



Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management
(CACILM)

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CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework
Support

Project Document

Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CACILM	–	Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management
CACs	–	Central Asian countries
CGIAR	–	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
CMPF	–	CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework
FAO	–	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	–	Global Environment Facility
GTZ	–	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
ICARDA	–	International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas
IFAD	–	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LADA	–	Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands
NGO	–	nongovernment organization
NPF	–	national programming framework
PDF	–	Project Development Facility
PFU	–	Project Facilitation Unit of the CGIAR
SDC	–	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SLIM	–	sustainable land management
SLIMIS	–	sustainable land management information system
SPA	–	Strategic Partnership Agreement for UNCCD Implementation in the Central Asian Countries
UNCCD	–	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	–	United Nations Environment Programme

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I. PROJECT SUMMARY

A. Rationale

1. The Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM) is proposed as a 10-year program of country-driven action and resource mobilization (July 2006-June 2016)¹ to support a sequenced set of high-priority activities to achieve: (i) strengthened policy, legislative, and institutional frameworks, creating conditions conducive for sustainable land management; (ii) increased capacity of key institutions responsible for planning and implementing land management interventions; and (iii) improved land management and natural systems through the combined impact of appropriate enabling conditions and targeted project investments.

2. The CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework (CMPF) provides a comprehensive package of actions and activities that together will bring about adoption of SLM broadly across the CACs, with attendant global benefits of restored ecosystems, biodiversity conservation, improved quality of transboundary rivers, and minimized contribution to climate change. The CMPF guides the activities of the CACILM partnership. The CMPF will undertake (i) program coordination, (ii) multicountry activities, and (iii) support for implementation of NPFs.

3. The CMPF Support Project is for essential support for the multicountry activities of sustainable land management information system, knowledge management and dissemination, and sustainable land management research. In addition it will support coordination at the multicountry and national levels.

4. The CMPF Support Project is necessary to assure the strategic objectives of CACILM as well as a coherent planning and coordination of the CACILM initiative. Without support for continuation of multicountry activities, the national activities will revert to independent, uncoordinated projects, with the resulting loss of economies of scale and increased transaction costs for donor agencies. There would be less, if any, coordination of Global Environment Facility (GEF) and nonGEF activities in land degradation. The likely result would be loss of motivation and political will. Apart from the multi-agency nature of the national working groups, there would be narrow participation by stakeholders in the planning and implementation of sustainable land management activities. While development cooperation partners would continue in a partnership of external agencies focusing on land degradation, there would be limited incentives for the further expansion of their cooperation and reduced motivation for a refocusing of assistance programs on land degradation.

5. Through the multicountry activities, there will be enhancement of capacity to support policy dialogue; to strengthen institutional building in order to make efficient investments that generate global benefits; and to store and disseminate the requisite knowledge that will form the basis of a common approach and integration of activities toward sustainable land management

¹ While the resource mobilization period is 10 years, the implementation of various investments in the enabling environment and on the ground development will be over 15 years.

1. Background

6. Land degradation² is a serious economic, social, and environmental problem in the Central Asian Countries (CACs) of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It directly affects the livelihood of the rural population by reducing the productivity of land resources and adversely affecting the stability, functions of, and services derived from natural systems. Agricultural yields are reported to have declined by 20–30% across the region since these countries achieved independence over a decade ago. Annual losses of agricultural production from salinization alone are estimated at \$2,000,000,000. The causes of land degradation are multiple, complex, and vary across these countries, but are largely attributable to the abuse and overexploitation of the natural resource base, particularly through inappropriate and unsustainable agricultural practices, overgrazing, deforestation, forest degradation, and natural disasters.

7. The principal forms of land degradation currently experienced across the CACs include (i) erosion, salinization, and water logging; (ii) deteriorating fertility of pasture land; (iii) decrease in fertility of the arable drylands of the steppes; (iv) decreased area and productivity of forests; (v) on-site and off-site impacts of mining operations; (vi) exacerbated risks from landslides and flooding due to poor watershed management; (vii) reduced stability and functioning of desert, mountain, wetland, and riparian ecosystems; and (viii) contaminated sites from resource extraction and nuclear testing operations.

8. The root causes of the present land degradation problems in all the CACs can be traced to three sets of issues that have become barriers to sustainable land management. The first include inappropriate agricultural and water policies, regulations, and incentives. These relate to land tenure, crop choice and market restrictions, and access to production factors. Second is government inability to adopt and implement sustainable land management due to a relatively weak capacity of central and local governments to formulate and monitor integrated sustainable land-use development initiatives. Third, there is a host of environmental problems—forest degradation and deforestation, water pollution in its many forms, and natural resource management and biodiversity conservation in general. In part, these result from environmental laws across the CACs that suffer from inadequacy, inconsistency, and weak implementation.

9. The CACs have responded to the land degradation problems by acceding to or ratifying the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), preparing UNCCD national action plans or programs (NAPs), and a Sub-regional Action Programme for Central Asian Countries on Combating Desertification and Drought (SRAP-CD), as well as national environmental action plans (NEAPs) and a "regional" environmental action plan (REAP) that give prominent attention to drought and desertification. However, for various reasons these initiatives have not had the required impact.

10. NAPs were generally well prepared by interagency groups of specialists and contain a wealth of data, with limited analyses of the nature and scale of desertification processes, their geographic characteristics and their natural and anthropogenic causes and consequences. However, they were weaker on policy and programmatic content, lacked a participatory approach, and were not linked to national planning and budgeting. SRAP-CD is a means to

² Land degradation is defined by GEF as "...any form of deterioration of the natural potential of land that affects ecosystem integrity either in terms of reducing its sustainable ecological productivity or in terms of its native biological richness and maintenance of resilience." Cited in GEF. 2003. Operational Program on Sustainable Land Management (OP 15).

elevate the importance of the problem within each country as well as take advantage of multicountry synergies, while the NEAPs and REAP have similar status in the broader environment field. Implementation of NAPs has been slow because of weak institutions, insufficient capacity, and—because governments have other urgent development priorities—lack of funds. This situation prevents NAPs and SRAP-CD from making headway.

11. GEF has been active addressing problems of land degradation in the CACs. GEF's total portfolio to date is \$156,700,000 covering 59 activities. In the relevant focal areas, GEF—in collaboration with its implementing agencies—has invested a total of \$68,400,000 in 24 projects, \$33,700,000 of which is for national projects and \$34,700,000 for regional/global projects. There are 11 projects under the biodiversity (BD) focal area, 6 projects under land degradation (LD) and 7 projects under the multifocal area. To improve the impact of its investments in the CACs, GEF felt that a multicountry pilot partnership under GEF Country Pilot Partnerships (CPP) Program was desirable. CACILM entered the GEF pipeline in May 2004 as a multicountry CPP and a PDF-B grant to elaborate the design of CACILM was approved in February 2005.

12. The ongoing work under the current portfolio of GEF projects in Central Asia has provided a foundation for the design of the CACILM framework and its proposed interventions. It is also expected that these projects will offer opportunities for collaboration in the subsequent implementation of CACILM's program.

13. The combination of the CPP concept—which caters to countries' needs in a holistic way for the long time frame needed for reversal of land degradation—with a partnership of virtually all the major development cooperation partners active in Central Asia offers the best chance for the CACs to resolve their land degradation problems, in a coordinated manner that will result in extensive global environmental benefits. The following section shows achievements of the CACILM partnership to date and how these have built a strong foundation for implementing the CMPF.

