategy and assistance in the MENA region***, which includes a range of products including, among others, the following: A rapid investment response to support required poverty interventions; Help with employment generation and special areas programs; Advisory support; Strengthening of institutional capacities; Provision of entrepreneurship and other training programs. Key to the sustainability of a manageable transition in MENA countries is a strengthening of the region’s governance framework (transparency, accountability, and social justice), fostering inclusive growth, establishing sustainable social protection, helping reduce food price volatility and supporting global and regional economic integration. The Bank’s environment agenda intersects with the much

larger job creation agenda ('green' jobs and new jobs for ecotourism and cultural tourism).<sup>18</sup> In the case of Algeria, the CAS focuses, among others, on promoting sustainable development (environment protection) and reducing spatial disparities (through ecotourism projects).

The objectives of the *New Environment Strategy for the World Bank group*, which is currently being drafted through an extensive consultation process with global stakeholders, and through the preparation of a series of analytical papers to inform the strategy. By highlighting the importance of green, clean and resilient growth, the strategy will focus on a "new development paradigm" that better balances growth with environmental and social sustainability, whereby economic growth does not necessarily guarantee quality of life or ensure that the needs of the poor and marginalized are always met.<sup>19</sup> Finally, the World Bank's new Environment Strategy places emphasis on green, clean and resilient growth. In particular, it focuses on better biodiversity management in the context of production landscapes, as well as on improved climate resiliency. These are both important aspects for the design of the MENA-DELP as a whole.

### **PART III: INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AND SUPPORT**

The project team conducted a desk review of national and regional institutions related to desert topic in order to identify the regional implementing agency. This analysis shows clearly that institutional mandates are linked closely with productive sectors (specifically agriculture or tourism) or are focused on local community development. This suggests that, as a first step, it would be beneficial for networks to be established that are sectoral in nature, as the lessons learned should ultimately lead to policy and investment recommendations that are of interest to a sectoral audience. At the same time, capacity clearly needs to also be built in an institution with a mandate that is multisectoral, which can take on the role of champion of the deserts agenda and can play a role as coordinator of the sectoral networks in the longer term to facilitate the dissemination of the policy-related knowledge linked with desert ecosystems. The only institution in the region with a clear mandate on desert issues is the 'Institut des Deserts du Monde' (IDM), based in Algeria. However, IDM is at an early stage in its development, and the Algerian government has requested an RTA from the Bank to help build its capacity. The Algerian government has also championed the deserts agenda and sees the IDM as rising to play a regional role on this agenda. It is however, at too early a stage of establishment to take on the administrative role of potential regional implementing agency. However, given recent commitments to strengthen information systems at IDM, there is a strong possibility that it could take on the role of program level M & E. The analysis concluded that the best regional institution that could ensure the role of the regional project coordination, thanks to its capacities and knowledge on monitoring and evaluation, desertification and land degradation, dedicated information systems on environment and strong fiduciary capacities is the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS).

#### **A. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT:**

The Project will be implemented by the '**Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel**' (OSS), where the Project Management Team (PMT) will be hosted. The Beneficiaries will be represented in the Project Steering Committee. The role and responsibility of OSS, the PMT, and the Steering Committee, is described in details below (see also the PAD annex 3 for more details). The World Bank will carry out the supervision of the Project, according to the Implementation Support Plan presented in Annex 5 of the PAD.

The choice of the OSS is due to a number of reasons: (i) OSS has over 20 years of experience promoting environmental regional cooperation, mainly on desertification and desert issues; (ii) its mandate is to give impetus to the combat against desertification and the mitigation of drought by providing member countries and organizations with a forum where they can share experiences and harmonize the ways in which data is collected and processed to feed into decision-support tools, thus entirely aligned with the Project objective; (iii) its geographical scope is similar, and goes beyond, the Project; (iv) it has well known economic-analytical capacity on environmental issues and environmental policy discussions; (v) it has broad experience with other development agencies to conduct similar work (i.e. AfDB,

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<sup>18</sup> 'Eco-tourism' defines travels to natural areas in a way that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of population (International Society of eco-tourism). 'Cultural tourism' refers to a type of tourism that takes account of other people's cultures (UNESCO).

<sup>19</sup> <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSQITE/ETERNAL/TOPICS/ENVIRONMENT/ESTENSVSSTRATEGY>.

FFEM, AFD, EU, GIZ, CIDA, FAO ...) and have adequate institutional capacities and experience (M&E and fiduciary capacity); (vi) it is one of the Regional Activity Centers for the implementation of the UNCCD regional action plan, (vii) it has a network of focal points in the DELP countries and beyond, and (viii) it is located in the region, in proximity with participating countries.

