GEF-6 REQUEST FOR PROJECT ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

PROJECT TYPE: Full-sized Project
TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

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PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Community-based sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan			
Country(ies):	Afghanistan	GEF Project ID:[1]	9285
GEF Agency(ies):	FAO	GEF Agency Project ID:	637329
Other Executing Partner(s):	MAIL NRM; NEPA; MRRD; IGDK	Submission Date: Resubmission Date:	5 October 2017 19 April 2018
GEF Focal Area (s):	Multi-focal Areas	Project Duration (Months)	72
Integrated Approach Pilot	IAP-Cities ☐ IAP-Commodities ☐ IAP-Food Security ☐	Corporate Program: SGP ☐	
Name of Parent Program	N/A	Agency Fee ($)	944,627

A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Focal Area Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	(in $) GEF Project Financing	(in $) Co-financing
BD-4 Program 9	Outcome 9.1. Increased area of production landscapes and seascapes that integrate conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into management.	GEFTF	1,743,738	9,014,057
CCM-2 Program 4	Outcome A. Accelerated adoption of innovative technologies and management practices for GHG emission reduction and carbon sequestration.	GEFTF	1,337,906	6,916,154
SFM-3 Program 7	Outcome 5. Integrated landscape restoration plans to maintain forest ecosystem services are implemented at appropriate scales by government, private sector and local community actors, both women and men.	GEFTF	3,498,624	18,085,743
LD-1 Program 2	Outcome 1.1. Improved agricultural, rangeland and pastoral Management.	GEFTF	3,915,605	20,241,279
	Total project costs		10,495,873	54,257,233

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Project Objective: To support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity

Project Components/ Programs	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	(in US$) GEF Project Financing	(in US$) Confirmed Co-financing
Component 1. Capacity building at national, sub-national and district levels for SLM/SFM.	TA	**Outcome 1.1.** Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors for SLM/SFM.	1.1.1. National 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' established for coordinating the capacity development and knowledge management on SLM/SFM at all levels. 1.1.2. Training programme developed and delivered to national and sub-national government officials on land	GEFTF	1,025,140	12,997,530

[1] Project ID number remains the same as the assigned PIF number.

			degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes. 1.1.3. Fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources – including ecosystem goods/services, rangeland/forest condition and socio-ecological resilience – undertaken for Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces. 1.1.4. National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap – including provisions for a national MRV system – formulated.			
		Outcome 1.2. Enhanced capacity of local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans.	1.2.1 Resource materials on local-level planning, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tools. 1.2.2 Training provided to local-level technical government staff on facilitation of community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for inter alia animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation and sustainable resource use. 1.2.3. Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based and gender-sensitive SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E. 1.2.4. Community Development Committees (CDCs), Forest Management Associations (FMAs) and Rangeland Management Associations (RMAs) supported to develop participatory, community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans. 1.2.5. Pastoralist field schools conducted on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/ SLM practices.	GEFTF	1,476,920	4,611,176
Component 2. Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes.	Inv	**Outcome 2.1.** Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to	2.1.1 Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVFs in Kunar and Paktya provinces. 2.1.2 Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-	GEFTF	3,206,550	21,228,331

		increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces	timber forest products to reduce pressure on forest resources in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces. 2.1.3 Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/ restoration and SFM implemented over 10,000 ha of HCVFs (Kunar and Paktya) and 20,000 ha of other forest types (Badghis) leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches. 2.1.4. Diversified livelihood options promoted to reduce pressure on forest resources, including agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces.			
Component 3. Community-based rangeland management.	Inv	**Outcome 3.1.** Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces	3.1.1. Climate-resilient SLM interventions – including soil and water conservation, rotational grazing and restoration/ rehabilitation with palatable species – implemented over 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands. 3.1.2. Enhanced livelihoods through strengthened value chains for products from livestock husbandry.	GEFTF	3,519,370	7,514,315
Component 4. Knowledge management and M&E.	TA	**Outcome 4.1.** Improved knowledge to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices	4.1.1. National information and resource centre with associated M&E system and database for SLM/SFM established. 4.1.2. Local-level, participatory M&E system for SLM/SFM established for monitoring of rangeland and forest condition, including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. 4.1.3. Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated. 4.1.4. Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces collated and disseminated nationwide as well as regionally.	GEFTF	768,090	5,322,206

			4.1.5. Mid-term review (MTR) and Terminal Evaluation (TE) conducted.			
				Subtotal	9,996,070	51,673,558
				Project Management Cost (PMC)	GEFTF	499,803	2,583,675
				Total project costs		10,495,873	54,257,233

C. CONFIRMED SOURCES OF CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY NAME AND BY TYPE

Please include evidence for co-financing for the project with this form.

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Cofinancing	Amount (US$)
Recipient Government	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock	In-kind	38,656,984
Recipient Government	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development	In-kind	3,630,249
Recipient Government	Afghanistan National Environmental Protection Agency	In-kind	710,000
Recipient Government	Independent General Directorate of *Kuchi*	In-kind	3,400,000
GEF Agency	United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation	In-kind	7,860,000
Total Co-financing			54,257,233

D. TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), COUNTRY(IES), FOCAL AREA AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country Name/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in $)		
					GEF Project Financing (a)	Agency Fee[a)] (b)[2]	Total (c)=a+b
FAO	GEF TF	Afghanistan	Multi-focal Areas	SFM	3,498,624	314,876	3,813,500
FAO	GEF TF	Afghanistan	Biodiversity	(select as applicable)	1,743,738	156,936	1,900,674
FAO	GEF TF	Afghanistan	Land Degradation	(select as applicable)	3,915,605	352,404	4,268,009
FAO	GEF TF	Afghanistan	Climate Change	(select as applicable)	1,337,906	120,411	1,458,317
(select)	(select)		(select)	(select as applicable)			0
Total Grant Resources					10,495,873	944,627	11,440,500

a) Refer to the Fee Policy for GEF Partner Agencies

E. PROJECT'S TARGET CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Provide the expected project targets as appropriate.

Corporate Results	Replenishment Targets	Project Targets
1. Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society	Improved management of landscapes and seascapes covering 300 million hectares	*30,000 hectares*
2. Sustainable land management in production systems (agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes)	120 million hectares under sustainable land management	*200,000 hectares*
3. Promotion of collective management of transboundary water systems and implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services	Water-food-ecosystems security and conjunctive management of surface and groundwater in at least 10 freshwater basins;	*Number of freshwater basins*
	20% of globally over-exploited fisheries (by volume) moved to more sustainable levels	*Percent of fisheries, by volume*
4. Support to transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path	750 million tons of CO_{2e} mitigated (include both direct and indirect)	*2,773,619 metric tons CO_2e (Direct); 1,087,011 metric tons CO_2e (Consequential)*
5. Increase in phase-out, disposal and reduction of releases of POPs, ODS, mercury and other chemicals of global concern	Disposal of 80,000 tons of POPs (PCB, obsolete pesticides)	*metric tons*
	Reduction of 1000 tons of Mercury	*metric tons*
	Phase-out of 303.44 tons of ODP (HCFC)	*ODP tons*
6. Enhance capacity of countries to implement MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and mainstream into national and sub-national policy, planning financial and legal frameworks	Development and sectoral planning frameworks integrate measurable targets drawn from the MEAs in at least 10 countries	*Number of Countries:*
	Functional environmental information systems are established to support decision-making in at least 10 countries	*Number of Countries:*

F. DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A "NON-GRANT" INSTRUMENT?

No

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

A. DESCRIBE ANY CHANGES IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE PROJECT DESIGN WITH THE ORIGINAL PIF

A.1. Project description

Global environmental problem

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (hereafter, 'Afghanistan') is a landlocked developing country situated in South-Central Asia. Afghanistan has a low population density at 39 people per km^2, with a total population of ~32.7 million[2], for which ~80% of livelihoods are underpinned by agriculture.

The increasing population and the heavy reliance of rural communities on natural resources are resulting in increased pressure on Afghanistan's natural environment and ecosystems. Conservation and sustainable management of nature

[2] This number includes the ~2.7 million Afghans temporarily residing in Pakistan. Urban areas have been experiencing rapid population growth since 2001 following the Karzai administration, which brought back over five million expats.

resources and ecosystems is needed to meet the growing demands of the population, and ensure the sustainability of livelihoods.

Afghanistan's population and environment have been directly and negatively affected as a result of conflict and the associated pressures, including: i) displacement of large numbers of people; ii) damage to infrastructure by disaster events; and iii) an increase in poverty. Consequently, ecosystems have been further exploited, resulting in degraded land, ongoing land degradation and deforestation and diminishing wildlife and livestock populations. These negative impacts are further compounded by inappropriate practices for natural resource management in rangeland and forest ecosystems that serve as primary livelihood sources for numerous Afghan communities. For example, extensive land degradation and deforestation have taken place through expansion of agricultural land, overgrazing[3] and unsustainable firewood collection. This deforestation has negatively affected the provision of ecosystem goods and services and the shortage of woody vegetation has led to economically valuable species being use for firewood. While some initiatives aimed at reducing land degradation and deforestation have been implemented[4], challenging environmental conditions and ongoing insecurity have hampered large-scale restoration efforts.

Afghanistan is prone to a range of natural disasters, including floods, droughts, earthquakes and landslides. These disasters result in environmental degradation being compounded by the impacts of climate change. For example, frequent droughts are accelerating land degradation, desertification and displacement of human populations, while flooding also leads to population displacement as well as increased rates of soil erosion. Such displaced populations have a tendency to engage in unsustainable livelihood practices owing to limited alternative options for income generation, further exacerbating degradation of land and ecosystems.

The FAO-GEF Trust Fund project (hereafter, the 'proposed project') will contribute towards reducing and reversing the impacts of environmental degradation – as well as the resultant vulnerability of Afghan communities to the effects thereof – by promoting the adoption of community-based approaches to sustainable land management (SLM) and sustainable forest management (SFM). To effectively implement community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) in targeted provinces, the proposed project will adopt a multi-focal area approach to SLM, biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation – through reduced emissions from land-use activities – and SFM. Activities under the proposed project will be implemented in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya Provinces in selected rangeland and forest sites. Furthermore, the proposed project will build the capacity of national and sub-national institutions for SLM/SFM planning and facilitate knowledge sharing of best practices and lessons learned. This will support the upscaling and replication of SLM/SFM across Afghanistan and inform community-based natural resource management regionally.

The adoption of SLM/SFM approaches supported by the proposed project will be done in alignment with the priorities of Afghanistan's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for 2014–2017[5], National Adaptation Programme of Action for Climate Change (NAPA)[6], Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)[7] and the Initial National Communication (INC)[8] as well as various national strategies such as the National Natural Resource Management Strategy (NRM Strategy) 2017–2021[9], and the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017–2021[10].

Root causes and barriers

Rangelands and forests in Afghanistan provide critical ecosystem goods and services that underpin the livelihoods of rural communities. However, many rangeland and forest ecosystems in the country have been severely degraded by human

[3] Approximately half of Afghanistan's total land area is used as rangelands for grazing livestock.

[5] Afghanistan's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP): A Framework for Implementation 2012–2017. 2012. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

[6] Afghanistan National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management (NCSA) and NAPA. 2009. Final Joint Report, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

[7] Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC). 2015. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

[8] Afghanistan Initial National Communication (INC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, National Environmental Protection Agency.

[9] National Natural Resource Management Strategy (NRM Strategy) for 2017–2021. 2017. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

[10] Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017 to 2021. 2017. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

activities and continue to be threatened by land degradation, deforestation, biodiversity loss and climate change. Despite the existence of various national strategies and plans, a number of barriers to implementing effective measures for SLM/SFM, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation exist. Six identified priority barriers are outlined below.

Barrier 1. Over-harvesting of riparian forests and dwarf alpine shrublands
Riparian forests and dwarf alpine shrublands are essential to local livelihoods as they are the primary source of wood fuel for household cooking and heating. Lack of knowledge on SLM had resulted in unsustainable land-use practices having adverse effects on these ecosystems, including: i) deforestation; ii) overgrazing; iii) erosion; iv) lowered soil fertility; and v) the loss of biodiversity. In regions where forests and land have been degraded, communities are forced to over-exploit the natural resources through shrub and wood collection for both fuelwood and livestock grazing. Continued over-harvesting threatens community livelihoods, as well as ecosystem functioning and the conservation of biodiversity in such areas.

Barrier 2. Insufficient data on land and forest ecosystems to inform appropriate decision-making and planning
While some mapping of Afghanistan's ecosystems has been undertaken, the current data is broad-scale – i.e. at a national level. There is little fine-scale data available to inform planning at the provincial or district levels. Moreover, there is little characterisation of the current condition of Afghanistan's rangeland and forest ecosystems. While it is generally accepted that these ecosystems are becoming increasingly degraded, there is limited information on: i) the extent, condition and current productivity of the land; ii) the rates of deforestation and current condition of forest ecosystems; iii) the current status of threatened biodiversity; and iv) the extent to which deforestation and land degradation are resulting in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Knowledge of the value of Afghanistan's ecosystem goods and services is consequently insufficient to inform effective strategies for sustainable management of land and forests at all levels.

Barrier 3. Weak enabling environment for SLM/SFM
Afghanistan has yet to develop a National Action Programme outlining priorities relating to the United Nations Convention on Combatting Desertification (UNCCD). While the country is currently receiving support for this through the GEF umbrella project, 'Support to GEF Eligible Parties for Alignment of National Action Programs and Reporting Process under UNCCD', it has yet to be completed. In addition, support provided through this project is limited owing to the large number of countries participating in it. Consequently, there remains a need for further capacity building on planning and decision-making to support identification, prioritisation and implementation of activities to reduce rates of land degradation and desertification in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's Forest Law[11] and National Forest Management Plan[12] provide the legal and policy framework for forest management in the country. This framework supports the implementation of a nation-wide approach to strengthening forest governance at all levels. In addition, there is recognition of the importance of the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) mechanism as a means of promoting SFM to achieve emissions reductions, biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. However, there is no clearly defined roadmap for the achievement of these objectives. In general, there are few examples of participatory mechanisms for forest management. There are also few mechanisms for cross-sectoral planning and decision-making on SFM. Consequently, government officials – particularly at the sub-national level – do not have the capacity to deliver support services on SFM for multiple environmental benefits.

Barrier 4. Inadequate frameworks for coordinating community-based SLM/SFM
With the increasing rates of land and forest degradation, local communities are experiencing reductions in the availability of natural resources to meet livelihood needs. This is resulting in declining livelihoods, ongoing over-exploitation of natural resources, ecosystem degradation and increased incidences of conflict between resource users, particularly between sedentary and nomadic pastoralists[13]. At present, there are few frameworks for community-based planning and decision-making processes for the coordination of SLM/SFM that is tailored to the needs of multiple stakeholders. This

[11] Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Forest Law. 2009.
[12] National Forest Management Plan for Afghanistan. 2012.
[13] Jacobs MJ & Schroeder CA. 2012. First steps in addressing land degradation in Afghanistan. *Journal of Arid Land Studies* 22(1):123–126.

results in a negative feedback loop whereby greater competition for dwindling resources results in increasing rates of resource use, and consequently increased rates of land and forest degradation.

