TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

FOR THE GEF-FUNDED PROJECT

ENABLING THE USE OF GLOBAL DATA SOURCES TO ASSESS AND MONITOR LAND DEGRADATION AT MULTIPLE SCALES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CI-GEF PROJECT SUMMARY INFORMATION

Project name	Enabling the use of global data sources to assess and monitor land degradation at multiple scales.
Project type	Medium-sized project
Funding source	GEF Trust Fund
GEF Project ID	9163
Country	Global
Region	Africa
GEF Focal Area	Land Degradation
Approval date	23rd November 2015
Implementing Agency	Conservation International
Executing Agencies	Vital Signs, NASA and Lund University
GEF total grant	US$ 1,828,217
Co-financing total	US$ 10,002,000
Implementation timeframe	January 1, 2016 - May 30, 2018
Project website	http://vitalsigns.org/gef-ldmp
Project objective	To provide guidance, methods and a toolbox for assessing and monitoring status and trends in land degradation using remote sensing technology which can be employed to inform land management and investment decisions as well as to improve reporting to the UNCCD and the GEF.
Terminal Evaluation timeframe	April - June 2018
Evaluation team	Julia E. Latham, International Consultant / Team Leader Lucy G. Anderson, International Consultant.

The Land Degradation Monitoring Project is a Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded project that provides guidance on robust methods and a toolbox for assessing, monitoring status, and estimating trends in land degradation using remote sensing technology. The project's guidance and toolbox can be employed to inform land management and investment decisions as well as to improve reporting to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and to the GEF. The project has piloted products and tools in four countries (Kenya, Tanzania,

Uganda, and Senegal) through a partnership between Vital Signs/CI, Lund University in Sweden, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States.

Overall project performance ratings

The below table summarizes ratings given to the main dimensions of project performance:

Area	**Terminal Evaluation Rating**
Project outcomes: the extent to which project objectives were achieved.	Overall project outcomes: **Highly satisfactory** Effectiveness: **Highly satisfactory** Relevance: **Highly satisfactory** Efficiency: **Satisfactory**
Sustainability: overall sustainability to project outcomes when risks are considered.	**Moderately likely**: There are moderate risks to sustainability.
Quality of project M&E	M&E design: **Highly satisfactory** M&E implementation: **Highly satisfactory**
Quality of implementation: the role and responsibilities discharged by the GEF Agencies that have direct access to GEF resources.	**Highly satisfactory:** There were no or minor shortcomings and no environmental or social impact assessments were triggered.
Quality of Execution: the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF Agencies and executed the funded activities on the ground.	**Highly satisfactory:** There were no or minor shortcomings and no environmental or social impact assessments were triggered.
Environmental and social safeguards	**Highly satisfactory:** This project was low risk and did not cause any adverse environmental or social impacts.

Summary of project outcomes

The objective of the project was to provide guidance on robust methods for assessing and monitoring land degradation trends using remote sensing technology, to improve national reporting to the UNCCD and the GEF and inform land management and investment decisions. The project designed a three-step logical process to achieve this objective: 1) to establish robust methods; 2) to demonstrate those methods and platforms; and 3) to build capacity to ensure project benefits are long-term and wide reaching.

The most significant project output was the Trends.Earth toolbox, a free and open-source tool for monitoring land degradation, available online (http://trends.earth). Trends.Earth allows non-expert users to use integrated national information with free global datasets to track changes in indicators of land degradation. Trends.Earth can be used to inform land management and investment decisions, as well as to improve reporting to the UNCCD and to the GEF. The

toolbox is supported by a set of guidance documents are all freely available on the project website (http://vitalsigns.org/gef-ldmp).

To maximize user engagement, the project team led three workshops on land degradation monitoring and the use of Trends.Earth in Tanzania (2017); South Africa (2017) and Kenya (2018). In total, 360 people were trained during these workshops, of whom 115 were women (32%). In addition, at the request of the UNCCD the team participated in five regional workshops on reporting to the UNCCD (in Antalya, Turkey; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Fortaleza, Brazil; Delhi, India; and Cairo, Egypt). All 196 UNCCD signatories were invited to these meetings, and over 378 participants were trained on Trends.Earth. In total, the team trained over 700 users from 142 countries on Trends.Earth.

Sustainability

The future relevance and application of project outcomes, in particular the Trends.Earth toolbox, were thoroughly considered and assured by the executing agency (EA). Through strategic engagement with UNCCD and other stakeholders, including the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and the Regional Center for Mapping Resource for Development (RCMRD); the wide geographic reach of capacity building workshops; close alignment with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) reporting guidance; and future application to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets, the toolbox is likely to remain relevant and useful to a wide variety of stakeholders long into the future. However, some uncertainties remain around future resourcing. Key strengths of the project's sustainability include positive feedback from existing users, relevance to UNCCD and SDG reporting, and future relevance to LDN monitoring and planning. However future financial resourcing remains a risk for the project's long-standing impact, and language barriers prevent all regions of the world from engaging with the toolbox at present.

Impacts

While it is too early to assess whether the project has catalyzed direct changes in policy, the project has strongly influenced the monitoring frameworks used in international policy. The project helped to address the three indicators adopted by the UNCCD for SDG 15.3.1 (*Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area*). These indicators include land cover, land degradation as measured by changes in productivity, and carbon stocks. UNCCD were engaged early on in the project to ensure that the methods being developed by the executing agencies aligned with requirements for reporting against the SDGs.

Prior to the development of Trends.Earth there was no end-to-end toolbox available for countries to report against SDG 15.3.1. Trends.Earth therefore fulfills a clear need, particularly as many government agencies have limited in-house capacity for spatial analysis. The toolbox also provides a consistent/efficient approach to reporting, which has helped considerably with

data harmonization which previously presented a major challenge for global reporting processes, according to UNCCD.

Following engagement with UNCCD and CSIRO, Trends.Earth became even more applicable to international policy reporting requirements than had originally been envisaged.

M&E Design and Implementation

The M&E plan for the project was extensive, starting with the inception workshop and inception report, outlining 12 types of progress reporting, their frequency and the parties responsible for each stage. The total indicative cost of M&E was US$74,800, approximately 4% of the GEF total grant, and 0.6% of the total project cost. With M&E allocation usually 3-5% of total project cost, this is a suitable proportion of the GEF total grant, and while a seemingly low proportion of total project cost this is due to the distortion of the significant NASA co-financing of in-kind commercial earth observation data.

All M&E activities were conducted during project implementation, with quarterly and annual progress and financial reports completed and submitted on time. This includes monitoring for the GEF focal area tracking tool, which was submitted to the GEF at the time of project inception and at project completion.

Quality of Implementation and Execution

The CI-GEF Agency had a clear oversight role throughout the project's duration. It clearly communicated its reporting expectations to the project team, ensured that reporting documents were delivered by the EAs in a timely and appropriate manner, reviewed report content from a technical and financial/programmatic perspective, and sought clarification from the EAs where necessary. Communication between the implementing and executing agencies was very effective throughout the project.

Throughout the evaluation, excellent feedback was received about the effectiveness with which the lead EA (Vital Signs/CI) managed its role in the project, particularly given the complex multi-institution nature of the project. The success appears to have been assured by the deep commitment of the EAs (Vital Signs/CI, NASA and Lund) to the project, as well as a clear division of tasks and objectives among the different partner organizations. Particular praise was directed to Alex Zvoleff who, as project lead, was widely considered to have played an instrumental role in the project's success.

A number of key factors contributed to the success of the project and are summarized within the report. They included strong applicability to international policy, facilitating wide-scale engagement with project outcomes; stakeholder engagement through all phases of the project; and strong project management, ensuring delays were minimized and budgets were maintained. Lessons can be learned from the minor delays caused by length data processing

times and in future, requirements for processing high-resolution data need to be carefully and realistically considered, especially for a short (two year) project.

Looking to future projects, recommendations include planning engagement activities into the future to maximize the relevance and impact of project outputs after project end; that time requirements for processing high-resolution data are carefully and realistically considered, especially for a short (two year) project; that future ownership of key project outputs should be clarified before project end and that CI-GEF provide greater flexibility around the timing of inception workshops to ensure relevant stakeholders are identified and invited.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CI	Conservation International
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CSE	Centre de Suivi Ecologique
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
ESA	European Space Agency
EA	Executing Agency
FS-IAP	GEF Food Security Integrated Approach Pilot
GBI	Global Benefits Index
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF IEO	GEF Independent Evaluation Office
GEO	Group on Earth Observations
GIS	Geographic Information System
IA	Implementing Agency
JRC	Joint Research Center of the European Commission
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States
NDVI	Normalized Difference Vegetation Index
RCMRD	Regional Centre For Mapping Resource for Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TFCG	Tanzania Forest Conservation Group
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of Evaluation

The objectives of this Terminal Evaluation (TE) are to provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of the GEF-funded project 'Enabling the use of global data sources to assess and monitor land degradation at multiple scales' by assessing its design, implementation, and achievement of objectives. The TE is also expected to promote accountability and transparency, and to facilitate the synthesis of lessons to aid in the design and delivery of future projects. The TE will provide feedback to allow the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) to identify recurring issues across the GEF portfolio; and, contribute to GEF IEO databases for aggregation and analysis.

1.2. Evaluation scope and methodology

The TE was an evidence-based assessment which combined a desk-based review of key project documents (detailed in Annex I), with a series of interviews with 11 key informants representing project implementing and executing agencies, partner organizations and end-users. Attempts were made to interview a further three informants, however responses were not received or timings could not be arranged within the timeline of the evaluation (detailed in Annex II). Given the global nature of the project, the TE did not include field visits.

The overall scope of the evaluation followed the scope of work for consultants (Annex IV). The evaluation was carried out by two independent research consultants and included the following activities:

1. The evaluation team established a workplan on 27 April 2018 having gathered and reviewed key project documents.
2. The evaluation team completed a desk-based review of key project documents and reports between 30 April - 04 May 2018.
3. The evaluation team hosted a workshop with Executing Agencies on 04 May 2018.
4. The evaluation team submitted a Terminal Evaluation Zero Report, submitted according to the Terms of Reference on 11 May 2018.
5. The evaluation team conducted interviews with 11 key informants between 14 May and 24 May 2018.
6. Evaluation matrix completed and analyzed between 14 May and 25 May 2018 using information gleaned through the document review and informant interviews.
7. Draft report prepared and submitted 25 May 2018.
8. Draft report comments received 1 June 2018.
9. Final report submitted 5 June 2018.

As a data collection and analysis tool, an evaluation matrix (Annex III) was formulated based on the questions included in the scope of work for this evaluation (Annex IV). Key findings from

project reports were extracted cross-referenced against the evaluation matrix, including a review of project outcomes and outputs against the project logical results framework, noting key issues raised, lessons learned, problems identified and key achievements for discussion with key informants. Key informant interview questions were developed based on the matrix, and were designed to complement and extend the desk-based evaluation and allow for triangulation of data, ensuring that empirical evidence collected from one source, e.g. project documents, was validated from other sources, e.g. through interviews.

1.3. Evaluation criteria

The project was evaluated against the following key criteria, as defined within the scope of work. The rating scale for each criterion is detailed within the scope of work for this evaluation.

Relevance:	Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes?
Effectiveness:	Were the project's actual outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes?
Efficiency:	Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects?
Sustainability:	Weigh the (financial, socio-political, environmental, institutional) risks to continuation of the project benefits.
Impact:	Assess the extent to which progress towards long-term impact may be attributed to the project.
M&E:	Assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project M&E plan and its implementation.
Implementation & Execution:	Assess the performance of the implementing agency (CI-GEF) and the executing agencies (Vital Signs/CI, Lund, NASA) in discharging their roles and responsibilities: ● Quality of implementation ● Quality of execution ● Assessment of environmental and social safeguards ● Gender ● Stakeholder engagement ● Accountability and grievance mechanism
Other assessments:	● Need for follow-up ● Materialization of co-financing ● Lessons and recommendations

1.4. Limitations

The study was carried out over a period of 21 consultant days, including preparatory activities, desk-based review, completion of interviews, and production of evaluation report, according to the consultants' scope of work. As time was limited, some stakeholders selected for interviews were unavailable, or did not respond to email requests (and subsequent follow ups) within this time period. The consultants sought the assistance of the executing agencies in making introductions to potential key informants, and arranged interviews with alternative representatives from the same organization where possible.

The study was also limited to a desk-based literature review, complimented and triangulated by key informant interviews. This made it difficult to incorporate feedback from a broad representation of project output end-users.

1.5. Evaluation team

The evaluation team comprised two consultants: Dr Julia Latham and Dr Lucy Anderson. Julia and Lucy hold doctorates in conservation science (both combining social and biological research into natural resource management) and have extensive experience in and knowledge of the conservation sector and synthesizing evidence into reports and other outputs for varied audiences.

Julia is a multidisciplinary conservation scientist specializing in natural resource management and monitoring and evaluation. Julia is experienced at conducting programme and project evaluations at local, national and global levels, for organizations such as International Union for the Conservation of Nature, World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and UN-REDD programme.

Lucy is a multidisciplinary conservation scientist and experienced science communicator. She has distilled the latest research and written reports, systematic reviews, internal strategy recommendations and academic papers for a wide range of government and NGO clients including the UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Colorado State University, Greenpeace, Blue Ventures Conservation, Earthwatch Institute, Chester Zoo and the Marine Stewardship Council.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Land Degradation Monitoring Project is a GEF-funded project that provides guidance on robust methods and a toolbox for assessing, monitoring status, and estimating trends in land degradation using remote sensing technology. The project's guidance and toolbox can be employed to inform land management and investment decisions as well as to improve reporting to the UNCCD and to the GEF. The project has piloted products and tools in four countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Senegal) through a partnership between Vital Signs/Conservation International (CI), Lund University in Sweden, and NASA.

2.1. Project start and duration

The project was approved on 23rd November 2015, and implementation commenced on January 1st 2016. The project was designed to be two years in duration, ending in December 2017, however a three-month extension was granted and the final activities of the project concluded in March 2018.

2.2. Project objective and components

The objective of the project was "*To provide guidance, methods and a toolbox for assessing and monitoring status and trends in land degradation using remote sensing technology which can be employed to inform land management and investment decisions as well as to improve reporting to the UNCCD and the GEF*."

To achieve this objective the project had three components, each with two outcomes:

Component 1: Methods for assessing and monitoring land degradation at multiple scales

> **Outcome 1.1.** Improved understanding of the accuracy, suitability, and trade-offs (e.g. resolution, accessibility, repeatability, sustainability/automation, cost, etc.) of different global datasets for estimating status and trends in land degradation.
>
> **Outcome 1.2.** Agreed-upon methods for assessing land degradation/ improvement suitable for identified end-users.

Component 2: Demonstration of recommended methods and platforms to enable widespread adoption across scales, from the regional to national and local levels

> **Outcome 2.1.** Baseline assessment of land degradation in four pilot countries (Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda).
>
> **Outcome 2.2.** Platforms for capacity building and for expanding the use of the data, methods, and toolbox to other countries and regions.

Component 3: In-country capacity development

Outcome 3.1. Strengthened capacity of the four pilot countries and regional center, with equitable participation by women and men, in accessing and processing data related to the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) and other vegetation indices for estimating degradation/improvement.

Outcome 3.2. Enhanced exchange of knowledge among countries and at least one regional center, with equitable participation by women and men, on remote sensing applications for land degradation monitoring.

2.3. Project theory of change

The project was initiated to address a clear and identified issue: Numerous international processes, including the UNCCD, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have highlighted land degradation as a key development challenge. A lack of reliable information and cost-effective methods for collecting and analyzing data have previously hampered the development of policies to address this challenge. Several barriers have contributed to this, including a dearth of standardized and harmonized datasets, methods, and tools for assessing land degradation; an absence of systematic and documented testing for assessing baselines at national scales in different agro-ecosystems; and capacity constraints due, in part, to the limited access to relevant satellite imagery. Following a review commissioned by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of the GEF on the use of the NDVI for monitoring land degradation, the STAP approached Vital Signs/CI, NASA, and the European Space Agency (ESA) to develop a proposal that would address these barriers and to develop multiscale indicators.

The project's objective was to provide guidance on robust methods for assessing and monitoring land degradation trends using remote sensing technology, to improve national reporting to the UNCCD and the GEF and inform land management and investment decisions. The project designed a three-step logical process to achieve this objective, with each step having clear activities and outputs that build upon the last (see below). Through this identification of the issue, project inputs, outputs and outcomes the project's theory of change is sound and provides a logical flow of events to ensure the long-term impact of the project benefits. This evaluation assesses the degree to which these outcomes and impact were achieved.

Step 1. Establish robust methods

The project's first component was to examine and test different global datasets and methods from satellite-derived indicators. The aim was to agree upon methods and ensure their relevance to end-users through stakeholder identification and engagement.

Step 2. Demonstrate methods and platforms

Building on the first component, this second step aimed to demonstrate the robust methods and create a platform to enable widespread adoption of the toolbox. To maximize uptake and outreach, the aim was to make the toolbox available online, alongside associated datasets and guidance, and to disseminate the toolbox and guidance through regional platforms.