**Project Management Team (PMT)** - The PMT will be housed in OSS. It will manage day-to-day implementation of the Project. OSS staff will be assigned to the following PMT roles: Project coordinator, procurement specialist and financial management specialist. If needed, consultants will be hired to carry out specific tasks. Inside the OSS, the PMT will be responsible for the following tasks:

Supervising the preparation of a Project Implementation Manual (PIM), which will identify eligible initiatives and bidders, and include guidelines for the preparation and submission of activities to be carried out under Component 1, as well procurement mechanisms;

Ensuring the financial management of the project funds and procurement activities in accordance to Bank's practices;

Prepare procedures for submission of tenders concerning activities to be financed at the level of one or more countries (tenders will be addressed to an agreed list of eligible institutions of each of the participating countries);

Validating/rejecting proposals received from the National Implementation Partners concerning eligible activities to be financed under Component 1, and submit them to the approval of the SC,

Preparing a comprehensive annual progress report (to be submitted to the SC) based on the annual project progress reports prepared by the National Implementing Institutions of the participating countries for respective national projects. Defining the general modalities of a common M&E system (the same indicators will be used in the participating countries).<sup>20</sup>

Directly supervising (or, alternatively, ensuring) M&E activities at the regional level, on the basis of M&E activities at country level (Component 2).

Ensuring the implementation of all the activities related to project coordination (Component 3).

Organizing the SC meetings and assuming a secretarial role.

**Steering committee.** Representatives of the key national institutions of the five participating countries will constitute a 'Steering committee' which will be responsible for general strategic issues and decision making. It will be made up of one representative of the leading ministerial departments of each participating country. The Steering committee will fulfill the following tasks: (a) Organize preliminary consultations concerning the selection of an agency to be in charge of the implementation of the project at the regional level (see below) (on the basis of a range of key parameters, concerning institutional capacities, skills, and international expertise); (b) Supervise the activities of the OSS (see below); (c) Supervise all the decision concerning the allocation of funds to country-based initiatives; (d) Facilitate a two-way communication process between the OSS and the National implementing institutions (see below) of the five participating countries; (e) Review and approve annual regional project progress reports.

**Project Steering Committee (PSC)** will be responsible for general strategic issues and decision making. It will be made up of one representative of the leading ministerial departments of each participating country. A representative of the OSS will also participate in the meetings of the SC as an observer and assume a secretarial role. The organization of Steering Committee's meetings on issues related to the regional DELP will be associated to high-level ministerial conferences during international fora (such as UNCCD or UNCCC or UNCBD COP). The Project Steering Committee will be responsible for the following activities, to be further detailed in the PIM:

Providing a list of national institutions in participating countries that would form the core list for this project;

Validation of the project annual action plan (prepared by the OSS) and make decisions on activities to be funded on an annual basis that are proposed by the core list, to be put forward for non-objection to the Bank;

Validating decisions on the allocation of funds;

Facilitating a two-way communication process between the OSS and the National Implementing Institutions of the MENA-DELP national projects in the participating countries; and

Reviewing and approving annual regional project progress reports.

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<sup>20</sup> Preliminary desk reviews indicate that the *Institut des Déserts du Monde* (IDM) (put in place in 2003 by the *Fondation des Déserts du Monde* in Ghardaïa, Algeria) could play an active role in M&E activities (provided it receives substantial technical support).



At the level of each of the participating countries, *National Implementation Partners* will be selected among the list of core institutions to carry out the implementation of project activities under Component 1, on the basis of proposals submitted to the SC for approval.

The *National Implementing Institutions* of the MENA-DELP national projects<sup>21</sup> will also play important roles in the context of the proposed project, in addition to their implementing agency role in the context of respective national projects. This will include:

- Encouraging and supporting, at national level, the identification and the preparation of eligible proposals by local eligible institutions for activities under Component 1.
- Consolidating eligible proposals and submitting them to OSS.
- Participating in the preparation of the PIM (under the supervision of the OSS).
- Ensuring M&E activities at the country level, as per the design of respective national projects.
- Preparing *a comprehensive annual progress report*, as per the design of respective national projects (to be submitted to the OSS).
- Strengthen the links with the implementing institutions of other countries to foster joint initiatives.

A desk review of national and regional institutions related to this topic shows clearly that institutional mandates are linked closely with productive sectors (specifically agriculture or tourism) or are focused on local community development. This suggests that, as a first step, it would be beneficial for networks to be established that are sectoral in nature, as the lessons learned should ultimately lead to policy and investment recommendations that are of interest to a sectoral audience. At the same time, capacity clearly needs to also be built in an institution with a mandate that is multisectoral, which can take on the role of champion of the deserts agenda and can play a role as coordinator of the sectoral networks in the longer term to facilitate the dissemination of the policy-related knowledge linked with desert ecosystems. The only institution in the region with this mandate is the 'Institut des Deserts du Monde' (IDM), based in Algeria. However, IDM is at an early stage in its development, and the Algerian government has requested an RTA from the Bank to help build its capacity. The Algerian government has also championed the deserts agenda and sees the IDM as rising to play a regional role on this agenda. It is however, at too early a stage of establishment to take on the administrative role of potential regional implementing agency. However, given recent commitments to strengthen information systems at IDM, there is a strong possibility that it could take on the role of program level M and E.