Barrier 5. Limited incentives for SLM/SFM
Much of Afghanistan's land is currently under communal land tenure. Consequently, various stakeholders have access to resources for both legal and illegal exploitation. These users have few incentives for ensuring the sustainability of resource consumption or for the conservation of resources and biodiversity. As a result, short-term interests are prioritised at the expense of long-term benefits. In addition, these resource users often have a limited understanding of the impacts of land and forest degradation on the sustainable production of ecosystem goods and services. An improved understanding of this would result in benefits of resource conservation being recognised and greater incentivisation of sustainable land-use practices.

Barrier 6. Inadequate extension services for SLM/SFM
The provision of extension services relating to land management and forest conservation is problematic in Afghanistan. Natural resource management and extension officers face considerable challenges in providing information to resource users. The large size of the country[14] and the low population density[15] results in logistical difficulties in reaching rural communities. In addition, extension officers do not always have access to up-to-date scientific information on international best practices for sustainable management of land and forests. These factors limit the ability of natural resource management and extension offices to provide information and other services to resource users and pastoralists on land and forest management.

Baseline scenario
Rangeland degradation and desertification
Large parts of Afghanistan are affected by land degradation and desertification. Most of the country has been classified as having 'degraded soil'[16], and it is estimated that 80% of the land area is at risk of soil erosion[17]. Land degradation is mainly caused by overgrazing and deforestation, which in turn is one of the largest contributors to desertification in Afghanistan. The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) reported that desertification in Afghanistan currently affects over 75% of the land area in the northern, western and southern regions[18]. In addition, more than 60% of Afghanistan's land area is classified as having an increasing vulnerability to desertification[19]. Degradation and desertification present a significant risk to livestock grazing which makes use of 70–80% of Afghanistan's land surface area[20], with 45% of the land classified as rangelands[21]. Livestock products from rangelands form the basis of livelihoods for more than 80% of Afghan households and contribute more than 50% to the agricultural GDP[22]. Current rates of land degradation and desertification will be exacerbated by climate change, which is predicted to cause decreases in mean annual rainfall and increased temperatures[23].

[14] ~645,800 km^2.
[15] 39 people per km^2.
[16] GRID Arendal. 2001. Land degradation. Available at: http://www.grida.no/publications [accessed 14.02.2017].
[17] Saba DS. 2001. Afghanistan: Environmental degradation in a fragile ecological setting. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology* 8:279–289.
[18] Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock. 2006. National Report.
[19] Specifically classified as having a 'very high' vulnerability. See further: Eswaran H, Lal R & Reich PF. 2001. Land degradation: an overview. In: Bridges *et al.* (eds.) "Responses to land degradation" Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Land Degradation and Desertification, Khon Kaen, Thailand. Oxford Press, New Delhi, India.
[20] Bedunah DJ. 2006. An Analysis of Afghanistan's Rangelands and Management Issues for the Development of Policy and Strategies for Sustainable Management. United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
[21] Ali A & Shaoliang Y. 2013. Highland rangelands of Afghanistan: significance, management Issues and strategies. In: Ning W, Rawat GS, Joshi S, Ismail M & Sharma E [eds.] "High-altitude rangelands and their interfaces in the Hindu Kush Himalayas: special publication on the occasion of ICIMOD's 30th anniversary" International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).
[22] Afghanistan Initial National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). 2013. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA).
[23] Ali & Shaoliang 2013 Highland rangelands of Afghanistan.

Deforestation and degradation of forests and woodlands
Natural forests in Afghanistan have been extensively degraded[24], with large areas being lost as a result of human activities. Tree cover has declined from ~3.3 million ha in the 1950s, to less than 1 million ha[25] currently, which represents only ~1.5% of the country's total area[26;27;28]. Although detailed information on forest degradation in Afghanistan is lacking, remote sensing indicates that previously-forested areas have undergone 50–80% deforestation from 1977 to 2002[29]. The rate of deforestation between 2000 and 2005 was ~3%, meaning that ~30,000 ha of forests were removed annually. The primary factors causing this forest and woody cover loss are overgrazing by goats[30] and the unsustainable collection of fuelwood. Woody cover has been extensively degraded in some areas that communities are now making use of economically valuable species such as pistachios and almonds for fuelwood. Although there have been several initiatives implemented in degraded forest and woodland areas to reduce deforestation over the years[31], conflict has slowed the development of large-scale restoration projects and has hindered the benefits for communities.

Loss of biodiversity
The greatest overarching threat to Afghanistan's biodiversity is the rapidly increasing population, coupled with the country's low socio-economic status. More than 40% of Afghans live on less than US$1 per day and the lack of alternative sources of income results in the unsustainable exploitation of biodiversity[32]. Furthermore, there is a lack of prerequisite policy, legal and social conditions for biodiversity conservation, such as: i) policy and legal instruments; ii) regulatory enforcement; iii) education and awareness; and iv) government co-ordination. Other threats to biodiversity include over-hunting, deforestation, overgrazing, shrub collection, dryland farming, water diversion, climate change and desertification[33].

Increasing negative effects of climate change on land degradation
The existing processes of land and forest degradation, as well as desertification, will be exacerbated by climate change resulting in increasing temperatures and decreasing rainfall. This will further reduce the productivity of rangelands and forests. Without changes to community and natural resource use management, this will likely lead to increased overexploitation as carrying capacities and regeneration rates decline. Reduced rainfall rates under climate change conditions will also reduce the infiltration of surface water into groundwater systems, which will negatively affect base flow levels in streams, especially in areas where land is already degraded. This is because degraded land is more prone to increased runoff and erosion during rainfall events, which results in less water infiltrating into aquifers.

Associated baseline projects

FAO baseline projects and co-financing
FAO have several ongoing and pipeline projects in the same geographical areas, which are well aligned with the objectives and to the scope of the proposed GEF-6 project. The ongoing FAO project, 'Household Food and Livelihood Security and Supporting the development of an effective Extension System', aims to promote and enhance sustainable and resilient livelihoods among the most food insecure and vulnerable households in four districts of Bamyan province in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, the FAO pipeline project on Agriculture Value Chains is also working in the same geographical areas where the GEF-6 project shall be implemented. This USAID-funded pipeline project is focusing on:
- increased wheat productivity;

[24] Delattre E & Rahmani H. 2007. A preliminary assessment of forest cover and change in the Eastern Forest Complex of Afghanistan. World Conservation Society (WCS), Afghanistan and USAID.
[25] UNEP & NEPA. 2008. Afghanistan's environment 2008. NEPA, Kabul.
[26] Groninger JW. 2012. Reforestation strategies amid social instability: lessons from Afghanistan. *Environmental Management* 49:833–845.
[27] Groninger 2006 Forestry and forestry education in Afghanistan.
[28] Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). 2010. Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010. Country Reports, Forestry Department, FAO, Afghanistan.
[29] UNEP. 2003. Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment.
[30] Approximately half of Afghanistan's total land area is used as rangelands for grazing livestock.
[31] For example, the Green Afghanistan Initiative (GAIN), which ended in 2010.
[32] National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (NBSAP). 2014. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan: Framework for Implementation 2014–2017.
[33] NBSAP 2014.

- improved production and productivity of High Value Crops (HVC's);
- enhance technology utilisation in the Livestock Industry; and
- institutional capacity building at provincial and district levels.

The above two ongoing and pipeline projects (total budget of US$26 million) shall be used as the basis for FAO Afghanistan's co-financing contribution of US$6,860,000 to the GEF-6 project. FAO-Afghanistan will also contribute US$1 million of co-financing from its ongoing Afghanistan operation by supporting the GEF-6 project logistically and operationally from FAO's: i) Jalalabad Regional Office (for Kunar and Paktya Provinces); ii) Herat Regional Office (for Badghis Province); and iii) Bamyan Regional Office (for Bamyan and Ghazni Provinces).

Desertification control and greenery
This MAIL NRM pipeline project is planned for implementation in 30 provinces in Afghanistan, with an unconfirmed timeline. The objective is to improve rangeland management within the target provinces through the provision of five project interventions, namely: i) establishing livestock reproduction centres; ii) providing water provisions; iii) planting for rangeland restoration; iv) establishing windbreaks for sand dunes; and v) planting and promoting medicinal plants. The proposed project aligns well with these interventions and the overall objective to improve rangeland management. Outcome 3.1 involves hard measures of improving rangeland management, while Outcome 1.1, 1.2 and 4.1 contribute to improved capacity within the government and communities, and establishing knowledge-sharing and management approaches, respectively.

Forest restoration and protection
This pipeline project is to be a direct initiative of MAIL NRM. Although the timeline is unconfirmed, the project is in final negotiations with co-financing for the project lifespan. The objective is to improve conservation and management of forest ecosystems across 20 provinces in Afghanistan. This will be done by: i) reforestation of pistachio and pine forest; ii) protection of forests; iii) monitoring forest resource use; iv) establishing forest management associations; v) developing alternative income-generating projects; and vi) raising public awareness about forest protection and forestry laws. The proposed GEF project is well-aligned with the above interventions and expands on the objective. Specifically, the proposed project aims at HCVFs within the pistachio belt and therefore will not duplicate project activities. The proposed project also aims to reforest identified non-HCVF areas under Outcome 2.1. In addition, the proposed project will build on the MAIL NRM pipeline project by enhancing public awareness programmes through establishing an awareness campaign specifically aimed at SFM under Outcome 4.1.

Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM)
This CBNRM pipeline project is to be implemented directly through MAIL NRM, aiming to strengthen community-based management of natural resources across more than 10 provinces in the country. Although neither the timeline nor the specific provinces have been confirmed, the co-financing is in the final stages of agreement for the project lifespan. The CBNRM project will achieve its objective through five main project interventions, namely: i) raising public awareness to reduce pressure on natural resources; ii) establishing woodlots for alternative sources of fuelwood; iii) constructing 'check dams' to reduce soil erosion; iv) constructing nurseries; and v) constructing deep-wells to improve water supply. The proposed project aligns well with this pipeline CBNRM project as community-based management for both SLM/SFM in Afghanistan is the objective of the proposed project. To avoid duplication with the pipeline CBNRM project, activity interventions have been detailed for specific provinces, including establishing nurseries and woodlots in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces under Outcome 2.1.

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through community forests and sustainable biomass energy in Afghanistan
The GEF-5 GHG project is being implemented by FAO through NEPA, MAIL, MRRD and the Ministry of Energy and Water. This medium-sized project has a total budget of ~US$6.7 million and began implementation in 2015. The GEF-5 GHG project aims to reduce GHG emissions by promoting community-based management of forests and natural resources, while removing barriers to sustainable biomass energy generation and laying the groundwork for climate change mitigation in the country. Specific components of the GHG project include: i) strengthening the national policy environment to support community-managed biomass energy systems, laying the groundwork for future investments and access to carbon markets; ii) developing CBNRM plans and establishing community forests in two project areas;

iii) promoting the demonstration and deployment of sustainable biomass energy systems, with a CBNRM approach; and iv) awareness raising and monitoring and evaluation. The proposed project aligns with the objective of the GHG project in implementing community-based management of resources, and avoids duplication by specifying it to SLM/SFM in forests and rangelands.

Proposed alternative scenario

The **development objective** guiding the proposed project is improving and maintaining the livelihoods of Afghan rural communities by addressing unsustainable land and forest use. This will contribute to the realisation of global environmental benefits such as the sequestration of carbon dioxide by rehabilitated and functional rangeland and forest ecosystems as well as protection of the unique biodiversity in Afghanistan's rangelands and forests. Benefits from improved hydrological functioning in sustainably managed ecosystems will be delivered in Afghanistan as well as in neighbouring countries downstream from project sites.

The **objective** of the proposed project is to support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity. Furthermore, the proposed project will promote sustainable management of natural resources through a community-based approach to SLM/SFM in Afghanistan, supporting conservation of the unique biodiversity of the country and enhancing climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration. Capacity building for SLM/SFM at the national and local level will improve planning and coordination by government decision-makers and local communities for managing the country's rangeland and forest ecosystems. Adoption of a community-based approach to implementing SLM/SFM will improve the sustainable use and management of ecosystem goods and services that underpin the livelihoods of local communities. Improved ecosystem management will reduce the risks posed by land degradation, desertification, deforestation and forest degradation. Furthermore, such activities will also increase resilience to climate change. The strengthened enabling environment brought about by the project outputs will: i) improve the governance of resources at the national and local level; ii) enhance support services and enable participatory, local-level planning; and iii) improve decision-making for implementing SLM/SFM interventions. The proposed project objective will be achieved through four interlinked components and their respective outcomes, which are described below.

GEF focal area strategies

The proposed project is designed around four focal areas, namely land degradation, sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation. Through this mutli-focal design, project activities will address unsustainable rangeland and forest ecosystems through a participatory, community-based approach. Using this approach, communities will be trained and empowered to plan and implement interventions for SLM/SFM, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation during the project period as well as beyond the lifespan of the project. The four focal areas are outlined according to the relevant GEF objectives below.

Land degradation (contributing to GEF Objective LD1, Programme 2)

The proposed project will promote integrated planning for SLM/SFM at the national, provincial and district levels in Afghanistan. SLM/SFM considerations will thus be mainstreamed into spatial planning processes in government and local communities. At the local level, the project will promote community-based land-use planning for the integrated and sustainable use of natural resources to support local livelihoods. Such integrated planning will also improve biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in HCVFs, other forest types and rangelands.

Project activities will enhance technical capacities for the identification and characterisation of degraded ecosystems, design of SLM/SFM plans, implementation of climate-resilient SLM/SFM interventions, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of restoration activities. Restoring degraded rangelands and ecosystems will also yield hydrological co-benefits, as greater vegetation cover in watersheds will increase infiltration of water into aquifers, reduce erosion and reduce the frequency of flood events. These will provide downstream benefits to communities beyond the project boundary.

In rangelands, grazing pressure will be reduced through improved management of rangeland ecosystems. Greater productivity of these ecosystems, coupled with improved and optimised pastoral practices, will improve local community livelihoods and strengthen biodiversity conservation. A minimum of 200,000 ha of rangelands will be placed under climate-resilient management practices that will increase vegetation cover, enhance ecosystem functioning and increase productivity. In forests, management practices that emphasise sustainable harvesting will be introduced, ensuring that rates of resource (e.g. fuelwood, timber, etc.) extraction do not exceed rates of regeneration of such resources[34]. This will improve forest ecosystem functioning. Concurrently, community woodlots and nurseries will provide an alternative supply of natural resources for local communities, thereby reducing pressures on natural ecosystems.

Biodiversity (contributing to GEF Objective BD 4, Programme 9)
The proposed project's activities will improve ecosystem functioning in rangelands and forests. Habitats of rare species such as the snow leopard, Himalayan black bear, markhor, western tragopan, long-billed bush-warbler, urial and Himalayan ibex will be improved. In addition, it will reduce degradation in wetlands in project areas that serve as habitat for migratory bird species. The proposed project objectives align with the following Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

- Target 5: The project will reduce rates of degradation in critical forest and rangeland ecosystems. Moreover, rehabilitation/restoration activities will reduce fragmentation of habitat for rare and threatened species.
- Target 7: The project will improve sustainable management of rangeland and forest areas through a participatory, community-based approach that is cognisant of the presence and importance of biological diversity.
- Target 14: The project will restore ecosystems that support the provision of critical goods and services, such as soil and water conservation as well as timber, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), grazing and other natural resources that underpin community livelihoods.
- Target 15: The project will rehabilitate/restore degraded forest and rangeland ecosystems, contributing to enhanced carbon sequestration and protection of carbon stocks as well as reducing rates of desertification.