2. CACILM Partnership

14. CACILM is partnership of CACs and development cooperation partners dedicated to combating land degradation and improving rural livelihoods. The main partners from the countries are the UNCCD Working Groups on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation and the UNCCD national focal points. The initial development cooperation partners were the members of the of the Strategic Partnership Agreement for UNCCD Implementation in the Central Asian Countries (SPA), which was formed among the Global Mechanism (GM), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and CCD Project of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). The membership was expanded to include the International Center for Agricultural Research on Dry Areas (ICARDA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In 2006, the World Bank and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) applied to join.

15. The underlying focus of the CACILM approach is to maintain a substantive country ownership and drivenness, expand and deepen stakeholder participation, and facilitate an action-oriented and transparent dialogue with development partner agencies. The keys to achieving this are the Working Groups on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation (national working groups), which, through their membership, broaden the participation of all stakeholders in CACILM. Their role includes guiding the consultants and endorsing their reports,

coordinating various workshops and meetings, and facilitating approvals by government of official documents. Under CACILM, the national working groups are directly responsible for preparation of the NPFs.

16. The CACILM Partnership, with GEF assistance, completed the overall design. The design phase of CACILM produced four outputs: (i) national programming frameworks (NPFs), (ii) the CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework (CMPF), (iii) mechanisms for consultation and coordination within and among the CACs, and (iv) increased awareness and commitments by national stakeholders and development cooperation partners.

17. **National Programming Frameworks.** The NPFs broaden, deepen, and operationalize the UNCCD NAPs and were developed through a process of review, updating, and problem analysis. A series of multistakeholder meetings was held in each country to develop the NPFs in a participatory manner. The NPFs were then reviewed at national workshops in September–October 2005 and February–March 2006. The NPFs define and describe the problems of land degradation specific to each country; they analyze the natural and human-made causes of land degradation in the unique historical and cultural contexts of each country; and present a prioritized program of projects and technical assistance, and related concept papers; and mechanisms for consultation and coordination at national and multicountry levels that will enhance participation of stakeholders and increase awareness and commitments by national and development cooperation partner stakeholders.

18. **Development of the CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework.** The CMPF was prepared under the direction of the CACILM task force. The draft outline was presented to the Almaty Task Force Meeting in June 2005 and was approved at the Tashkent Task Force Meeting in November 2005. The first draft was prepared by ADB and circulated to the task force in early February 2006. The first draft of the CMPF was reviewed at the Bishkek Task Force Meeting in February 2006, which approved the list of projects under CACILM to be funded from the GEF-3 Replenishment and provided guidance for further revision and preparation of the CMPF documentation. The CMPF guides the activities of the CACILM partnership. The CMPF will undertake (i) support for implementation of NPFs developed under CACILM (ii) multicountry activities, and (iii) program coordination.

19. **Mechanisms for Consultation and Coordination.** Efficient and effective mechanisms for national and multicountry consultation and coordination were developed through a series of multicountry stakeholder workshops in each country to develop, review, and approve the NPFs. Future consultation at the multicountry level will occur through the CACILM steering committee, which will convene multicountry meetings. In addition, consultation and coordination will occur through the implementation of multicountry activities. Finally, appropriate and effective arrangements for improved coordination and harmonization of development cooperation partners at the country level are a basic tenet of the CMPF, and strong efforts through consultations, teleconferences, and workshops are features of its development.

20. **Increased Awareness and Commitments.** CACILM has (i) increased awareness of the need for a coordinated approach to combating land degradation and (ii) increased commitments by national stakeholders and development cooperation partners to sustainable land management (SLM) in the CACs. These have been accomplished mainly through national workshops and meetings with key stakeholders to disseminate information and discuss the CMPF concept, the advantages and disadvantages, and the responsibilities of national stakeholders and development cooperation partners. The NPFs are one visible result. Also, negotiations during multicountry workshops and CACILM task force meetings have sought

increasing commitment by donor partners to support the NPFs and commitment on programming and finances.

3. CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework

21. The CMPF guides the activities of the CACILM partnership. The CMPF will undertake (i) program coordination, (ii) multicountry activities, and (iii) support for implementation of NPFs. The NPFs each contain a phased program of individual activities and projects. Selected projects in each country, along with multicountry activities, comprise the CMPF investments and technical assistance. Details of the mechanisms and activities of CMPF implementation follow.

22. During implementation of CMPF, a CACILM steering committee will be established, with responsibility and authority for the overall direction of CACILM. The CACILM steering committee will comprise (i) representatives of the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan; (ii) GEF implementing agencies (World Bank, United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], and United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP]); (iii) GEF executing agencies (ADB, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], and International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD]); (iv) bilateral agencies acting as CACILM implementing agencies or participating in projects or activities through cofinancing; and (v) other international organizations participating in CACILM project and activities.

23. A CACILM multicountry secretariat (henceforth CACILM secretariat) will be created to support the CACILM steering committee in the overall implementation of projects and activities included in the CMPF.

24. At the national level, each country will create its own national coordination council consistent with the country's governmental administrative laws and procedures. Each country will also create a national secretariat as the operational unit to support the national coordination council in the overall implementation of projects and activities mandated by the NPFs.

25. The responsibilities and functions of these multicountry and national entities are described in the section on Program Coordination.

4. Support to the CACILM Multicountry Partnership Framework

26. Experience to date with the operation of national working groups (as precursors of national coordination councils) and work of interim national secretariats, created during the CACILM design phase, indicates that each country has to be responsible for its national coordination council and secretariat and provide the basis structure and staff. Nevertheless, some financial support and additional capacity development will be needed to ensure efficient operations of both these entities. Capacity building will be required most of all in management aspects, such as financial management; project implementation tracking, and performance monitoring and evaluation; communication; and planning methods.

27. While CACILM is primarily directed to support implementation of the NPFs at the country level, it is recognized that other activities are required in order to capture the added value and synergy of a program operating at the multicountry level: (i) sustainable land management information system, (ii) knowledge management and information dissemination; and (iii) sustainable land management research.

28. CACILM's design is based on a multicountry approach to take advantage of economies of scale to address common problems among the CACs. For this approach to be meaningful, careful coordination of the various activities is needed to take maximum advantage of scale. The CMPF has already demonstrated the benefit of coordination of national efforts through initiating the NPFs, which have used a common format to facilitate a coordinated approach to SLM. This coordination must be continued if the benefits of scale are to be sustainable.

29. These multicountry activities and program coordination, described below, are those for which GEF financing is requested in this proposal.

B. Objective

30. The overall objective of the CMPF Support Project is the same as that for the CMPF, which is the restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of the productivity of land in the CACs, leading to improved economic and social well-being of those who depend on these resources, while preserving the environmental functions of these lands in the spirit of UNCCD. Achieving this objective requires the successful implementation of national programs of the CACs that were developed in NPFs formulated under CACILM. Partnership framework support is necessary for the implementation of the national programs to be done in a way that ensures a comprehensive and integrated approach to sustainable land management across the CACs.

31. CMPF Support Project contributes to two outcomes:

- improved capacity of the institutions in Central Asia to adopt integrated land use planning and management; and
- Long-term sustained harmonized commitments of financial and human resources through mainstreaming of SLM in donor programs for Central Asia.

C. Outputs

32. The outputs of the project will be

- (i) a sustainable land management information system designed, developed, and operated;
- (ii) a knowledge management plan developed, and the first set of knowledge products, mainly lessons learnt out of the CACILM process, disseminated;
- (iii) a sustainable land management research program designed and implemented;
- (iv) strategic development of the CMPF, promotion of policy dialogue, and efficient and effective coordination of the implementation of the CMPF; and
- (v) efficient and effective coordination of NPF implementation in all CACs.