#### **B. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT:**

A Project implementation manual will be prepared at the beginning of the project to define mechanisms and procedures related to project implementation. Eligible sub-projects identified by eligible institutions at the level of the five participating countries will be validated by the national implementing agencies and integrated to an overall national framework, to be submitted to the OSS for final endorsement. The Steering committee will supervise the entire process.

#### **PART IV: EXPLAIN THE ALIGNMENT OF PROJECT DESIGN WITH THE ORIGINAL PIF**

Originally, it was envisioned that the RTA from Algeria will co-finance this regional project; the ongoing restructuring in the Ministry of Environment didn't allow us to confirm this commitment from the Government.

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

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<sup>21</sup> The four National Implementing Institutions are the Ministry of Land Planning and Environment (Algeria), the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (Egypt), the National Center for Agriculture Research and Extension (NCARE), and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Morocco).


**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)

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
Mr. Saleh Al-Kharabsheh	Secretary General	Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	09/07/2011
Dr. Mawaheb Abou El Azm	CEO	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency CEO	09/15/2011
M. Alid Mouli	Secretary General	Morocco Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries	09/15/2011 (letter confirming request of STAR allocation)
M. Mohamed Benyahia (OFP)	Director for Communication and Coordination Partnerships	Morocco Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment	08/29/2011 (letter confirming interest in ASIMA project for the MENA-DELP)
M. Mohamed Benyahia (OFP)	Director for Communication and Coordination Partnerships	Morocco Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment	10/13/2011
Mme. Amel Oudina	Deputy Director	Ministry of Land Planning and Environment	09/25/2011
BENNA Zeyani	Minister of Environment	Ministry of Environment	09/26/2012

**B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION**

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF criteria for CEO endorsement/approval of project.

Agency Coordinator, Agency Name	Signature	Date (Month, day, year)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
Karin Shepardson, World Bank		10/10/2012	Song Li	202 473 3488	Sli@worldbank.org

## ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

PDO Level Results Indicators*	Core	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Cumulative target value				Frequency Data Source/	Methodology	Responsibility for Data Collection	Description (indicator definition etc.)
				YR 1	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4				
<b>Indicator One:</b> Number of Workshops organized on issues related to desert ecosystems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	1	2	2	2	Annually	Project documentation & reports. External reports Reports of supervision mission	External reviews MTR Final evaluation	
<b>Indicator Two :</b> Number of virtual meetings held through the dedicated Desert Information System on desert related issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	0	2	4	6	Annually	Project documentation & reports. External reports Reports of supervision mission	External reviews MTR Final evaluation	
<b>Indicator Three :</b> Number of knowledge products related to desert ecosystems issues developed through the study tours and disseminated	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	1	2	2	2	Annually	Project documentation & reports. External reports Reports of supervision mission	External reviews MTR Final evaluation	

**INTERMEDIATE RESULTS**

**Component 1: Knowledge management and sharing**

PDO Level Results Indicators*	Core	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Cumulative target value				Frequency Data Source/	Methodology	Responsibility for Data Collection	Description (indicator definition etc.)
				YR 2	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4				
Number of participants to workshops organized by the project		Number	0	50	100	120	200	Twice a year	Progress reports & reports. External assess. Reports of supervision mission	Project M&E	Cumulative number of people (by session, topics and, if possible, by gender) over implementation
Number of participants of study tours organized by the project		Number	0	10	15	20	25	Twice a year	Progress reports & reports. External assess. Reports of supervision mission	Project M&E	Cumulative number of participants (by type of institution, gender, etc.)
Number of analytical studies prepared, published and disseminated		Number	0	1	1	1	1	Twice a year	Progress reports & reports. External assess. Reports of supervision mission	Project M&E	Cumulative number of studies (by topics.)