Step 3. Capacity building

The project's final component aimed to ensure the benefits from the project were long-term and wide reaching. Through gender-appropriate training manuals and workshops, the aim was to ensure the toolbox was relevant to stakeholders and to encourage uptake.

2.4. Project team and main stakeholders

The Executing Agencies for this project were Vital Signs/CI, NASA, and Lund University. The project also had national NGO partners in three of the four pilot countries: Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE) in Senegal, Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) in Tanzania and AfrII in Uganda. At project inception, Dr Sandy Andelman was project lead. However, mid-way through the project Dr Andelman moved institutions and Dr Alex Zvoleff became project lead.

The following table summarizes the project team structure:

ID	Name	Organization	Position
IMPLEMENTING AGENCY			
1	Dr Free De Koning	CI-GEF	Project Manager
2	Ms Susana Escudero	CI-GEF	Project Finance Manager
EXECUTING AGENCY			
3	Dr Alex Zvoleff*	CI (Vital Signs)	Senior Director of Data Science & CI Project Lead
4	Ms Christy Osoling	CI	Finance and Operations
5	Dr Mariano Gonzalez-Roglich*	CI (Vital Signs)	Director of Ecosystems Analysis
PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE			
6	Dr Sandy Andelman	Organization for Tropical Studies	Independent Steering Committee Member
7	Dr Annette Cowie	GEF STAP	Independent Steering Committee Member
8	Dr Michael Cherlet	European Commission Joint Research Centre	Independent Steering Committee Member
9	Mr Stephen	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal	Independent Steering Committee

	Muwaya	Industry, and Fisheries, Uganda	Member
10	Dr Lennart Olsson*	Lund University	Director of the Centre for Sustainable Studies & Lund Project Lead
11	Dr Compton Tucker*	NASA	Physical Scientist & NASA Project Lead
PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS			
12	Ms Monica Noon	CI (Vital Signs)	Geographic Information System (GIS) Manager
13	Ms Carly Silverman	CI (Vital Signs)	Finance Manager
14	Mr John (Ebo) L. David	NASA	Senior Programmer/Analyst
15	Ms Katherine Melocik	NASA	Senior Research Scientist
16	Dr Jorge Pinzon	NASA	Lead Research Scientist
17	Dr Anna Tengberg	Lund University	Adjunct professor
18	Dr Genesis Yengoh	Lund University	Researcher

** Denotes key stakeholder is also a Project Team Member*

Other project stakeholders include:

Stakeholder	**Interests in the project**
GEF STAP	Key users of the improved data and the assessments of status and trends of land cover and land degradation using remote-sensing in their work
UNCCD Secretariat/Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT)	Needs improved baseline data on land cover and land degradation for global reporting
UNCCD national focal points	Key users of land cover data for reporting on the core indicator under SO-2 of the 10YSP on land cover
National technical experts	Need access to improved data and tools for land cover and land degradation monitoring and assessment
Regional remote-sensing centers	Need access to improved data and better tools for land cover monitoring and assessment
The European Commission Joint Research Center (JRC) and the ESA	Sharing of data and experiences throughout the project with the UNCCD and the GEF
International scientific community	Ensure credibility of toolbox and data

3. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT RESULTS

Assessment of the project results was evaluated by assessing the progress made toward realizing the targets on the indicators set out in the project's logical results framework.

3.1. Achievement of project outputs

The project achieved all of its intended outputs, and made additional achievements. The main project output was the Trends.Earth toolbox, a free and open-source tool for monitoring land degradation available online (http://trends.earth). Trends.Earth allows non-expert users to use integrated national information with free global datasets to track changes in indicators of land degradation. The project's guidance and tools can be employed to inform land management and investment decisions, as well as to improve reporting to the UNCCD and to the GEF. The toolbox is supported by a set of guidance documents all freely available on the project website (http://vitalsigns.org/gef-lmdp). The project team led three workshops on land degradation monitoring and the use of Trends.Earth: a workshop focused on the four pilot countries in Morogoro, Tanzania in October 2017, a workshop in South Africa in December 2017, and a workshop focused on Kenyan stakeholders in Nairobi, Kenya in January 2018. In total, 360 people received training during these workshops, of whom 115 were women (32%). In addition, at the request of the UNCCD the team participated in five regional workshops (in Antalya, Turkey; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Fortaleza, Brazil; Delhi, India; and Cairo, Egypt) on reporting to the UNCCD. All 196 UNCCD signatories were invited to these meetings, at which over 378 participants were trained on Trends.Earth. As these workshops were UNCCD-led, a gender breakdown is not available. In total, the team trained over 700 users from 142 countries on Trends.Earth, and the UNCCD continue to train users, as well as train trainers, on the use of Trends.Earth using the project outputs.

The establishment of a Scientific Advisory Committee to provide peer review on the project's outputs and reports helped to enable the achievement of outputs. Completion of Report 2 (output 1.1.2.) by NASA was delayed as it took more processing power than had originally been estimated to clean, format and process the high-resolution data. Some informants for this evaluation considered NASA had been ambitious in their expectation to process this data in the given time. The extent to which this data was then used in further outputs was less than expected, and to compensate Lund University asked NASA to prioritize areas of the countries where ground truthing could take place, rather than conducting analyses for the entire countries. However, the project manager (Alex Zvoleff) considered this to be a limitation of the data itself rather than the delay in processing, with the density of high-resolution data being inadequate for the intended purposes. While this limitation did not stop the project achieving its outputs, the UNCCD have questioned the applicability of high-resolution commercial data to the toolbox as it cannot be easily processed or replicated by countries due to financial constraints. However, high-resolution data is expected to become cheaper and easier to access in the near future, and

the toolbox has been produced in such a way that this data can be incorporated once it becomes more openly available.

The project experienced difficulty in identifying and reaching end-users at the national scale (output 1.2.1.), as contacting the GEF and UNCCD focal point in each country was difficult or the focal point could not help identify further stakeholders. National project partners helped with the identification of end-users and workshop participants, and the project team also had to make country-visits to assist with this. This appears to have been a fairly significant challenge for the project and a lot of time was invested in this activity, however participants were identified and new collaborations were developed from this. For example, the project collaborated with the RCMRD in Kenya to identify participants and host workshops and this collaboration continues with further training planned post-project close. This challenge might have been improved with dedicated project staff time allocated to this task early on in the project's implementation.

3.2. Achievement of project outcomes

Overall extent to which project outcomes were achieved: **Highly satisfactory**

The project achieved all of its expected outcomes. The Trends.Earth toolbox, in combination with the outreach and capacity building were widely cited by informants as the most effective outcomes of the project.

Key enabling factors for the overall achievement of project outcomes include:

- **Steering committee membership:** The project steering committee comprised representatives from key project stakeholders. During the project it was suggested that a representative for ESA/JRC and for the four pilot countries sit on the committee. As a result, Dr Michael Cherlet (JRC) and Mr Stephen Muwaya (UNCCD Focal Point for Uganda) were elected to the committee.
- **Adapting to feedback:** The project team responded to the advice of the independent steering committee and scientific advisory committee, as well as to end-user needs within training workshops.
- **Good project management:** The project team responded to delays in activities and adapted timelines to ensure that outputs were delivered by end of project.
- **UNCCD engagement:** The engagement of UNCCD benefitted the project by assisting with uptake of the Trends.Earth toolbox and significantly improving outreach and capacity building through ongoing training.

Key constraining factors encountered by the project include:

- **Level of input between steering committee members:** Dr Cherlet's input declined in the second year due to other commitments, contributing to a cited concern that ESA/JRC did not have as much input to the project as initially intended.

- **Underestimation of time to process high-resolution data:** Processing high-resolution data was a challenge, and the extent to which it is useful is questionable. This is discussed in further detail below.
- **Identifying workshop participants** was a lengthy and challenging process for the project team. This is discussed in further detail below.

3.2.1. Effectiveness

Outcome effectiveness rating: **Highly satisfactory**

Overall, the project was very effective at achieving its expected outcomes. These are summarized here by project component.

Component 1: Methods for assessing and monitoring land degradation at multiple scales.

Indicator	Target	End of project indicator status
Outcome 1.1: Improved understanding of the accuracy, suitability, and trade-offs (e.g. resolution, accessibility, repeatability, sustainability/automation, cost, etc.). of different global datasets for estimating status and trends in land degradation.		
Outcome Indicator 1.1.: Number of reports that improves the understanding of implications for estimating status and trends in degradation completed and readily available for key stakeholders	Improved understanding sufficient to identify data sources and methods that enable estimation of areas of land degradation or drivers.	Four reports produced: • Report 1: Using Spectral Vegetation Indices to Measure Gross Primary Productivity as an Indicator of Land Degradation • Report 2: Evaluation of approaches for incorporating higher-resolution data for disaggregation or targeted analysis • Report 6: Background and guidance for toolbox • Supplemental report on "Disentangling the effects of climate and land use on land degradation"
Outcome 1.2: Agreed-upon methods for assessing land degradation/improvement suitable for identified end-users.		
Outcome Indicator 1.2.: Number of agreed-upon method(s) for assessing land degradation suitable for identified end-users	Methods for assessing land degradation have been developed that are suitable for end users and agreed upon among key stakeholders.	Demonstrated by the four reports above as well as: • The project recommends following the good practice guidance (Good Practice Guidance for Assessing UN Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 15.3.1: Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area) that has since been developed by the UNCCD, considering the input of this project and other stakeholders.

		• Report 4: Recommendations for the Global Benefits Index (GBI) • Toolbox training materials and tutorials agreed upon by stakeholders (http://trends.earth) 21 methods implemented: • 16 methods for productivity trajectory (NDVI trend, P-RESTREND using soil moisture, precipitation, and evapotranspiration, S-RESTREND using soil moisture and precipitation, Rain Use Efficiency trend, and Water Use Efficiency trend, each with two different productivity datasets) • One method for productivity state • One method for productivity performance • One method for degradation due to changes in land cover • One method for assessing degradation due to change in soil organic carbon • One method from JRC for assessing land productivity dynamics.

The project has developed a number of reports and approaches for monitoring land degradation monitoring that have helped to harmonize data reporting between countries, and have informed international best practice guidance on land degradation monitoring methods. These methods and tools are directly applicable to stakeholders and end users, including UNCCD, CSIRO and RCMRD who advise and build capacity of the ministries responsible for land degradation reporting. The project has also provided the GEF with a common standard against which to monitor projects, and also made recommendations for the GBI formula, the algorithm used to determine GEF funding allocation to the focal area of land degradation. Whilst these recommendations to the formula have not yet been implemented, it is understood that the project's data were used to derive the final allocations using the existing formula.

Component 2: Demonstration of recommended methods and platforms to enable widespread adoption across scales, from the regional to national and local levels.

Indicator	Target	End of project indicator status
Outcome 2.1: Baseline assessment of land degradation in 4 pilot countries (Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda).		
Outcome Indicator 2.1.: Number of national baseline reports and guidance documents completed and readily available for key stakeholders.	Baselines have been completed for 3 pilot countries and guidance documents have been completed and are available for key stakeholders.	Four baseline reports completed (Kenya, Tanzania, Senegal and Uganda), sent directly to key stakeholders (UNCCD Focal Points and their designees) and made available online on the project website.

		Five guidance documents completed and made available online for stakeholders: • Report 1: Using Spectral Vegetation Indices to Measure Gross Primary Productivity as an Indicator of Land Degradation • Report 2: Evaluation of approaches for incorporating higher-resolution data for disaggregation or targeted analysis • Report 6: Background and guidance for toolbox • Supplemental report on "Disentangling the effects of climate and land use on land degradation" • Toolbox training materials and tutorials (http://trends.earth)
Outcome 2.2: Platforms for capacity building and for expanding the use of the data, methods, and toolbox to other countries and regions.		
Outcome Indicator 2.2.: Number of platforms created and functional.	Improved distribution of methods and knowledge through one regional and one global web platform that provide methodological guidance, demonstrations and toolbox.	Toolbox available online http://trends.earth alongside guidance and tutorials in English, French, Spanish, Swahili, and Portuguese.

The project more than achieved these outcomes. Baselines from each of the four pilot countries were completed following the UNCCD Good Practice Guidance. These datasets were provided to the pilot country focal points and are available to download from the project website. The project also developed the Trends.Earth toolbox and a set of associated guidance freely available online. The toolbox fills a unique gap, as previously there was no land mapping tool using data to measure and assess trends related to land degradation. The open-source accessibility of the toolbox also enables many countries to conduct spatial analysis and monitoring where previously there was limited capacity to do so. While internet access was initially required for optimal use of the toolbox, the latest version can now be used fully offline. Through engagement with the UNCCD, the use of the data, methods and toolbox has expanded beyond the four pilot countries to be of global benefit. The UNCCD linked the project team with CSIRO, who were writing guidelines for best practice for countries reporting on SDG 15.3.1 (proportion of land that is degraded over total land area), and the project team worked closely with CSIRO and the UNCCD to ensure that the toolbox was directly applicable to the SDGs. This involved expanding the original scope of the project from a focus on land productivity to including means of analyzing all three of the sub-indicators for SDG 15.3.1 (land productivity, land cover and carbon stocks) within the toolbox. As such, the project has contributed directly to

UNCCD and SDG reporting needs by providing a consistent and efficient approach to reporting where previously data harmonization has been problematic.

Whilst the benefits of the Trends.Earth toolbox are clear, it does have the following limitations that the project team are aware of:

- **Some prior knowledge** of spatial data is required to use the platform and users may not always have the required skills. The project has sought to address this by providing tutorials and training materials with the toolbox online, available in English, French, Spanish, Swahili, and Portuguese. This includes videos on YouTube, currently in English only.
- **The software uses Google Earth Engine** to process lower-resolution datasets, which requires continued services from Google. In addition, Google Earth is banned in some countries such as China. However, the use of this engine is beneficial as it significantly speeds up data processing time and the project team is in communication with Google to help ensure these services are maintained.
- **Data accessibility** is currently limited in terms of high-resolution data. The toolbox uses globally calibrated data that limits the precision of small (local) scale analysis. However, the toolbox has been built with the functionality to process high-resolution data as it becomes more freely available, which is widely predicted to occur in the near future.
- **Software updates means the platform could become outdated** and the toolbox will require maintained upkeep to ensure longevity.

Component 3: Gender appropriate capacity development in the application of toolbox and recommended approaches for estimating status and trends in land degradation using remote sensing

Indicator	Target	End of project indicator status
Outcome 3.1: Strengthened capacity of the 4 pilot countries and regional center in accessing and processing spectral index-related data for estimating status and trends in land degradation.		
Outcome Indicator 3.1.: Number of nationals, disaggregated by gender, who have provided feedback or used online materials.	National capacity to access and process data to estimate degradation improved.	360 attendees at in-person workshops sponsored by the project, of whom 115 were women. 340 attendees trained on Trends.Earth through UNCCD-sponsored regional workshops (gender breakdown is not available for these meetings) Over 700 users registered on Trends.Earth cloud-processing tool.

		Participants from 140 countries trained (including UNCCD-led workshops featuring Trends.Earth).
Outcome 3.2: Enhanced exchange of knowledge among countries and at least one regional center, with equitable participation by women and men, on remote sensing applications for land degradation monitoring.		
Outcome Indicator 3.2.: Four countries or regional centers, and percent of women, that have received capacity building.	Professional exchanges of key stakeholders from at least four countries completed.	Eight total exchanges: • Three project-led workshops: ○ Capacity-building workshop in Morogoro, Tanzania (October 2017), with stakeholders from all four pilot countries ○ Training on Trends.Earth in South Africa (December 2017), at the request of Conservation South Africa. ○ Capacity-building workshop in Nairobi, Kenya (January 2018) to allow fuller participation of Kenyan government stakeholders who were not able to participate in the training session in the Morogoro workshop. • Five regional workshops at the request of UNCCD (Antalya, Turkey; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Fortaleza, Brazil; Delhi, India; and Cairo, Egypt) open to all UNCCD signatories, at which attendees were trained in the use of Trends.Earth to support analysis of datasets for UNCCD reporting.

The project has more than achieved these outcomes by directly building capacity in the four pilot countries and extending that outreach globally through close collaboration with UNCCD. The project team trained 360 people during workshops and meetings, of which 32% were female. UNCCD-sponsored workshops have reached 142 countries and trained 378 people, with this number growing as more workshops are planned. UNCCD are also now conducting training of trainer workshops to expand exponentially the reach of the toolbox and associated guidance. An identified limitation of the capacity building is the need to ensure uptake of training and continued maintenance of skills and tools by end users. This is a need to ensure long-term sustainability of project benefits, and responsibility for this needs to be identified. Collaborations with external agencies and organizations will assist with this. The project has established a collaboration with a regional center, the RCMRD in Kenya, through which further training is currently planned.

Activities related to this component did experience some challenges:

- **Identifying/receiving response from national stakeholders** the project initially experienced difficulty in identifying and contacting the right stakeholders from

each country for training. This was also true for the project inception workshop, which CI-GEF specify should take place within the first three months of a project. For this project that timeframe was too short to identify the relevant stakeholders in all pilot countries to attend, especially in Senegal where the project team had not worked before. Working with national partners helped to alleviate this challenge.