D. Activities

33. The proposed activities will take place during the first phase of CMPF implementation from July 2006 to December 2008. During this phase,

- the sustainable land management information system will
 - (i) design, develop, and operationalize the sustainable land management information systems for evaluation of changes in land degradation status;
 - (ii) establish the land degradation baseline, using specific land degradation indicators;

- the sustainable land management research program will
 - (iii) design and develop the sustainable land management research program, and initiate research activities;
- the knowledge management and information dissemination program will
 - (iv) develop a knowledge management plan and initiate knowledge generation, knowledge capture, and knowledge dissemination activities;
- the program coordination activities will
 - (v) establish multicountry and national program coordination and management units, with necessary capacity building in finance and administration; and
 - (vi) design, develop, and operationalize project monitoring and evaluation systems.

1. Multicountry Activities

a. Sustainable Land Management Information System

34. All national programming frameworks note the poor state of land degradation monitoring and information systems. Some of the data reported in the NPFs require updating or validation and the picture of the current state of land resources contains serious gaps. A recent country assessment produced by ADB³ has shown that environmental monitoring and information systems in general do not function properly and in some cases do not function at all. The weaknesses of the monitoring and information systems are widely recognized by the scientific community in Central Asia. The NPFs revealed that there are many interests, sometimes competing, that have proposed to conduct some form of monitoring. These proposals mainly ask for equipment and funding for programs to collect data on land and water indicators. However, most of the proposals have been uncoordinated and in their present form would not well serve the needs of CACILM for monitoring and the resultant information. Thus, CACILM proposes to develop the sustainable land management information system (SLMIS) at the multicountry level as a tool to monitor progress in combating land degradation in each country.

35. Initially, SLMIS will be directed toward monitoring the performance indicators in the NPF and CACILM logical frameworks. The information system will include

- (i) systems for acquisition of economic, social, and environmental data and information;
- (ii) procedures, protocols, and guidelines for data acquisition including all necessary survey instruments, sampling methods, analytical methods, and reporting formats;
- (iii) computer databases and analytical programs, including geographic information systems, for storing and analyzing data and information;
- (iv) computer-based systems, including geographic information systems, for presenting results and generating reports on the results of the project monitoring; and
- (v) systems for managing monitoring field teams in the collection and reporting of all necessary economic, social, and environmental data and information.

36. An important feature is that the sustainable land management information system will be directly linked to the performance monitoring system to ensure that important sustainable land management indicators are systematically tracked. Monitoring and evaluation at the level of

³ TA 6155: Capacity Building in Environmental Information Management System in Central Asian Countries.

CACILM framework will consolidate and analyze both the multicountry activities and the results of national reporting for dissemination to the members of SPA.

37. The SLMIS will be managed and administered by the CACILM secretariat. The SLMIS will be designed and developed at the multicountry level but most of its activities will occur at the national level with provisions made for the flow of information between the national and multicountry levels.

38. The national SLMIS will be developed under the supervision of national coordination councils in each country. In consultation with the CACILM secretariat and national coordination council in each country, an appropriate institution will be designated as SLMIS administrative agency. This institution must have or be provided with all the necessary technical capability to manage and implement the SLMIS. A SLMIS national coordinator will be recruited to SLMIS administrative agency to manage all aspects of the SLMIS design, development, testing, and deployment. This institution will form and chair a multi-agency technical task force.

39. The national SLMIS will be developed taking into consideration current international efforts towards the harmonization of data and information management. One of these efforts is the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project. The LADA project aims to assess causes, status, and impact of land degradation in drylands in order to improve decision making for sustainable development in drylands at local, national, subregional, and global levels. LADA responds to the needs of all stakeholders concerned by land degradation and, in particular, those involved in the implementation of the action programs of UNCCD. The LADA project's purpose is to develop and test an effective assessment methodology for land degradation in drylands: by marshalling the extensive knowledge and varied expertise already available worldwide, by creating a new, more interactive and comprehensive framework of assessment methods; and by capacity building and testing this framework in real-world situations. Once the tools and data required to understand the root causes, driving forces, and functioning of the degradation puzzle are in place, it will be possible to assess land degradation at global, national, and subnational levels to identify

- (i) the status and trends of land degradation in drylands in all its components including biodiversity;
- (ii) the hotspots—the areas with the most severe land constraints, the degraded areas or those at risk of degradation, drought, or flooding; and
- (iii) the bright spots—areas where conducive policies and actions have slowed or reversed degradation and the priority areas where the conservation and rehabilitation of fragile lands could be most cost effective. Such information will assist communities and governments in the design of effective remedial measures and supportive policies.

40. CACILM intends to adopt the LADA methodology, approach, and indicators. CACILM will work with FAO in design, development, and deployment of the SLMIS. A distinct and separate set of activities is planned for development of SLMIS under CACILM. However, it is anticipated that there will be considerable synergy between SLMIS and the LADA project.

41. **Data Sharing.** In addition, it is proposed, subject to national approvals, that information generated by SLMIS will be made available to FAO for inclusion in global databases. Information may be made available to FAO at different levels of aggregation, depending on confidentiality policies in the CACs. Links and feedback at different stages of the project will allow for use of harmonized land degradation assessment methodologies and the production of information systems that are useful at local, national, regional, and global scales.

42. The SLMIS project will proceed systematically through a set of interlinked activities: (i) inception, (ii) design, (iii) capacity building for land degradation assessment, (iv) development and testing, (v) deployment, and (vi) implementation of specific applications.

43. **Inception.** During inception, the LADA methodology and approach will be presented to wide range of stakeholders, including national and local authorities, institutes, academe, and other sections of society with an interest in land degradation and that participate actively in land management at national and local level. The national SLMIS administrative agency will identify the relevant stakeholders and invite them to participate in an inception workshop, at which the SLMIS administrative agency will explore the possibilities of collaboration with the different agencies and call for the participation of experts in the SLMIS technical task force. The SLMIS technical task force will be responsible for the technical implementation of the project under the guidance of the SLMIS national coordinator. Membership may include, for example, specialists on land management, land evaluation, land tenure, land rehabilitation, spatial information, and information management.

44. A multicountry workshop will bring together SLMIS technical task forces from all the CACs. During the workshop the approaches that the project aims to use for land degradation assessment at global, national, and local scales will be discussed.⁴ A project outline and work plan proposal, integrating global, national, and local components, will be presented. Countries will be requested to take the proposal back to their countries and adapt it to local circumstances in consultation with FAO and in close collaboration with members of the SLMIS technical task force.

45. The SLMIS national coordinator will develop a work plan for its design, development, testing, and deployment in consultation with FAO and in close collaboration with the SLMIS technical task force, taking into consideration key activities, inputs, and requests for feedback from the LADA activity. The different contributions and benefits to different national stakeholders will be highlighted in the work plan. This will allow for the harmonization of the information generated during the project and the production of tools that are useful for decision making at local and national levels. The project outline and work plans will be prepared in the national language and English. The final version of the project outline and work will be presented in a national meeting to obtain the official support of involved stakeholders.

46. **Capacity Building for Land Degradation Assessment.** LADA training programs will be established in each of the national SLMIS administrative agencies. These programs will promote awareness of land degradation problems as well as assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation technologies. The project will provide assistance for training of trainers and curriculum development. This will ensure the sustainability of information and knowledge transfer within the country after the project has finished. A selected group of professionals related to land degradation assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation, together with the trainers of the LADA Training Program will be involved in training courses organized by FAO, the University of East Anglia, and the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT). This will cover the use of local land degradation assessment and monitoring techniques and simple tools as visual soil assessment as well as tools for documentation and monitoring of rehabilitation technologies.

⁴ These approaches are derived from consultations and experiences from pilot countries and case studies collected during the development of the LADA methodology.