**INTERMEDIATE RESULTS**

**Component 2: Monitoring & Evaluation**

PDO Level Results Indicators*	Core	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Cumulative target value				Frequency Data Source/	Methodology	Responsibility for Data Collection	Description (indicator definition etc.)
				YR 2	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4				

Number of users of the established information system (web server)		Number	0	100	200	300	500	Twice a year	Number of connections to the web server Project documentation & reports. External reports Reports of supervision mission	External reviews MTR Final evaluation	
Number of members of national institutions trained on M&E system and Information system		Number	0	2	2	2	2	Twice a year	Project documentation & reports. External reports Reports of supervision mission	External reviews MTR Final evaluation	
Number of comprehensive M&E reports prepared at Program and project levels		Number	0	2	2	2	2	Twice a year	Project documentation & reports. External reports Reports of supervision mission	External reviews MTR Final evaluation	

**ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS** (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

<b>STAP Comments on MENA DELP PFD related to the regional project</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<p>STAP also is keen to assist the process towards a regional project, especially the Desert Ecosystem Assessment. STAP would like to see this programmatic approach spearhead similar integrated regional approaches in other drylands, and therefore urges careful tracking and monitoring of key indicators, including land cover, total systems carbon, climate resilience, biodiversity and rural livelihood/poverty status. Knowledge Management (KM), along with Decision Support (DS), systems must be firmly rooted both nationally and regionally.</p>	<p>Component 2 of this regional project was designed to (i) <b>Establish a Programmatic level monitoring system for the MENA-DELP program</b> based on aggregating national project level indicators and results, and (ii) <b>Establish a specific M&amp;E system for the regional project</b>. The implementing regional organization, the OSS, will be responsible to develop these 2 M&amp;E systems and will elaborate a comprehensive annual progress reports on program level results, to be disseminated to all the stakeholders, including the Bank and GEF.</p>
<p>STAP suggests: An explicit intention to monitor and describe good practices in achieving multiple benefits through one of the KM existing platforms for Sustainable Land Management, such as WOCAT. This will also, coincidentally, met national reporting needs for 'best practices' and further enhance the wider dissemination and knowledge sharing of desert ecosystem technical and approach solutions.</p>	<p>I in order to create a positive feedback loop between M&amp;E and knowledge management, the regional project M&amp;E system will incorporate a <b>dedicated information system</b> which will: (i) allow for the collection of data and information on desert ecosystems, livelihoods and sustainable management practices; (ii) disseminate information through a dedicated website; (iii) provide a link and a platform for exchange of information between partners; (iv) include a centralized GIS database; (v) include a monitoring evaluation with predefined indicators to facilitate analysis, consistency and monitoring of activities; and (vi) moderate virtual discussions through existing or new web-based networks, as proposed under Component 1.</p> <p>The dedicated desert information system will benefit and establish linkages with similar knowledge management existing platforms such as WOCAT and TerraAfrica Knowledge base. This will support national reporting needs for best practices and further enhance the wider dissemination and knowledge sharing of desert ecosystem technical and approach solutions. The proposed Information system will also contribute to the learning of the GEF-5 land degradation, biodiversity, and climate change portfolios, and help shape these future focal area strategies by enhancing the knowledge base on global environmental benefits generated by GEF investments on desert ecosystems and livelihoods.</p>

**ANNEX C: CONSULTANTS TO BE HIRED FOR THE PROJECT USING GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF RESOURCES**

<i>Position Titles</i>	<i>\$/ Person Week*</i>	<i>Estimated Person Weeks**</i>	<i>Tasks To Be Performed</i>
<b>For Project Management</b>			
Local			
Project Coordinator	1,000	15	Coordinate the project activities
Procurement staff	1,000	15	Ensure procurement activities
FM staff	1,000	15	Ensure Financial management activities
International			
			Support study tours and workshops
Justification for travel, if any: The Grant will finance the meetings of the steering committee members and the participation of the OSS project team			
<b>For Technical Assistance</b>			
Local			
Workshop Facilitator	1,000	20	Preparing, Facilitating and moderating the workshops
Desert experts (biodiversity, Desertification, Participatory approach, ecosystems services, ecotourism, development policies, ...)	1,000	245	Conduct the study tours on desert issues as per countries requests
Web Administrator	1,000	10	Responsible of the set up and administration the dedicated Desrts information system
M&E specialist	1,000	90	Responsible of the establishment of the 2 M&E systems and their administration
International			
Desert Expert	1,500	30	Support studies on desert issues
Justification for travel, if any: The Grant will pay for the workshops related travels and will ensure the participants travels including consultants			

\* Provide dollar rate per person week. \*\* Total person weeks needed to carry out the tasks.

**ANNEX D: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION ACTIVITIES AND THE USE OF FUNDS**

- A. EXPLAIN IF THE PPG OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THROUGH THE PPG ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN.
- B. DESCRIBE FINDINGS THAT MIGHT AFFECT THE PROJECT DESIGN OR ANY CONCERNS ON PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, IF ANY:
- C. PROVIDE DETAILED FUNDING AMOUNT OF THE PPG ACTIVITIES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION STATUS IN THE TABLE BELOW:

<i>Project Preparation Activities Approved</i>	<i>Implementation Status</i>	<i>GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Amount (\$)</i>				<i>Cofinancing (\$)</i>
		<i>Amount Approved</i>	<i>Amount Spent To date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>	<i>Uncommitted Amount*</i>	
	(Select)					
	(Select)					
	(Select)					
	(Select)					
	(Select)					
	(Select)					
	(Select)					
	(Select)					
<b>Total</b>		0	0	0	0	0

\* Any uncommitted amounts should be returned to the GEF Trust Fund. This is not a physical transfer of money, but achieved through reporting and netting out from disbursement request to Trustee. Please indicate expected date of refund transaction to Trustee.