Climate change mitigation (contributing to GEF objective CCM 2, Programme 4)
Through improved management of carbon sinks in rangeland and forest ecosystems, the proposed project will increase Afghanistan's carbon stocks. Carbon benefits were calculated using the FAO EX-ACT Tool Version 7.1.8.c. The calculation assumed improved management of 10,000 ha of High Conservation-value Forests (HCVF) and 20,000 ha of other forest types to sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Paktya and Kunar Provinces, and improved management of 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands to sequester 1,243,550 tCO_2e in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces. Total carbon sequestration for the proposed project is estimated at 2,773,619 tCO_2e.

Sustainable forest management (contributing to GEF objective SFM 3, Programme 7)
SFM practices for forest ecosystem management will be integrated into planning at all government levels. Furthermore, communities will be capacitated for developing and implementing SFM plans that are context-appropriate, inclusive and sustainable. Restoration activities will be supported by community-based nurseries and woodlots which will provide seedlings for reforestation purposes, while also providing alternative supplies of timber and wood fuel for local communities. Consequently, forest ecosystems will experience reduced harvesting pressure from local communities while ecosystem functioning will be improved through assisted natural regeneration and other forest rehabilitation practices.

Expected outcomes
Component 1. Capacity building at national, sub-national and district levels for SLM/SFM.

Activities implemented under this component will build capacity at various government levels for SLM/SFM in Afghanistan. Capacity building will be achieved by providing locally-relevant, long-term training through capacity building programmes at the national, provincial and district levels. Furthermore, government representatives will be trained and supported in undertaking fine-scale inventories – incorporating Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques – that will inform and improve decision-making for SLM/SFM. Component 1 comprises two outcomes, namely capacity building of the government and government institutions (Outcome 1.1), and capacity building of communities and on-the-ground practitioners of SLM/SFM (Outcome 1.2).

Outcome 1.1. Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors for SLM/SFM.

Output 1.1.1. National 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' established for coordinating the capacity development and knowledge management on SLM/SFM at all levels.

Under this output, a training centre entitled the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' (hereafter 'the Centre') will be established within MAIL NRM to act as a national hub for improving knowledge and awareness of – as well as technical capacities for – SLM/SFM at the national, provincial and district levels. To ensure that the Centre addresses capacity needs and gaps within MAIL NRM and other relevant government institutions[35], an assessment of institutional and technical capacities will be undertaken to determine current capacity and capacity needs related to planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices. This assessment will be informed by the results of the preliminary capacity assessment conducted during the PPG Phase with relevant stakeholders from the national and provincial levels. The assessment will involve reviewing the mandates of the relevant institutions and their existing roles in community-based SLM/SFM. This will assist with assessing the availability of and need for human, financial and other resources in each institution. Activities under Outcome 1.1 will address gaps in institutional and technical capacities to ensure that institutions are well-equipped for SLM/SFM planning and integrating such considerations into government mandates and work programmes. A detailed organisational structure, mandate and operational model will be developed for the Centre that outlines its objectives, roles and responsibilities of participating stakeholders and constituent parties, and the strategy for achieving its objectives. The organisational structure and operational model for the Centre will be informed by the outline developed during the PPG Phase and will include an organogram of relevant stakeholders and participants as well as activities for establishing the Centre and its continued operation beyond the project lifespan. The Centre will serve two primary, over-arching functions. Firstly, it will be the hub for capacity development through the training programmes developed and undertaken under this project (Outcome 1.1 and 1.2). And secondly, it will house all information and data that will be collated and made available to relevant user groups through the proposed project.

Output 1.1.1 will include coordinating a consultation workshop with relevant stakeholders – particularly academia – on establishing the Centre within MAIL NRM. This consultation is integral to the success of the Centre, as all parties are required to be involved with the setup and ensuring the Centre is sustainable within MAIL NRM beyond the lifespan of the project. The workshop will include assessing the capacity of MAIL NRM to coordinate the establishment of the Centre, and for setting up MoUs, ToRs as well as a training programme. Relevant supporting activities will be conducted including setting up a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FAO, MAIL NRM and other institutions that will be involved in contributing to the Centre. Setting up the MoU will be guided by the organisational structure and operational model developed for the Centre (also under Output 1.1.1). Along with an MoU, a financial and exit strategy will be developed to outline how the Centre will be funded both during and beyond the lifespan of the project. The strategy will detail the employment of a full-time manager during implementation of the proposed project, who will then be responsible for overseeing the ongoing functioning of the Centre following project closure, to continue training personnel within MAIL NRM and other government institutions.

Output 1.1.2. Training programme developed and delivered to national and sub-national government officials on land degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes.

A long-term capacity-building programme on integrated SLM/SFM will be developed for government officials at the national, provincial and district levels. All training will be prepared and delivered in local languages – particularly Dari and Pashto – to ensure accessibility to all participants. The capacity-building programme will focus on mainstreaming integrated SLM/SFM into planning and budgeting processes at all levels and will be institutionalised into ongoing government training activities as in-service training and short courses through the Centre (Output 1.1.1). In particular, members of the inter-ministerial Committee for Environmental Coordination – mandated for national-level coordination of planning and decision-making on SLM/SFM – will be trained on SLM/SFM priorities relevant to their particular sectors. Dialogue between these committee members will be facilitated to promote integrated and cross-sectoral planning

[35] Particularly NEPA, MRRD and IGDK.

and decision-making on SLM/SFM at the national level. Through promoting such a dialogue, this output will contribute to addressing the barrier of inadequate extension services specifically for SLM/SFM[36]. Furthermore, interaction and engagement between facilitators and on-the-ground implementers will be enhanced through this improved dialogue (i.e. through linking this output with Output 1.2.2 and 1.2.4).

A training package will also be developed under Output 1.1.2 to target provincial- and district-level technical staff in government institutions including MAIL, NEPA, MRRD and IGDK. The training packages will be specifically aimed at improving the knowledge base and technical capacities related to decentralised planning for SLM/SFM in project provinces. This training will also be made available to government staff in other provinces through the Centre. Such enhanced knowledge and technical capacities will contribute to improving the implementation of SLM/SFM across Afghanistan.

Output 1.1.3. Fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources – including ecosystem goods/services, rangeland/forest condition and socio-ecological resilience – undertaken for Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces.

To support informed decision-making on integrated SLM/SFM, a methodology for undertaking fine scale inventories of forest and rangeland resources across the country will be developed. The project will first review the accuracy level of available information and identify information gaps that hampers the current decision-making for SLM/SFM with policy makers. Based on the gap analysis and identification of the most recent technological options, a cost efficient inventory methodology will be designed. The design of this nation wide methodology will inform the development of a training programme for conducting such inventories at both the national and provincial levels. The training programme will be available in local languages to ensure that national, provincial and local stakeholders are able to participate in the inventory.

Using the methodology, a fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources will be undertaken in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya Provinces. The inventory will make use of remote sensing and GIS data – including that available through MAIL's GIS section as well as other initiatives. Based on these inventories, reports will be conducted for each province that will detail the following: i) a classification of rangeland and forest ecosystem types; ii) the current extent of rangeland and forest ecosystems; iii) ecosystem goods and services provided by these ecosystems; iv) the current rangeland and forest condition, detailing degradation and threats to ecosystem functioning; v) the current status of GIS mapping; and vi) the socio-ecological resilience of these ecosystems relative to current and future trends of global change – such as climate change and desertification. These reports will be disseminated to relevant institutions as well as made available through the Centre.

Output 1.1.4. National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap – including provisions for a national MRV system – formulated.

A national REDD+ Readiness Roadmap will be developed through inclusive consultation with relevant stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels. This development process will be facilitated by the government with support from an international REDD+ specialist. This roadmap will include an outline of activities required for Afghanistan to develop a National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS). The NFMS will form a foundation by which the Government of Afghanistan can undertake Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of GHG emissions – particularly within the land-use sector - in line with the REDD+ mechanism within the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC). Formulation of this roadmap will allow for improved engagement with mechanisms such as the UN-REDD initiative, the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, the Clean Development Mechanism and other initiatives focused on improving carbon sequestration through sustainable management of forest ecosystems. The roadmap will be disseminated to the relevant government and non-government stakeholders and made available to the public through the Centre, as well as meetings, workshops and conferences. Furthermore, priorities identified by the roadmap will be integrated into both internal and external planning and coordinating within the relevant government ministries at all levels.

[36] See Barrier 6 under 'Root causes and barriers' that outlines inadequate extension services for SLM/SFM.

By utilising the roadmap, institutions will be better-equipped to coordinate, plan and implement activities to reduce carbon emissions from land and forest degradation.

Outcome 1.2. Enhanced capacity of local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans.

Output 1.2.1. Resource materials on local-level planning, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tools.

Under Output 1.2.1, information, resource materials and toolkits on participatory, community-based approaches to planning, implementation and M&E of SLM/SFM will be developed in local languages – in particular, Dari and Pashtu. These materials, toolkits and approaches will be based on FAO's 'Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands' (LADA), IUCN's 'Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology' (ROAM), the Resilience Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Assessment (RAPTA) Framework and the 'World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies' (WOCAT) approach to documentation, M&E and dissemination of knowledge on SLM/SFM.

The tools and techniques will be used to support planning and decision-making at the local level among communities on SLM/SFM, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. Examples of the tools and techniques in addition to LADA-WOCAT, RAPTA and ROAM include the following.

- Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs). These techniques serve to assist decision-makers and planners at all levels to collect, analyse and evaluate information. PRAs include tools for mapping rural areas and prioritising risks and opportunities. These approaches are designed to include local communities in information gathering and decision-making.
- GIS and land suitability mapping. The 'Modules for Land-use Change Evaluation' plug-in for the QGIS software allows users to analyse land-use and forest change. In addition, it supports the modelling of land-use change potential and deforestation risks to simulate future land-use and forest changes. The InVEST Scenario Generator supports decision-making on natural resource management by providing information on how to manage landscapes to support ecosystem goods and services – including biodiversity conservation and agricultural production – that result in benefits for local communities as well as private sector agents.
- Measure, Report and Verify (MRV) and M&E. The 'Open Foris Collect Earth' allows users to collect and analyse data from freely-available remote sensing imagery. This open access encourages the development of forest inventories, changes in land-use and forest area assessments, monitoring of land-use extent, and quantifying deforestation and forest degradation.
- FAO 'Ex-Ante Carbon-balance Tool' (EX-ACT). The EX-ACT tool provides estimates of agricultural and forestry intervention impacts on GHG emission rates. In addition, the tool provides estimates of the level of carbon sequestration brought about by business-as-usual scenario interventions.
- Cost-benefit analyses. The FAO 'WinDASI' tool supports cost-benefit analyses of interventions to determine the economic viability. The tool takes into account the flow of inputs and outputs, different intervention components and different alternative scenarios compared to business-as-usual activities.
- Investment and business plans. The FAO 'RuralInvest' toolkit provides methodologies targeted at local communities and government specifically for preparing investment and business plans to support rural development. The toolkit includes the following four modules:
    - Module 1: Participatory identification of local investment needs;
    - Module 2: Preparing and using project profiles;
    - Module 3: Detailed project formulation and analysis; and
    - Module 4: Profiles and projects database management and support to monitoring and evaluation.

These and other relevant tools will be compiled into comprehensive training material and relevant toolkits to be delivered and distributed to local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces. The training material and tool packages will be integrated into SLM/SFM planning.

Output 1.2.2. Training provided to local-level technical government staff on facilitation of community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for *inter alia* animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation and sustainable resource use.

MAIL NRM technical officers based in the project provinces will be trained in the use of the toolkits developed under Output 1.2.1, as well as other tools[37], for planning and implementing locally-relevant SLM/SFM practices. In particular, training will focus on building the capacity of MAIL NRM technical officers to facilitate community-level planning processes. Adequate facilitation is required to ensure that community-based SLM/SFM plans are developed through a fully-participatory approach, have buy-in from resource users and address community needs. MAIL NRM officers will also be trained on international best-practices related to: i) animal husbandry; ii) rangeland and grazing management; iii) conservation of forest resources and biodiversity; iv) sustainable use of natural resources from rangelands and forests; v) assisted natural regeneration; and vi) local-level, participatory M&E. This training will strengthen the capacity of MAIL NRM technical officers to support local communities in the implementation of beneficial SLM/SFM practices. Output 1.2.2 will also contribute to improved extension services between on-the-ground implementers and technical officers (linked with Output 1.1.2). The international best-practices will be collated and fed-back into the Centre to be made readily-available as a reference to future projects.

Output 1.2.3. Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based and gender-sensitive SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E.

An awareness-raising campaign will be developed at the national, provincial and district levels to sensitise communities on the: i) current threats and unsustainable land- and resource-use activities; ii) benefits of SLM/SFM practices; and iii) the importance of M&E to inform SLM/SFM decision-making and planning. This nationally-relevant campaign will be outlined using locally-appropriate materials – such as posters, brochures, booklets and video or radio broadcast messages.

The developed campaign will be conducted at a national, provincial and district level in locally-appropriate languages to raise awareness of SLM/SFM practices within Afghanistan and the benefits to communities. In addition, the campaign will bring attention to the importance of implementing effective M&E systems into SLM/SFM activities.

Activities under Output 1.2.3 will also involve the development of a continuous awareness-raising campaign that is specifically targeted at rangeland farmers. Awareness activities will include bringing attention to the availability of pastoralist field schools that are brought about through Output 1.2.5 of the proposed project.

Output 1.2.4. Community Development Committees, Forest Management Associations and Rangeland Management Associations supported to develop participatory, community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans.

Under this output, Community Development Committees (CDCs), Forest Management Associations (FMAs) and Rangeland Management Associations[38] (RMAs) will receive training on developing community-based plans for SLM/SFM. The primary focus of the training will be on building community capacity for sustainable resource use. This training will include themes such as: i) characterisation of the rangeland, forest and other available natural resources relevant to communities; ii) identification of the full range of resource users and their respective needs; iii) establishment of a formal decision-making structure on SLM/SFM that is representative of – and endorsed by – all stakeholders, including women; and iv) the establishment and formalisation of benefit-sharing and conflict-resolution mechanisms.

Following the training delivered through the developed packages under this output, in addition to CDCs, FMAs and RMAs, communities will be empowered and enabled to develop and validate SLM/SFM plans that are specific to their local context. The specific themes under this broader community training will include: i) participatory resource mapping focusing on rangeland and forest areas to characterise resource availability, land tenure and climate hazards; and

[37] E.g. questionnaires, decision-support tools and standardised methodologies.
[38] RMAs is the preferred term for rangeland governance institutions, as defined in the National Plan for Sustainable Rangeland Management.

ii) making use of integrated land- and forest-use planning to detail certain areas for activities, such as *inter alia* grazing, wood-fuel collection, agriculture, conservation, restoration and rehabilitation. The training provided under this output, in combination with training implemented under Output 1.1.2 and 1.2.2, will contribute toward providing valuable extension services among target communities.

Output 1.2.4 will include an activity to develop community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) plans that makes use of existing community planning approaches. The design of these CBNRM plans will be based on assessments to identify critical ecosystem services and will be informed by the results of the biodiversity assessment undertaken in forests in Output 2.1.1, as well as the climate-resilient SLM measures implemented in rangelands under Output 3.1.1. Specifically, these CBNRM plans should include details on undertaking these site selections in forests and rangelands for restoration and/or rehabilitation. The CBNRM plans will entail restoring and sustainably managing forests and rangelands, thereby maintaining the provision of ecosystem goods and services – under current and future climate change conditions – that are beneficial to local communities. In addition to restoring degraded forests, additional livelihood activities will be introduced to reduce the pressure on forest resources, thereby slowing rates of deforestation and forest degradation. Examples of such additional livelihoods include cultivation of mushrooms, medicinal plants and plants used for dyes in traditional handicrafts. Woodlots and nurseries will also be introduced for forest communities under Output 2.1.2 using identified species to reduce pressure on forests.