- **Language barriers** were cited during the workshops, with this challenge particularly acute when communicating the complex and technical terms inherent to this type of project.
- **Engaging women** was a challenge for the project, which sought as best as possible to ensure balanced gender representation throughout project activities. The project gave each country focal point guidance on gender representation for the workshop but this needed repeated efforts as focal points and their contacts were predominantly men. This could be resolved through better contacts and relationships with each country to build the relevant networks, yet this is understandably hard to achieve during a two-year project. Since the project was very technical, having a project member dedicated to stakeholder engagement could improve this for future similar projects.

3.2.2. Relevance

Outcome relevance rating: **Highly satisfactory**

The project is highly relevant to the GEF as the project outputs are directly applicable to GEF land degradation monitoring and reporting. The project was inspired by a review commissioned by the GEF STAP on the use of NDVI to monitor land degradation, and was designed to harmonize datasets, methods and tools for assessing land degradation. The project closely engaged with the GEF throughout to communicate the results of the project, and to ensure the relevance of its outputs to the GEF. Data from the Trends.Earth toolbox has had direct input into GEF's allocation of funding to this focal area.

Relevance to GEF:

The project was inspired by a review commissioned by the GEF STAP on the use of NDVI to monitor land degradation demonstrating its relevance to the GEF. The STAP approached Vital Signs, NASA, and the ESA to develop a proposal that would address the lack of reliable information and lack of consistent, cost-effective methods for collecting and analyzing data which have acted as barriers to the comparison of trends across countries and to the development of policies to address this challenge.

The project was fully aligned with the national priorities of the pilot countries and their obligations to the UNCCD and will also benefit other country parties to the UNCCD through wide dissemination of methods, tools and datasets. To ensure these benefits were realized, the project closely engaged with UNCCD and GEF to communicate the latest results, and to ensure the relevance of outputs to ongoing activities of both institutions.

The project made it possible for GEF to consistently monitor and report on land degradation by providing a common standard against which to monitor projects and to allocate funds. For example, the project informed the development of the GEF-7 Programming Directions by offering data and guidance on the land degradation component of the GBI.

In July 2017 the project submitted to the GEF Secretariat a global analysis (stratified by country) of proportion of land area that was degraded from 2001-2015. This analysis drew on the methods developed in the first phase of the project and was performed using the software toolbox the project has developed. The project team maintained contact with the GEF Secretariat to support the analysis and interpretation of these datasets, and provided an update to the GEF Secretariat with calculations based on the final approved Good Practice Guidance from UNCCD. The project also conducted active outreach to other GEF-funded projects such as the Food Security Integrated Approach Pilot (FS-IAP).

Relevance to CI-GEF Agency:

CI-GEF designs and implements a portfolio of projects to achieve global environmental benefits and support the needs of partner countries. It seeks to develop inclusive and country-driven projects, to make efficient and effective use of GEF resources, and to operate in a flexible manner to ensure responsiveness to partners and maintain the ability to rapidly leverage strategic opportunities that align with the Agency's strategic results framework.

Specifically, CI-GEF funds projects that contribute to global environmental benefits and focuses on four overarching project themes.

- **Improving Natural Capital Conservation and Governance**
- **Improving Sustainability of Production in Terrestrial and Marine Ecosystems**
- Preventing Loss and Degradation in Ridge to Reef Ecosystems
- Ensuring a Sustainable Flow of Ecosystem Services

This project is therefore highly relevant to two of the four themes of the CI-GEF's mandate. The outcomes will be used by GEF (as detailed above) as well as by CI, feeding into further planning and projects, for example the integration of the toolbox and guidance with other land use planning tools. Such tools would be very useful for CI externally as well as by CI managers when planning activities in the different countries in which they work.

The project has benefitted from the close link between Vital Signs/CI and the CI-GEF implementing agency. Ease of communication between the two agencies has allowed the project to move more smoothly.

Relevance of project design:

The overall project design was sensible in its three components to achieving the project outcomes and objective. Each component built upon the previous, and had a logical flow: first to define and agree upon methods for assessing and monitoring land degradation at multiple scales; second to demonstrate and implement these methods through creation of the toolbox and guidance materials; and third to increase capacity for land degradation monitoring and reporting in the pilot countries using the developed toolbox and guidance materials. The logical step-wise process of the project components does mean that careful monitoring of the project activities was necessary, as delays to one component would hinder the next. Despite some delays to activities, all outputs and outcomes were achieved.

3.2.3. Efficiency

Outcome efficiency rating: **Satisfactory**

The project represents very good value for money given the extent of its reach within its short two-year duration. Having streamlined methods and developed an open-source toolbox for land degradation monitoring and reporting, ensured alignment with UNCCD and the GEF and extended capacity building beyond the four pilot countries that will continue post project-close. The open-access availability of the tool and guidance material means that the project benefits can have lasting legacy across both temporal and spatial scales.

The project was cost-efficient in its use of funds, as NASA's in-kind contribution of data and data processing allowed for analyses that would otherwise be expensive for other projects to carry out. However, there were concerns regarding the extent to which NASA's high-resolution data analysis contributed to the final outputs of the project, and so whether this was a cost-effective use of time. UNCCD concurred with this point, stating that NASA's testing of high-resolution commercial data had value from a scientific perspective but not necessarily from a practical perspective given the financial constraints for countries to use commercial data. However, it is envisaged that this data will become more freely available in the near future, and as such the toolbox will be able to process this data with minimal input from the project at that time, improving the potential for long-term project benefits.

The project was extended by three months, however this was not due to delays in outputs but rather due to remaining budget allowing for the capacity building component of the project to be extended. At the time of the Tanzanian workshop, the Kenyan election meant Kenyan nationals

were subject to travel restrictions and so participation was less than intended. The project extension rectified this by enabling an additional workshop to be held in Kenya during this time, which was hosted by RCMRD and thus also helped to reinforce the developing partnership between the project and this regional center.

4. SUSTAINABILITY

Overall sustainability of project outcomes rated as: **Moderately Likely**

The assessment of sustainability assesses risks to the continuation of benefits from the project. It identifies key risks and explain how these risks may affect the continuation of benefits after the GEF project ends. The overall sustainability is rated as moderately likely.

Risk Mitigation

The below table summarizes risks identified in the project documents. Project risk mitigation measures were rated as 'Satisfactory' in the 2017 Project Report (2018 Project Report yet to be finalized).

Risk identified in Project Document	**Rating**	**TE comments on risk management**
Risk 1: Insufficient human and financial resources	Low	No change. Initially assessed as low and maintained status. EA monitored expenditure regularly and financial reports sent to CI-GEF. NASA provided costly datasets to the project through the toolbox.
Risk 2: Low interest from national stakeholders due to lack of incentives to participate	Low	No change. Initially assessed as low and maintained status. Through in person meetings, scientific presentations, phone calls, electronic email and online presentations the project team engaged with UNCCD and GEF focal points from the four pilot countries, as well as with numerous members of the community of researchers and technicians working on land degradation. All expressed interest in the project overall, and in participating in the in-person capacity building activities, and the project was able to reach a total of 700 participants in-person, representing 140 countries, through its outreach and capacity building efforts.
Risk 3: Potential for the spectral index to fail as a proxy for land degradation	Originally Low, revised to Medium	The executing agencies identified a risk that spectral indices will in some conditions not fully capture degrading conditions, or in other cases identify areas potentially degraded when they are not. The risk was therefore revised to account for this limitation in the

		toolbox.
Risk 4: Project partners are not sufficiently willing to share scientific information, data, methods	Low	No change. Initially assessed as low and maintained status. The experiences of previous GEF funded projects, such as LADA and GEF-Soil Organic Carbon Stocks and Changes (GEF-SOC), have demonstrated that countries and other development partners are willing to share information and data and see a large added value in sharing experiences related to assessment. The sharing of technical and scientific information, data, and methods from all partners has continued throughout the project. Project partners continue to discuss the ongoing challenge of sharing high-resolution imagery, particularly considering the potentially changing requirements.
Risk 5: It is not possible to reach agreement on standardized/harmonized approaches, methods and toolbox to assess land degradation trends	Low	No change. Initially assessed as low and maintained status. The project has contributed to the Good Practice Guidance document for reporting on land degradation for the SDGs and to the UNCCD (prepared by CSIRO). The methods recommended for assessing status and trends in land degradation in the guidance document have been incorporated into the Trends.Earth toolbox to assure its broad adoption by the scientific and technical land degradation community.
Risk 6: Weak institutional framework and project coordination hampers Project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and achievement of results	Low	No change. Initially assessed as low and maintained status. Coordination and regular communication between UNCCD national focal points and institutions such as the GEF Secretariat and the UNCCD Secretariat allowed the project to maintain a strong framework. Institutionally, the project has strong technical teams and partnerships which helped the completion of all outputs.

Only one identified risk (Risk 3) had its rating updated (from low to medium) over the course of the project. This change reflected a more thorough assessment of the impact of the indicators to assess potential land degradation. The executing agencies, as well as the scientific community more broadly, recognize that the use of spectral indices alone has limitations. Ideally, spectral indices should be verified using ground data and local knowledge to provide an overall picture of land degradation, as recognized in the SDG framework. Within this project, spectral indices were corroborated with ground-truthing data from Tanzania, Uganda and Senegal; three of the four pilot countries. Kenyan stakeholders were also invited to validate Kenyan land maps.

Sustainability strategy

The future relevance and application of project outcomes, in particular the Trends.Earth toolbox, has been thoroughly considered and assured by the EA. Through strategic engagement with UNCCD and other stakeholders such as CSIRO and RCMRD; the wide geographic reach of capacity building workshops; close alignment with SDG reporting guidance; and future application to LDN targets, the toolbox is likely to remain relevant and useful to a wide variety of stakeholders into the future. However, some uncertainties remain around future resourcing. A summary of the strengths and challenges to the project's future sustainability is provided below.

KEY STRENGTHS

Positive feedback from users

Despite some reported initial skepticism at the inception workshop, the Trends.Earth toolbox has received incredibly positive feedback by workshop attendees, as well as by all stakeholders interviewed both within and outside of the project's executing agencies. Participants felt great satisfaction and empowerment that they had understood and were able to use the tool.

The tool has been praised for being user-friendly, highly relevant, flexible for users with different datasets, and for filling a critical gap as a tool for reporting against SDG 15.3.1. One stakeholder remarked that the toolbox was "*One of the rare examples where a technical device has been developed and is useful even beyond the project. I'm optimistic that the toolbox will remain a useful device into the future*."

Trends.Earth uses cloud computing, and using Google Earth makes it possible for users with limited computing capacity and without expert knowledge of cloud computing to perform complex calculations on large datasets in minutes (enabling analyses of land degradation on national-global scales). The project acknowledges the limitation of internet connectivity limits the use of cloud-based tools and so also supports offline computation of indicators to maximize reach to stakeholders.

Relevance to UNCCD reporting and the SDGs

A major merit of the Trends.Earth toolbox is its relevance to the SDGs, in particular its value in supporting countries to report against SDG 15.3.1. Trends.Earth was built to align directly with the guidance (developed by CSIRO) for reporting against SDG 15.3.1, making it highly relevant to beneficiaries, and boosting its future sustainability, as countries will be required to report against 15.3.1 every four years. Consistent reporting through the use of the toolbox overcomes a major hurdle in data harmonization that had previously posed a challenge to international bodies such as UNCCD.

To ensure that all potentially interested stakeholders are aware of the project's work, the team has worked to communicate project activities using a mix of on the ground workshops and activities in the pilot countries, webinars and email updates, presentations at scientific conferences and international meetings, and through continued engagements with UNCCD and its partners. With the help of UNCCD country focal points and additional UNCCD workshops, over 700 individuals have received in-person training, representing 142 countries.

Potential users who did not attend capacity-building workshops can access the toolbox itself, as well as guidance documents and capacity-building materials on the project website, widening the projects potential reach. At present, over 700 users have registered to use the Trends.Earth tool.

Toolbox built using open source software and data, boosting accessibility

To ensure the project's future sustainability, Trends.Earth was built as a plugin for a freely available open-source software package that is commonly used in developing countries (QGIS). The project team also released the source code to Trends.Earth freely under an open-source license so that others can view and modify it. Trends.Earth also uses Google Earth as a free data processing platform. While there is a small risk that Google Earth will become unavailable in the future, Trends.Earth also supports the use of other offline data sources, so functionality should be maintained.

Relevance of toolbox to LDN monitoring and planning

In addition to reporting against the SDGs, Trends.Earth also supports the calculation of all three of the indicators recommended by the UNCCD for monitoring achievement of LDN. In addition, the project's outputs will be used within the recently launched FS-IAP, to support the regional monitoring component of that project.

Timely updates to existing version of Trends.Earth

Stakeholders commented that Vital Signs/CI have already made significant improvements to the toolbox since the initial workshops, and since the project has ended. For example, the team made significant modifications and additions to Trends.Earth in response to UNCCD requests

and to ensure the project's outputs are aligned with the reporting process endorsed at the UNCCD COP in September 2017. This alignment ensures Trends.Earth will remain useful for countries in the next round of UNCCD reporting in 2022.

Stakeholders have expressed high levels of satisfaction with the speed at which modifications and additions have been made to the toolbox at the request of end-users (e.g. UNCCD national focal points).

Commitment from NASA and project partners to ensure the sustained provision of data and development of toolbox

NASA are due to ensure the sustained provision of data for land cover analysis through the AVHRR NDVI and the MODIS NDVI through NASA's MODIS team, and then through the VIIRS team, which, in the next few years, will replace MODIS. VIIRs will continue operation to 2030. In addition, the methods and tools developed for analysis of land cover and land degradation trends in countries affected by desertification and drought are due to be maintained by Vital Signs/CI, and will be made available to an increasing number of partners. Lund University, together with other academic partners, aim to continue working on improving the toolbox through applied research projects in Africa and other regions of the world.

CHALLENGES TO FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY

Financial sustainability

Financial resourcing remains a risk for the project's long-standing impact. Although use of the toolbox by countries is open source and free, maintaining the toolbox does have associated costs. Integrating new data sources in future, as well as keeping up to date with more users and downloads may see the cost of maintenance increase. UNCCD are keen to see funding for the toolbox be maintained so that it will remain available and up to date for countries to use in future. Responsibility for future maintenance of the toolbox currently remains unclear.

Language/accessibility barriers

The background guidance, toolbox itself, and other training materials are available online (http://trends.earth) in English, French, Spanish, Swahili and Portuguese. YouTube videos are only currently available at English. Further translations and the addition of subheadings may be required to maximize future reach.

Stakeholders also felt there was room for improvement in the manuals and user guidance for the toolbox. The language was considered to be fairly technical, so there may be room to make the language and the guidance in the manuals more accessible to non-experts.

Including case studies for different regions and ecosystems outside Africa (e.g. Asia, Latin America) may help non-dryland beneficiaries better understand the application of the toolbox, enhancing future uptake.

Scaling up and replication

The use of Trends.Earth shows strong potential for replication outside of the four pilot countries. The project team has worked hard to engage beneficiaries across a wide geographic area, and the toolkit has been designed to be applicable for a range of ecosystems, not just dryland areas.

A huge benefit for sustainability and replication were the five workshops hosted by UNCCD on reporting and assessment of the SDG 15.3.1 indicator. The project team collaborated with UNCCD to run these workshops between March and May 2018, with training on Trends.Earth forming a major component of their content. These workshops had greater exposure than the project team could have had on their own, reaching representatives from 140 countries and specifically targeting the people responsible for reporting to UNCCD. UNCCD are now running training of trainer workshops, expanding exponentially the reach of the tool.

To enable broader participation beyond the pilot countries, the project team presented the project at various conferences and international forums and presented the project in two sets of webinars (in July and December 2017), in English, French, and in Spanish. Close engagement with UNCCD and other stakeholders (WOCAT, RCMRD) was essential to the success of this project, and this evaluation recommends continued close collaboration in the future.

Looking ahead, UNCCD among other stakeholders see strong potential for the toolbox to be used in supporting countries to plan and implement LDN activities, and prioritize hotspots for management intervention. This is a major policy demand with over 115 countries committed to setting LDN targets, and more countries are considering joining the programme. This is a growing area, suggesting that demand for tools like Trends.Earth is likely to be high in the near future.

However, continued training and advocacy work will be required to explore how the tool is being used and to monitor uptake, a process that could be facilitated through UNCCD Focal Points. Further training and engagement opportunities will help to ensure that new staff members at government agencies are aware of the tool and its functionality, and that the tool remains relevant and accessible to users. For example, stakeholders may begin to use it for LDN management processes once the SDG reporting period is over. It also remains unclear how users who downloaded Trends.Earth from the Vital Signs website without attending training workshops are getting on with the tool, and whether further engagement with those users is required. Maintaining momentum when other projects become the priority for EAs, and the SDG reporting period is over for beneficiaries, may present a challenge.

5. IMPACT

The impacts of this project are relevant to policy frameworks in particular. The project was not designed to address environmental stress reduction, environmental status change, or socioeconomic status-change. Hence environmental and social impacts have not been evaluated. Similarly, no environmental or social safeguards were triggered as part of this project.