47. **Design.** The design will encompass both the monitoring and data collection component and the information technology component. In addition work will begin to compile and collate existing land degradation information available at national and local levels. A detailed system design document will be prepared to guide system development. The design will need to provide for the information and data sharing between the national and multicountry systems and between CACILM systems and LADA and other global systems. The system design must provide for data acquisition and collection, laboratory analysis, storage, quantitative analysis, and reporting on indicators for land degradation and sustainable land management. The design will rely heavily on the LADA methodology, adapted as necessary to local conditions.

48. It is anticipated that national experts, together with international information system management specialists and FAO, will collaborate to ensure the usefulness of the system. This stage will comprise a capacity-building component, as national and international information system specialists will exchange knowledge on latest developments on information management. Countries will also benefit from the joint work of different national institutions which have information systems relevant to land degradation.

49. **Monitoring and Data Collection Component.** Activities under this task will include the overall design of: (i) systems for acquisition of economic, social, and environmental data and information; (ii) procedures, protocols, and guidelines for data acquisition, including all necessary survey instruments, sampling methods, analytical methods, and reporting formats; and (ii) systems for managing monitoring field teams in the collection and reporting of all necessary economic, social, and environmental data and information.

Information Technology Component. Activities under this task will involve the overall design of: (i) computer databases and analytical programs, including geographic information systems, for storing and analyzing data and information; computer-based systems, including geographic information systems, for presenting results and generating reports on the results of the project monitoring; and (iii) use of remote sensing images.

50. **System Design Document.** A detailed system design document will be prepared to guide SLMIS development. This document will first develop the business case for the SLMIS system. Then it will outline the basic functional and system requirements. The main subsystems; (i) data acquisition systems; (ii) laboratory and analytical systems; and (iii) information technology systems will be described. The overall system design will be detailed, including the system architecture, data flow, information and data sharing protocols, database structures, and user administrative procedures.

51. **Compilation and Collation of National Land Degradation Information.** The National coordinator will lead activities to compile and collate all information available at national level that relates to land degradation and land degradation assessment. This includes identifying main institutions in charge of relevant issues, studies, databases, mapping and information systems, situation analysis, needs assessment, etc. The information collected will be incorporated into the final national information system.

52. **Relationship to LADA Project for Centralized Information Systems.** To ensure that CACILM information systems are compatible with global land degradation systems (including LADA systems), it will be necessary to design specific arrangements for data and information exchange. Specific activities will be undertaken to establish a land degradation information system where global and national information can be linked. The LADA Virtual Centre is at the core of this system, this will be the platform for interaction with national systems. A prototype will

be developed (platform, indicator system, and network) for discussion. The CACs will be invited to provide comments on the functionality of the prototype and possible improvements through a user survey and an email conference.

53. **System Development and Testing.** During the development and testing phase, the data compilation and collection will continue. However, the data collection activities will be more focused by the list of indicators and methodologies of the system design document. A fully functional prototype of the system will be developed based on the system design document. The prototype will be tested to ensure that it is completely functional from a technical perspective and completely debugged. Acceptance testing will be undertaken to ensure that the system meets the overall design specification and end-user requirements. Based on test results, the system will be revised as necessary. The final documentation for the system, including on-line user manuals, will be prepared.

54. **Deployment.** During the initial deployment, all collected information and data will be inputted into the system databases. It will be important to observe the quality control and assurance protocols developed during the system design phase. The details of all data and information sharing arrangements will be finalized. In addition, the specific roles and responsibilities of the database administrators will be clarified.

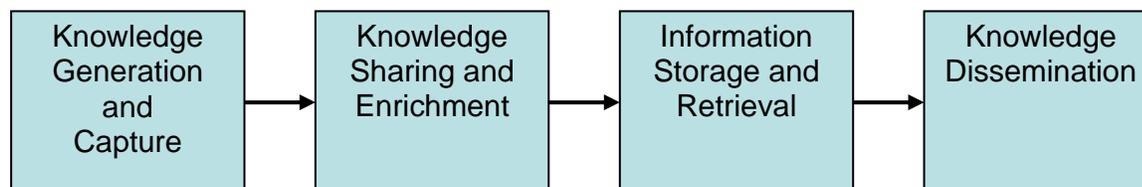
55. Once the system is operational, ongoing monitoring and assessment activities will be ongoing to provide new information into the system databases. Day to day operation and maintenance of the system will be required. In addition, routine entry of new information will take place. Annual reports on key land degradation indicators will be produced. Reporting will occur at three levels; (i) national to the national coordination council, (ii) multicountry to the CACILM steering committee; and (iii) global, subject to national confidentiality policies, to the LADA project.

56. **Hot Spot and Bright Spot Analysis.** It is proposed to carry out a hot spot and bright spot analysis under the direction of FAO. FAO will carry out a global stratification, or superimposition of layers of information, for creating management units over which the information on land degradation can be analyzed. The stratification also allows comparing information at different levels. The initial procedures for stratification are being developed by FAO and other LADA partners. The stratification will result in a number of products: a high-resolution harmonized global land information system; a global database on major land production systems units; an enhanced evaluation and associated land, land-use/farming system, land cover, and population characteristics; and a first scan of areas considered at risk or already severely degraded.

57. The national SLMIS technical task forces will select a number of hot spots and bright spots for further investigation. This further investigation will use participatory local surveys as well as local assessment techniques that can be performed with a minimum of knowledge by land users. The techniques learned during the training courses will be applied and transferred in the selected pilot sites. This will result in capacity building at the local level, including local authorities and land managers, and a mechanism for information transfer. A full assessment and analysis of each pilot site, including indicators, can be extrapolated to the national level. These assessments will provide documented information on the status and causes of degradation, including information on the practices that have resulted in bright spots. The reports on results at different levels of analysis and with different tools will guide an assessment of needs for policy and research.

b. Knowledge Management and Information Dissemination

58. In the course of the 10-year implementation of NPFs, the CACILM program will generate a number of lessons and develop many knowledge products, mainly through the SLM research program and SLMIS. To ensure effective sharing of knowledge, CACILM will establish a knowledge management system to efficiently and effectively process knowledge internally, and to quickly capitalize on the skills and knowledge in different countries and in different SLM areas. Within CACILM, knowledge processes are broadly categorized into four stages: (i) knowledge creation and capture, (ii) knowledge sharing and enrichment, (iii) information storage and retrieval, and (iv) knowledge dissemination (see figure below).



59. **Knowledge generation and capture.** CACILM will create and capture knowledge throughout its all of its operations, projects, and activities. Explicit knowledge will be captured in the form of documented outputs generated at different stages of each project's implementation. In addition to capturing knowledge products and lessons learned from implementation of the NPFs, CACILM will commission separate knowledge products.

60. **Knowledge sharing and enrichment.** Knowledge sharing is an important process during which knowledge can be refined and enriched. At the outset CACILM will develop a SLM network and work with key individuals and organizations to establish a SLM community of practice. The SLM community and practice and SLM network will provide a forum where new ideas on development issues are exchanged, debated, and made more relevant before their dissemination within and outside CACILM. Many opportunities for knowledge sharing and enrichment will be taken advantage of, including seminars, workshops, and meetings among CACILM stakeholders.

61. **Information storage and retrieval.** To maximize accessibility to acquired knowledge, CACILM will store information in a centralized location accessible for retrieval. For example, the SLMIS will be used to store all monitoring data. Also, all reports generated by CACILM projects will be stored in central database under the administration of the CACILM secretariat. Also, all project reports will be made available through a centralized library.

62. **Knowledge dissemination.** Without effective dissemination, the development impact of knowledge remains minimal. The most obvious forms of dissemination are publications and presentations. In addition a bilingual (Russian and English) web site will be developed and administered by the CACILM secretariat CACILM also expects to establish a project library and e-learning center. CACILM-supported investment projects are also effective for disseminating knowledge through incorporating good practices to address certain development issues.