**ANNEX E: CALENDAR OF EXPECTED REFLOWS (if non-grant instrument is used)**

Provide a calendar of expected reflows to the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Trust Fund or to your Agency (and/or revolving fund that will be set up)

ANNEX F: DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL PROJECTS

1. Algeria

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Improving Desert Ecosystems and Climate Resilient Oases</b>					
<b>Project Area</b>	Preliminary intervention areas will include two governorates within the desert ecosystem, namely, Adrar and Ghardaia. The criteria for the selection of sites will emphasize the following: development and environmental goods and services (oasis agriculture, water harvesting and management, biodiversity, agro-biodiversity, medicinal/aromatic plants, etc.). The selection will also take into consideration the cultural, social, and spiritual values specific to desert communities in these areas.					
<b>Project Description</b>	<p>The <u>proposed project objective</u> is to improve livelihoods of oasis communities through the piloting of a combined approach of conservation, agricultural development, and adaptation to climate change impacts at a network of intervention sites.</p> <p><b>Component 1. Establishment of a Network of Demonstration Sites.</b> This component will put in place a network of sites demonstrating the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, embodying the principles of IEM. The initial sites will be selected based on characteristics typical of different oasis systems in Southern Algeria, including biodiversity/agro-biodiversity hotspots, important agricultural and groundwater aquifer areas, and special social and cultural dimensions of Algerian deserts. This component will finance: (i) the preparation and implementation of management plans for the selected sites in the context of a sustainable use of desert resources and a reduction of vulnerability to climate change impacts; (ii) improving oasis agricultural activities, including the introduction of climate change resilient practices, and the restoration of traditional irrigation systems and related agricultural knowledge; (iii) enhancing management and activities around protected areas, and the conservation of the agro-biodiversity in oases; (iv) reducing the vulnerability of local communities to long lasting droughts through the diversification of livelihood opportunities, including income generating activities such as handicrafts, apiculture, medicinal and aromatic plants, fruit tree cultures, date culture, and ecotourism, among others.</p> <p><b>Component 2. Enabling Environment for the Application of IEM.</b> This component will aim to create an enabling environment for implementing an IEM approach at local, regional and national levels. The implementation of this component will take advantage of the World Deserts Institute (WDI) in Ghardaia and existing good agricultural practices and research undertaken under the Five Year Agricultural Plan. This component will finance the following activities: (i) strengthening institutional and governance capacity building through the use of existing management and institutions under the National Territorial Planning Scheme (SNAT) and FYAP at local, regional and national levels. This will include creating a steering committee for the project to strengthen the coordination of key sectors (environment, agriculture and water resources management), and strengthening local government and farmers' associations at project sites; (ii) sensitization and training. This will include related training of targeted stakeholders and the development of a dissemination plan for strengthened IEM (conserving desert ecosystems, managing oasis agricultural resources, and strengthening local resilience to climate change impacts). This will also include a stock taking and gap analysis in terms of knowledge to apply the IEM approach, dissemination of good practices for climate change adaptation, as well as documentation and restoration of traditional knowledge in desert management; (iii) supporting a participatory and consultative approach to define a strategy and an action plan to preserve and improve resilience to climate change impacts in the provision of desert ecosystem goods and services, in order to enable their conservation as well as their rational and sustainable use. It is important to emphasize that private sector partners, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and vulnerable groups (rural women and youth) will be included in consultations; and (iv) integrating IEM and climate change adaptation into the SNAT and FYAP where applicable.</p> <p><b>Component 3. Project Management, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation.</b> This component will provide support for project implementation, coordination, management, supervision, and Monitoring and Evaluation, including the establishment of a Project Management Unit (PMU) and of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) system. In addition, the component will finance a dissemination strategy to increase public awareness of IEM approach, good practices of conserving and use of related desert ecosystems services and goods, climate change adaptation measures, and other good practices generated by the project in view of disseminating and scaling up through different national mechanisms and social media.</p> <p><b>SCCF Funding.</b> Through its pilot investments, the ALG-DELP will address two important SCCF objectives: (i) reducing vulnerability to climate change of desert communities and ecosystems; and (ii) increasing adaptive capacity.</p> <p>The objective of the Climate Resilient Desert Agriculture Project is to contribute to the integrated oasis agricultural management and diversified livelihoods opportunities in Algerian deserts through piloting climate change adaptation approach within the Five Year Agriculture Plan.</p>					
<b>Executing Agency</b>	Ministry of Land Planning and Environment (MATE)					
<b>Project millstones</b>	Concept Review	Decision Meeting	Auth Appr/Negs (in principle)	Begin Appraisal	Begin Negotiations	Board Approval
	12-Sep-2012	19-Dec-2012	20-Jul-2013	29-Mar-2013	15-May-2013	30-Oct-2013