Activities under Output 1.2.4 are in alignment with the National Forest Management Plan (NFMP), which emphasises community-based approaches for local-level resource management. Specifically, Output 1.2.4 will provide training on developing and validating community-based SLM/SFM plans. Such integrated spatial planning will assist in the sustainable and optimal use of locally-available natural resources, with economic and ecological benefits. This training will be integrated into the work programme of the Centre of Excellence as part its financial and exit strategy to ensure that such training is maintained and replicated after project implementation.

This process will be facilitated by MAIL and the Afghanistan National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), who will guide the alignment of community-level planning and implementation with national goals and objectives. The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) already provides financial and technical support to local communities through CDCs. This support is an implementation of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), and CDCs support communities in developing a list of Community Development Priorities (CDPs). Communities then receive financial and technical support through the NSP to implement these priorities. The proposed project will use, and build on, these existing arrangements, and SLM/SFM plans will follow the process of CDP development. As communities are familiar with the CDP process, this will reduce the impact of shifting modalities that could hinder progress.

Output 1.2.5. Pastoralist field schools conducted on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/SLM practices.

Through making use of the capacity assessment results from the PPG Phase – as well as additional capacity assessment needs – activities under Output 1.2.5 include developing a framework and detailing an implementation modality for conducting pastoral field schools to address the needs and gaps in current local community capacity.

Following the development of a detailed framework and implementation modality, a comprehensive training programme will be detailed to be included in the curriculum for the pastoralist field schools. Specifically, curricula will include livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland and SLM practices.

Finally, through the newly-developed awareness programme for rangeland farmers under Output 1.2.3 as well as the developed training programme under this output, pastoralist field schools will be established and undertaken. Through the provision of these schools, local community capacity will be built specifically surrounding the sustainable management of rangelands and the integration of SLM measures.

The capacity enhancement activities undertaken through the pastoral/farmer field schools will be integrated into the work programme of the Centre of Excellence and detailed in the financial and exit strategy thereof to ensure sustainability after project implementation.

Component 2. Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes.

Under this component, the proposed project will support the improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest landscapes to promote biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. This will take place in East Afghan Montane Conifer Forests (Paktya), Baluchistan Xeric Woodlands (Kunar) and Paropamisus Xeric Woodlands (Badghis). Kunar and Paktya Provinces are home to the Eastern Forest Complex, which encompasses the seeders, pines and oak-dominated woodlands. The Paropamisus Xeric Woodlands of Badghis are part of the Northern Pistachio Belt and are an important region for the economy of Afghanistan. Under this component, Outcome 2.1. will improve the management of forests specifically aiming to conserve biodiversity in Afghanistan.

Outcome 2.1. Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces.

Outputs under this outcome will assess the existing biodiversity within Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces, to promote increased biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. This will be achieved by assisting the regeneration of HCVFs and other forests while also reducing pressures on forests by diversifying livelihoods and planting community woodlots and nurseries that provide NTFPs, fuelwood and building materials.

Output 2.1.1. Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVFs in Kunar and Paktya provinces.

Under Output 2.1.1, the HCVF areas within Kunar and Paktya will be identified through technical and community consultations. The identification of these areas and the methodology of conducting the technical and community consultations will be used to inform the CBNRM plans under Output 1.2.4. This process will also be fed back into the Centre (Outcome 1.1) for the use in future projects, replicating and/or upscaling.

In the identified HCVF areas, biodiversity assessments will be undertaken. The assessments will be focused on threatened and rare species as well as economically valuable species (e.g. medicinal plants) for the communities as well as the country as a whole. Results from the biodiversity assessments will be used to identify areas of HCVFs that warrant increased conservation efforts or where rehabilitation or restoration should take place. In addition, the assessments will inform communities on the importance of conserving biodiversity and provide technical support for regulating the management of HCVF areas in a manner that provides sustainable socio-economic benefits through conserving ecosystem functioning. This support is linked with the provision under Output 1.2.1 of toolkits and training to local communities in target provinces for SLM/SFM and M&E.

Output 2.1.2. Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-timber forest products (NTFPs) to reduce pressure on forest resources in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces.

Through community participation and consultation, activities under Output 2.1.2 will identify areas to establish community nurseries and woodlots. Community consultations and relevant expert inputs will guide site selection as well as species composition of the nurseries and woodlots to ensure productivity is maximised.

Community nurseries will be established in the identified areas to grow important species, i.e. rare, useful and/or valuable species, that can either be distributed to community members or used for restoration activities. To reduce pressure on forests from the collection of firewood, community woodlots will be established in additional identified areas. These woodlots will consist of fast-growing, multi-use trees that are easy to propagate, e.g. *Populus*, and other species identified under this output. Wherever possible, local species will be preferred. This will improve local access to fuelwood and building materials from alternative sources to forests, thereby reducing pressure on HCVFs and their associated

biodiversity. The proposed project recognises that wood is a primary domestic fuel source and will thus support the cultivation of high-yielding timber species in the established community woodlots to supply this fuel on a sustainable basis.

Activities under this output will support the restoration of forests with species such as *Pinus gerardiana*, *Picea smithiana* and *Cedrus deodara*. Besides their economic value, these forest species provide habitats for rare species such as the snow leopard, markhor and the western tragopan. The biodiversity assessments conducted under this Output 2.1.1 will inform the SLM/SFM plans on rates of extraction of timber and NTFPs that will be sustainable in the long-term. In particular, gathering of pistachio and pine nuts would be monitored to ensure that the rate of extraction does not impact on regeneration of the species. In addition, the developed CBNRM plans on SLM/SFM – under Output 1.2.4 – will outline means for supporting assisted natural regeneration of these and other economically-valuable species through measures such as: i) reduced collection during germination periods; ii) protection of naturally-germinated seedlings; iii) supplementary planting of *Pinus* and *Pistacia* spp.; iv) protection of forests from forest fires; v) reduced grazing pressure in core forest areas; and vi) reduced extraction of firewood. Throughout, the implementation of SLM/SFM plans – including woodlots and assisted natural regeneration activities – will focus on sustainable and alternative means of supporting community livelihoods while maintaining ecosystem functioning and conserving biological diversity.

In addition, gender sensitivity will be promoted through activities such as support for woodlots and nurseries. Afghan women traditionally work in the collection of forest products and hence, through the proposed project, local women will be empowered to manage the community nurseries and woodlots, including through additional income generating activities and decision-making. This will be predicated on the involvement of women and in planning and decision making (Output 1.2.4) to ensure that women's priorities are integrated into design and implementation of SFM interventions at the local level.

Output 2.1.3. Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/restoration and SFM implemented over 10,000 ha of HCVFs (Kunar and Paktya) and 20,000 ha of other forest types (Badghis) leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches.

Under this output, 10,000 ha of HCVFs will be restored in the areas selected in Output 2.1.1 to provide necessary habitats for threatened, endangered and rare species. Through this restoration, pressure will be reduced on existing HCVFs and their associated biodiversity. Furthermore, 20,000 ha of non-HCVFs will be rehabilitated and restored in selected areas – identified under Output 1.2.4 through developing the CBNRM plans. In Badghis, assisted natural regeneration will focus on ensuring healthy populations of economically-important species such as the pistachio forests in the Ab Kamari and Muqur districts. In Kunar, this output will support restoration with species identified in Output 2.1.1. Output 2.1.3 will also contribute to improving the management of selected forest ecosystems to increase biodiversity conservation as well as soil carbon sequestration.

Output 2.1.4. Diversified livelihood options promoted to reduce pressure on forest resources, including agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and NTFPs in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces.

This output will be achieved by undertaking community livelihood surveys to identify livelihood options that meet community needs while also reducing pressure on forest resources. Additional livelihood activities will then be introduced – based on the results of the community surveys – to reduce the pressure on forest resources, which in turn will slow the rates of deforestation and forest degradation. Examples of such additional livelihood activities include: i) the cultivation of mushrooms[39], medicinal plants[40] and plants used for dyes[41]; ii) agro-forestry programmes; and iii) value-addition for timber and NTFPs.

[39] Particularly *Pleurotus ostreatus*.
[40] Such as *Ferula asa-foetida*, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, *Cuminum cyminum* and *Tulipa* spp.
[41] Such as *Rubia tinctorum* and *Crocus sativus*.

Additionally, through the provision of community nurseries and woodlots under Output 2.1.2, additional livelihoods are presented to a greater number of community individuals than previously based on the available resources.

All activities undertaken here will be designed to be financially and economically viable. This will ensure that – after initial GEF investment into setting up of the various livelihoods – the initiatives are self-sustaining and will not require further investment, operations or maintenance costs from external sources. Instead, such costs will be financed from the revenue generated from the livelihood activities.

Component 3. Community-based rangeland management.

This component will support the implementation of climate-resilient SLM practices across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces. Local communities practising pastoral livelihoods will have their capacity for implementing sustainable rangeland management practices strengthened, and their livelihoods enhanced, through improved livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management practices. Under this component, Outcome 3.1 will implement climate-resilient practices for the rehabilitation of degraded rangelands in Afghanistan, specifically within the provinces Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni.

Outcome 3.1. Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces.

Outputs under this outcome will see climate-resilient SLM interventions implemented across degraded rangelands to enhance community livelihoods. Livestock husbandry value chains and associated products will also be enhanced to strengthen community livelihoods.

Output 3.1.1. Climate-resilient SLM interventions – including soil and water conservation, rotational grazing and restoration/rehabilitation with palatable species – are implemented over 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands.

Under this output, a detailed mechanism and methodology will be developed for implementing climate-resilient SLM interventions within the targeted provinces. The SLM interventions to be implemented will based on the CBNRM plans for SLM developed under Output 1.2.4 and will likely include *inter alia*: i) applying rotational grazing systems based on spatial and seasonal variability (~100,000 ha); ii) establishing seed banks of selected locally-appropriate, hardy and climate-resilient fodder crops (~2,500 ha); iii) establishing fodder banks that are demarcated and managed specifically for fodder production (~2,500 ha); iv) rangeland rehabilitation through mixed reseeding, revegetation and establishing dune-stabilising windbreaks (~50,000 ha); and v) implementing soil and water conservation measures, including check dams, contour bunds, and other appropriate measures (~45,000 ha). The detailed mechanism and methodology will be integrated into the SLM/SFM-specific 'knowledge hub' within the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' – established under Output 4.1.1.

The above SLM interventions are expected to improve ecosystem functioning across rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces. This will primarily be through an increase of vegetation cover and an associated reduction in erosion and water runoff. These results will improve the hydrological functioning of sensitive riparian and wetland systems within the project implementation sites. Reduced soil erosion will decrease the degree of siltation in rivers and streams, improving water quality in downstream water bodies and therefore increasing the amount of water available for livelihood and household use by communities. The increase in vegetation cover will result in greater infiltration of rain and meltwater into groundwater. This will further improve the hydrological functioning in important seasonal wetlands and other water systems.

Output 3.1.2. Enhanced livelihoods through strengthened value chains for products from livestock husbandry.

This output will further enhance the benefits of Output 3.1.1 by introducing improved livestock management practices – e.g. with better feeding practices and increased alternative livelihoods – into sustainable land and rangeland management practices across Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces. This introduction will reduce grazing pressure without

decreasing productivity. Optimising the value-addition from improved livestock management will be achieved through the identification, coordination, management, linking and organisation of livestock and veterinary stakeholders to form a 'pasture network'. This 'pasture network' will include livestock owners, veterinary services, as well as health and disease prevention experts and service providers. Through the 'pasture network', newly-available information will be quickly disseminated through the community and relevant farmers. Additionally, extension services will be introduced and distributed to rangeland farmers through the established 'pasture network'.

Component 4. Knowledge management and M&E.

This component will focus on improving the availability and accessibility of knowledge and information to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices in Afghanistan. Furthermore, activities under this component will ensure that the necessary monitoring process and review channels are adhered to. Under this component, Outcome 4.1 will improve the collection and collation of knowledge gained from the proposed project and related initiatives, and will ensure that the collected knowledge is made available through a 'knowledge hub' within the established 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' under Output 1.1.1.

Outcome 4.1. Improved knowledge to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices.

Outputs under this outcome will be focused on ensuring all information generated through the proposed project is captured and made accessible and available. M&E processes will also be applied through outputs under this outcome.

Output 4.1.1. National information and resource centre with associated M&E system and database for SLM/SFM established.

An analysis of the current gaps in available knowledge as well as the barriers to improving knowledge management and information-sharing will be conducted. This will be informed by the results of the capacity assessment undertaken during the PPG Phase. The results of this gap analysis will directly inform planning and the implementation of SLM/SFM practices.

A 'knowledge hub' will be established within the MAIL NRM 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' ('the Centre') that serves as a basis for national information and available resources for SLM/SFM. The results of the gap and barrier analysis will directly feed into the hub that will be set up within the 'Centre' established under Output 1.1.1. In order to ensure the 'knowledge hub' is sustainable beyond project closure and that the process may be replicated and/or upscaled, an operational modality for setting up the hub will be identified and detailed in a methodology. This methodology will include technical specifications and the outline of an MoU and ToRs of the relevant institutions.

This 'knowledge hub' will be accessible via an online platform and will be a repository for training materials, toolkits and best-practice guidelines specifically developed for SLM/SFM through the proposed project, as well as those available from other countries, projects, programmes and initiatives. Furthermore, the online platform will provide a central base for the M&E system and M&E activities undertaken under Output 4.1.2 to be uploaded and made accessible.

The online platform will undergo regular assessment during project implementation and thereafter to ensure that the type of knowledge management services being provided are up-to-date and relevant to the needs of users. In addition, regular revisions of the contents, operation and maintenance of the platform will be undertaken to tailor the services being provided based on user feedback.

Output 4.1.2. Local-level, participatory M&E system for SLM/SFM established for monitoring of rangeland and forest condition, including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration.

This output will be achieved by designing a local-level, participatory M&E system for reporting on rangeland, forest, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. This M&E system will take into account the local literacy levels, gender balance as well as the local language context. Following the design, the local-level, participatory M&E will be

conducted within the five target provinces of the proposed project. In addition, this M&E will be conducted with the relevant DAIL staff through a learning-by-doing approach. Based on the results of the M&E system, detailed reports will be compiled on rangeland, forest, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. These reports will feed back into the 'knowledge hub' set up under Output 4.1.1 as well as contribute towards developing lessons learned under Output 4.1.4.

A detailed methodology and framework of the designed M&E process will be developed including the carrying out of activities through the learning-by-doing approach with the provincial staff.

Output 4.1.3. Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated.