63. **Objective.** The overall objective is to strengthen sustainable land management in Central Asia by facilitating learning and information sharing among stakeholders. The component has two immediate objectives:

- (i) to facilitate the integration, exchange, and accessibility of data and information among CACILM projects, their partners, and stakeholders; and

- (ii) to establish and technically support a series of face-to-face and electronically-mediated structured learning activities—or learning exchanges—among related projects within the CACILM projects portfolio.

64. **Knowledge Management Plan.** A knowledge management plan will be developed, which includes the overall plan for knowledge generation, knowledge capture, knowledge sharing, knowledge and information storage, and knowledge dissemination. Taking into account the special needs of the CACs and the CMPF, the plan will be based on the experiences the CACILM development cooperation partners. The knowledge management plan will also draw on the experience of other SLM knowledge management initiatives and expects to share knowledge with other SLM knowledge management systems.

65. **CACILM LEARN.** Knowledge capture and knowledge sharing activities will be supported by CACILM LEARN, which will foster structured learning, information sharing, collaboration, and replication across the CACILM portfolio. At local, regional, and global scales, CACILM LEARN stakeholders will be able to adapt and apply learning, information skills, and tools obtained through CACILM LEARN to advance and sustain ongoing benefits of their respective SLM projects. Partners/stakeholders will access information and data across the CACILM projects portfolio, sharing information and communications technology (ICT) tools to improve SLM.

66. There is a strong need for information transfer across CACILM projects to ensure quick and effective transfer of valuable experiences. Current technical support services within each development cooperation partners need to be made responsive to stakeholders' expressed needs across the CACILM portfolio.

67. CACILM LEARN actively promotes effective SLM through information sharing and targeted learning in support of its SLM strategic priorities. Experiences resulting in good practices and lessons learned will be transferred horizontally across projects and fed back from CACILM secretariat monitoring and evaluation unit to projects in preparation and those underway. Structured learning and information exchange creates enduring *in situ* capacity to sustain SLM benefits well beyond project life. Information products generated by projects and through these exchanges can be readily discovered, accessed, and applied to improve SLM across Central Asia.

68. CACILM LEARN will scale-up and replicate its effective structured learning and information transfer activities among countries participating in CACILM. From 2007 onward, all country-driven, NPFs will benefit from participating in structured learning and information sharing facilitated by CMPF via CACILM LEARN. From 2009 onward, successful CACILM LEARN structured learning and information sharing services are expected to be insitutionalized and sustained indefinitely through the CMPF and its partners.

69. **Knowledge Products.** It is anticipated the CACILM will generate a number of publications that synthesize the results of the individual activities. For example, a publication to demonstrate the current baseline with respect to land degradation and state of sustainable land management practice might be developed in collaboration with the SLMIS. In addition, new knowledge products that will address issues of global and multicountry importance will be commissioned.

c. Sustainable Land Management Research

70. SLM is a knowledge-based process that integrates land, water, and biodiversity through better land management and that responds to increasing demands for food and fiber while sustaining ecosystem services and livelihoods. The adoption of SLM strategies and programs needs to be supported by research on land use at multiple spatial and temporal scales. The proposed research program takes into consideration the requirement for broad stakeholder involvement and the need to ensure that some benefits accrue to participants quickly, for example, within one growing season, while addressing long-term issues, such as soil erosion or loss of soil fertility. It will also take into account the numerous ongoing research programs whose results are often difficult to obtain and to adapt to practical use. The proposed research program will strongly support scientific capacity building, especially fostering the training of young scientists.

71. The NPFs have identified a number of gaps in knowledge of land degradation and SLM practices. These define common areas for further research, including: (i) improved agronomic, soil, and water conservation practices; (ii) diversification of cropping and livestock production systems for increased income generation; (iii) germplasm collection and improvement particularly for stress tolerance to drought, salinity, and extreme temperatures; (iv) improved water-use efficiency and allocation; (v) better rangeland, feed, and livestock management; (vi) better forest and woodlot management; and (vii) affordable, rapid, and reliable methods of land degradation assessment and monitoring. In addition, research activities may target selected causes of land degradation, such as climatic factors (reduced rainfall), poorly structured agricultural growth policies, inappropriate or inefficient land-use technologies, or practices, socioeconomic aspects, and unsuitable land tenure and ownership arrangements.

72. CACILM's research agenda is directed at filling gaps in knowledge, which will (i) help to understand better the policy and institutional failures that drive land degradation, and (ii) help design innovative SLM practices and technologies. It is anticipated that the multicountry research program for CACILM would be implemented through national centers to ensure that information on best practices and success stories can be made available widely to land users and policy makers in each country.

73. The SLM Research Program will be administered by the CACILM secretariat. The International Center for Agricultural Research in Dryland Areas (ICARDA) will be lead implementing agency. The research program will be designed and developed at the multicountry level but most of its activities will occur at the national level, with provisions made for the flow of information between the national and multicountry levels. At the national level, the research program activities will take place under the supervision of the national coordination council in each country. In consultation with the CACILM secretariat and the national coordination council in each country, qualified institutions will be designated for SLM research funding.

74. A comprehensive research prospectus will be developed to guide research activities over the 10-year period of CACILM implementation. A five-step approach is envisaged.

75. Step 1 is the identification of problems through participatory diagnosis involving land users, policy makers, rural development organizations, and researchers. The above problems noted in the NPFs need to be validated with local players and organizations. In this step, research can be done on mechanisms for local participation drawing on the experiences from other regions.

76. Step 2 is in the formulation of integrative research hypotheses that are studied by inter- or cross-disciplinary teams of researchers, land users, and other partners. These should evolve from the problem and options analyses in the NPFs, with a clear definition of the linkages between the problems and NPF priorities and the operational arrangements with collaborating projects under the NPFs.

77. Step 3 is research on production functions, human well-being, and ecosystem functions, which requires different teams of disciplines from traditional biophysical, social, and environmental sciences. Research is focused on alternative technological, institutional, and/or policy options to solve the problems and improve adaptive capacity. Fostering of truly cross-disciplinary hypotheses and activities is a key and innovative process at this step.

78. Step 4 involves analysis of the trade-offs between competing interests and the likely scenarios with different options. New science is required at this level of analysis that blends social, economic, biophysical, and environmental disciplines.

79. In Step 5, outcomes emerge from extrapolation, dissemination, and policy development and their impact can be assessed. Most of this work is done by more development-orientated partners within development projects but research on how best to disseminate outputs (scaling out and up) is required.

80. Finally, as part of the learning cycle, the outcomes feed back into the process with renewed problem diagnosis (Step 1), and the SLM cyclical process is repeated if/as necessary.

81. Human well-being is central to the approach with a focus on poverty alleviation and understanding of the livelihood strategies of the rural poor. Placing people at the center requires a switch in thinking and hypothesis development. This approach emphasizes the need to involve land users more, to build new scientific interventions on to local knowledge and farmer innovations, and to integrate knowledge across disciplines. The mobilization of farmer innovators and local organizations has been shown to improve the performance of agricultural extension and advisory services and is particularly appropriate to Central Asia where such services have declined following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Training, capacity building, and co-learning will feature prominently in the design of the research projects, employing methods of participatory action research that will reinforce local participation in CACILM. Hence, the research program will also contribute to multicountry capacity-building efforts.