## 2. Egypt

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Climate-Adapted Livelihoods for Bedouins</b>
<b>Project Area</b>	The project will be implemented in areas to be determined during project preparation.
<b>Project Description</b>	<p>The <u>proposed project objective</u> is to improve the livelihoods of the disadvantaged Bedouin and other local communities and enhance their resilience to projected climate change impacts, through an integrated and participatory approach to sustainable ecosystem management.</p> <p><b>Component 1. Water supply, harvesting and management.</b> The objective of this component is to improve access to water resources for local communities, while introducing sustainable management practices and innovative efficient use options. The component will also finance runoff water harvesting techniques contributing to water resource conservation, such as dams gull plugs, contour terracing and contour trenches, etc. Existing water supply infrastructure will be complemented by small-scale photovoltaic water pumping installations for irrigation, as well as for public services or household uses. Storage and recovery techniques will also be applied. In particular, collected water sources, regardless of salinity, will be used to cultivate adapted food and fodder crops for Bedouins communities and their animals, according to the salinity and other characteristics of the collected water resources.</p> <p><b>Component 2. Public and Private Sector Investment in Ecotourism Related Infrastructures.</b> The objective of this component is to provide an appropriate incentive framework to catalyze private sector investment in ecotourism ventures (circuits, ecolodges, ...). The component will support the following main activities: (i) the revision/updating of appropriate institutional and regulatory frameworks; (ii) the carrying out of an economic feasibility study and marketing study for the development of ecotourism in select areas; (iii) capacity building of community and private sector stakeholders on ecotourism principles and practices, including training sessions, study tours, and exchange visits; and (iv) the rehabilitation and/or construction of small-scale start-up ecotourism infrastructure, such as visitor centers.</p> <p><b>Component 3. Community Empowerment and Livelihood Opportunities.</b> The objective of this component is to help build the capacity of local communities to sustainably manage their ecosystem and its resources and to harness opportunities for improved livelihoods. The component will help consolidate the participation and negotiation skills of local Bedouin in the management and securing of their natural resources, through the creation of inter-group management structures. This component will also support Bedouin and other local communities to harness ecosystem services to generate new livelihood opportunities, through activities such as embroidery, tailoring, camel and sheep wool products, collection and packing of medicinal plants, and the involvement of local communities in culture and ecotourism activities (as guides and/or operators). Small scale industries centered on animal products would be supported and consolidated through the development of strategies and marketing infrastructures for animal trade and livestock products by increasing partnerships with development partners (government, the private sector, NGOs). The component would also finance study tours, exchange visits, field days, workshops/seminars, and training for community facilitator groups at the national, regional and local levels. In particular carrying out study tours for some local community leaders to areas (projects, cities, districts) with advanced income generation would be particularly useful.</p> <p><b>Component 4. Assessment, Dissemination and Monitoring.</b> The objective of this component is to ensure outreach and dissemination in order to enhance the adoption of SLWM practices implemented by the project and establish a monitoring system to support the evaluation of project activities and future endeavors. The component will support an assessment of the status and potential opportunities of desert ecosystem services including biodiversity, natural resources (soil, water, animal feed potential), and related land use policy frameworks. The assessment would also: (i) evaluate the impacts of inadequate natural resource management in select desert locations on the socioeconomic status of the local population; and (ii) evaluate the status of natural resource over-exploitation and identify sustainable and implementable alternatives. In terms of outreach and dissemination, the component would support information and experience sharing, particularly in terms of land management and use, traditional practices, local knowledge, methodologies for collecting, analyzing and interpreting data, as well as the documentation and communication of success stories, practices and lessons learned. The component could also consider the establishment of a public relations and awareness raising program on ecosystem service conservation and management, including an information center for environmental education targeting a wide range of audiences, including school children, students, local visitors, as well as settled and nomadic pastoralists. Finally, in terms of monitoring, the component will support the creation of a regional database for desert areas in order to facilitate monitoring and evaluation and facilitate future work.</p>
<b>Implementing Agency</b>	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
<b>Project Milestones</b>	The current country situation didn't allow making a substantial progress in the project preparation.