Best-practice guidelines on SLM/SFM will be collected from similar projects both within and adjacent to Afghanistan to be synthesised into best practice guidelines on SLM/SFM. These guidelines will be made available through the 'knowledge hub' set up under Output 4.1.1. The synthesis of the different best practices will be ordered in themes to inform different user groups and applications on the following:

- training government to assess land degradation and integrate SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting – which will contribute towards training under Output 1.1.2;
- conducting fine-scale inventories of rangeland resources – which will contribute towards Output 1.1.3;
- training government on facilitating community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM – which will contribute to training under Output 1.2.2;
- developing community-based and gender-responsive plans for SLM/SFM – which will contribute towards Output 1.2.4;
- conducting pastoralist field schools on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management – which will contribute towards achieving Output 1.2.5;
- conducting biodiversity assessments in HCVFs – which will contribute to undertaking assessments under Output 2.1.1;
- regenerating/rehabilitating/restoring forests and implementing SFM – which will contribute toward Output 2.1.3; and
- implementing climate-resilient SLM interventions in degraded rangelands – which will contribute towards Output 3.1.1.

These best practices will be collected, collated and packaged to provide information on a seasonal basis that is tailored to Afghanistan's social and environmental context, including the most up-to-date information from the previous seasons. In light of this, under Output 4.1.3, a strategy for the effective knowledge management and sharing of information will be developed. This strategy will then be delivered to project beneficiaries as best-practice guidelines based on the collated and synthesise information. These best practices will be grouped into the following themes for project beneficiaries: i) SLM/SFM measures; ii) rangelands and associated livestock; and iii) water conservation measures.

Output 4.1.4. Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces collated and disseminated nationwide as well as regionally.

Lessons learned in target provinces on SLM/SFM practices through proposed project interventions will be collated and fed back into the 'knowledge hub' within the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management'. These lessons will be used to inform future planning for the target provinces as well as to build on for upscaling.

Regional sharing of the collated lessons learned will be done with neighbouring countries with similar socio-economic and environmental contexts. This sharing will contribute towards informing future planning of similar projects as well as potential upscaling of project activities.

The lessons learned will also be included in ongoing training activities, disseminated through awareness-raising campaigns and communicated through the 'pasture network' established under Output 3.1.2.

Output 4.1.5. Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation conducted.

A Mid-term Project Review (MTR) will be conducted by an international external consultant who will work in consultation with the FAO project team to produce an MTR report. The MTR process will include a workshop held in Kabul with all relevant stakeholders – including both national and provincial counterparts – to assess project implementation based on a draft MTR report. The international external consultant will then revise and finalise the MTR report based on the comments received at the workshop.

At the conclusion of project implementation, a Terminal Evaluation (TE) will be conducted by an international external consultant under the supervision of the FAO Independent Evaluation Office, and in consultation with the FAO project team, to produce a TE report. The TE process will include a workshop held in Kabul with all relevant stakeholders – including both national and provincial counterparts – to assess project implementation based on the final MTR report and the draft TE report.

Both the MTR and TE reports will be fed back into the 'knowledge hub' – set up under Output 4.1.1 – within the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' – established under Output 1.1.1.

Incremental/additional cost reasoning

Baseline scenario
Under the baseline situation, forests and rangelands in Afghanistan will continue to be degraded and the associated biodiversity will face increasing pressures. Local communities will continue to be reliant on natural resources that are diminishing because of overexploitation and climate change impacts. This will maintain the vicious cycle of environmental degradation and poverty. Rangelands and forests in the target areas will remain degraded and their carbon sequestration capacity will be further compromised.

Capacity constraints within the Government of Afghanistan currently prevent planning and implementation of national and regional scale CBNRM for biodiversity management. It is thus likely that, without intervention, forest cover in Afghanistan will be further reduced. High-value species, such as pistachio trees, are likely to be further exploited for fuelwood – resulting in an overall economic loss to local communities and the country. Rangelands are likely to continue to suffer from overgrazing, with corresponding declines in carrying capacity.

Without the incremental GEF contribution, the baseline will result in further loss to global environmental values. The Government of Afghanistan will not be capacitated to promote CBNRM and communities will continue to overexploit globally important biodiversity in Afghanistan. This will result in continued: i) losses of globally valued biodiversity; ii) emissions of GHGs from rangeland and forest degradation and iii) loss of environmental goods and services supporting local community livelihoods.

Alternative Scenario
Incremental GEF contributions will be used to promote the global environmental values of biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration and SLM/SFM in Afghanistan. The proposed project will promote the rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests and rangelands via locally-appropriate community-based management. This will include the following.

- Enhancing the capacity of national and sub-national government institutions for SLM/SFM.
- Enhancing the capacity of local communities in target areas for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans.
- Improving management of selected forest ecosystems to increase biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration.
- Implementing climate-resilient SLM practices on selected rangelands to reduce degradation and enhance livelihoods.
- Improving knowledge and knowledge management to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices in Afghanistan and regionally.

The proposed project will enhance national and sub-national government capacity for SLM/SFM planning. This will allow for lessons learned and best practices from building local communities' capacities and

Global environmental benefits

As described in detail under GEF Focal Areas above, the proposed project aligns with the following focal areas outlined below.

- BD-4 Programme 9 (adapted from GEF Indicator 4): Production landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their management demonstrated by objective data. The overall objective of the proposed project aligns with this indicator, namely that project activities are intended to support the integration of community-based approaches to SLM/SFM specifically for promoting biodiversity conservation.
- LD-1 Programme 2 (adapted from GEF Indicator 1.1): *Land area under effective agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management practices and/or supporting climate-smart agriculture.* Under Outcome 3.1, the proposed project will encourage community-based rangeland management by implementing climate-resilient SLM practices across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces.
- CCM-2 Programme 4 (adapted from GEF Indicator 4): Deployment of sustainable land and forest management practices resulting in reduced GHG emissions from land and forest degradation. This is the second indicator for the overall objective of the proposed project, namely that project activities are intended to support the integration of community-based approaches to SLM/SFM that promote climate change mitigation. In addition, project activities will improve biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes.
- SFM-3 Programme 7 (adapted from GEF Indicator 5): *Area of forest resources restored in the landscape, supported by forest management actors, training and materials.* Outcome 2.1. of the proposed project will see HCVFs, as well as other forest types, rehabilitated and improved management methods introduced.

Innovativeness

The proposed project provides for the necessary means to integrate local innovation and best practices into sustainable community-based management approaches. Specifically, community-based SLM/SFM is a suitable approach in a country where the implementation of national policies and regulations is complicated by political conflicts. In addition, activities implemented through the proposed project will be novel to the targeted provinces. Given the range of challenges that have historically hampered ecosystem restoration activities in rural areas of Afghanistan, these approaches have not previously been implemented at the scale proposed under this project. This project thus represents a novel approach to local-level action for SLM/SFM.

Knowledge sharing via the creation of a knowledge- and information-sharing centre, the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management', will enhance the sustainability of proposed project activities while allowing adaptive, evidence-based management of forests and rangelands (Outcome 1.1 and 4.1). In addition to the Centre, a 'knowledge hub' set up within the Centre will be dedicated to housing all knowledge and information specifically relating to SLM/SFM.

Proposed project activities will incorporate aspects of climate resilience into all interventions. For example, woodlots and nurseries will perform dual functions of supplying plants for the assisted regeneration of forests while also providing alternative sources for timber and NTFPs, thereby reducing the pressure on natural forests, in particular HCVFs (Outcome 1.2).

Through the proposed project, a platform for cooperation and collaboration will be created between government, communities and research entities to support and maintain community-based SLM/SFM approaches. In addition, the proposed project provides a foundation for other baseline and future projects to build the good practices and lessons learned developed and collated through the proposed project.

Potential for scaling up

The potential scaling up of the proposed project approach will be promoted in various ways through project implementation. Activities integrated into the targeted provinces will also provide opportunities for upscaling of other baseline and future projects. For example, the approaches to planning and implementation proposed under this project will be able to guide planning and implementation of similar activities under MAIL's "Desertification control and greenery", "Forest restoration and protection" and "Community-based natural resource management" initiatives. The proposed project will build the capacity of the government at all levels to plan and implement community-based SLM/SFM. This will create the necessary conditions for the Government of Afghanistan to implement proposed project activities in priority communities across the country.

In addition, the proposed project will generate positive collaboration between communities and local-level government. This increased collaboration will benefit the sustainability of the proposed project and subsequently promote the upscaling of project activities to further Afghan communities.

Lessons learned and best practices from proposed project activities will be collated, made available and disseminated through the learning and knowledge centre, the Centre (Outcome 1.1), allowing for continuous improvement of SLM/SFM in Afghanistan.

Sustainability

As the planning and technical capacity of the Government of Afghanistan for SLM/SFM is strengthened, proposed project benefits will be scaled beyond project intervention areas. In particular, the proposed project will create an enabling environment for decentralised planning and decision-making by increasing the capacity within Afghanistan's national and sub-national government institutions for promoting community-based SLM/SFM. Training programmes and knowledge management will be institutionalised into government programmes, with the establishment of the Centre ensuring that knowledge gained and best practices collected on SLM/SFM be collated and made readily accessible. Furthermore, strengthening capacity for local-level governance will enable CSOs to maintain project interventions beyond the project lifespan. Maintaining interventions that are beneficial to communities is within the mandate of organisations like CSOs, thus there is incentive to provide continued support to the project. As beneficiaries of project activities, pastoralists are likely to continue developing and implementing SLM/SFM plans – based on their strengthened community governance structures – following project closure.

Handover of the project will be facilitated through the institutionalised knowledge-sharing and training mechanism that will be put in place – i.e. the Centre – and will continue beyond project closure (Outcome 1.1). Knowledge and expertise gained during project implementation will be retained within the country. Furthermore, approaches for participatory, community-based SLM/SFM can be replicated in further sites outside of project boundaries. The benefits from project activities will provide sufficient incentive for this replication.

The proposed project will implement measures that have been shown to be cost-effective in promoting SLM/SFM, including capacity building, concrete SLM/SFM activities, livelihood strengthening and knowledge management. For example, the project will support development of technical capacities at national, provincial and local levels for planning and implementing SLM/SFM measures. A capacity-building programme – founded within the Centre of Excellence – will enhance the capacity of government officials, extension officers, CDCs/FMAs/RMAs, local communities and other stakeholders to effectively plan and implement SLM/SFM measures.

The SLM/SFM interventions to be promoted under this project focus on sustainable management and rehabilitation of ecosystems as an approach that has been demonstrated to have with favourable cost-benefit ratios, requiring small investments compared to the long-term, climate-resilient and sustainable socio-economic and environmental benefits provided[42;43]. For example, soil conservation measures such as terracing and bunds have been shown to increase crop

[42] Jones HP, Hole DG & Zavaleta ES. 2012. Harnessing nature to help people adapt to climate change. *Nature Climate Change* 2:504–509.
[43] UNEP/STREP. 2012. A comparative analysis of ecosystem-based adaptation and engineering options for Lami Town, Fiji: Synthesis Report.

productivity[44] by between 15–25%. The project will thus support SLM/SFM interventions in the pilot provinces, linking them to diversified livelihoods and value addition for agricultural, rangeland and forestry products. This has been shown to be more cost-effective for increasing income and reducing poverty than support for other sectors[45].

Increased capacity for cross-sectoral decision-making within government institutions will provide staff with necessary skills to facilitate activity implementation country-wide. MAIL NRM officers will be able to apply knowledge gained through the project in ongoing advisory services that continue following project closure. Knowledge gained from the project will also assist in informing future management, and will be continuously improved as best practices are refined. In this way, long-term monitoring will inform future SLM/SFM activities in the country.

A.2. Child project?

N/A

A.3. Stakeholders

Will project design include the participation of relevant stakeholders from civil society organisations (yes ☒ /no☐) and indigenous peoples (yes ☒ /no☐)?

During its implementation, the proposed project will continuously engage with the various stakeholders through consultations and the use of participatory methodologies and tools.

- Local-level governance mechanisms were consulted during the PPG process and will continue to be throughout project implementation to identify and prioritise areas for community-based SLM/SFM.
- Local communities will be engaged with during the implementation phase to ensure that community priorities are addressed by the project. Consultations on a local-level will take place to identify needs, initiate dialogue and promote community buy-in. Consequently, local communities will actively participate in the design, planning and implementation of proposed project activities.
- Indigenous peoples were engaged with during the PPG phase and will continue to be consulted and engaged with during project implementation – through the IGDK – by following a model that will include both sedentary and *Kuchi* pastoralists within an integrated management framework for rangelands. This will ensure that the priorities of the *Kuchi* nomads are included into the design and implementation of project interventions to reduce conflict of rangeland resources.
- National and local-level CSOs/NGOs were consulted during the PPG phase to identify opportunities for alignment of this project with ongoing initiatives. In particular, such organisations have insights into local socio-economic and environmental priorities related to community needs.
- Academics from Afghanistan's universities will be consulted during the project implementation to ensure that the planning and implementation of project interventions are tailored to the specific socio-economic and environmental context of Afghanistan.

The proposed project will facilitate exchanges among multiple groups to contribute to policy debates related to community-based SLM/SFM approaches in Afghanistan. Relevant stakeholders will participate both directly and indirectly in: i) the implementation of project interventions; ii) the M&E of project interventions; and iii) discussions focused on the success, improvement and sustainability of interventions.

Table 1 includes a list of all relevant stakeholders in the proposed project.

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[44] Tesfaye A, Brouwer R, van der Zaag P & Negatu W. 2016. Assessing the costs and benefits of improved land management practices in three watershed areas in Ethiopia. *International Soil and Water Conservation Research* 4:20–29.

[45] Ligon E & Sadoulet E. 2007. *Estimating the Effects of Aggregate Agricultural Growth on the Distribution of Expenditures.* Background Paper for the World Development Report.

Table 1. Relevant stakeholders and how they are involved in the proposed project.

Stakeholder name	Stakeholder type	Stakeholder role in the proposed project
Natural Resource Management Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL NRM)	Government institution	MAIL will be the executing partner for the proposed GEF project. MAIL has the mandate for supporting sustainable management of natural resources (including forests) and supporting agricultural livelihoods – including livestock husbandry, particularly through the Natural Resource Management Directorate. As the chairperson of the Agricultural and Rural Development cluster of the National Priority Programme, MAIL NRM will play a leading role in the coordination of planning for SLM/SFM between the relevant stakeholders, including government institutions and local communities. MAIL's NRM officers will also facilitate community-based SLM/SFM planning as well as train communities in the implementation of interventions.
Afghanistan National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA)	Government institution	NEPA is Afghanistan's national GEF focal point. NEPA's functions include the coordination and monitoring of all activities relating to the natural environment in Afghanistan. As the chairperson of the inter-ministerial Committee for Environmental Coordination, NEPA will have a strong supporting role in the coordination of SLM/SFM planning and implementation.
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)	Government institution	MRRD will be an integral member of the PSC and TWGs, providing support for capacity building, M&E and other local level activities. MRRD is mandated with improving rural infrastructure, enhancing local planning and management capacity, and promoting rural livelihoods. MRRD will thus be an important stakeholder during implementation of the proposed project for facilitating work with local communities.
Community Development Committees, Forest Management Committees and Rangeland Social Associations	Civil Society Organisation (CSO)	Local-level governance mechanisms were consulted during the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Phase process and will continue to be consulted throughout implementation to identify and prioritise areas for community-based SLM/SFM. Working through these bodies will facilitate community-based planning processes and will thus form the basis for participatory planning and implementation of project interventions. Through such direct involvement of community organisations, greater buy-in will be achieved to promote local-level support of project activities. This will provide both community organisations and the private sector with opportunities for direct decision-making and input into the practices to be implemented as well as the selection of the areas where these interventions will take place.
Local communities	Social	Local communities were engaged with during the PPG phase and will continue to be engaged with during the implementation phase to ensure that community priorities are addressed by the project. Consultations at the local level will take place to identify needs, initiate dialogue and promote community buy-in relating to project activities. Local communities will thus participate actively in the design, prioritising and planning of proposed project activities. The project will ensure a strong emphasis on gender representation during stakeholder consultations as well as gender-sensitive planning. In addition, local communities will be directly engaged in practical implementation of project activities through involvement in forest/rangeland rehabilitation, training, knowledge exchanges, and establishing and managing nurseries.
Indigenous peoples – particularly the Independent General Directorate of *Kuchi* (IGDK)	Social	*Kuchi* nomads are primarily reliant on pastoral practices in rangelands for their livelihoods. The proposed project will engage with indigenous peoples –through the IGDK – following a similar model to that used in the PEACE project to include both sedentary and *Kuchi* pastoralists within an integrated management framework for rangelands. This engagement commenced during the PPG phase and will continue throughout project implementation to ensure that the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is followed in planning and executing project activities through involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples. This will ensure that the priorities of the *Kuchi* nomads are included into the design and implementation of project interventions to reduce the possibility of negative impacts on their lives and livelihoods.