82. Although separate projects will be carried out by the different CACs, the use of a common approach and methodology will allow synthesis and scaling-up of results that will be applicable to all the CACs. Projects will be designed in collaboration with the national coordination councils, CACILM secretariat, and international organizations and agencies that are active in the region. Through the offices of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Program Facilitation Unit (PFU) in Tashkent, relevant and context-specific options for SLM will be collated and made available to the countries, thereby contributing to the SLMIS. Common diagnosis and selection of areas for research will ensure that the research projects serve all the CACs. ICARDA will oversee these processes to ensure rapid incorporation of existing and developing innovations in SLM from other regions. It is envisioned that countries will implement research projects at well-characterized representative benchmark sites with adequate *ex ante* analyses of likely outcomes and impacts of the research for the country and region.

83. Preparation of the project and work plans will be linked to the coordination meetings of the PFU to ensure avoidance of duplication and creation of synergy among the participating institutions and agencies.

2. Program Coordination

84. The mechanisms of coordination and activities of the coordinating bodies—CACILM steering committee and CACILM secretariat at the multicountry level and national coordination councils supported by national secretariats at the country level—are outlined in the description of the CMPF. Following are the main activities of these entities.

a. CACILM Steering Committee

85. The CACILM steering committee will be responsible for

- (i) overall strategic development of the CMPF on the basis of lessons learnt from the process,
- (ii) policy dialogue,
- (iii) approval and endorsement of proposals for submission to GEF,
- (iv) oversight of those multicountry projects and activities that are the direct responsibility of the steering committee,
- (v) monitoring performance of the multicountry projects and activities undertaken the CMPF, and
- (vi) reporting to GEF on all projects and activities undertaken under CMPF that receive GEF cofinancing.

b. CACILM Secretariat

86. The CACILM secretariat will have the following functions:

- (i) operation of the consolidated project monitoring and evaluation system, which includes (a) financial administration, (b) progress reporting, (c) environmental and social safeguard systems, and (d) sustainable land management performance indicators;
- (ii) training, advisory services, and support to the national secretariats;
- (iii) administration of the multicountry activities, including (a) sustainable land management research program, (b) land degradation and sustainable land management information system, (c) knowledge management and information dissemination, and (d) multi-country capacity-building projects;
- (iv) administration of GEF submission and approval processes;
- (v) reporting to GEF on the GEF-cofinanced elements of CMPF implementation; and
- (vi) logistics and other support for all CACILM steering committee meetings.

c. National Coordination Councils

87. Each country will create a national coordination council consistent with the country's governmental administrative laws and procedures. The main functions of the councils will be to

- (i) analyze lessons learnt from the NFP implementation,
- (ii) coordinate the overall implementation of projects and activities mandated by the NPF;

- (iii) supervise implementation of the activities that are the direct responsibility of the councils;
- (iv) monitor performance of all projects and activities and report to the CACILM steering committee;
- (v) review and endorse proposals for consideration by the CACILM steering committee; and
- (vi) periodically update NFP investment programs, following the agreed criteria of project selection.

d. National Secretariats

88. The national secretariats will support the national coordination councils in the overall implementation of the NPFs, including:

- (i) analysis of lessons learnt from the NPF implementation,
- (ii) monitoring the performance of all projects and activities,
- (iii) annual reporting to the CACILM steering committee on NPF implementation,
- (iv) providing secretarial and logistic support to council meetings and workshops,
- (v) supervising specific activities that are the direct responsibility of the councils, and
- (vi) providing guidance and assistance in the preparation of project proposals.

E. Key Indicators, Assumptions, and Risks

89. CMPF Support Project indicators at the outcome level are:

- (ii) Degree of Acceptance of Integrated approach to land use planning and management in public investment projects.
- (iii) Quality of monitoring and evaluation reports of relevant public investment projects
- (iv) Degree of adoption of improvements land use practices by land users
- (v) Increase in research budgets.
- (vi) Increase in SLM budgets in disaster preparedness programs to double.
- (vii) Average annual disbursements for SLM multicountry activities within CACILM
- (viii) Complete accounting for all donor-implemented SLM activities in the region
- (ix) Shared understanding about the technical content of proposed SLM interventions, and
- (x) Degree of inclusion of SLM in donors' assistance programs.

90. The main assumptions are common to all CACILM activities at all levels, i.e., continued commitment of CAC governments to (i) a coordinated approach to tackling land degradation within and among their countries, and (ii) improvement of economic and environmental governance. More specifically, the assumptions are:

- (i) Fundamental support exists and can be sustained at the central level for a multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach to dealing with land degradation;
- (ii) Flow of information from research to extension to farmers' fields is maintained;
- (iii) Land reform situation continues to provide incentives for farmers to adopt practices;
- (iv) Donors will be able to make long term commitments beyond their normal programming cycle; and

- (v) Donor programs will place increasingly higher priority on sustainable land management activities in the short term; and continue to place high priority in the long term.

II. COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

A. Country Eligibility

91. All five CACs are GEF-eligible. They have ratified the UNCCD (Table 1) and designated focal points for national UNCCD implementation.

Table 1: Dates of UNCCD Actions by the Central Asian Countries

UNCCD Action	Kazakhstan	Year by Country			
		Kyrgyz Republic	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Ratification of UNCCD	1997	1996*	1997	1996	1995
Adoption of UNCCD NAP	1997**	1999***	2000	1996	1999

Notes: * Accession. ** Revised/updated in 2000. *** Formally approved in 2000.

NAP = national action program; UNCCD = United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

B. Country Drivenness

92. Drivenness by the CACs in matters of desertification and land degradation has been evident since the mid-1990s when they ratified and subsequently prepared UNCCD national action plans or programs (NAPs) to prioritize and guide interventions to address land degradation (Table 1). The CACs also recognized the transboundary nature of their land degradation problems and the benefits of a multicountry approach in the development and adoption in 2003 of the SRAP-CD, which focuses on country-level actions. The Programme serves both as evidence of country drivenness and conformity with eligibility criteria under the UNCCD, as well as a point of reference in devising effective national strategies to promote SLM. The CACs have also adopted national environmental action plans, in which land degradation is a prominent issue.

93. National working groups were responsible for preparing the NPFs as the basis for national activities under CACILM. A series of multistakeholder meetings was held in each country to develop the NPFs in a participatory manner. The NPFs were then reviewed at national workshops in September–October 2005 and February–March 2006.

94. Drivenness at the multicountry level is also seen in adoption of a regional environmental action plan by the CACs; accession by four CACs (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan) to the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters; and consideration of a multicountry environmental convention by the Interstate Commission on Sustainable Development (ICSD), which comprises the environment, economics, and science ministers of the CACs.

III. PROGRAM AND POLICY CONFORMITY

95. CACILM is in complete conformity with GEF programs and policy. The multicountry support requested in this proposal was developed to ensure that the global benefits of the

activities—with regard to land degradation, biodiversity, and atmospheric pollution—under the individual NPFs will eventuate. CMPF is designed to (i) ensure that the (national and multicountry) activities during implementation of CACILM remain consistent with GEF strategic priorities; (ii) ensure the sustainability of both national and multicountry activities; (iii) ensure replicability of individual activities to benefit all CACs; and (iv) are designed and carried out with broad stakeholder involvement. CMPF meets the strategic priorities of both GEF3 and GEF4.

A. Fit to GEF Operational Program and Strategic Priorities

96. During development of the NPFs, care was taken to ensure consistency with the GEF Operational Program 15 Sustainable Land Management under the Land Degradation Focal Area (OP15), and the strategic priorities of targeted capacity building and implementation of innovative and indigenous sustainable land management practices. Through the monitoring and evaluation system of this project, by collection and analysis of regular reports from national coordination councils to the CACILM steering committee, and subsequent recommendations from the steering committee to the national coordination councils, relevance of proposed and ongoing projects to OP 15 and GEF strategic priorities can be maintained.