International Policy Relevance

While it is too early to assess whether the project has catalyzed direct changes in policy, the project has strongly influenced the monitoring frameworks used in international policy.

The project helped to address the three indicators adopted by the UNCCD for Sustainable Development Goal 15.3.1 (*Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area*). These indicators include land cover, land degradation as measured by changes in productivity, and carbon stocks. UNCCD were engaged early on in the project to ensure that the methods being developed by the executing agencies aligned with reporting against the SDGs. The UNCCD facilitated this process by linking Vital Signs with CSIRO who they had commissioned to develop Good Practice Guidance, detailing best practice methods for reporting against 15.3.1. Through the collaboration with UNCCD and CSIRO, the project team were able to ensure the Trends.Earth tool was directly applicable to the SDGs, and in turn informed CSIRO about the feasibility of different reporting methods for inclusion in the Good Practice Guidance.

Trends.Earth allows non-expert users to use integrate national information (where available) with free global datasets to facilitate calculation and analysis of each sub-indicator. The project's guidance and tools can be employed to inform land management and investment decisions, as well as to improve reporting to the UNCCD and to the GEF.

Prior to the development of Trends.Earth there was no end-to-end toolbox available for countries to report against SDG 15.3.1. Trends.Earth therefore fulfills a clear need, particularly as many government agencies have limited in-house capacity for spatial analysis. The toolbox also provides a consistent/efficient approach to reporting, which has helped considerably with data harmonization which was previously a major challenge for global reporting processes according to UNCCD.

UNCCD has transformed from focusing on drylands to including all elements of land degradation (including temperate and tropical ecosystems). The tool supports the exposure of the UNCCD into other regions, and the toolbox is relevant to any location where land degradation is occurring.

Other relevant policies and applications

In addition to addressing SDG obligations, UNCCD see a future impact of the toolbox in supporting countries to implement LDN, a major national and international policy objective. The tool could help countries to identify and prioritize areas for management intervention -- i.e. where degradation can be avoided or reversed through restoration activities -- as well as evaluating the outcomes of such activities over time. Over 115 countries are committed to setting LDN targets under the UNCCD umbrella, with more set to join in the near future, suggesting that there is considerable momentum in this area.

The tool also links directly to the GEF-funded FS-IAP, a 12-country project. The project team are working with a range of GEF agencies and the ESA on this pilot, and the toolbox will be used to support its monitoring component. The toolbox is also being used within other programmes; such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development, an economic development programme of the African Union; and SERVIR, a joint venture between NASA and the U.S. Agency for International Development that provides earth observation data and tools to help improve environmental decision making among developing countries.

Capacity building

Through capacity building workshops, webinars, guidance materials and wider engagement, the project has improved capacity for countries to report against SDG 15.3.1. Historically, land degradation has been very difficult for countries to evaluate consistently, and has often been assessed in a qualitative or pseudo-quantitative way, meaning that trends are interpreted as meaningful when they may be caused by random variation. Further, some countries did not previously have access to high quality maps at the necessary resolution for land degradation analysis. These have now become freely available at global level within the toolbox.

In total, the team trained over 700 users from 142 countries on Trends.Earth during eight workshops. The project team led three workshops on land degradation monitoring and Trends.Earth during the project period: a workshop focused on the four pilot countries in Morogoro, Tanzania in October 2017, a workshop in South Africa in December 2017, and a workshop focused on Kenyan stakeholders in Nairobi, Kenya in January 2018. 360 people were trained in these workshops of which 115 women (32%).

In addition, the project team participated at the request of the UNCCD in five regional workshops (in Antalya, Turkey; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Fortaleza, Brazil; Delhi, India; and Cairo, Egypt) on reporting to the UNCCD (all 196 UNCCD signatories were invited to these meetings at which over 340 participants were trained on Trends.Earth, gender break down not available).

Despite the very positive impact the project has had on national and international capacity building, some stakeholders have expressed concerns that the project duration was too short to have lasting impact. Further capacity building will likely be required to ensure that Trends.Earth

has sustained impact, remains relevant to user needs into the future, and to ensure that users are trained in its application to other policy areas (e.g. LDN planning).

Unintended positive impacts

Due to engagement with UNCCD and CSIRO, Trends.Earth became even more applicable to international policy reporting requirements than had originally been envisaged.

The engagement of UNCCD also benefited the project enormously by assisting with uptake of the Trends.Earth toolbox and significantly improving the reach of capacity building activities through ongoing training. Moreover, engagement with UNCCD ensured that the correct stakeholders were engaged through the workshops by engaging with their network of national focal points who are responsible for reporting to UNCCD.

In the initial project proposal, *productivity* was the key focus of the toolbox. However, through collaboration with CSIRO and UNCCD, the scope of the tool was expanded to include *soil carbon* and *land cover*, going beyond its initial focus of the tool and making the tool more relevant for reporting to UNCCD against the SDGs.

Unintended negative impacts

This TE encountered no unintended negative impacts caused by the project.

6. ASSESSMENT OF M&E SYSTEMS

6.1. M&E design

Overall quality of project M&E design rated as: **Highly satisfactory**

The M&E plan for the project was extensive, starting with the inception workshop and inception report, outlining 12 types of progress reporting, their frequency and the parties responsible for each stage. The total indicative cost of M&E was US$74,800, approximately 4% of the GEF total grant, and 0.6% of the total project cost. With M&E allocation usually 3-5% of total project cost, this is a suitable proportion of the GEF total grant, and while a seemingly low proportion of total project cost, this is due to the distortion of the significant NASA co-financing of in-kind commercial earth observation data.

The logical results framework for monitoring of project results was clear, practical and sufficient given the nature of this project as a research rather than practical field project. Given the project sought to develop and implement new methods and tools for land degradation monitoring and reporting, baseline data was not relevant to the M&E framework. The M&E indicators used provided a clear measure of project outputs in terms of workshops conducted, people trained and reports produced that took into account gender considerations. One measure which could have been improved was indicators that measured the number of data sources, indices and methods assessed and used by the project (output indicator 1.1.1. and outcome indicator 1.2) as this count is less relevant to the external community. Instead, a measure of the level of agreement/adoption of methods might be more appropriate.

6.2. M&E implementation

Overall quality of project M&E implementation rated as: **Highly satisfactory**

All M&E activities were conducted during project implementation, with quarterly and annual progress and financial reports completed and submitted. This includes monitoring for the GEF focal area tracking tool, which was submitted to the GEF at the time of project inception and at project completion. Many sections within this tool were not relevant to this project, given it was not a practical field-based project for which the tool is primarily designed.

Monitoring of projects results was good, and it is clear within progress and final reports what the outputs and outcomes of the project were and they were easily verifiable by the TE. The only outputs less easily verifiable as a project external were those relating to the number of methods implemented by the project, which relates to the above comment regarding these indicators. The project reported on gender considerations as planned. It is noted that participants of the UNCCD workshops are not identified by gender, however being an external activity to which the

project contributed this is not within their remit. The format of the project final report could be improved to allow for a clear overview and comparison of planned with actual project activities, including financial details. However, this is due to a lack of guidance from CI-GEF on the format of the final report, and so the project team modified the Project Implementation Report template.

Given the logical step-wise process of the project components the project team had to ensure careful monitoring of results, as delays to one component would hinder the next. It seems clear given the achievement of all outcomes, despite some delay in outputs, that the team monitored their timeline and the dependence between activities well and as such the M&E frameworks in place were sufficient.

7. ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION

The assessment of the implementation and execution of GEF full-size projects takes into account the performance of the IA and EAs in discharging their expected roles and responsibilities.

7.1 Quality of implementation

Project implementation rated as: **Highly satisfactory**

The IA had a clear oversight role throughout the project's duration. The IA clearly communicated its reporting expectations to the project team, ensured that reporting documents were delivered by the EAs in a timely and appropriate manner, reviewed report content from a technical and financial/programmatic perspective, and sought clarification from the EAs where necessary. Despite the close relationship between CI-GEF and Vital Signs/CI, CI-GEF safeguard policies and finance/procurement policies were in place to ensure no conflicts of interest arise. Further, the IA have no role in project execution, and are not able to vote in steering committee decisions, ensuring independence is maintained between the IA and EAs.

Communication between the IA and EAs was very effective throughout this project. This was facilitated by the IA and lead EA (Vital Signs/CI) being located in the same building, enabling the IA to attend and observe relevant progress meetings. The only comment from the EAs related to the formatting of reporting documents which they felt could be simplified to improve efficiency, particularly with regard to the PIR template for the final report.

The IA considered this to be a low-risk project, due to its focus on research methods and capacity building, rather than on the ground intervention, or community engagement. In line with this, the safeguard screening process and the review of the project proposal determined that the project would not cause adverse environmental or social impacts, hence no environmental or social impact assessments were triggered.

7.2 Quality of execution

Project execution rated as: **Highly satisfactory**

Throughout the evaluation, excellent feedback was received about effectiveness with which the lead EA (Vital Signs/CI) managed its role in the project, particularly given the complex multi-institution project. Particular praise was directed to Alex Zvoleff who was widely considered to have played an instrumental role in the project's success in his role as project lead. Lund University, steering committee members, and stakeholders including UNCCD commented that Vital Signs/CI kept them well informed about the project's progress through calls, in-person

meetings and brown-bag events; effectively organized meetings despite difficulty arranging logistics across multiple time zones; and submitted all project reports on time.

The deep commitment of the EAs contributed to the project's success, as well as a clear division of tasks and objectives among the different partner organizations before and during the inception workshop. This facilitated the communication, planning and implementation of the overall project objectives.

The project's Steering Committee, which comprised EA members as well as independent technical advisors, had quarterly meetings which contributed to keeping different partners and key stakeholders informed of the process and aware of emerging potential issues, which were promptly addressed by the committee. Independent members of the steering committee facilitated information sharing and stakeholder engagement by identifying relevant partner organizations and building connections between this project and parallel projects.

The EAs also maintained a scientific advisory committee of international experts on land degradation to review the technical outputs of the project. The EAs considered the comments of this committee to have been instrumental in verifying the scientific integrity of the project's outputs. However, there was some frustration among members of the SAC due to limited updates about project progress, and insufficient opportunities to input on technical outputs. SAC members only recall attending two meetings over the duration of the project, suggesting that momentum for maintaining contact with the SAC may have been lost over the project's duration. A clear timeline for SAC engagement over the course of the project may have helped to ensure members, who provided their expertise pro-bono, felt valued.

The biggest challenge faced by the EAs was underestimation of the time required to process high-resolution commercial data. Data processing under output 1.1.2 (responsibility of NASA) was considerably delayed due to the processing time required.

The EAs worked effectively with partners in the pilot regions, whose role it was to assist with collection of national and subnational data. This was facilitated by Vital Signs/CI's existing relationships with TFCG in Tanzania and AfrII in Uganda, and their new relationship with CSE in Senegal. Having in-country contacts helped to establish relationships with potential end-users and workshop attendees. Connecting with UNCCD's national focal points helped to build further momentum for the project in-country.

7.3 Assessment of environmental and social safeguards

Environmental and social safeguards rated as: **Highly satisfactory**

The need for environmental and social safeguards were considered in the project proposal and safeguarding screening process. The screening process determined that this project was low risk and would not cause any adverse environmental or social impacts.

7.4 Gender considerations

A gender mainstreaming plan, which identified where the direct links with gender were, such as ensuring gender-sensitivity in training manuals and workshops, was completed and approved in September 2016 (on time), and hosted on the project website. Gender appropriate capacity building was a major component of the overall project (Component 3). As such, it was regularly monitored and evaluated against as part of the project logframe.

- Outcome 3.1.: Strengthened capacity of the 4 pilot countries and regional center in accessing and processing spectral index-related data for estimating status and trends in land degradation
    - Indicator 3.1.: # of nationals, disaggregated by gender, who have provided feedback or used online materials

- Outcome 3.2.: Enhanced exchange of knowledge among countries and at least one regional center, with equitable participation by women and men, on remote sensing applications for land degradation monitoring
    - Indicator 3.2.: Four countries or regional centers, and percent of women, that have received capacity building

A focused effort was made by the project team to ensure implementation of the gender safeguard policy and ensure capacity building workshops were as gender balanced as possible. The project was consistent with the GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming (PL/SD/02. May 1, 2012) and fully aligned with the focus of Vital Signs' gender policy to address gender holistically throughout the project cycle and with knowledge sharing that ensures both men's and women's full access to data and information.

While considering attendees for the capacity building activities, the project leadership asked all team members to consider gender balance in presentations and project reporting, and following receipt of the initial lists of recommended stakeholders for the pilot country training workshop, the project team re-contacted stakeholders to emphasize the importance of gender balance. Workshop attendance was recorded and reported on by gender (32% female) for the project-led workshops, however gender ratios are not known for the UNCCD capacity-building workshops that the project was invited to contribute to.

The project conducted a training workshop in Nairobi in January 2017 with 28 participants, of whom eight were women. Invitations were sent to 28 attendees, of whom 11 (39%) were women. The training workshop in Morogoro, Tanzania had 32 participants, of whom seven were women (22%) and the training workshop in South Africa had 17 participants of which seven were women (42%). With the exception of the South Africa workshop, the project fell short of the 40% target for women. This suggests continued attention and efforts will be required to build

gender balance in these technical trainings. Further, three of four of the project's Scientific Advisory Committee were women, and seven out of 15 (47%) project members were women.

7.5 Stakeholder engagement

The project's stakeholder engagement plan received a 'satisfactory' rating from the IA in 2017 and has not yet been scored for 2018. CI's policy on stakeholder engagement for GEF funded projects is based on International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Stakeholder engagement (A good Practice Handbook for Companies doing Business in Emerging Markets) and is applicable to all CI-GEF funded projects.

The stakeholder engagement plan itself identified key stakeholders along with their interest in the project, effects of the project on their work, and the proposed engagement activities during the project. A clear timeline for stakeholder engagement, and overall responsibility for stakeholder engagement were also provided. The below table summarizes levels of satisfaction from the stakeholders listed in the original engagement plan.

Stakeholder	**Interests in the project**	**TE comments on level of satisfaction**
GEF and STAP	Key users of the improved data and the assessments of status and trends of land cover and land degradation using remote-sensing in their work	Members of GEF STAP were highly satisfied with the project outcomes and the usability and relevance of the final Trends.Earth tool, not only to the SDGs but to LDN monitoring and management, and to the GEF-funded food security integrated approach pilot.
UNCCD Secretariat/Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and WOCAT	Needs improved baseline data on land cover and land degradation for global reporting	The UNCCD were highly satisfied with the project outcomes, in particular the Trends.Earth tool which has built wide-scale in-country capacity for reporting to UNCCD and against the SDGs. UNCCD commented that the tool not only aligns with reporting needs, but has helped with harmonization with data processing across countries - this is a major added value of the tool for UNCCD.
UNCCD national focal points	Key users of land cover data for reporting on the core indicator under SO-2 of the 10YSP on land cover	UNCCD national focal points and technical experts attended regional capacity building workshops organized by the project team (n=2) and UNCCD (n=5). During the workshops, users were trained on the use of
National technical experts	Need access to improved data and tools for land cover	

	and land degradation monitoring and assessment	the Trends.Earth tool. Users were highly engaged in workshops and now have free access to consistent tools and map layers for land degradation monitoring and assessment.
Regional remote-sensing centers	Need access to improved data and better tools for land cover monitoring and assessment	Effective partnerships built with RCMRD and WOCAT. RCMRD is planning to participate in another workshop with CI in August and aim to speak to other stakeholders who are interested in monitoring land degradation, helping with scaling up the project and capacity building.
JRC and the ESA	Sharing of data and experiences throughout the project with the UNCCD and the GEF	Project stakeholders reported contrasting views on the level of input that ESA and JRC had during the project with some stakeholders disappointed that the organizations did not have as much input as was originally intended. However, as NASA was a funded EA on the project the organization was perhaps inevitably going to dominate the provision of data and technical expertise. We sought to verify the position of ESA and JRC but did not receive a response. A member of JRC sat on the steering committee early in the project but was unable to maintain the level of engagement to work commitments.
International scientific community	Ensure credibility of toolbox and data	The scientific community were engaged through a series of international workshops, including: the inception Workshop, CRIC15 conference, a February 2016 Uganda WOCAT meeting, 7 webinars, WOCAT symposium, ISRSE37 conference, GEF-Secretariat meetings (2), UNCCD Secretariat meetings (3), American Association of Geographers Annual meeting, Morogoro workshop, South Africa Workshop, Kenya Workshop, UNCCD Regional Monitoring Workshops (5), and

		FS-IAP Meetings (2) – 28 in total. The project also maintained a Scientific Advisory Committee comprized on independent technical experts who peer-reviewed project outputs. There was some dissatisfaction among the SAC due to limited involvement, but comments were gratefully received and implemented by the EAs where provided.