Stakeholder name	Stakeholder type	Stakeholder role in the proposed project
National- and local-level CSOs/non-governmental organisation (NGO)	CSO/NGO	There are a number of CSOs and NGOs that focus on supporting rural livelihoods in Afghanistan. These include Madera, AfghanAid, Mercy Corps, the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent and the members of the Afghan Civil Society Forum-organisation. These organisations will be consulted during the PPG phase to identify opportunities for alignment of this project with ongoing initiatives. In particular, such organisations have insights into local socio-economic and environmental priorities related to community needs. The inclusion of CSOs/NGOs in project design will ensure that interventions address real priorities in local communities in a manner that is culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable.
Local universities	Academic/ research	Afghanistan's academic institutions employ experienced researchers with considerable expertise in SLM/SFM, particularly at Kabul University, Jalalabad University and Kabul Polytechnic University. These specialists will be consulted during the PPG phase as well as during project implementation to ensure that the planning and implementation of project interventions are tailored to the specific socio-economic and environmental context of Afghanistan.
FAO	Implementing agency	FAO is the implementing agency for this GEF project. FAO will thus provide support and project assurance through the FAO Representation in Afghanistan as well as through its regional offices based in Bangkok and headquarters in Rome. This will include project oversight, technical support and monitoring functions, as defined in Section 2.1.
Other UN agencies	International institution	The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environment both have strong track records in supporting sustainable environmental management practices in Afghanistan. These agencies provide technical support to various ministries and have also facilitated the implementation of a number of GEF projects in the country. Strong coordination during the PPG phase and implementation will ensure close collaboration to maximise synergies between complementary initiatives. International research institution such as International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) could be a collaboration partner for capacity development activity.

A.4. Gender equality and women's empowerment

Are gender equality and women's empowerment taken into account (yes ☒ /no☐)?

Equality between men and women in Afghanistan is increasingly being emphasised in national plans and strategies. The National Development Strategy and the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan emphasise the importance of gender-sensitivity in planning and implementing project activities. Therefore, the proposed project has included women in the design phase and will further engage during the planning and implementation of activities to ensure that project priorities are gender-sensitive. The relevant Provincial Department of Women's Affairs will be continuously engaged and involved in planning for project activities at the provincial level. At the local level, women will be involved in decision-making through CDCs, FMCs and RMAs.

The proposed project will actively seek input from women for the development of SLM/SFM plans while respecting the cultural context, and taking gender roles into account. It is expected that the proposed project will provide opportunities for women to actively and meaningfully contribute to SLM/SFM activities, particularly in the management of trees and forest resources. Women-led households reliant on forest resources are predicted to receive socio-economic benefits from proposed project activities, granted they are conducted in a gender-sensitive manner. Additionally, women will be included from the outset of project implementation within the project staff team, including a gender specialist. In particular, this will include dedicated community mobilisers/gender specialists to ensure active engagement and interaction with women throughout planning and implementation of project activities.

Afghan women significantly contribute to existing community-based rangeland management. In particular, women bear the responsibility for feeding, watering and treating livestock, as well as for selling livestock products. The two most prevalent priorities for women in rangeland management were identified as: i) greater quantity and quality of feed; and ii) improved animal healthcare. SLM practices focussed on increasing rangeland productivity will increase the availability and quality of feed. Concurrently, extension services will inform women on optimal animal healthcare. The proposed project integrates these priorities into project activities and interventions to ensure gender-sensitivity is included into the overall approach.

A.5 Risk

As per the FAO Project Environmental and Social Screening, the proposed project falls into the *Low* Category of FAO's Environmental and Social Risk Classification system. Therefore, for those environmental and social safeguards for which potential risks may arise, a mitigation plan including detailed descriptions of mitigation measures has been developed. A summary of these mitigation measures is included in
Table 2.

Table 2. Identification of risks for the proposed project and the mitigation measures for each.

Risk no.	Risk	Risk rating (L/M/H)[46]	Mitigation measure
1	Deterioration in security situation prevents the effective implementation of project activities in selected provinces and districts	M–H	An analysis of the security situation within selected provinces and targeted districts was undertaken during the PPG phase of project design. The security situation in the targeted districts will be reassessed during the inception phase of project implementation and changes to project design effected accordingly. This will ensure that up-to-date information is used for adaptive management and decision-making. The proposed project will ensure that there is full compliance with the UN-DSS Minimum Operational Security Standards at all times.
2	Limited capacity of relevant national- and local-level institutions hinders effective	L	Strong technical support has been provided by FAO on project design during the PPG phase. This will be continued throughout project implementation. Engagement of both national and international specialists and consultants will support the transfer of skills and expertise to government staff and other relevant

[46] L/M/H indicates the potential of the risk to occur during the proposed project (L=low; M=medium; H=high).

Risk no.	Risk	Risk rating (L/M/H)[46]	Mitigation measure
	planning and implementation		stakeholders during implementation. Outcome 1.1 and 1.2 of the proposed project focus on training at both the institutional and community level to ensure that strong capacity is built for planning, implementation and sustainability of all project activities.
3	Climate risks – especially drought – impact on ecosystem rehabilitation activities and accelerate desertification	M	The SLM/SFM practices to be implemented under the proposed project activities focus on climate-resilient and climate-smart measures that will reduce the vulnerability of rangeland/forest ecosystems and community livelihoods to such extreme climate events. Planning processes at both the national and local levels include contingency planning for drought conditions and other climate-induced disasters. All project interventions have been designed to follow international best practice guidelines that take climate and other environmental risks into account. Species for re-vegetation in both forest and rangeland landscapes will be chosen during the inception phase based on the local ecological conditions in the selected project implementation sites, with due consideration of the potential impact of extreme climate conditions such as drought. Under Outcome 1.2, communities will be trained on restoration protocols, care of seedlings/saplings and post-rehabilitation follow-up to maximise the success of restoration activities. This training will be incorporated into the long-term capacity building programme within the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' under Outcome 1.1, while the approaches will be incorporated into best practice guidelines and made available as a part of the 'knowledge hub' and information-sharing management approaches under Outcome 4.1.
4	Disease outbreaks affect livestock of participating communities	M	Training for technical government staff and extension officers will include topics such as the treatment of livestock against potential diseases. Communities will also be trained on livestock treatment under Outcome 1.2 of the proposed project. Furthermore, under Outcome 3.1, a 'pastoral network' will be established to improve improved access to veterinary assistance and animal healthcare. In case of improved livestock breeds are introduced, they will be selected based on *inter alia* resistance to common diseases.
5	Low levels of participation from national- and local-level stakeholders hinders progress	L–M	National-level stakeholders have been engaged and consulted with throughout the design of the proposed project. During the inception phase of project implementation, they will be further engaged with to ensure strong buy-in. Furthermore, communities will be involved during project implementation through a fully participatory, community-based process for SLM/SFM planning and implementation of on-the-ground activities. This engagement at the community-level will promote ownership of the proposed project among participants.
6	Knowledge generated through the proposed project is not widely used or taken up	L–M	The demonstration of benefits of the proposed project approach will provide practical examples that are easily understood by communities, encouraging the continuation of uptake, utilisation and adaptation of approaches. Furthermore, the knowledge management undertaken under Outcome 4.1 will ensure that knowledge is readily available and can be easily disseminated to relevant end-users.
7	Lack of involvement from indigenous people negatively affects implementation of proposed project activities	L	During the PPG phase, indigenous peoples were intensely consulted with and involved in designing project activities and selection of project sites. Specifically, the IGDK is a key stakeholder in the proposed project and will continue to be so during project implementation.

A.6. Institutional arrangements and coordination

Implementation and management arrangements
Stakeholders from the national, provincial and district levels will be integrally involved in execution of project activities. At present, there is no government agency has been accredited as the GEF agency in Afghanistan even though the nodal Ministry (MAIL) intends to be accredited agency of GEF. The proposed project will be implemented over a six year period by FAO as the GEF Agency with the lead government partner of this project.

FAO is the **GEF Implementing Agency** responsible for oversight and the overall implementation of the proposed project. This implementation role includes ensuring technical soundness of project activities in close collaboration with the lead government partner, namely the National Resource Management Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL NRM). In addition, FAO will facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the project outcomes, as well as the project adherence to GEF policies and criteria. As the GEF Agency, FAO will be a part of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and, in addition, will be responsible for forming the Project Management Unit (PMU). FAO will be solely responsible for the management and disbursement of GEF funds.

MAIL NRM will be the **lead government partner** for the proposed project with the technical support and assistance of FAO. As the lead government partner, MAIL NRM will be a member of the PSC and the Technical Working Groups (TWGs). MAIL NRM will facilitate SLM/SFM planning and implementation as well as the training of government staff and communities on SLM/SFM.

The **PMU** will be established under FAO, staffed by the following positions: i) one full-time National Project Manager (NPM); ii) one full-time project administration and finance assistant; iii) five provincial project coordinators; vi) one full-time Chief Technical Advisor (CTA); v) national M&E expert; and vi) various short-term consultants. The salaries of these positions will be paid through the proposed project, i.e. the GEF Trust Fund. The PMU will work closely with selected liaison officers of relevant institutions including MAIL NRM, NEPA, MRRD and IGDK. The day-to-day management of the proposed project will be through the PMU, including monitoring of approved annual work plans. The PMU will work under the direct supervision of FAO to implement any decisions made by the PSC to ensure delivery of the project outputs and outcomes. Specifically, the PMU will perform the following activities:

- act as secretariat to the PSC (the NPM will fulfil this role);
- organise project meetings as required;
- prepare annual work plans and detailed budgets, and submit these to the PSC and FAO for approval;
- operationalise, coordinate and monitor the implementation of approved annual work plans and budgets;
- during the inception phase of project implementation, review the M&E plan, propose refinements if necessary, and implement the M&E plan;
- prepare the six-monthly Project Progress Reports (PPRs), give inputs in preparing the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR), and ensure all co-financing partners provide necessary information on all disbursed co-financing throughout project implementation for inclusion in the PIR;
- coordinate project activities with other ongoing initiatives in the country to ensure positive inter-institutional collaboration; and
- assist in the organisation of mid-term review and Terminal Evaluation of the proposed project.

Liaison officers from participating government institutions – MAIL NRM, NEPA, MRRD and IGDK – will support the PMU. These liaison officers will be appointed by their relevant institutions to promote involvement and integration of line ministries in project implementation. This ensures that: i) the project receives the technical inputs required, and that they are provided in a timely and efficient manner; ii) relevant high-level officials are appropriately briefed and made available to participate in the PSC; and iii) the appropriate government procedures are followed specifically for monitoring compliance during project activity implementation.

The **PSC** provides a platform for efficient engagement between agencies, institutions and initiatives to coordinate activities during implementation of the proposed project. As Afghanistan's **Operational Focal Point for GEF**, NEPA will be responsible for chairing the PSC. Institutions included in the PSC are those relevant to the proposed project,

including the following: i) FAO; ii) MAIL NRM; iii) MRRD; iv) NEPA; v) IGDK; vi) institutions from the private sector; cii) universities, e.g. Kabul University; viii) related initiatives; and ix) new initiatives and projects.

The PSC will meet at least twice per year, and may call additional meetings as necessary. The role of the committee is to provide strategic guidance to the implementation of proposed project activities. Specific roles of the PSC are expanded on below.

- Provide guidance to the lead government entity and on-the-ground implementers of project activities to ensure alignment with the Project Document.
- Review and approve proposed revisions to project activities and the Project Document, including to the project results framework and implementation arrangements.
- Review, amend and endorse annual work plans and budgets for project activity implementation.
- Review project progress and all achieved planned results through the presented six-monthly PPRs, PIRs and Financial Reports.
- Advise on challenges and problems that arise during project implementation.
- Facilitate cooperation between all project partners as well as facilitate collaboration between the proposed project and other relevant initiatives, projects and programmes in Afghanistan and specifically the five selected provinces.

The **National Project Manager** (NPM) will be a representative from FAO and will chair the PMU and will be supported by the liaison groups. NPM will lead the PMU and work closely with the National Project Director (NPD). The NPM is a full-time position funded by GEF. The NPM will lead and organise the day-to-day execution of the proposed project. The NPM will also take the lead in communications with government agencies and advocacy. The NPM will also be responsible for providing technical advice and guidance in their area of technical expertise. The NPM will report on project progress to PSC meetings, and will develop and submit semi-annual PPRs and annual PIRs. The NPM reports to the BH on operational issues and to the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and FAO Lead Technical Officer (LTO) on technical issues. In addition to technical and substantive duties, the NPM will:

- oversee the creation of a participatory monitoring system for the proposed project;
- ensure real-time monitoring of project implementation and progress, alerting the National Project Director, BH and the LTO to potential problems that could result in delays in implementation;
- help identify consultant candidates and work with the BH to ensure their timely recruitment;
- ensure the proposed project is implemented in an effective and efficient manner with stakeholders in the pilot areas;
- help organise and supervise consultant inputs; and
- oversee creation of the proposed project's approach to managing and sharing knowledge, and to identifying and disseminating lessons learned.

The **National Project Director** (NPD) will be a senior staff member designated by MAIL NRM and will be the lead person responsible for ensuring smooth execution of the project on behalf of Government of Afghanistan. The NPD is responsible to the Government for the successful implementation of the proposed project and the project's impacts. The NPD will work closely with the NPM, the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and the rest of the Project Management Unit to ensure that planning and implementation of project activities is aligned with MAIL's programme of work and ongoing initiatives.

The **Administration and Finance Officer** (AFO) will be responsible for the operational and logistical aspects of the project. The AFO will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project operations and with financial and administrative reporting. The AFO's primary responsibility is to ensure that the project activities specified in the project document are facilitated to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost, and also supports NPM to prepare budget revision to reflect any activity changes as approved by the PSC. AFO will also draft procurement plan and prepare financial statement.

Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) will provide professional backstopping for all aspects of the proposed project in the PMU. The CTA will ensure that the proposed project is an active member of a broader knowledge management network on adaptation to climate change and natural resource and land management. This includes emphasising a learning and adaptive approach to project management and implementation in close coordination with all relevant partners. The CTA

will work closely with NPD and NPM. The CTA will report to the FAO Lead Technical Officer and Project Task Force members.

Technical Working Groups (TWGs) will be established for the proposed project specifically to provide technical advice and backstopping on project components and activities to the PMU. The TWGs will advise the PMU on best practices for executing project activities and will facilitate collaboration between the proposed project and related programmes, projects and initiatives. The TWGs will also be involved in the technical evaluation of project progress, identifying possible solutions to challenges, as well as highlighting potential changes to be made to project activities during the course of implementation.