97. Although the strategic objectives of GEF 4—fostering system-wide change and removing policy, institutional, technical, capacity, and financial barriers to SLM; demonstrating and up-scaling successful SLM practices for the control and prevention of desertification and deforestation; generating and disseminating knowledge addressing current and emerging issues in SLM; and demonstrating cross focal-area synergies and integrated ecosystem approaches to watershed-based sustainable land management—were developed only recently, the CACILM approach is consistent with these objectives. CACILM is aimed at removing the major SLM barriers, devising innovative practices for SLM, disseminating relevant knowledge, and providing benefits across several GEF focal areas. It is expected that integrated ecosystem approaches will be adopted in the course of developing SLM practices because the ecosystem approach is now recognized as essential component of sustainable development—land degradation itself is defined by GEF OP 15 as a loss of ecosystem integrity.

98. This CMPF Support Project provides essential components toward meeting these objectives: an information system to enable progress to be determined and monitored, a means to ensure a multicountry flow of knowledge and information, research toward common, innovative SLM practices, and coordination of activities to capture advantages of scale.

99. Further, the CACs' acceptance of the GEF programmatic approach has been demonstrated through their commitments of human and financial resources to participating in the development of the CACILM PDF-B design phase, the NPFs, and the CMPF.

B. Sustainability

100. The focus of the multicountry activities of this project is sustainability—sustainable land management information systems, research, and knowledge management all have this element as a basis. Environmental sustainability is fundamental to CACILM.

101. To ensure institutional sustainability, all activities will be developed in consultation with the CACILM national coordination councils in each country and implemented in conjunction with the CACILM national secretariats. To ensure sustainability and the multicountry level, the project will be overseen by the CACILM steering committee and administered by the CACILM multicountry secretariat

102. To ensure social sustainability, the project will emphasize the early involvement of key stakeholders in project preparation and implementation, including policy makers, local public officials and community leaders, farmers, their associations, NGOs. Such involvement will create a sense of ownership and contribute to social sustainability.

C. Replicability

Replicability is clearly an essential feature of a program spanning five countries with potential benefits to many other countries affected by land degradation. CACILM was developed with built-in means to maximize the replicability, including scaling-up, of piloted good practices in SLM and in institutional reform. Two vehicles to be developed under this project will be used. First is SLMIS, which, by making available data on indicators to be monitored, will allow for use of harmonized land degradation assessment methodologies and the production of information systems that are useful at local, national, regional, and global scales. The second vehicle is the knowledge management plan, which will provide a coordinated approach to capturing the lessons learned, storing them in an easily accessible manner, and actively disseminating them to stakeholders in ways appropriate to each type of stakeholder. CACILM will develop a SLM network and work with key individuals and organization to establish a SLM community of practice that inter alia will ensure that methodologies developed are replicable within and beyond the CACs.

103. Effective knowledge dissemination is as important as its generation. The most obvious forms of dissemination of replicable lessons learned are publications and presentations. In particular, the component CACILM LEARN is intended to foster, inter alia, replication across the program's portfolio. In addition a bilingual (Russian and English) website will be developed and administered by the CACILM secretariat. CACILM also expects to establish a project library and e-learning center. CACILM-supported investment projects are also effective for disseminating knowledge through incorporating good practices to address certain development issues.

D. Stakeholder Involvement

104. Strong and broad stakeholder involvement at various levels is an essential element of the CMPF. Some elements of the public participation plan of the CMPF (Annex E) require support through this project if the plan is to be implemented properly. The SLM research program will be of vital interest to land managers in the CACs; other stakeholders include participating national and regional research institutions; international agricultural and land management research organizations, and SPA members. Results of the research at all levels need to be distilled in different forms and disseminated to all stakeholders through the knowledge management plan, the main stakeholders being land managers and national technical agencies in the CACs, as well as civil society groups and SPA members.

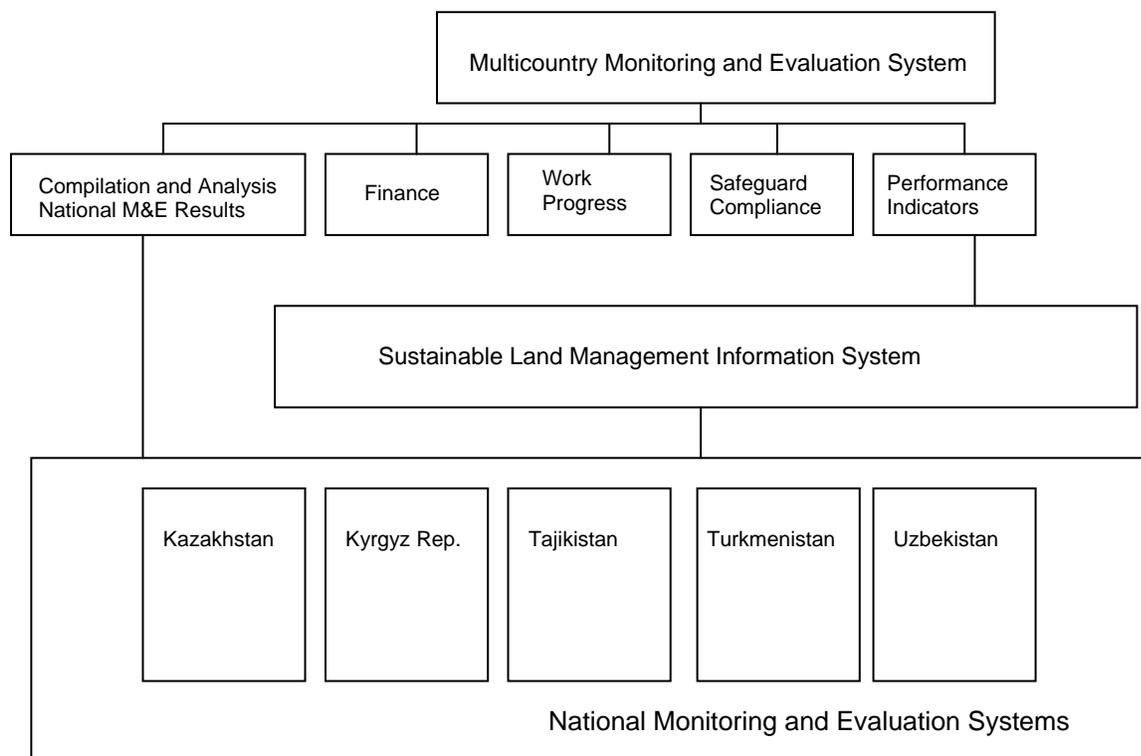
105. The SLM information system is necessary in order to provide efficient collection and dissemination of economic, social, and environmental data and information, primarily for national land management agencies and SPA members, as well as global environmental monitoring bodies and, importantly, the CACILM steering committee—to enable optimum management of the overall CACILM program. Program coordination provides the connectivity between on-the-ground projects, national secretariats, and national coordination councils on the one hand, and the CACILM steering committee and SPA members on the other. More directly, individual CACs may require assistance in planning and implementing national public participation plans.

E. Monitoring and Evaluation

106. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system of the CMPF is based on a logical framework that focuses on the catalytic and coordinating functions of the partnership within the overall objective of the CMPF. The targets, indicators, data sources and reporting mechanisms, and assumptions and risks are shown in the monitoring and evaluation plan (Annex D). At the multicountry level (Figure 1), the M&E will be provided through this project and include

- (i) compilation and analysis of the results of national monitoring and evaluation;
- (ii) monitoring and evaluation of multicountry activities, consisting of
 - monitoring programmed and disbursed amounts of donor SLM resources,
 - monitoring physical progress, and
 - compliance of multicountry activities with environmental and social safeguards of financing partners;
- (iii) monitoring of performance indicators under the program logical framework, supported by the SLMIS. This component will also monitor the quality of the multicountry coordination process, i.e.
 - completeness of the accounting for all donor-implemented SLM activities in the region, and
 - the quality of the shared understanding about the technical content of proposed SLM interventions.