Stakeholder engagement has been a key strength of this project. The project plan itself took on board recommendations from a previous stakeholder workshop: STAP Agro-Ecosystem Resilience Workshop 19-21 November, 2014 in Sydney, Australia. The meeting and discussion included representatives from the UNCCD, CBD, UNFCCC and GEF Secretariats; the STAP; CSIRO and representatives from (Australia, Cameroon, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, Zimbabwe). The project plan itself was therefore designed to address recommendations made by stakeholders during the STAP workshop. These stakeholders were also offered an opportunity to review the project proposal.

Stakeholders were also engaged with the proposal during a STAP side event at the UNCCD Science Conference in Cancun, Mexico, on 10 March, 2015. Vital Signs/CI, NASA, ESA and JRC also met at the same conference to discuss the proposal.

Six groups were officially involved in the project (TFCG, AfrII, CSE, NASA, Lund University, Vital Signs/CI), and wider stakeholder engagement was considered from the outset of the project. A number of other regional workshops were convened (Tanzania, Uganda) and GEF operational Focal Points liaised with before the project proposal was submitted to check feasibility, and to ensure project outcomes were aligned with the specific needs of GEF.

Additional Stakeholders participated in the inception workshop and during project webinars and technical calls. There has been a strong interest in the project's activities, and much anticipation of the release of the project toolbox, Trends.Earth. To identify stakeholders for participation in the project's capacity building activities, the project team maintained close contact with participants from the inception workshop, and with the UNCCD national focal points in each pilot country and requested lists of recommended attendees. The project sought to include a diverse array of stakeholders, including representatives of government, academia, and civil society. The project received a list of stakeholders from each pilot country with the relevant technical background to attend the workshop.

In particular, the project closely engaged with UNCCD and GEF throughout to communicate the results of the project, and ensure the relevance of outputs to ongoing activities of both

institutions. The project team has regularly informed stakeholders of project updates through webinars and report distributions. The project team has been working closely with the UNCCD Secretariat and national focal points, GEF Secretariat and national focal points, and others to ensure improved reporting.

Throughout the project, through the inception workshop, during project webinars, technical calls and capacity building workshops, the team maintained contact with other ongoing efforts in the land degradation monitoring community, including with the ESA, JRC, Group on Earth Observations (GEO), CSIRO, WOCAT, RCMRD, and other stakeholders to ensure that the project is linked with current and past efforts and draws on existing datasets and the existing body of knowledge. The project has also conducted active outreach to other GEF-funded projects such as the FS-IAP. In total, the project recorded 30 engagements with stakeholders. Many of these partnerships facilitated through this project are expected to continue long into the future.

Challenges

Despite the overwhelming success of the project's stakeholder engagement, the EAs did experience some challenges with regard to stakeholder engagement. For example, new government policies limiting travel by officials presented an issue for both Tanzanian and Kenyan stakeholders. To address this challenge, the project visited both Kenya and Tanzania to meet in person with stakeholders there to update them on the project, and to seek input on capacity building activities.

The project also faced challenges arranging stakeholder travel due to government travel restrictions. For example, for the inception workshop in Nairobi, participation from Tanzanian stakeholders was limited due to Tanzanian government policies. To enable full participation of stakeholders from Tanzania in the project capacity building activities in October 2017, the project held its workshop in Tanzania. However, due to new government restrictions put into effect in late 2017, Kenyan government stakeholders were largely unable to attend. To address this the project team added an additional training in Nairobi in January 2017 for Kenyan stakeholders.

7.6 Accountability and grievance mechanism

The project established a grievance mechanism which was detailed on the project website from late 2016, after a minor delay in completing the website itself. Grievances could be reported through the project website or via the project email address gef-ldmp@conservation.org. The project assured all stakeholders throughout the project that all claims would be filed and committed to responding to all grievances within 15 days of submission. The project webpage also provides CI's ethics hotline as well as instructions on how to escalate grievances.

No grievances were submitted or reported throughout the duration of the project. No further comment can be provided on how effectively the mechanism worked in practice.

8. OTHER ASSESSMENTS

8.1 Need for follow up

Notwithstanding the recommendations made below, there are no actions that the project needs to follow up on based on the findings of this TE.

8.2 Project finance

Project Finance Information	
GEF total grant	US$ 1,828,217
NASA co-financing	US$ 9,300,000
Lund University co-financing	US$ 102,000
Vital Signs co-financing	US$ 600,000
Co-financing total	US$ 10,002,000
Total project cost	US$ 11,997,422

A significant proportion of the total project cost was the co-financing contribution by NASA, which was granted as in-kind commercial satellite data products and materialized on time. At the time of writing, the Lund University co-financing contribution for in-kind salary and support was in deficit by approximately US$29,000, however the project accounting was yet to be finalized at the time of writing, and this relatively small amount may still be realized. Vital Signs co-financing contribution was in the form of web and information systems, platform development support and data collection in Tanzania and Uganda. No issues with regard to this co-financing were reported.

Overall, this project was assessed as being straightforward to manage by the Finance and Operations officer responsible for oversight of the project finances. The only fluctuation in expenses experienced was for grants to Lund University and NASA for travel to workshops, but these were in line with what was planned. The project's financial reporting was good, with the project manager praised for being conscious of budget and involved in decision-making regarding project costs, such as workshop expenses.

The project over-budgeted for travel and workshop costs, due to the difficulty in estimating fluctuating costs abroad. With this budget surplus, the project re-budgeted to cover salaries to cover some of the additional tasks that arose at the request of the close collaboration with UNCCD. This allowed the project to have some flexibility to respond to these evolving requests during project implementation. In addition, the remaining budget allowed for a short extension of the project from December to March 2018 to extend the capacity building component of the

project. This was beneficial as the Tanzanian workshop was held during the Kenyan election, which meant Kenyan participants were subject to travel restrictions. An additional workshop in Nairobi was held during this time, to extend the reach to Kenyan stakeholders. This also benefited the relationship with RCMRD, as they hosted the workshop.

Another change in budgeting was a small amount (approximately US$1200) assigned to cover the costs of project publications in open-access journals. Within the short timeline of the project these publications were not achieved (and were not an explicit output in the project logical results framework). This saving was also used to allow flexibility to respond to evolving requests. This was not considered a problem, as flexibility in other project grants within CI will allow for these costs to be covered in the future.

9. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Lessons learned

This TE has identified a number of lessons learned by the project, summarized into the following six key points:

1. **Strong applicability to international policy facilitated wide scale engagement with project outcomes.**

A key success of the project, and in particular the Trends.Earth toolbox, was its relevance to country reporting against the SDGs. Trends.Earth provides an open source end-to-end tool through which countries can consistently monitor land degradation and report to the UNCCD against SDG 15.3.1. Not only does this make the tool highly valuable to beneficiaries, many of whom previously lacked in-house capacity to source the necessary data layers and conduct analyses, it boosts its future sustainability, as countries are required to report against the SDGs every four years. Consistent reporting through the use of the tool overcomes a major hurdle in data harmonization that had previously posed a challenge to UNCCD.

2. **Stakeholder engagement was maintained through all phases of the project, maximizing the relevance of project outcomes.**

To ensure that all potentially interested stakeholders are aware of the project's work, the project team worked hard to communicate project activities using a mix of on the ground workshops and activities in the pilot countries, webinars and email updates, presentations at scientific conferences and international meetings, and continued engagements with UNCCD and its partners. With the help of five additional UNCCD workshops, over 700 individuals received in-person training, representing 140 countries.

Regular engagement with UNCCD was instrumental in ensuring widespread uptake of the Trends.Earth toolbox, and significantly improved the reach of capacity building activities through additional workshops outside Africa. Engagement with UNCCD national focal points also ensured that the correct stakeholders (i.e. those responsible for reporting) were invited to workshops.

Another good practice was the involvement of representatives from affiliated, but external, organizations (e.g. RCMRD, WOCAT, ESA) on the project's steering committee. These individuals helped to facilitate wider introductions and built bridges between this and parallel projects, maximizing project impact.

3. **Strong project management ensured delays were minimized and budgets were maintained.**

A key factor in the project's success appears to have been the deep commitment of the EAs (Vital Signs/CI, NASA and Lund) to the project's outcomes, as well as a clear division of tasks and objectives among the different partner organizations before and during the inception workshop. This facilitated the communication, planning and implementation of the overall project objectives. Strong leadership from Vital Signs/CI also ensured that any delays were minimized and communicated to project partners, and that the project met its proposed timeline and budget.

4. **A dedicated stakeholder engagement officer might have improved workshop participant identification.**

The project team experienced some difficulties in identifying and contacting participants for the national workshops, with this challenge requiring fairly significant effort to overcome. Having a team member tasked with identifying and engaging stakeholders within each pilot country might have eased this challenge.

5. **Factoring in buffer time may have helped to overcome delays in data processing.**

Completion of Report 2 (output 1.1.2.) by NASA was delayed as it took more processing power than had originally been estimated to clean, format and process the high-resolution commercial data. Some informants for this evaluation considered NASA had been ambitious in their expectation to process this data in the given time. The extent to which this data was then used in further outputs was less than expected, and to compensate Lund University asked NASA to prioritize areas of the countries where ground truthing could take place, rather than conduct analyses for the entire countries. However, the project manager considered this to be a limitation of the data itself rather than the delay in processing, with the density of high-resolution data being inadequate for the intended purposes.

While this limitation did not stop the project achieving its outputs, the UNCCD have questioned the applicability of high-resolution commercial data to the toolbox as it cannot be easily processed or replicated by some countries due to financial constraints.

6. **Further funding for steering committee meetings may help to ensure all members are able to partake, and all stakeholder views are heard.**

This was a multi-country, multi-agency project. As such, logistical difficulties arose in arranging meetings with all members of the Steering Committee. More dedicated funds for committee meetings may help to ensure that all members partake and stakeholder interests taken into account. Remuneration for the Scientific Advisory Committee may also have helped this group of independent stakeholders to feel valued for their time conducting peer-review.

9.2 Recommendations

Based on these lessons learned, this TE has the following four recommendations for future CI-GEF projects:

1. **Engagement activities should continue into the future, to maximize the relevance and impact of project outputs after project end.**

Given the short duration of the project, it is too early to quantify the long-term impact that the project has had at a national or international scale. For example, it would be valuable to understand the proportion of countries which attended capacity building workshops, and ultimately went on to use Trends.Earth to report on 15.3.1. Of the 360 attendees of project workshops, 340 attendees of UNCCD workshops, and 700 users who registered on Trends.Earth via the project website, it remains unclear what proportion of users are actively using the tool, and for what purposes. Should users have a greater interest in using the tool to monitor and plan LDN (or other) activities now that the SDG reporting period is coming to an end, additional capacity building may be required to maximize user experience and ensure that the tool itself remains relevant.

2. **Time requirements for processing high-resolution data should be carefully considered, especially for a short (two year) project.**

As recognized by the EAs, further research using high-resolution imagery should consider the time requirements for processing this data and ensure that sufficient time is built into the work plan to allow the imagery to be processed into any needed derived products, for these products to be reviewed, and for final products to be completed in advance of the date that they are needed by any downstream activities. Had a pilot study been conducted by NASA with a small area of high-resolution commercial data early on in the project, delays in data processing may have been identified earlier in the project, and contingency plans developed.

3. **Future ownership of key project outputs should be clarified before project end.**

A number of informants remained unclear and somewhat concerned about how the Trends.Earth toolbox would be resourced, updated and maintained once the project had ended. At present, there is no confirmed resourcing to support the long-term maintenance of the toolbox, threatening its continued impact. Stakeholder interest in the toolbox, particularly from the UNCCD, is high which suggests that funding will likely be granted. However, it would be preferable if firmer plans to host and fund critical outputs such as these were arranged in advance of the project end.

4. **Flexibility around the timing of inception workshops to ensure relevant stakeholders are identified and invited.**

It was an IA requirement that the EAs host an inception workshop in the first three months of the project. This presented something of a challenge as the project was still in its early stages and had not yet made the necessary contacts for this workshop, particularly given the notice required by workshop attendees to book travel. More flexibility on the timings of inception workshops would help to ensure that the most relevant stakeholders can be identified and invited, which in turn would have helped to establish connections and assisted with workshop participant identification and contact.

10. ANNEXES

ANNEX I. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

ID	Document Name	Document Description
PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) PHASE		
PIF1	GEF-6 Request for One-step Medium-sized Project Approval	Project proposal
PIF2	Project Safeguards Screening Form	
PIF3	Safeguard Screening Results and Analysis Report	
PIF4	NDVI MSP GEF LD Tracking Tool_Initial	Initial GEF Land Degradation focal area tracking tool.
PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT PHASE		
PP1	Gender Mainstreaming Plan	Document detailing the measures the project will take to ensure that gendered impacts are considered throughout Component 3 (capacity building phase) of the project.
GEF FOCAL AREA TRACKING TOOL		
TT1	NDVI MSP GEF LD Tracking Tool_Initial	Initial Land Degradation Focal Area Tracking Tool submitted with project.
TT2	NDVI MSP GEF LD Tracking Tool_Final	**DRAFT** final Land Degradation Focal Area Tracking Tool.
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE		
PI1	Project Inception Workshop Report	34-Page summary of the Inception Workshop held at the Fairview Hotel Nairobi, Kenya, March 16-17, 2016.
PI2	Project Factsheet	Two-page user-friendly factsheet produced by Vital Signs, detailing the background and the three components of the project.
PI3	Summary Report Of CRIC15 Presentation	Overview of the presentation delivered by Mr. Matthew Cooper, Data Manager of Vital Signs, at the fifteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 15) in Nairobi, October 2016.

PI4	Report One: Using Spectral Vegetation Indices to Measure Gross Primary Productivity as an Indicator of Land Degradation GEF-Land Degradation Monitoring Project	This 70-page report describes and evaluates remotely sensed techniques for assessing changes in primary productivity.
PI5	Project June 2017 Webinar	MP4 Webinar from June 2017 providing a project overview as well as an update on the first report (listed above) which evaluates remotely sensed techniques for assessing changes in productivity.
PI6	Trends.Earth Toolbox Webinar	MP4 Webinar from December 2017 providing a project overview as well as a further update on the first report.
PI7	Report Two: Evaluation of approaches for incorporating higher-resolution data for disaggregation or targeted analysis	40 page report on integration of high-resolution data into land degradation monitoring
PI8	Report Three: Output 1.2.1 Activity 6 Presentation Report Compilation	47-page summary of the Inception Workshop held at the Fairview Hotel Nairobi, Kenya March 16-17, 2016. Note that this report has similar content to the Inception Workshop Report (ID: PI1), but with other stakeholder engagements added (CRIC 15, ISRE 37, GEF SEC/STAP, WOCAT Symposium, and UNCCD LDN Working session).
PI9	Capacity Building Workshop Report	15-page summary of the Capacity Building Workshop held in Morogoro, Tanzania, October 2-6, 2017.
PI10	Report Four: Recommendations for the GBI	9-page document detailing comments on the GEF star allocation algorithm and suggestions for alternatives
PI11	Report Five: Country baselines	Datasets
PI12	Supplemental report on "Disentangling the effects of climate and land use on land degradation"	64-page report synthesizing theory and field observations to explore the effects of climate and land use on land degradation.
PI13	January 2018 Nairobi Capacity Building Workshop Report	GEF-Land Degradation Monitoring Capacity Building Workshop Project Report. January 16-18, Nairobi, Kenya
PI14	Monitoring and Assessing Land Degradation to Support Sustainable Development	84-page guidance report giving a background to the use of the land degradation monitoring toolbox – Trends.Earth
ANNUAL WORK PLANS		

WP16	FY16 Workplan Land Degradation Monitoring Project_Approved	2016 Project Workplan
WP17	FY17 Workplan Land Degradation Monitoring Project Update 4-19-2017	2017 Project Workplan
WP18	FY18 Workplan Land Degradation Monitoring Project 10-1-2017	2017 Project Workplan
QUARTERLY REPORTS - progress on the activities that are listed in the yearly Workplans		
FY16 Q3	FY16Q3 Workplan and Quarterly Report Land Degradation Monitoring Project	2016 Quarterly Report for Q3
FY16 Q4	FY16Q4 Workplan and Quarterly Report Land Degradation Monitoring Project 9.9 Approved	2016 Quarterly Report for Q4
FY17 Q1	FY17Q1 Workplan and Quarterly Report Land Degradation Monitoring Project_approved	2017 Quarterly Report for Q1
FY17 Q2	FY17Q2 Workplan and Quarterly Report Land Degradation Monitoring Project_approved	2017 Quarterly Report for Q2
FY17 Q3	FY17Q3 Report Land Degradation Monitoring Project Approved 5-16-2017	2017 Quarterly Report for Q3
FY17 Q4	FY17Q4 Workplan and Quarterly Report NDVI approved 9-7-2017	2017 Quarterly Report for Q4
FY18 Q1	FY18Q1 Report_12-04-17 Approved	2018 Quarterly Report for Q1
FY18 Q2	FY18Q2 Report 3-1-2018 Approved	2018 Quarterly Report for Q2
FY18 Q3	FY18Q3 Report 05-03-2018 Approved.pdf	2018 Quarterly Report for Q3
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS - Yearly progress on outcomes and outputs		
PIR FY17	PIR FY17 20171212 NDVI FY17 PIR final	Project Implementation Report for FY17 (Y1)
PIR FY18	PIR FY18 GEF_NDVI_Final_Report_DRAFT_20180501	**DRAFT** Project Implementation Report for FY18 (Y2/final report)
PROJECT FINANCIAL REPORTS		

FFY 16	FY16 Annual Budget Package_FY Budget_Q4 Report_Final	Final financial report for FY16
FFY 17	FY17 Q4_Financial report approved	Final financial report for FY17
FFY 18	FY18_Q3_Financial report Template_approved	Most recent (FY18 Q3) financial report which includes the budget for the project.
STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES		
SC1	March 31, 2016 Steering Committee Call Minutes	
SC2	June 27, 2016 Steering Committee Call Minutes	
SC3	September 19, 2016 Steering Committee Call Minutes	
SC4	December 19, 2016 Steering Committee Call Minutes	
SC5	January 23, 2017 Steering Committee Call Minutes	
SC6	March 16, 2017 Steering Committee Call Minutes	
SC7	May 25, 2017 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes	
SC8	August 24, 2017 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes	
PROJECT OUTPUTS		
TE1	Trends.Earth (Land Degradation Monitoring Toolbox)	A beta version of the Land Degradation Monitoring Toolbox (Trends.Earth). Available at http://trends.earth/docs/en/documentation/installing.html
TE2	Trends.Earth User Guide	Online user guide available online at http://trends.earth/docs/en/index.html
TE3	Trends.Earth Technical Factsheet	Two-page summary of the toolbox and its uses.