Provincial Coordination Committees (PCCs) will be established to coordinate between relevant stakeholders at the provincial level, including government institutions, local communities and NGOs involved in implementation of project activities in the respective provinces. The PCC Chair will be elected by the committee during the first PCC meeting.

Along with PCCs, Provincial Project Coordinators and one Provincial Working Group (PWG) will be established in each province to manage activity implementation at the provincial level.

The implementation arrangements are illustrated as an organogram in **Error! Reference source not found.**1.

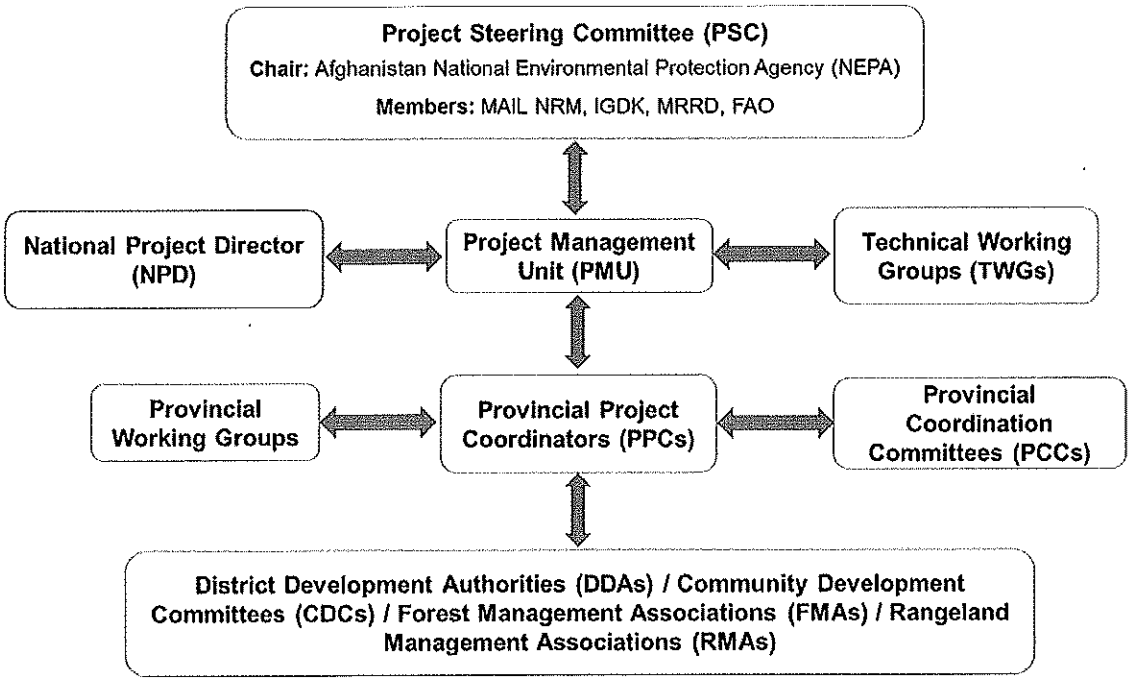

Figure 1. Organogram of implementation arrangements for the proposed project.

Letters of Agreement (LoAs) will be signed between FAO and several service providers for the implementation of proposed project activities. The Terms of References (ToRs) of services to be delivered by service providers for LOAs will be prepared by the project CTA, NPM and technical staff in consultation with NPD. The FAO BH, together with the FAO Lead Technical Officer (LTO) in the FAO Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (RAP), will be responsible for setting up all necessary LoAs to be defined at the inception phase of project implementation. The LoAs will be administratively managed by the project Budget Holder (i.e. FAO). The funds received by the service providers, as part of the LoA, will be used to carry out proposed project activities ensuring alignment and conforming to the rules and procedures of FAO. The proposed LoAs for the project include for developing: i) fine-scale inventories; ii) biodiversity assessments; iii) training; iv) lessons learned; v) ToRs for field assistants; vi) synthesising best-practice guidelines; and vii) for developing a financial plan.

Institutional arrangements, roles and responsibilities
The main stakeholders of the proposed project have been listed in Section 1.4 of the Project Document with an outline of their mandates, roles and responsibilities.

MAIL NRM will be the lead government partner for the proposed project, engaged in project oversight and implementation of project activities with the technical support of FAO. As a government ministry, MAIL is responsible for restoring the agricultural economy of Afghanistan through increased production, efficient natural resource management and market development. Within MAIL, the Natural Resource Management Directorate (NRM) is the agency best-situated to lead the implementation of community-based SLM/SFM and is the public body mandated to assign forest-use rights.

As mentioned previously, representatives of MAIL NRM will serve on the PSC and in TWGs to facilitate project activities. MAIL NRM will ensure coherence with and relevance to national plans and strategies, in particular the National Natural Resource Management Strategy[47]. In addition, MAIL NRM will provide direct technical inputs to the proposed project, through liaising with the PMU.

MAIL NRM has numerous programmes, projects, initiatives and entities under its scope that align with and will provide insight to the proposed project.

As the GEF Operational Focal Point for Afghanistan, **NEPA** will oversee implementation of the proposed project in the country. Formed in 2005, NEPA's function and roles are outlined in Afghanistan's first Environmental Law[48], which was passed in the same year. NEPA's mandate includes regulatory, coordination, monitoring and enforcement roles for all environmental issues in the country. NEPA currently chairs the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Environmental Coordination as well as the National Climate Change Committee, which are responsible for the coordination of inter-ministry responses to cross-cutting and multi-sectoral issues. Consequently, NEPA will be responsible for chairing the PSC meetings of the proposed project.

NEPA has been identified as an implementing partner for the proposed project and has performed a similar role in other projects under multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Therefore, as a member of the PMU, NEPA will be responsible for coordinating both the local and international stakeholders for implementation of the proposed project as well as all other identified aligned initiatives. NEPA will ensure that proposed project activities are undertaken in alignment with national environmental law as well as good practices.

The **Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development** (MRRD) will be an integral member of the PSC and TWG, providing support for capacity building, M&E and other local-level activities. MRRD is mandated with improving rural infrastructure, enhancing local planning and management capacity, and promoting rural livelihoods. For example, MRRD has in the past – and is currently – implementing off-grid and local power generation activities through the large-scale National Area-based Development Programme (NABDP), the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) and the Citizen's Charter. Through these past and ongoing initiatives, MRRD's activities have established and capacitated sub-national and community-based organisations, most notably the Community Development Committees (CDCs) and District Development Authorities (DDAs). These groups have been established throughout Afghanistan, and will have important roles in the proposed project. MRRD will thus be an important stakeholder during implementation of the proposed project for facilitating work with local communities.

The proposed project will benefit from MRRD participation in the PMU, PSC and TWGs. Through its provincial representation, the MRRD will guide interventions within the targeted provinces. MRRD will also benefit from technical assistance through the proposed project, including technical capacity building of MRRD staff to promote community-based management activities.

[47] National Natural Resource Management Strategy (NRM Strategy). 2017–2021.
[48] Environmental Law. 2005. Afghanistan. Official Gazette, 2005, No. 873.

As the proposed project is to be implemented through DEX modality, **FAO** will take responsibility for supervising and providing technical support and guidance during project implementation. In addition, FAO will deliver procurement and contracting services for the proposed project using FAO rules and procedures, as well as financial services to efficiently manage GEF resources. FAO will be responsible for oversight of the proposed project, as well as overall implementation and technical supervision to ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the proposed project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes and outputs as established in the Project Document in an efficient and effective manner. FAO will be responsible for reporting project progress to the GEF Secretariat as well as providing financial reports to the GEF Trustee. FAO will closely supervise and carry out supervision missions, monitor progress of project activities and provide technical support throughout project implementation. Furthermore, FAO will be responsible for project closure.

The Budget Holder and LTO will fall within the management structure, the roles and responsibilities of which are outlined below.

Budget Holder
Under FAO's Direct Execution modality, the FAO Representation in Afghanistan will hold the budget and operational responsibilities for this project. The budget holder (BH) will schedule the technical backstopping and monitoring missions as required. The FAO Representative will ensure timely operational, administrative and financial management of the project's GEF resources, including the disbursement of funds. Working closely with the LTO, CTA, NPM, National Operations Officers, NPD and national M&E expert, the specific role of the BH will include the following:

- Review, approve and monitor all annual work plans and budgets;
- schedule technical backstopping and monitoring missions;
- coordinate and participate in project supervision missions;
- authorise the disbursement of GEF resources for the proposed project;
- give final approval of procurement, project staff recruitment, Letter of Agreements (LoAs) and financial transactions in accordance with the FAO clearance/approval procedures;
- prepare financial and monitoring reports (see section "Financial management of and reporting on GEF resources" below);
- review procurement and subcontracting material as well as supporting documentation, and obtain internal FAO approvals;
- be responsible for the management of proposed project resources and all associated aspects in agreements between FAO and the lead government and other partners;
- provide operational oversight of contracted activities carried out by project partners;
- monitor all areas of work and suggest corrective measures, as required;
- prepare semi-annual budget revisions in close consultation with the LTO and submit to the GEF Coordination Unit;
- be accountable for safeguarding resources from inappropriate use, loss or damage;
- be responsible for addressing recommendations from oversight offices, such as from audits and evaluations such as the Mid-Term Review and Terminal Evaluation; and
- establish a multi-disciplinary FAO Project Task Force (PTF) to support the proposed project.

Lead Technical Officer
A Forestry Officer based in the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok will be the LTO for this project. The LTO will provide technical guidance to the project team to ensure delivery of quality technical outputs. The primary areas of LTO support to the proposed project include the following:

- review and ensure clearance by the relevant FAO technical officers of all the technical Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the project team and consultants;
- ensure clearance by the relevant FAO technical officers of the technical ToRs for the LoAs and contracts;
- review and ensure clearance by the relevant FAO technical officers of all the technical ToRs of the Mid-term Review (MTR) report as well as the Terminal Evaluation (TE) report;
- in close consultation with the BH, MAIL NRM and NEPA, lead the selection of the project staff, consultants and other institutions to be contracted or with whom an LoA will be signed;

- review and clear all technical reports, publications, papers, training material and manuals;
- monitor technical implementation as established in the project results framework through conducting annual monitoring missions to project implementation sites;
- review the Project Progress Reports (PPRs) and prepare the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR); and
- coordinate with other FAO Technical Officers in the FAO Project Task Force along with the thematic focus of the project intervention.

FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok (RAP) will provide general country operation support through the Country Support Group (CSG) under the overall guidance from the FAO GEF Coordination Unit.

FAO and the GEF Coordination Unit will review and approve PPRs, annual PIRs, financial reports and budget revisions. The GEF Coordination Unit will provide project oversight, organise annual supervision missions, and will participate as a member in the PTF and as an observer in the PSC meetings, as necessary. The unit will participate in the selection process of necessary consultants to be recruited for the proposed project, including the National Project Manager. In addition, the unit will assist in the organisation of, as well as be involved as a stakeholder in, the MTR and TE. The GEF Coordination Unit will, in collaboration with the FAO Finance Division, request the transfer of proposed project funds from the GEF Trustee based on six-monthly projections of funds needed.

The FAO Finance Division will provide annual Financial Reports to the GEF Trustee and, in collaboration with the GEF Coordination Unit, call for project funds on a six-monthly basis from the GEF Trustee.

During the Mid-Term Review, the success of the current execution modality will be assessed and recommendations made for improved implementation arrangements under future GEF projects.

Coordination with other initiatives
Synergies between the proposed project and other aligned GEF projects are described below.

LDCF-1: Building adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change in Afghanistan
These two projects (LDCF-1 and the proposed LDCF project) will be strongly coordinated through frequent meetings of project partners, as well as the fact that many partners are members of the Project Steering Committees (PSC) for both projects. Lessons learned from the LDCF-1 project on community-based early warning systems and climate-resilient livelihood options will be integrated into the on-the-ground implementation of activities under Components 2 and 3 of this LDCF project. In addition, the institutional capacity building under Component 4 will build on the work done under LDCF-1 relating to capacity building of the National Climate Change Committee.

LDCF-2: Strengthening the resilience of rural livelihood options for Afghan communities to manage climate change-induced disaster risks
These two projects will have strong coordination owing to shared PSC members and the strong alignment of the project objectives. In addition, it is anticipated that there will be regular meetings between project stakeholders to align the implementation of project activities. The thematic similarity of the two projects – particularly concerning climate-resilient livelihoods and DRR – will allow for sharing of lessons learned during the implementation of LDCF-2.

LDCF-3: Building resilience of communities living around the Northern Pistachio Belt and Eastern Forest Complex of Afghanistan through an Ecosystem-based Adaptation approach
There is considerable potential for alignment of the proposed LDCF project with the LDCF-3 initiative. Both projects will have activities implemented in Nangarhar Province, although in different districts. However, there is a clear thematic difference in that the LDCF-3 project has a focus on ecosystem-based adaptation, while the LDCF project has a greater focus on DRR measures. At the sub-national level, there will be opportunity for exchange of lessons learned related to climate-resilient livelihood options. At the national level, the projects will prove complementary in the institutional and technical capacity-building activities focused on policy- and strategy-level work to include climate change adaptation into decision-making processes.

Additional Information not well elaborated at PIF Stage:

N/A

A.7 Benefits

Socio-economic development (capacity development)
As the planning and technical capacity of the Government of Afghanistan for SLM/SFM is strengthened, proposed project benefits will be scaled beyond project intervention areas. In particular, the proposed project will create an enabling environment for decentralised planning and decision-making by increasing the capacity within Afghanistan's national and sub-national government institutions for promoting community-based SLM/SFM. Training programmes and knowledge management will be institutionalised into government programmes, with the establishment of the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' ensuring that knowledge gained and best practices collected on SLM/SFM be collated and made readily accessible. Furthermore, strengthening capacity for local-level governance will enable CSOs to maintain project interventions beyond the project lifespan. Maintaining interventions that are beneficial to communities is within the mandate of organisations like CSOs, thus there is incentive to provide continued support to the project. As beneficiaries of project activities, pastoralists are likely to continue developing and implementing SLM/SFM plans – based on their strengthened community governance structures – following project closure.

Handover of the project will be facilitated through the institutionalised knowledge-sharing and training mechanism that will be put in place – i.e. the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' – and will continue beyond project closure (Outcome 1.1). Knowledge and expertise gained during project implementation will be retained within the country. Furthermore, approaches for participatory, community-based SLM/SFM can be replicated in further sites outside of project boundaries. The benefits from project activities will provide sufficient incentive for this replication.

The proposed project will implement measures that have been shown to be cost-effective in promoting SLM/SFM, including capacity building, concrete SLM/SFM activities, livelihood strengthening and knowledge management. For example, the project will support development of technical capacities at national, provincial and local levels for planning and implementing SLM/SFM measures. A capacity-building programme – founded within the Centre of Excellence – will enhance the capacity of government officials, extension officers, CDCs/FMAs/RMAs, local communities and other stakeholders to effectively plan and implement SLM/SFM measures.