Figure 1. Multicountry Monitoring and Evaluation System



IV. FINANCIAL MODALITY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

A. Financing Plan and Cofinancing Sources

Table 2: Cofinancing Sources

Cofinancier (Source)	Classification	Type	Amount (\$)	Status*
Kazakhstan	Government	Cash/In-kind	100,000	Confirmed
Kyrgyz Republic	Government	Cash/In-kind	100,000	Confirmed
Tajikistan	Government	Cash/In-kind	100,000	Confirmed
Turkmenistan	Government	Cash/In-kind	100,000	Confirmed
Uzbekistan	Government	Cash/In-kind	100,000	Confirmed
ADB	Executing Agency	Grant	1,500,000	Confirmed
FAO	Executing Agency	In-kind	300,000	To be Confirmed
IFAD	Implementing Agency	Grant	200,000	To be Confirmed
GTZ	Bilateral Donor Agency	In-kind	300,000	To be Confirmed
ICARDA	Research Agency	In-kind	500,000	Confirmed
		Total	3,300,000	

107. The Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, recognizing the importance of this CMPF Support Project, have indicated their full support for the project and are willing to provide cofinancing for project implementation through the life of the project. Expected contributions from the development cooperation partners are shown in the financing plan table above.

B. Incremental Cost Analysis

108. The CMPF was created largely in response to countries' and donors' search for (a) greater synergy in combating land degradation, and (b) as a vehicle to generate global benefits. CMPF Support Project is the principal vehicle to capture these categories of benefits.

109. **The "Without GEF" case**, i.e., the baseline, would require countries to search for greater synergy in a variety of small ways stopping short of creating a formal partnership. There would be fewer SLM investments than under the GEF Alternative because, in the absence of a suitable framework, there would be less confidence that SLM investments would have the desired effect. The countries would want to undertake individual SLM projects with GEF cofinancing in mind as they have been doing for some time (refer to existing GEF projects in individual CACs) but the justification for GEF support would be weaker than under a coordinated framework. GEF would rightly see fewer incremental benefits, and the volume of GEF funding under a country-by-country approach would be smaller than with the Alternative.

110. **The GEF Alternative** replaces the country-by-country approach by a coordinated approach. Creating and supporting CMPF is what makes it possible for the CACs taken together to realize more global benefits than possible under country-by-country formulation. The result is that under GEF Alternative, more is spent on SLM than in the baseline, and more global benefits (as well as national benefits) are potentially available than under the baseline.

111. The additional level of activity (and associated cost) under the Alternative applies differently to different subcomponents of CMPF Support Project according to nature of each subcomponent (Table 3). The incremental cost of program coordination at national levels is estimated to be small. Program coordination at the multicountry level is required to keep the Partnership going and reap the extra global environmental benefits made possible by working in

a coordinated way. The entire cost of this subcomponent is understood to be incremental. There will be other benefits of the CMPF, such as reduced cost of doing business for development cooperation partners and government agencies (fewer separate meetings, separate formulations of interventions, etc.). These reduce somewhat the incremental cost of the GEF Alternative but they do not replace it. Furthermore, the reduced cost of doing business on the part of development partners coexists with additional provisions and cost that they have to make to bring their own procedures in line with GEF procedures. The overall additional impact on the incremental cost is probably small enough to be ignored. What remains is the cost of maintaining the program at the multicountry level.

112. Estimated percentages of incremental cost under multicountry activities of the CMPF Support Project are given in Appendix G. The combined cost of the GEF Alternative is estimated at \$6,300,000. Of this, the incremental cost is estimated at \$3,970,000.

Table 3: Estimated Incremental Cost of the CMPF Support Project

	Total estimated cost (\$)	Estimated proportion of incremental cost (%)	Estimated Incremental cost (\$)
Program Coordination			
Program coordination at a national level	1,000,000	20	200,000
Program coordination at a multicountry level	1,000,000	100	1,000,000
Multicountry activities			
SLMIS	2,400,000	75	1,800,000
SLM research	1,300,000	30	390,000
Knowledge Management and information dissemination	625,000	60	375,000
Total	6,325,000		3,765,000

C. Cost Effectiveness

113. Cost effectiveness is one of the main reasons for the multicountry mode of operation of the CMPF concept. Clearly, the use of a single set of country and sector analyses for all donors and coordination of donor activities through CMPF, the use of common monitoring and evaluation systems, multicountry training programs, etc., will reduce transaction costs of individual donors and hold the promise of benefits beyond the national level.

114. There are also economies of scale to be found in the multicountry activities supported by this CMPF Support Project. The sustainable land management information system is a vehicle through which all CACs can access a wide range of basic data, methodologies, and computer-based systems for presenting research results for project monitoring, enabling common approaches to data acquisition and monitoring. The SLM research program seeks to determine the reasons for institutional failures that drive land degradation and to facilitate adoption of innovative SLM practices across the CACs. The knowledge management and dissemination component provides the distillation of research results in each country for the benefit of all CACs. Program coordination in itself is designed to reduce to avoid duplication among donors.

V. INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AND SUPPORT

A. Core Commitments and Linkages

115. This project responds to the need for essential support for the CMPF, which is one of six GEF CPPs. The overall design of the CMPF has benefited from interaction and information exchange with other CPPs and the guidance provided by the GEF secretariat. Lessons learned for other GEF activities in Central Asia, which are detailed in the CMPF, will help target and focus the proposed multicountry activities.

B. Consultation, Coordination, and Collaboration between IAs, and IAs and EAs

116. This project was designed in coordination with all members of the CACILM task force, which includes:

- (i) representatives of the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan;
- (ii) GEF implementing agencies, World Bank, UNDP, and UNEP;
- (iii) GEF executing agencies, ADB, and IFAD;
- (iv) bilateral agencies; and
- (v) other international organizations participating in CACILM projects and activities.

117. The project will be implemented under the oversight of the CACILM steering committee, the successor for to the task force, to be created at the outset of implementation.

C. Project Implementation Arrangements

118. This is multicountry project of the CMPF. As such, it is under the supervision of the CACILM steering committee and will be administered by the CACILM secretariat. ADB will be the GEF Executive Agency, and will be responsible for operation the CACILM secretariat. The CACILM secretariat will be headed by the CACILM project manager. The project manager will be supported by deputy project manager, who is expected to come from ADB staff. In addition, financial, administrative, and monitoring personnel will be recruited.

119. ADB, through the CACILM secretariat, will be the lead agency for the knowledge management and dissemination activities. FAO will be the lead agency for implementation of SLMIS; and ICARDA will be lead agency for the sustainable land management research program. Team leaders will be recruited for each of these multicountry activities and they will report to the CACILM project manager.

120. **Relationship to CACILM Multicountry Capacity Building Project (MCB Project).** Capacity building, one of the two strategic priorities of OP 15, was also seen as a priority need by the CAC governments in designing the SRAP-CD and subsequently in the formulation of the NPFs for CACILM. Consequently, it is considered a vital part of the multicountry activities of CMPF. For this reason, capacity building has been made the subject of a separate project proposal for mainly in-country implementation. In this proposal, some capacity building is, however, included for effective implementation of a national and multicountry information system.

121. A separate project (Multicountry Capacity Building Project) has been designed to respond to capacity building needs and proposed activities in the NPFs. The Multicountry Capacity Building Project is a project within the CMPF. As such, it is under the supervision of the CACILM steering committee and will be administered by the CACILM secretariat. The team leader for the Multicountry Capacity Building Project will report to the CACILM project manager.