### 3. Jordan

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Desert Ecosystems and Livelihoods Project (DELP)</b>					
<b>Project Area</b>	<p>The Jordan-DELP will focus its interventions on the southern and northern Badia, which includes four poverty pockets. In the south, an area comprising the following three poverty pockets will be targeted: <i>Al Jafer, Husainiyeh and Deisa</i>. In the north, activities will be implemented along a route which begins in Al Azraq (south east of Amman) and ends in Burqu' in the east, targeting the communities in the <i>Ar Ruwaishid</i> poverty pocket.</p> <p>In the southern Badia, the DELP country project would focus on three poverty pocket areas: <i>Al Jafr</i>, <i>Husayniya</i> (Ma'an Governorate), and <i>Deisa</i> (Aqaba Governorate). Altogether the population size of these sub-districts is of about 23,000 people. Although not centered in the Badia area of the same governorates, interaction and synergies would be sought with the IFAD-supported Agricultural Resources Management Project, with the related but GEF-funded Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Water Management Practices, and with the World Bank-supported Jordan Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Urban Development project.</p> <p>In the northern Badia and given the high biome value and ecotourism potential, activities would be centered on <i>Burqu'</i> and <i>Ar Ruwayshid</i> (Mafraq Governorate). The project would target the communities living in these areas, which are estimated to be about 10,000 people. In order to enhance the eco-tourism return to investment, the project would consider a larger interaction area by including <i>Al Azraq</i> and <i>Shaumari</i> (with important and already established Protected Areas, wetland reserves, and eco-lodging facilities) and determining an ideal itinerary following a route from <i>Al Azraq</i> to <i>Burqu'</i>. These areas are either part of the Badia Restoration Program workplan (<i>Ar Ruwayshid</i>) or are included in on-going programs of the Royal Society for Conservation of Nature/RSCN (<i>Al Azraq</i> and <i>Shaumari</i>).</p>					
<b>Project Description</b>	<p><b>The proposed project objective</b> is to sustain the ecosystem services and livelihoods in four poverty pockets in the Badia through diversification of community income sources; preservation and sustainable use of natural and rangeland resources; and capacity enhancement of target stakeholders and beneficiaries.</p> <p><b>Component 1. Supporting Sustainable Rangeland Rehabilitation and Livelihoods</b> Rangeland rehabilitation activities will add to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)/National Center for Agricultural Research and Extension's (NCARE) planned activities in the southern Badia, which include a range of water harvesting, rangeland rehabilitation, animal productivity enhancement and other livestock-related value added activities, within a sustainable grazing and rangeland management framework. Livelihoods supporting activities will link to ongoing and planned investments by the donor community, NGOs and the Government in the southern Badia.</p> <p><b>Component 2. Promoting Community-Centered Ecotourism and Resource Use</b> The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people (TIES, 1990). This component will contribute to the implementation of the National Tourism Strategy and achievement of its targets by promoting eco-tourism ventures that are private sector-led with competitiveness and sustainability as core principles. It will support and expand RSCN's planned intervention in the northeast Badia by using the existing Al Azraq/Shaumari infrastructure (extending from the Al Azraq Reserve and Lodge and the Shaumari Reserve with attached facilities) as a starting point from which an eco-tourism route is developed, reaching the Burqu' Protected Area in the northeast as an end point. The utilization of the Burqu' PA's rangeland will follow the Cooperative Rangeland Management approach where RSCN as the resource manager will collaborate with the resource users, i.e., the surrounding herding communities. This approach has been recognized by the UNCC as an effective approach to the management of Jordan's livestock grazing activities, in order to improve the productivity of rangelands and wildlife habitats.</p> <p><b>Component 3. Capacity Building, Awareness Raising and Knowledge Management</b> This component will focus on building stakeholders and beneficiaries' capacity in the areas of rangeland management and a variety of IGAs (including eco-tourism) in both the southern and northern Badia. Youth and women will be the primary beneficiaries of capacity building activities for IGAs through tailor-made programs that are sensitive to their culture, existing skills and interests. In addition, this component will finance the preparation of a project communication action plan which will ensure that targeted communities fully understanding the project, their roles and benefits, thus ensuring their buy-in and collaboration in planning and implementation of activities. This is in response to lessons learned from past interventions in the Badia, which struggled to achieve results due to communities' mistrust of outside interventions and lack of understanding of their benefits.</p> <p><b>Component 4: Project Management, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation</b> A Project Management Unit (PMU), based in NCARE's headquarters outside Amman, will be tasked with the overall objective of project coordination, monitoring and evaluation, financial management and procurement, and preparation of regular audits for the project. RSCN will assign a project liaison who will be responsible for maintaining close contact with the PMU on matters concerning RSCN's activities, especially under Component 2. The PMU will report to a Steering Committee which will be composed of representatives from all relevant line ministries, agencies, NGOs and the private sector.</p>					
<b>Current Status of Project Identification</b>	Concept Review	Decision Meeting	Auth Appr/Negs (in principle)	Begin Appraisal	Begin Negotiations	Board Approval
	28-Sep-2011	23-Apr-2012	23-Apr-2012	08-May-2012	23-Jul-2012	29-Nov-2012