ANNEX II: KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

ID	Name	Organization	Position
IMPLEMENTING AGENCY			
1	Dr Free De Koning	CI-GEF	CI-GEF Project Manager
EXECUTING AGENCY			
2	Dr Alex Zvoleff	CI (Vital Signs)	Senior Director of Data Science & CI Project Lead
3	Ms Christy Osoling	CI	Finance and Operations
4	Ms Monica Noon	CI (Vital Signs)	GIS Manager
PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE			
5	Dr Sandy Andelman	Organization for Tropical Studies	Independent Steering Committee Member
6	Dr Annette Cowie	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel to the GEF	Independent Steering Committee Member
7	*Mr Stephen Muwaya*	*Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries, Uganda*	*Independent Steering Committee Member*
8	Dr Lennart Olsson	Lund University	Director of the Centre for Sustainable Studies & Lund Project Lead
9	*Dr Compton Tucker*	*NASA*	*Physical Scientist & NASA Project Lead*
EXTERNAL AGENCIES			
10	Sara Minelli	UNCCD	Programme Officer, Science Policy Interface, UNCCD. Collaborated closely with the project to ensure alignment with UNCCD.
11	Neil Simm	CSIRO	Remote Sensing Research Scientist, CSIRO. Collaborated with Vital Signs in the production of good practice guidance on SDG 15.3 for UNCCD.
12	*Dr Michael Cherlet*	*JRC*	*Project Independent Steering Committee Member*
13	Kenneth Mubea	RCMRD	Capacity Development Lead, RCMRD. Project stakeholder in East Africa (Kenya).

Italicized informants denote those for which interviews were attempted but not completed.

ANNEX III. EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation criteria questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes?			
To what extent is the project aligned to the main objectives of the GEF focal area?	Consistency with GEF strategic objectives	GEF strategy documents, PIRs	Desk review, interviews with implementing and EA staff
To what extent is the project aligned with the mandates of the CI-GEF Agency?	Consistency with CI-GEF mandates	CI-GEF strategy documents, PIRs	Desk review, interviews with IA and EA staff
To what extent was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes?	Were the project objective and components clear, practicable, and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of the executing agencies and properly considered when the project was designed? Were partnership arrangements and roles and responsibilities properly identified and executed? What are the overall design strengths and weaknesses of the project?	Logical results framework, progress reports, PIRs, MoU, PIF, Workplans	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
To what extent were the expected outputs actually delivered?	Number and quality of actual vs. expected project outputs. Identify any variation in project design and/or expected results after the project started. Key enabling and constraining factors affecting output delivery.	Progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, logframe analysis, interviews
To what extent were the expected outcomes actually achieved?	Extent to which outcomes were achieved. Key enabling and constraining factors affecting outcome delivery.	Progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, logframe analysis, interviews with IA an EA staff and project

			beneficiaries.
To what extent was the project objective achieved?	Number of methods developed and availability of toolbox. Number of baselines of degradation in target countries. Number of effective methods tested and toolbox demonstrated. Number of guidance documents and capacity-building materials completed and available. Extent of influence on UNCCD and GEF land degradation assessment and reporting.	Progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, logframe analysis, interviews with IA and EA staff and project beneficiaries.
Efficiency: Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects?			
The extent of achievement of the project objective and outcomes according to the proposed budget	Percentage expenditures in proportion with the results. Identify any significant variation in expenditure and reasons for this.	PIF, PIRs, progress reports, workplans, budgets	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff
Does the project represent good value for money?	Was the project completed within the expected timeline? Extent to which the project outcomes and objective have been delivered with the least costly resources available. Extent to which similar outcomes could have been achieved without the project.	PIF, PIRs, progress reports, workplans, budgets	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff and project beneficiaries.
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic and environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
Were the risks identified in the project documents and PIRs appropriate and were suitable risk management strategies implemented?	Sufficiency of human and financial resources Sufficiency of national stakeholder interest and participation Sufficiency of the spectral index to act as a proxy for land degradation	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans, budgets	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.

	Sufficiency of information, data and methods shared between project partners Ability to reach agreement on standardised approaches/methods/toolbox to assess land degradation trends Sufficiency of project arrangements for M&E and achievement of results		
Was the project sustainability strategy suitable and relevant?	Is the sustainability strategy suitable going forward? Who is responsible for the sustainability strategy going forward?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.
To what extent do project beneficiaries have ownership of the project outcomes, and ability for further replication and scaling up?	Have beneficiaries for project outcomes been identified and engaged by the project? How will the outcomes be used by beneficiaries going forward?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff and project beneficiaries.
Impact: To what extent can progress towards long-term impact be attributed to the project?			
Has the project contributed to environmental stress reduction?	To what extent has the project contributed to environmental stress reduction? To what extent would these changes have been achieved without the project?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff and project beneficiaries.
Has the project contributed to environmental status change?	To what extent has the project contributed to environmental status change? To what extent would these changes have been achieved without the project?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff and project beneficiaries.
To what extent has the project contributed to changes in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks?	Change in capacity achieved (training, infrastructure, monitoring..). Extent of governance architecture achieved (laws, information-sharing systems..). Extent of change in socioeconomic status (income	PIF, progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff and project beneficiaries.

	health, wellbeing…). To what extent would these changes have been achieved without the project?		
To what extent did the project contribute to unintended impacts?	Were there any unintended impacts of the project? Were these positive or negative? To what extent were these impacts avoidable or manageable?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff and project beneficiaries.
Monitoring & Evaluation: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the project's M&E plan and its implementation?			
To what extent was the M&E design suitable and appropriate?	Was the M&E plan at the point of CEO endorsement practical and sufficient? Did the M&E plan include baseline data? Did the M&E plan specify clear targets and appropriate (SMART) indicators to track environmental, gender, and socio-economic results? Did the M&E plan specify a proper methodological approach? Did the M&E plan specify practical organization and logistics of the M&E activities including schedule and responsibilities for data collection? Did the M&E plan budget adequate funds for M&E activities?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.
To what extent was the M&E implementation suitable and appropriate?	Did the M&E system operate as per the M&E plan? If necessary, was the M&E plan revised in a timely manner? Was information on specified indicators and relevant GEF focal area tracking tools gathered in a systematic	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff

	manner? Were appropriate methodological tools used to analyze the data? Were resources for M&E sufficient? How was information from the M&E system used during the project implementation?		
Implementation & Execution: How well did the GEF implementing Agency and project Executing Agencies discharge their expected roles and responsibilities?			
To what extent did CI-GEF (implementing agency) deliver their expected role and responsibilities?	How well did CI-GEF deliver their activities: project identification, concept preparation, appraisal, proposal preparation, approval, project start-up, oversight, supervision, completion and evaluation? How well were risks identified and managed by CI-GEF	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans, steering committee minutes	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.
To what extent did the Executing Agencies deliver their expected roles and responsibilities?	How well did the EAs deliver their activities: management and administration of project activities, quality of communication within EAs and between CI-GEF, and budget management.	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans, steering committee minutes	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.
To what extent did the project take into account environmental and social safeguards?	Were appropriate environmental and social safeguards addressed in the project design and implementation?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans, safeguard documents	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.
To what extent did the project take into account gender considerations?	Were appropriate gender considerations addressed in the project design (incl. M&E) and implementation? Was gender disaggregated data gathered and reported on beneficiaries? Did gender considerations contribute to the success of the project?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans, safeguard documents	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.
To what extent were stakeholders (civil society, indigenous populations, private	Was the stakeholder engagement plan suitable and appropriate?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans, safeguard documents	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.

sector etc) engaged by the project?	To what extent were stakeholder views and concerns taken into account by the project?		
To what extent was the grievance mechanism suitable and appropriate?	Did the project have a grievance mechanism? Were project stakeholders aware of the grievance mechanism? Was the grievance mechanism effective in addressing grievances?	PIF, progress reports, PIRs, workplans, safeguard documents, steering committee minutes	Desk review, Interviews with IA and EA staff.

ANNEX IV. TERMINAL EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

Date: 2/9/2018

Request for Proposals: Terminal Evaluation of Global Environmental Facility Funded Projects

Dear Sir or Madam,

Conservation International Foundation. (hereinafter referred to as "Conservation International"), is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Evaluations of Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Funded Projects. The RFP contains all necessary information for the interested offerors.

General Background:

Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded projects are required to complete a Terminal Evaluation. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) is designed to provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of a completed project by assessing its design, implementation, and achievement of objectives. The evaluation is expected to: promote accountability and transparency; and facilitate the synthesis of lessons. Also, the TE will provide feedback to allow the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) to identify recurring issues across the GEF portfolio; and, contribute to GEF IEO databases for aggregation and analysis.

Consulting firms (Consultants), should indicate their interest in submitting a proposal for the anticipated agreement by sending an email indicating their intention to CIProcurement@conservation.org by 4:00 PM on 2/20/2018. Interested Offerors can submit their questions to CIProcurement@conservation.org.

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GEF	Global Environmental Facility
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
PIF	Program information file
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
TE	Terminal Evaluation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
SOW	Scope of Work
RFP	Request for Proposal
CI	Conservation International
NDVI	Normalized Digital Vegetation Index

Section I: Instruction and General Guidance

I.1 Introduction

CI, the Buyer, is soliciting offers from consulting firms to submit proposals to carry out The Evaluation of GEF Funded Projects

General Guidelines

- Evaluators will be independent of project design, approval, implementation, and execution. Evaluators will familiarize themselves with the GEF programs and strategies, and with relevant GEF policies such as those on project cycle, M&E, co-financing, fiduciary standards, gender, environmental and social safeguards.
- Evaluators will take perspectives of all relevant stakeholders (including the GEF Operational Focal Point[s]) into account. They will gather information on project performance and results from multiple sources including the project M&E system, tracking tools, field visits, stakeholder interviews, project documents, and other independent sources, to facilitate triangulation. They will seek the necessary contextual information to assess the significance and relevance of observed performance and results.
- Evaluators will be impartial and will present a balanced account consistent with the evidence.

- Evaluators will apply the rating scales provided in these guidelines in Annex 2.
- Evaluators will abide by the GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines.

The evaluator will review the documents and deliver a terminal evaluation report on the following project:

Project Title: Enabling the use of global data sources to assess and monitor land degradation at multiple scales.

Project Objective: To provide guidance, methods and a toolbox for assessing and monitoring status and trends in land degradation using remote sensing technology which can be employed to inform land management and investment decisions as well as to improve reporting to the UNCCD and the GEF.

The CI-GEF Medium-Sized project was approved by the GEF CEO in November 2015. The project was designed around three components with their respective outcomes.

Component 1: Methods for assessing and monitoring land degradation at multiple scales;

i. Outcome 1.1. Improved understanding of the accuracy, suitability, and trade-offs (e.g. resolution, accessibility, repeatability, sustainability/automation, cost, etc.). of different global datasets for estimating status and trends in land degradation
ii. Outcome 1.2. Agreed-upon methods for assessing land degradation/ improvement suitable for identified end-users

Component 2: Demonstration of recommended methods and platforms to enable widespread adoption across scales, from the regional to national and local levels;

i. Outcome 2.1. Baseline assessment of land degradation in 4 pilot countries (Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda)
ii. Outcome 2.2. Platforms for capacity building and for expanding the use of the data, methods, and toolbox to other countries and regions

Component 3: In-country capacity development.

i. Outcome 3.1. Strengthened capacity of the 4 pilot countries and regional center, with equitable participation by women and men, in accessing and processing data related to NDVI and other vegetation indices for estimating degradation/improvement

More information on the project can be found here:
https://www.conservation.org/gef/projects/pages/ndvi.aspx

I.2. Offer Deadline

Offerors shall submit their offers electronically at the following email address, CIProcurement@conservation.org

Offers must be received no later than 4:00 PM EST March 15, 2018. Offerors are responsible for ensuring that their offers are received in accordance with the instructions stated herein. Late

offers may not be considered. This RFP does not obligate CI to execute a contract nor does it commit CI to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of the proposals.

I.3. Instruction for Offerors

All proposals must be submitted in one volume, consisting of:

- Technical proposal
- Cost proposal

1. Technical Proposal: Technical Approach, Methodology, and Detailed Work Plan.

   The Technical Volume should describe in detail how the offeror intends to carry out the requirement described in the Scope of Work (SOW) found in Section II. The technical volume should demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken and the responsibilities of all parties involved. The offeror should include CV of the consultant who will be involved to carry out the required services. The consultant should hold a Master's Degree in natural science, or other related closely field and should have the following experience at the minimum.

   a. Experience in relevant technical areas.
   b. Experience with program's terminal evaluation.
   c. Knowledge of programs and strategies such as project life cycle, M&E, fiduciary standards, environmental and social safeguards.
   d. Experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies, and applying smart targets.

   The offerors must include the corporate capabilities, past performance and provide contact address of the two recent references to the technical volume.

2. Cost Proposal

The cost is used to determine which proposals represent the most advantageous and serves as a basis for negotiation for the award of a contract. The cost shall include a budget narrative that explains the basis for the estimation of expenses. If required, supporting information must be provided in sufficient detail to allow for a complete analysis of the cost.

I.4. Chronological List of Proposal Events

The following calendar summarizes important dates in the solicitation process. Offerors must strictly follow these deadlines.

RFP announcement	2/9/2018
Deadline for written questions	2/20/2018
Proposal due date	3/15/2018 (4:00 PM, EST)

The dates above may be modified at the sole discretion of CI. Any changes will be published in an amendment to this RFP.

I.5. Evaluation and Basis for Award

An award will be made to the offeror whose proposal is determined to be responsive to this solicitation document, meets the eligibility criteria stated in this RFP, meets the technical capability requirements, and is determined to represent the most advantageous to CI.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Sub-criteria	Weigh Points
Technical Approach, Methodology, and Detailed Work Plan		
	Technical know-how – Does the proposal clearly explain, understand and respond to the objectives of the project as stated in the Scope of Work?	20
	Approach and Methodology – Does the proposed program approach and detailed activities and timeline fulfill the requirements of executing the Scope of Work effectively and efficiently?	20
Key Personnel		
	Personnel Qualifications – Do the proposed consultant(s) have necessary experience and capabilities to carry out the Scope of Work?	20
Corporate Capabilities, Experience, and Past Performance		
	Company Background and Experience – Does the company have experience relevant to the project Scope of Work?	10
Cost- Includes (Travel, Fee, Charges, any other expenses)		
	Cost- Lowest Cost	30

Section II. Scope of Work, Deliverables, and Deliverables Schedule

I.6 Key Tasks

1. Based on an approved work plan, the evaluator will conduct a desk review of project documents (i.e. PIF, Project Document, plans related to the Environmental and Social Safeguards [including Gender and Stakeholder Engagement], Work plans, Budgets, Project Inception Report, Quarterly Reports, PIRs, documents with project results, Finalized GEF Focal Area Tracking Tools, policies and guidelines used by the Executing Agency, CI-GEF Evaluation Policy, GEF Evaluation Policy, Project Operational Guidelines, Manuals and Systems, etc.).
2. The evaluator will host a workshop (in person/virtual) with the Executing Agencies to clarify understanding of the objectives and methods of the Terminal Evaluation.

3. The conclusion of the workshop will be summarized in a Terminal Evaluation Zero Report with the following information:

   a) Identification of the subject of the review, and relevant context
   b) Purpose of the evaluation: why is the evaluation being conducted at this time, who needs the information and why?
   c) Objectives of the evaluation: What the evaluation aims to achieve (e.g. assessment of the results of the project, etc.)
   d) Scope: What aspects of the project will be covered, and not covered, by the evaluation
   e) Identification and description of the evaluation criteria (including relevance, effectiveness, results, efficiency, and sustainability)
   f) Key evaluation questions
   g) Methodology including approach for data collection and analysis, and stakeholder engagement
   h) Rationale for selection of the methods, and selection of data sources (i.e. sites to be visited, stakeholders to be interviewed)
   i) System for data management and maintenance of records
   j) Intended products and reporting procedures
   k) Potential limitations of the evaluation

4. The evaluator will undertake the evaluation of the project, including any interviews and in-country site visits.

5. Based on the document review and the in-country interviews/site visits, the evaluator will prepare a draft evaluation report following the outline in Annex 1. The report will be shared with the Executing Agencies and the CI-GEF Agency. Each party can provide a management response, documenting questions or comments on the draft evaluation report.

6. The evaluator will incorporate comments and will prepare the final evaluation report. The evaluator will submit a final evaluation report in word and PDF and will include a separate document highlighting where/how comments were incorporated.

Annex I: Outline for Draft and Final Evaluation Reports

The draft and final evaluation reports should at the minimum contain the information below:

General Information

The Terminal Evaluation report will provide general information on the project and conduct of the Terminal Evaluation. This includes information such as:

- GEF Project ID
- Project name
- GEF financing

- Planned and materialized co-financing
- Key objectives
- GEF Agency
- Project countries
- Key dates
- Name of the Project Executing Agency(ies)

The Terminal Evaluation report will also provide information on when the evaluation took place, places visited, who was involved, the methodology, and the limitations of the evaluation. The report will also include, as annexes to the main report, the evaluation team's terms of reference, its composition, and expertise.

Where feasible and appropriate, the Terminal Evaluation reports should include georeferenced maps and/or coordinates that demarcate the planned and actual area covered by the project. To facilitate tracking and verification, where feasible, the Terminal Evaluations should include geo-referenced pictures of the sites where GEF supported interventions were undertaken.

Project Theory of Change

The Terminal Evaluation report will include a description of the project's theory of change including a description of; the outputs, outcomes, intermediate states, and intended long-term environmental impacts of the project; the causal pathways for the long-term impacts; and, implicit and explicit assumptions.

The project's objective(s) should also be included within the theory of change. Some of the projects may already have an explicit theory of change. Where appropriate, after consultations with the project stakeholders, the evaluators may refine this theory of change. Where an explicit theory of change is not provided in the project documents, the evaluators should develop it based on information provided in the project documents and through consultations with the project stakeholders.

Assessment of Project Results

The TE must assess achievement of project outputs and outcomes, and report on these. While assessing a project's results, evaluators will determine and rate the extent to which the project objectives – as stated in the documents submitted at the CEO Endorsement stage – have been achieved. The evaluator(s) should also indicate if there were any changes in project design and/or expected results after the start of implementation. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), where feasible, the evaluator should estimate the baseline conditions so that results can be determined. Where applicable, the Terminal Evaluation report will include an assessment of the level of achievement of the GEF corporate results targets to which the project contributes and will also incorporate data from the focal area tracking tool.

Outputs

The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outputs were actually delivered. An identification and assessment of the factors that affected the delivery of outputs should also be included.

Outcomes

The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outcomes were achieved and the extent to which its achievement was dependent on delivery of project outputs. They should also assess the factors that affected outcome achievement, e.g. project design, project's linkages with other activities, extent and materialization of co-financing, stakeholder involvement, etc. Where the project was developed within the framework of a program, the assessment should also report on the extent the project contributed to the program outcomes.

Criteria for Outcome Ratings

Outcome ratings will take into account the outcome achievements of the projects against its expected targets. Project outcomes will be rated on three dimensions: a. Relevance: Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes? b. Effectiveness: Were the project's actual outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes? c. Efficiency: Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects? Rating Scale for Outcomes: An overall outcome rating will be provided on a six-point scale (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory) after taking into account outcome relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency (See Annex 2).

Sustainability

The assessment of sustainability will weigh risks to the continuation of benefits from the project. The assessment should identify key risks and explain how these risks may affect the continuation of benefits after the GEF project ends. The analysis should cover financial, socio-political, institutional, and environmental risks. The overall sustainability of project outcomes will be rated on a four-point scale (Likely to Unlikely) based on an assessment of the likelihood and magnitude of the risks to sustainability. Higher levels of risks and magnitudes of effect, imply the lower likelihood of sustainability. Annex 2 describes the rating scale for sustainability.

Progress to Impact

The evaluators should also assess the extent to which the progress towards long-term impact may be attributed to the project. The evaluators should report the available qualitative and quantitative evidence on environmental stress reduction (e.g. GHG emission reduction, reduction of waste discharge, etc.) and environmental status change (e.g. change in the population of endangered species, forest stock, water retention in degraded lands, etc.). When reporting such evidence, the evaluator should note the information source and clarify the scale/s at which the described environmental stress reduction is being achieved.

The evaluators should cover the project's contributions to changes in policy/ legal/regulatory frameworks. This would include observed changes in capacities (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information (laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc.). Contribution to change in socioeconomic status (income, health, well-being, etc.) should also be documented.

Where the environmental and social changes are being achieved at scales beyond the immediate area of intervention, the evaluators should provide an account of the processes such as

sustaining, mainstreaming, replication, scaling up and market change, through which these changes have taken place. The evaluators should discuss whether there are arrangements in the project design to facilitate follow-up actions and should document instances where the GEF promoted approaches, technologies, financing instruments, legal frameworks, information systems, etc., were adopted/implemented without direct support from, or involvement of, the project. Evidence on the incidence of these processes should be discussed to assess progress towards impact. When assessing contributions of GEF project to the observed change, the evaluators should also assess the contributions of other actors and factors.

The evaluators should assess merits of rival explanations for the observed impact and give reasons for accepting or rejecting them. Where applicable, the evaluators are encouraged to identify and describe the barriers and other risks that may prevent further progress towards long-term impacts.

The evaluators should document the unintended impacts – both positive and negative impacts – of the project and assess the overall scope and implications of these impacts. Where these impacts are undesirable from environmental and socio-economic perspectives, the evaluation should suggest corrective actions.

Assessment of Monitoring & Evaluation Systems

The evaluators will include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project M&E plan and its implementation.

M&E Design. To assess the quality of the M&E plan, the evaluators will assess:

a. Was the M&E plan at the point of CEO Endorsement practical and sufficient?
b. Did it include baseline data?
c. Did it: specify clear targets and appropriate (SMART) indicators to track environmental, gender, and socio-economic results; a proper methodological approach; specify practical organization and logistics of the M&E activities including schedule and responsibilities for data collection; and, budget adequate funds for M&E activities?

M&E Implementation. The evaluators should assess:

a. Whether the M&E system operated as per the M&E plan?
b. Where necessary, whether the M&E plan was revised in a timely manner?
c. Was information on specified indicators and relevant GEF focal area tracking tools gathered in a systematic manner?
d. Whether appropriate methodological approaches have been used to analyze data?
e. Were resources for M&E sufficient? How was the information from the M&E system used during the project implementation?

Project M&E systems will be rated on the quality of M&E design and quality of M&E implementation using a six-point scale (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory). Annex 2 provides more details on the scale.

Assessment of Implementation and Execution

The assessment of the implementation and execution of GEF full-size projects will take into account the performance of the GEF Implementing Agencies and project Executing Agency(ies) (EAs) in discharging their expected roles and responsibilities. The performance of these agencies

will be rated using a six-point scale (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory). See Annex 2 for more information on the scale.

Quality of Implementation: Within the GEF partnership, GEF Implementing Agencies are involved in activities related to a project's identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation of the detailed proposal, approval, and start-up, oversight, supervision, completion, and evaluation. To assess the performance of the GEF Agencies, the evaluators will assess the extent to which the agency delivered effectively on these counts, with focus on elements that were controllable from the given GEF Agency's perspective. The evaluator will assess how well risks were identified and managed by the GEF Agency.

Quality of Execution: Within the GEF partnership, the EAs are involved in the management and administration of the project's day-to-day activities under the overall oversight and supervision of the GEF Agencies. The EAs are responsible for the appropriate use of funds, and procurement and contracting of goods and services to the GEF Agency. To assess EA performance, the evaluators will assess the extent to which it effectively discharged its role and responsibilities.

Assessment of the Environmental and Social Safeguards: The evaluator will assess whether appropriate environmental and social safeguards were addressed in the project's design and implementation (See Annex 2 for more details on the rating scale). It is expected that a GEF project will not cause any harm to the environment or to any stakeholder and, where applicable, it will take measures to prevent and/or mitigate adverse effects. The evaluator should assess the screening/categorization of the project along with the implementation of the safeguard plans that were approved by the GEF Agency.

Gender: The evaluator will determine the extent to which the gender considerations were taken into account in designing and implementing the project. The evaluator should report whether a gender analysis was conducted, the extent to which the project was implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits, and whether gender disaggregated data was gathered and reported on beneficiaries. In case the given GEF project disadvantages or may disadvantage women or men, then this should be documented and reported. The evaluator should also determine the extent to which relevant gender-related concerns were tracked through project M&E, and if possible, addressing whether gender considerations contributed to the success of the project.

Stakeholder Engagement: The evaluator should, where applicable, review and assess the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and project-specific aspects such as involvement of civil society, indigenous population, the private sector, etc. The evaluator should also indicate the percentage of stakeholders who rate as satisfactory, the level at which their views and concerns are taken into account by the project.

Accountability and Grievance Mechanism: The evaluator should review and assess the project's Grievance Mechanism. The evaluator should analyze and assess whether project stakeholders were aware of the grievance mechanism and whether the mechanism was effective in addressing grievances.

Other Assessments

The Terminal Evaluations should assess the following topics, for which ratings are not required:

a. Need for follow-up: Where applicable, the evaluators will indicate if there is any need to follow up on the evaluation findings, e.g. instances financial mismanagement, unintended negative impacts or risks, etc.
b. Materialization of co-financing: the evaluators will provide information on the extent to which expected co-financing materialized, whether co-financing is cash or in-kind, whether it is in form of grant or loan or equity, whether co-financing was administered by the project management or by some other organization, how shortfall in co-financing or materialization of greater than expected co-financing affected project results, etc.
c. Lessons and Recommendations: Evaluators should provide a few well-formulated lessons that are based on the project experience and applicable to the type of project at hand, to the GEF's overall portfolio, and/or to GEF systems and processes. Wherever possible, Terminal Evaluation reports should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation that have led to effective stakeholder engagement, successful broader adoption of GEF initiatives by stakeholders, and large-scale environmental impacts. The evaluators should describe aspects of the project performance that worked well along with reasons for it. They should discuss where these good practices may or may not be replicated. Recommendations should be well formulated and targeted. The recommendations should discuss the need for action, the recommended action along with its likely consequences vis-à-vis status quo and other courses of action, the specific actor/actors that need to take the action, and time frame for it.

Annex II: Rating Scale

The main dimensions of project performance on which ratings are first provided in the terminal evaluation are; outcomes, sustainability, quality of monitoring and evaluation, quality of implementation, and quality of execution. The CI-GEF Agency also includes ratings for environmental and social safeguards.

Outcome Ratings:

The overall ratings on the outcomes of the project will be based on performance on the following criteria:

a. Relevance
b. Effectiveness
c. Efficiency

Project outcomes are rated based on the extent to which project objectives were achieved. A six-point rating scale is used to assess overall outcomes:

- Highly satisfactory (HS): Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings.
- Satisfactory (S): Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings.

- Unsatisfactory (U): Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.

The calculation of the overall outcomes rating of projects will consider all the three criteria, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical. The rating on relevance will determine whether the overall outcome rating will be in the unsatisfactory range (MU to HU = unsatisfactory range). If the relevance rating is in the unsatisfactory range, then the overall outcome will be in the unsatisfactory range as well. However, where the relevance rating is in the satisfactory range (HS to MS), the overall outcome rating could depend on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either in the satisfactory range or in the unsatisfactory range.

The second constraint applied is that the overall outcome achievement rating may not be higher than the effectiveness rating. During project implementation, the results framework of some projects may have been modified. In cases where modifications in the project impact, outcomes and outputs have not scaled down their overall scope, the evaluator should assess outcome achievements based on the revised results framework. In instances where the scope of the project objectives and outcomes has been scaled down, the magnitude of and necessity for downscaling is taken into account and despite achievement of results as per the revised results framework, where appropriate, a lower outcome effectiveness rating may be given.

Sustainability Ratings:
The sustainability will be assessed taking into account the risks related to financial, sociopolitical, institutional, and environmental sustainability of project outcomes. The evaluator may also take other risks into account that may affect sustainability. The overall sustainability will be assessed using a four-point scale.

- Likely (L): There is little or no risk to sustainability.
- Moderately Likely (ML): There are moderate risks to sustainability.
- Moderately Unlikely (MU): There are significant risks to sustainability.
- Unlikely (U): There are severe risks to sustainability.
- Unable to Assess (UA): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

Project M&E Ratings:
Quality of project M&E will be assessed in terms of:

- Design
- Implementation

Quality of M&E on these two dimensions will be assessed on a six-point scale:

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings and quality of M&E design/implementation exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of M&E design/implementation meets expectations.

- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some shortcomings and quality of M&E design/implementation more or less meets expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of M&E design/implementation somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings and quality of M&E design/implementation substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe shortcomings in M&E design/ implementation.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design/implementation.

Implementation and Execution Rating:

Quality of implementation and of execution will be rated separately. Quality of implementation pertains to the role and responsibilities discharged by the GEF Agencies that have direct access to GEF resources. Quality of Execution pertains to the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF Agencies and executed the funded activities on the ground. The performance will be rated on a six-point scale.

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/execution met expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some shortcomings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation more or less met expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe shortcomings in quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation

Environmental and Social Safeguards:

The approved environmental and social safeguard plans will be rated according to the following scale.

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings and quality of implementation/execution exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of implementation/execution meet expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some shortcomings and quality of implementation/execution more or less meets expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of implementation/execution somewhat lower than expected.

- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings and quality of implementation/execution substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe shortcomings in the quality of implementation/execution.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation/execution.

I.7 Deliverables and Deliverables Schedule:

The successful offeror shall deliver to CI the final Terminal Evaluation Report, in accordance with the outline in Annex 1.

Number	Activity	Responsible	Deliverable	Due Date
1	Establish work plan	Consultant	Approved work plan	4/6/2018
2	Desk review of all relevant project documents	Consultant	Consultants understand the project and can deliver an Evaluation Inception Workshop as outlined in Deliverable #3.	To be completed before Evaluation Inception Workshop
3	Host Evaluation Inception workshop with Executing Agencies (virtual/in person)	Consultant	Terminal Evaluation Zero Report	4/20/2018
4	Evaluation of the project via interviews and site visits	Consultant	Draft evaluation report based on outline in Annex 1	5/4/2018
5	Review draft evaluation report	Executing agencies and CI-GEF Agency	Provide comments or questions	5/11/18
6	Incorporate comments into evaluation report	Consultant	Final Terminal Evaluation Report (word and PDF), including document showing how comments/questions were incorporated	5/18/2018

I.8

SERVICE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION
AND
[ENTER SERVICE PROVIDER NAME]

Service Agreement Number: [ENTER AGRESSO CMF NUMBER]

Project Title: [ENTER PROJECT TITLE]

This Services Agreement (the 'Agreement') is made and entered into as of [insert date] (the 'Effective Date') by and between Conservation International Foundation ('CI'), a nonprofit public benefit corporation organized under the laws of the State of California and [NAME], a [type legal entity e.g. sole proprietor, partnership, corporation etc.] ('Service Provider').

1. Services; Project Description. CI hereby engages Service Provider as an independent contractor, on a non-exclusive basis, to perform the activities and provide the deliverables set forth below (the 'Services'), as may be modified from time to time:

[INCLUDE OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT, SPECIFY EXPECTED OUTCOMES; AND

CHOOSE TABLE 1 FOR SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH PAYMENT AGAINST DAILY RATE; CHOOSE TABLE 2 FOR SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH PAYMENT AGAINST DELIVERABLES ONLY]

#	Allotted days	Activity	Due date	Deliverable
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				

#	Activity	Due date	Deliverable
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

During the Period of Performance (as defined in Section 2) of this Agreement, CI shall have the right to request reasonable changes to the scope of the Services. All changes shall be in writing and signed by authorized representatives of the parties. Service Provider shall receive technical direction from [CI REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME AND TITLE] or his/her designee, as authorized in writing.

2. Period of Performance. The Performance Start Date is [DATE]. The Performance End Date is [DATE] unless otherwise modified, or the Agreement is terminated in accordance with Section 5. Any extension of the Period of Performance requires a written amendment of this Agreement signed by authorized representatives of both Parties.

3. Compensation.

a. Fee for Services. In consideration of Service Provider's performance of the Services during the Period of Performance, CI shall pay Service Provider an amount [choose among the following options, depending on payment terms – if these options do not apply to the contractual arrangement, write it up as best you can]

[OPTION 1 not to exceed amount, based on labor rate] not to exceed US$_____which is based on a rate of US$____per [hour/day/week] for such times as the Service Provider actually performs Services under this Agreement.