#### 4. Morocco

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Solidarity-based Integrated Agriculture in Morocco (ASIMA)</b>					
<b>Project Area</b>	During preparation of the ASIMA, criteria will be developed for the selection of the regions and of the agro-food chains.					
<b>Project Description</b>	<p>The <u>proposed project objective</u> is to promote the mainstreaming in the <i>Plan Maroc Vert</i> of an approach based on solidarity among small farmers and horizontal integration among agro-food chains, in marginal arid and semi-arid regions of Morocco.</p> <p>With reference to the <b>olive agro-food chain</b>, the ASIMA will finance the construction of state-of-the-art drying pits to avoid loss of wet pomace (residues) in the water bodies. The ASIMA will switch from a vision of the wet pomace as residues with environmental risks, to one where they are used as inputs. In the spirit of horizontal integration among agro-food chains, the pomaces, once dried and treated, could be used as fertilizer, animal feed, and combustion. They will be used as fertilizers for both the olive trees and the cactus, also promoting climate change mitigation with increased soil carbon stock. They will be used as animal feed in the sheep agro-food chain, reducing pressure on the natural resources and conserving biodiversity. They will be used as combustion in domestic ovens and/or in the processing of aromatic and medicinal plants, reducing the pressure on non-renewable energy, contributing to climate change mitigation. The ASIMA will cover the incremental costs for the construction of the transformation units, as well as for the capacity development of adequate technical know-how at a local level. In addition, in order to promote the conservation of the scarce water resources in the arid and semi-arid regions, the ASIMA will finance water saving technologies like deficit irrigation and rainwater harvesting. The rainwater harvesting technique to be implemented in the olive fields will be chosen taking into consideration that over the first few years after the plantation of trees, small farmers might produce cereals and/or fodder in the inter-row for animal feeding.</p> <p>With reference to the <b>cactus agro-food chain</b>, the ASIMA will finance the construction of transformation units for the use of the plant beyond the traditional fruit production. The cactus plant can be used to produce animal feed, cosmetic products, and combustion. Cladophylls of cactus plants can be used for the production of livestock feed, for a horizontal integration with the sheep agro-food chain. Also, the cactus plant can be used for the production of cosmetic products, for a horizontal integration with the aromatic and medicinal plants agro-food chain. Last but not least, the cactus plants can be used for cogeneration, to be used in place of non-renewable energy in homes of farmers and the industry in integration with aromatic and medicinal plants in the units of drying.</p> <p>With reference to the <b>sheep agro-food chain</b>, the ASIMA will finance the production of highly nutritious, locally produced animal feed taking advantage from the horizontal integration with olive and cactus agro-food chains. Within a sustainable grazing and rangeland management framework, this will reduce the grazing pressure, the risk of erosion and desertification. At the same time, production of manure will be an important input in the sustainable management of olive and cactus fields, with the increase in carbon stock in soil and the benefits derived.</p> <p>With reference to the <b>aromatic and medicinal plants agro-food chain</b>, the ASIMA will finance the cultivation and the transformation units for local typical plants. The transformation units (i.e. drying units) could take advantage of the use of cogeneration opportunities resulting from the olive and cactus agro-food chains. The reduced grazing pressure resulting from the use of by-products for the feeding of the animals can alleviate the pressure on natural biodiversity. The development of an agro-food chain which typically involves women can support a more social integration. Labeling of aromatic and medicinal plants will be considered to ensure the improvement of income for rural women.</p>					
<b>Executing Agency</b>	<p>The coordination responsibility of the ASIMA will be assumed by the Agricultural Development Agency (ADA). The implementing entities will be: (i) the ADA, for all transversal actions; and (ii) the Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries (MAPM) (through the DRA and DPA of the target regions), with the assistance of the ADA, for the implementation at a sub-project level.</p> <p>The ADA will be responsible of the coordination of the ASIMA on technical, administrative, fiduciary, safeguard, M&amp;E, and reporting related matters. The ADA will oversee the implementation of the ASIMA and ensure that the directions chosen, actions undertaken, and results achieved are in accordance with project documents and agreements. The ADA will organize training sessions to selected staff of the implementing entities.</p>					
<b>Current Status of Project Identification</b>	Concept Review	Decision Meeting	Auth Appr/Negs (in principle)	Begin Appraisal	Begin Negotiations	Board Approval
	8-Dec-2011	24-Sep-2012	24-Sep-2012	26-Nov-2012	17-Dec-2012	05-Mar-2013