[OR OPTION 2, fixed price contract] equal to US$[click and type amount] .

b. Expenses. [OPTION 1] The Fee For Services set forth above is inclusive of all expenses.

[OPTION 2] CI agrees to reimburse Service Provider for reasonable, documented out of pocket expenses as indicated below or authorized by CI in writing prior to incurrence: [include expense budget and budget cap]

Service Provider must provide receipts or invoices for all expenses of US$40.00 or more. Total expenses shall not exceed those set forth in the attached budget without prior written approval of CI.

c. All activities and expenditures must occur during the Period of Performance of this Agreement to be reimbursable.

d. Payment Terms. [PLEASE CHOSE APPROPRIATE OPTION]

e.

[EXAMPLE 1] Payment shall be made against invoice(s). Consultant shall invoice CI on a monthly basis. Consultant shall provide invoices to CI containing name and address, place of performance, days/period and hours worked according to activities and deliverables (as defined in Section 1), and payment instructions. Invoices for reimbursable expenses shall be accompanied by an itemized account of such expenses, together with original receipts for expenses over $40.00. All amounts will be paid within thirty (30) days after receipt of Consultant's invoice.

[EXAMPLE 2] Payment shall be made in accordance with the following payment milestones:
(1) $____upon completion and CI's acceptance of deliverable No. 1,
(2) $____upon completion and CI's acceptance deliverable No. 2,
(3) $____upon completion and CI's acceptance of final deliverable.

Service Provider shall provide invoices to CI containing name and address, place of performance, activities and deliverables (as defined in Section 1) completed and

accepted, and payment instructions. Invoices for reimbursable expenses, if any, shall be accompanied by an itemized account of such expenses, together with original receipts for expenses over $40.00. All amounts will be paid within thirty (30) days after receipt of Consultant's invoice.

f. Service Provider shall provide an IRS W-9 form for US entities, or an IRS W-8 form for non-US entities.

4. Acceptance of Deliverables; Time is of the Essence.

a. Acceptance Criteria. Service Provider is expected to perform the Services and Deliverables in accordance with the following acceptance criteria, which may be revised and supplemented from time to time during the Period of Performance of this Agreement to accommodate for successful performance of the Services.

[INCLUDE ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA AGAINST WHICH THE ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURE DESCRIBED IN 4 B MAY BE CARRIED OUT; PLEASE BE SPECIFIC IN DEFINING THE ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA, AS THIS CONSTITUTES A MAJOR AREA FOR DISPUTES BETWEEN CI AND SERVICE PROVIDERS]

b. Acceptance. In the event that a Deliverable meets CI's acceptance criteria, CI shall notify the Service Provider via email that such Deliverable has been accepted. In the event that a Deliverable does not meet CI's acceptance criteria, CI shall advise the Service Provider via email as to which aspects of the Deliverable require revision. Service Provider shall implement such revisions in accordance with CI's instructions and deliver the revised Deliverable to CI for review within [INCLUDE APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF BUSINESS DAYS] business days following receipt by Service Provider of the revision request. CI may request that this process be repeated for as many times as necessary to meet the acceptance criteria. Time spent on necessary revisions to meet acceptance criteria may not be charged to CI, unless authorized in writing by CI.

c. Time is of the Essence. Service Provider shall perform the Services in strict compliance with the Delivery Schedule set forth in Appendix 1. Time is of the essence with respect to all aspects of this Agreement and the subject matter hereof.

5. Termination. Either party may terminate this Agreement at any time upon ten (10) days prior written notice. In such event, Service Provider shall provide to CI all deliverables (incl. all embodiments thereof) completed or partially completed up to the effective date of termination to CI in a format and medium specified by CI, and CI shall pay a pro-rated fee for all Services provided by the Service Provider in good faith prior to the effective date of termination. Any payment effected by CI in excess of the pro-rated fee due on the effective date of termination shall be returned by the Service Provider immediately upon request by CI. If CI terminates this Agreement due to a material breach by Service Provider or due to the Service Provider's failure to perform any of the Services to CI's satisfaction, CI may withhold payment for any such unsatisfactory Services until such Services are performed to CI's satisfaction.

6. Indemnification. Service Provider hereby covenants and agrees to indemnify CI and to defend and hold CI harmless from and against any and all liabilities, damages, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising out of or resulting from any claim, action or other proceeding (including any proceeding by any of Service Provider's employees, agents or contractors) related to or arising out of the performance of the Services under this Agreement.

7. Relationship of CI and Service Provider. [CHOOSE (A) OR (B) DEPENDING ON WHETHER SERVICE PROVIDER IS A COMPANY OR AN INDIVIDUAL – DELETE THE PARAGRAPH WHICH DOES NOT APPLY]

a. [IF A COMPANY] Service Provider is not an employee, agent or assign of CI for any purposes whatsoever. Accordingly, Service Provider shall be solely responsible for all matters relating to the employment of its personnel including, but not limited to, compliance with all applicable workers' compensation, unemployment compensation and social security laws and with all withholding and all other federal, state and local laws and regulations governing such matters. CI shall not provide Service Provider or its employees with any insurance or other benefits including, but not limited to, unemployment, medical, dental, worker's compensation and/or disability insurance.

b. [IF AN INDIVIDUAL] Service Provider is performing the Services as an independent contractor of CI and not as an employee, agent or assign of CI for any purposes whatsoever including, but not limited to, federal, state, or local taxes, payroll tax or workers' compensation coverage. Accordingly, CI shall not withhold or pay federal, state or local income tax, or payroll tax of any kind on behalf of Service Provider, nor shall CI provide Service Provider with any insurance or other benefits including, but not limited to, unemployment, medical, dental, worker's compensation and/or disability insurance. Service Provider understands that he/she is responsible to pay, according to law, his/her income and all other applicable taxes.

c. [APPLICABLE TO BOTH COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS] Service Provider is performing the Services as an independent contractor of CI and not as an officer, employee, partner or agent of CI. Accordingly, Service Provider has no right or authority to assume or create any obligation of any kind or to make any representation or warranty, whether expressed or implied, on behalf of CI or to bind CI in any respect.

8. Government Officials and Employees. Service Provider hereby certifies that no assistance, payments or anything of value (monetary or non-monetary) shall be made, promised, offered to or accepted by any government employee or official (a) in contravention of any U.S. or other applicable law or regulation including, but not limited to, the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act; (b) without the express consent of the government for which the employee or official works; and (c) that is not reasonable, bona fide, and directly related to the activities funded under this Agreement. It is Service Provider's responsibility to ensure compliance with this clause, and to maintain and provide at CI's request, documentation demonstrating such compliance. Service Provider hereby certifies that no payments or other form of assistance shall be made to or accepted by any government employee or official (x) to influence any official government act or decision; (y) to induce any government employee or official to do or omit to do any act in violation of his or her lawful duty; or (z) to obtain or retain business for, or direct business to any individual or entity. If Service Provider is a government employee or official, Service Provider shall recuse him/herself from any governmental act or decision affecting CI, and shall not influence any governmental act or decision affecting CI. Under no circumstances shall any payments or anything of value be given, made, promised or offered to any U.S. Federal, State or local employee or official.

9. Confidential Matters and Proprietary Information. During the course of this Agreement, either party may acquire confidential information or trade secrets of the other ("Confidential Information"). Each party agrees to keep all such Confidential Information in a secure place, and further agrees not to publish, communicate, divulge, use, or disclose, directly or indirectly, for his own benefit or for the benefit of another, either during or after performance of this Agreement, any of the Confidential Information, except as may be required by law or this Agreement. Upon termination or expiration of this Agreement, each party shall deliver all Confidential Information produced or acquired during the performance of this Agreement and all copies thereof to the other. This obligation of confidence shall not apply with respect to information that is (a) available to the receiving party from third parties on an unrestricted basis;

(b) independently developed by the receiving party; or (c) disclosed by the other party to others on an unrestricted basis.

10. Intellectual Property

[CHOOSE BETWEEN THE FOLLOWING TWO OPTIONS – NOTE THAT THE FIRST OPTION IS RECOMMENDED]

[CI OWNERSHIP – NO LICENSE TO SERVICE PROVIDER] All work product created, prepared, procured, generated or produced by Service Provider under this Agreement and delivered to CI including, but not limited to, raw or processed data, articles, reports, drawings, computer data bases, and all other memoranda (collectively, "Works"), shall belong solely and exclusively to CI. All Works shall be deemed "works made for hire" within the meaning of U.S. copyright law, and CI shall be deemed the author of the Works. If for any reason, any Work is not deemed a "work made for hire," or all rights in and to any Work are deemed not to vest in CI, Service Provider hereby irrevocably assigns and transfers any rights it may retain in and to the Works to CI and waives all its rights, title and interest in and to the Works, including moral rights. Upon CI's request and at its expense, Service Provider agrees to cooperate with and assist CI in perfecting its rights in and to the Works, including executing appropriate documents.

CI will have the sole right to copyright the Works, except that Service Provider grants to CI a nonexclusive, irrevocable royalty-free license to reproduce, translate, publish, use and dispose of, and to authorize others to so do, all copyrighted or copyrightable material not first produced or prepared by Service Provider in the performance of this Agreement, but which is incorporated in the Works, provided that such license shall be only to the extent that the Service Provider now has, or prior to completion of the Agreement may acquire, the right to grant such license without becoming liable to pay compensation to others solely because of such grant. To the extent that the Works contain any material to which Service Provider does not have the right to grant such license, Service Provider will assume responsibility for obtaining all necessary rights for use, reproduction, translation, publication and disposition of that material by CI.

OR

[CI OWNERSHIP – LICENSE TO SERVICE PROVIDER TO USE] All work product created, prepared, procured, generated or produced by Service Provider under this Agreement and delivered to CI including, but not limited to, raw or processed data, articles, reports, drawings, computer data bases, and all other memoranda (collectively, "Works"), shall belong solely and exclusively to CI. CI hereby grants to Service Provider a nonexclusive, revocable, royalty-free license to reproduce, translate, publish and use, and to authorize others to so do, all copyrightable Works first produced or prepared under this Agreement by Service Provider; provided, however, that Service Provider understands and agrees that this license does not include the right to first publication of any Works, which right shall belong solely to CI.

CI will have the sole right to copyright such Works, except that Service Provider grants to CI a nonexclusive, irrevocable royalty-free license to reproduce, translate, publish, use and dispose of, and to authorize others to so do, all copyrighted or copyrightable material not first produced or prepared by Service Provider in the performance of this Agreement, but which is incorporated in the Works, provided that such license shall be only to the extent that the Service Provider now has, or prior to completion of the Agreement may acquire, the right to grant such license without becoming liable to pay compensation to others solely because of such grant. To the extent that the Works contain any material to which Service Provider does not have the right to grant such license, Service Provider will assume responsibility for obtaining all necessary rights for use, reproduction, translation, publication and disposition of that material by CI.

11. Security and Safety. Service Provider agrees that s/he has read, understands and shall comply with any applicable security regulations provided by CI, and acknowledges that Service Provider shall be solely responsible for Service Provider's own safety and physical property or equipment

during the performance of this Agreement. [IN THE EVENT OF HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES, PLEASE CONTACT GCO FOR INCORPORATION OF A RELEASE OF LIABILITY]

12. Travel. Service Provider shall be solely responsible for any travel arrangements, travel insurance, and all arrangements for visas, passports or immunizations.

13. Choice of Law; Arbitration. This Agreement shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia, USA, applicable to contracts fully executed and performed therein and without giving effect to its conflict of laws principles. Any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement, or the breach thereof, shall be settled by arbitration before a single arbitrator in Washington, DC, under the rules of the American Arbitration Association in effect at the time of commencement of the arbitration, and the parties agree that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator shall be final, binding and may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

14. Compliance With Law; CI Code of Ethics. Service Provider will perform the Services in compliance with (i) the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and Office of Foreign Asset Control regulations, as well as (ii) all laws and regulations of the country in which the Services are performed (including, but not limited to, such relating to bribery, corruption, terrorism financing and equal employment opportunity, as well as all the generally accepted standards applicable to such work), as if such aforementioned laws and regulations directly reached the activities of the Service Provider. Further, Service Provider agrees to perform all Services and to conduct all activities related thereto in accordance with CI's Code of Ethics, a copy of which is attached hereto as Appendix 2 and incorporated by reference.

15. Service Provider's Anti-Terrorism Representation And Warranty. Service Provider is hereby notified that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. Service Provider, therefore, represents and warrants that Service Provider has not provided, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that Service Provider does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitate, or participated in terrorist acts, and is compliant with all other applicable provisions of such U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law.

16. Counterparts And Facsimile Signatures.

    a. Each party agrees that the other party may rely on a facsimile copy of the signature of a duly authorized signatory and that upon the exchange of such facsimile signatures, electronically or otherwise, this Agreement shall be binding between the parties whether or not hard copies of this Agreement are ever exchanged between them.

    b. This Agreement may be signed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument even though all the parties are not signatories to the original or the same counterpart.

17. Severability. In the event that any one or more of the provisions contained herein shall, for any reason, be held to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality or unenforceability shall not affect any other provisions of this Agreement, but this Agreement shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal or unenforceable provisions had never been contained herein, unless the deletion of such provision or provisions would result in such a material change so as to cause completion of the transactions contemplated herein to be unreasonable.

18. No Third-Party Beneficiaries. Except as expressly set forth herein, neither party intends that this Agreement shall benefit or create any right or cause of action in or on behalf of any person or entity other than the Service Provider and CI.

20. Waiver. Either party may specifically waive any rights under this Agreement by the other party,

19. NON-ASSIGNMENT. THIS AGREEMENT SHALL NOT BE TRANSFERRED OR ASSIGNED BY SERVICE PROVIDER WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT OF CI.

but no such waiver shall be deemed effective unless in writing, signed by the waiving party, and specifically designating the rights waived. No waiver shall constitute a continuing waiver of similar or other rights.

21. Entire Agreement; Amendments. This Agreement supersedes all prior oral or written agreements between the parties and constitutes the entire Agreement between the parties. Unless indicated otherwise herein, this Agreement may not be amended, supplemented, or modified in any respect except by written agreement signed by both parties.

22. Notices. Notice under this Agreement shall be deemed to have been sufficiently given either when served personally or when sent by first-class registered mail addressed to the parties at the addresses set forth below. CI shall not be liable for, nor shall Service Provider be liable to perform, services or expenses incurred after the receipt of notice or termination.

If to Service Provider:
[Click and type Contractor name]
[Click and type Contractor Address]
Phone: [Click and type Contractor phone]
Fax: [Click and type Contractor fax]

If to CI:
Attn: [Click and type contact person]
Conservation International Foundation
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22202
Phone: 703-341.2400
Fax:
"[click and type your fax number]"

The authorized representatives of the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed as of the date first written above.

[CLICK AND TYPE CONTRACTOR NAME] Conservation International Foundation

_____ _____

[Click here and type Title]

[Name of CI representative]
[Title]
[SVPs/+ or their authorized designees only

APPENDIX A
DELIVERY SCHEDULE

APPENDIX B

ETHICS STANDARDS

Conservation International's reputation derives from our commitment to our core values: Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, and Passion and Teamwork. CI's Code of Ethics (the "Code") provides guidance to CI employees, service providers, experts, interns, and volunteers in living CI's core values, and outlines minimum standards for ethical conduct which all parties must adhere to.

Any violations of the Code of Ethics should be reported to CI via its Ethics Hotline at www.ci.ethicspoint.com.

CI relies on the personal integrity, good judgment and common sense of all third parties acting on behalf, or providing services to the organization, to deal with issues not expressly addressed by the Code or as noted below.

Integrity:

- Act in good faith, responsibly, with due care, competence and diligence and maintain the highest professional standards at all times.
- Comply with all contractual terms as well as all applicable laws, rules and regulations, domestic and international, in every country where Services are carried out.
- Provide true representation of all Services performed.
- Never engage in any of the following acts: falsification of business document or receipts, theft, embezzlement, diversion of funds, bribery, or fraud.

Transparency:

- Avoid conflicts of interest and not allow independent judgment to be compromised.
- Not accept gifts or favors from sub-contractors, suppliers or other 3rd parties that would negatively impact the provision of Services to CI.

Accountability:

- Disclose to CI, at the earliest opportunity, any information you have or become aware of, that may result in a real or perceived conflict of interest or impropriety.
- Implement activities, provide Services, and manage staff and operations in a professionally sound manner, with knowledge and wisdom with the goal of a successful outcome per the terms of this Agreement.

Confidentiality:

- Not disclose confidential or sensitive information obtained during the course of your work with CI.
- Protect confidential relationships between CI and other 3rd parties.

Mutual Respect and Collaboration:

Engage with indigenous peoples and local communities in which CI works in a positive and constructive manner that respects the culture, laws, and practices of those communities, with due regard for the right of free, prior and informed consent.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of CI's Code of Ethics and certify agreement and compliance therewith.

FOR SERVICE PROVIDER:

By: _____

Title: _____