The SLM/SFM interventions to be promoted under this project focus on sustainable management and rehabilitation of ecosystems as an approach that has been demonstrated to have with favourable cost-benefit ratios, requiring small investments compared to the long-term, climate-resilient and sustainable socio-economic and environmental benefits provided. For example, soil conservation measures such as terracing and bunds have been shown to increase crop productivity by between 15–25%. The project will thus support SLM/SFM interventions in the pilot provinces, linking them to diversified livelihoods and value addition for agricultural, rangeland and forestry products. This has been shown to be more cost-effective for increasing income and reducing poverty than support for other sectors.

Increased capacity for cross-sectoral decision-making within government institutions will provide staff with necessary skills to facilitate activity implementation country-wide. MAIL NRM officers will be able to apply knowledge gained through the project in ongoing advisory services that continue following project closure. Knowledge gained from the project will also assist in informing future management, and will be continuously improved as best practices are refined. In this way, long-term monitoring will inform future SLM/SFM activities in the country.

Proposed project activities will promote rural development by increasing the productivity of forests and rangelands that underpin rural livelihoods in Afghanistan. Value chain strengthening and value addition will further enhance these livelihoods, which will be safeguarded against impacts of climate change through climate-resilient interventions. By promoting community-based SLM/SFM practices, rural development will be participatory, enabling local communities to make informed decisions regarding their livelihoods and further development. Increased productivity of rangelands

and forests is expected to increase opportunities for self-employment in livestock husbandry and forest-based income generating activities.

The indigenous *Kuchi* nomads of Afghanistan are predominantly a Pashtun social grouping. The majority of modern *Kuchis* follow a semi-sedentary lifestyle while some groups remain purely nomadic. Historically, *Kuchis* were the main traders in Afghanistan, owning a large portion of the country's livestock. Subsequently, they acted as money-lenders and provided transportation services and labour for harvesting. Over time, the *Kuchi* tribes have been greatly affected by conflict, drought and modernisation. They are now recognised as one of the poorest groupings in Afghanistan.

Kuchi nomads within Afghanistan are primarily reliant on pastoral practices in rangelands for their livelihoods. During the design phase of the proposed project, the Independent General Directorate of *Kuchis* (IGDK) was consulted to ensure their considerations were taken into account. Further to this, consultations ensured their inclusion into community-based management approaches and activities that will be implemented through the proposed project. This will safeguard the needs of *Kuchi* communities, ensuring they are continually considered and included in the implementation of project interventions.

The *Kuchis* will benefit directly through the proposed project from the increased productivity and improved management practices of rangelands that provide the basis for their livelihoods. Project activities in *Kuchi* territory will be conducted through the IGDK in order to ensure that interventions are undertaken in a culturally-appropriate manner. During project implementation, the FAO project team will further consult with local *Kuchi* groups to ensure that local project benefits are distributed equitably amongst social groupings. Community consultations will also be held to ensure that Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is given for project activities. FPIC is a principle that indigenous peoples and communities have the right to either give or withhold their consent for proposed projects that may affect their customary land in one way or another. The land may be customarily owned, occupied or used for any livelihoods activities by the communities for FPIC. In addition, none of the proposed project activities are expected to negatively impact on the *Kuchi* nomads.

Environmental sustainability and benefits

The proposed project will promote increased environmental sustainability by mainstreaming the conservation of natural ecosystems and their unique biodiversity in Afghanistan. Approximately 30,000 ha of forests – including 10,000 ha of HCFVs – will be restored through improved management activities including: i) assisted natural regeneration; ii) sustainable harvesting of forest resources; and iii) the provision of alternative sources for fuelwood and NTFPs. Alternative fuelwood sources will be provided through establishing community-managed nurseries and woodlots. Harvesting for fuelwood and NTFPs from the nurseries and woodlots will reduce pressure on natural forest ecosystems.

A minimum of 200,000 ha of rangelands will benefit from improved, climate-resilient management practices that will: i) improve vegetation cover; ii) enhance ecosystem functioning; and iii) increase rangeland productivity. Improved management of livestock husbandry and the introduction of improved breeds will reduce grazing pressure on rangelands without decreasing productivity. Livelihoods from livestock husbandry will be maintained and improved by strengthening the value chains for livestock products. The cumulative effect of these interventions will be improved returns for pastoralists from rangelands while enhancing and maintaining their ecosystem functionality.

Improving the management of forests and rangelands to restore, protect and enhance ecosystem functioning has carbon sequestration potential. The proposed project has a total carbon sequestration potential conservatively-estimated at 2,773,619 tCO_2e.

A.8 Knowledge management

Various ministries, donor agencies and development partners in Afghanistan have extensive experience in implementing different kinds of land management projects. Numerous previous and ongoing initiatives have provided recommendations and lessons learned that have been incorporated into the activities and approaches of the proposed project. Furthermore, these initiatives have contributed to building capacity that can and will be applied for implementing proposed project activities.

Throughout the implementation period, the proposed project will benefit from regular engagement with other stakeholders and ongoing initiatives in order to coordinate activities, share information and explore further opportunities for collaboration. The inclusion of representatives from NEPA and relevant ministries will support the collaboration and information-sharing between representatives from the different sectors.

A number of these previous projects and initiatives in Afghanistan have focused on engaging rural communities in natural resource management and environmental education. Examples and brief outlines of these projects and the respective lessons learned are detailed below.

The FAO-led project, titled **'Initiating participatory forestry in support of sustainable livelihoods in Afghanistan'** (IPF), implemented community forestry programmes in the provinces of Balkh, Baghlan and Nangarhar[49]. The primary objective of the IPF project was to improve the status of forests through demonstrating effective management mechanisms to make resources a more viable income source for communities than they currently are. The IPF project also intended to bring communities, government forestry departments and research institutions together in partnership to ensure that the established participatory forestry practices would be sustainable in the country. Through the IPF project, several challenges for CBNRM were highlighted specifically in rural areas which helped to identify suitable participatory forest management methodologies for upscaling the project to the national level. In addition, highlighting these challenges as well as identifying the benefits of the IPF project, enabled FAO to build up their experience in ensuring the success of CBNRM approaches would be integrated into strategies going forward. The IPF project provided extensive training to national, provincial and district-level government representatives as well as to members of participating communities. This training has provided a baseline for the technical capacity necessary to continue replication and upscaling of CBNRM and specifically community-based forestry.

The FAO-led project titled, **'Strengthened approach for the integration of sustainable environmental management in Afghanistan'** (SAISEM), was implemented jointly by FAO, UNDP and UN Environment, with the objective to strengthen existing natural resource management strategies of MAIL, NEPA and MRRD. SAISEM indirectly supports the proposed project through its investments in capacity building and institutional knowledge built within government technical staff. One of the main outputs of the SAISEM project was a summary overview of the best practices and lessons learned on CBNRM in Afghanistan. Several lessons learned outlined by the SAISEM review are summarised below[50], which have been integrated into the design of the proposed project.

- Active community participation in mapping the project area was an important tool for fostering 'buy-in' as well as for including traditional knowledge and practices in the project's activities. Furthermore, through the process of developing a visual planning tool, all community members were included including those where limited literacy may have been a barrier to their involvement.
- Government involvement at all stages of the project was an important factor of community trust and acceptance of project activities.
- Taking into account land tenure and land rights of the community is an important aspect to consider to ensure successful project implementation and sustainability of activities beyond project closure. This way communities feel empowered to implement and invest in forest management. In addition, those communities granted stewardship rights must also be aware of their responsibilities to provide government with assurance that the respective area will be used and managed with appropriate sustainable methods and relevant environment safeguards.
- A Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach is a useful tool for engaging communities in planning and implementing appropriate management practices.
- Although scarce, available information and knowledge on the original state of natural resources is useful in establishing goals and indicators for management of a given area.
- A summary field manual on CBNRM for government officers is needed.

[49] FAO. 2012. Project Findings and Recommendations: Initiating Participatory Forestry in Support to Sustainable Livelihoods in Afghanistan.
[50] Strengthened approach for the integration of sustainable environmental management in Afghanistan (SAISEM). 2011. Best Practices and Lessons Learned in Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Afghanistan. MDGF1713-E-11a-AFG: Strengthened Approach for the Integration of Sustainable Environmental Management in Afghanistan – A FAO-UNDP-UNEP Joint Programme.

The GEF/UN Environment project titled, **'Developing core capacity for decentralised MEA implementation and natural resources management in Afghanistan'**, which focuses on developing national capacity and coordination in the sectors related to climate change and natural resource management.

The ongoing LDCF project titled, **'Building adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change in Afghanistan'**, which focuses on developing national capacity and coordination in climate change and natural resource management sectors. Specifically, the focus of the LDCF project is on climate change overlaps with the proposed project in establishing restored and productive ecosystems through community-based structures. Representatives from the proposed project will liaise with the LDCF project regularly during project implementation to exchange lessons learned, project successes and challenges, and to integrate these into ongoing activities.

Throughout implementation of the proposed project, participants should proactively source and identify other ongoing projects with related activities, particularly those which generate data and knowledge outputs relevant to be integrated into the 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management'. The identification of projects which generate best-practice guidelines, field manuals and other knowledge outputs will be a source of material to be included in the online information platform under Outcome 4.1. Furthermore, lessons learned and best practices emerging from this project will be available for dissemination via the same platform.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:

B.1 Consistency with national priorities

The National Natural Resource Management Strategy (NRM Strategy) for 2017–2021 provides a strategic framework for MAIL to work towards community-based management of natural resources in Afghanistan. This will be achieved by focusing on: i) encouraging science-based interventions; ii) enabling policies and partnerships; and iii) aligning with global climate-smart agendas for job creation, food security and economic growth. The proposed project is aligned with the NRM Strategy's four main objectives, as described below.

- Strategic Objective 1: Community-based forest management that includes conservation, restoration, reforestation, afforestation, sustainable utilisation and local-based value addition, and watersheds improvement for resilient, climate-adapted and sustainable economy of rural and pre-urban communities. Outcome 2.1 of the proposed project aligns well with this objective, whereby biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration will be enhanced in forest landscapes. This will be achieved by inter alia: i) undertaking biodiversity assessments; ii) establishing community nurseries and woodlots; and iii) assisting with the natural regeneration, restoration and sustainable management of forest ecosystems.
- Strategic Objective 2: Community-based management of rangeland and medicinal plants through strengthening community-based interventions, introducing good practices, and up-scaling indigenous knowledge, for a better livelihood of local and herder communities, desertification control and subsequently combat negative impacts of climate change. Outcome 1.2 and 3.1 of the proposed project are aligned with this objective, whereby community-based rangeland management will be enhanced. This will be achieved by inter alia: i) conducting pastoralist field schools on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/SLM practices (Outcome 1.2); and ii) ensuring that climate-resilient SLM interventions are implemented in degraded rangelands (Outcome 3.1).
- Strategic Objective 3: Co-management and conservation of protected areas to protect biodiversity, promote ecotourism and increase resilience to climate change. Co-management and collaborative governance of natural resources will be promoted through Outcome 1.1 of the proposed project.
- Strategic Objective 4: Institutional and human capacity development to build an enabling environment for meeting expected outcome of this NRM strategy. Outcome 1.1 and 1.2 of the proposed project are both well-aligned with this objective, whereby capacity will be built at national, sub-national and district levels for SLM/SFM. The two outcomes are divided by their focus, with Outcome 1.1 dealing with building government and institutional capacity and Outcome 1.2 focusing on enhancing community capacity to undertake SLM/SFM. This will be achieved by inter alia: i) developing a capacity-building and training programme to raise awareness of SLM/SFM at national, provincial and district levels; ii) providing training to national and sub-national government officials; iii) developing methodologies for and undertaking fine-scale inventories of forest and rangeland resources; iv) formulating a national REDD+

Readiness Roadmap to reduce emissions from forests and rangelands; v) developing resources for local-level planning and implementation of SLM/SFM; vi) training MAIL NRM officers on participatory and community-based planning; vii) conducting an awareness-raising campaign regarding SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E; viii) strengthening associations and committees to enable community-based decision-making; and ix) developing community-based SLM/SFM plans for targeted communities.

The **National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management** (NCSA)[51] brought together the country's commitment to the CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC, stating that through GEF funding, UNEP will support the Government of Afghanistan to implement the NCSA as well as the **National Adaptation Programme of Action for Climate Change** (NAPA). Both the NCSA and the NAPA aim to build the capacity of national institutions to address global environmental issues and to meet the country's existing commitments under the CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC. In addition, they identify and communicate urgent and immediate adaptation needs of Afghanistan to the effects of climate change.

The **Afghanistan National Development Strategy**[52] (ANDS) was the framework for the five-year plan from 2008 to 2013. The environment is highlighted as a 'cross-cutting issue' to the three main pillars of Afghanistan's National Strategy, namely: i) security; ii) governance, Rule of Law, and Human Rights; and iii) economic and social development. The ANDS has since been updated to the **Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework**[53] (ANPDF) for 2017 to 2021. Under environmental management, ANDS prioritises restoration and sustainable use of rangelands and forests. ANPDF still includes this as a national priority programme, aiming to expanding agroforestry and reforestation with over 60,000 ha that support environmental conservation and income generation for farmers.

Afghanistan has signed and ratified various international policies and frameworks including Convention on Biological Diversity[54] (CBD), CITES and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification[55] (UNCCD). Under the CBD, Afghanistan set up its National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP). The NBSAP calls for the establishment of legally recognised, adequately funded and effectively managed protected areas as a priority action. The current NBSAP covers 2014 to 2017, hence the proposed project re align with the priority actions once the NBSAP is updated.

Under the NBSAP, a **Framework for Implementation for 2012 to 2017**[56] was established. The proposed project aligns with Strategy 1.1 and 1.3 outlined in the framework that aim to achieve CBD Goal 1: *Promote the conservation of the biological diversity of ecosystems, habitats and biomes*:

- Strategy 1.1: to continue ongoing assessments of Afghanistan's floral and faunal communities, with the overall aim of improving the understanding of Afghanistan's biodiversity resources and their conservation requirements; and
- Strategy 1.3: to develop and implement the support mechanisms (incentives, rules, regulations, environmental education, public awareness) necessary for the effective conservation of biodiversity and other natural resources.

C. DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M&E PLAN:

Table 3. M&E arrangement with budget allocation.

Type of M&E activity	Responsible party(ies)	Time frame	Budget
Project Inception Workshop	PMU in consultation with the LTO, BH and PSC	Within one month following project start-up	US$5,000
Results-based Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP/B)	PMU in consultation with the FAO project team	Three weeks following project start-up and on an annual basis	Project staff time

[51] Afghanistan: National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management (NCSA) and National Adaptation Programme of Action for Climate Change (NAPA): Final Joint Report. 2009. United Nations Environment Programme.
[52] Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) 2018 to 2013. 2008. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
[53] Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017 to 2021. 2017. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
[54] Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). 1992. United Nations.
[55] United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). 1994. United Nations.
[56] Afghanistan's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP): A Framework for Implementation 2012–2017. 2012. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Type of M&E activity	Responsible party(ies)	Time frame	Budget
		thereafter within the July to June reporting period	
Project Inception Report	PMU in consultation with the LTO and BH; report to be cleared by BH, LTO and FAO-GEF Coordination Unit, and uploaded to FPMIS by BH	One month following project start-up	Project staff time
Project M&E expert in PMU	FAO consultant	One month following project start-up	US$79,200
Finalisation of baseline information and reassessment at mid-term and project closure	Short-term consultants	During project year's 1, 3/4 and 6	Project staff time
Supervision visits	FAO PTF	Annual	Project staff time
Project Progress Reports (PPRs)	PMU with inputs from PPCUs, NPD, PSC and other partners	No later than one month after each six-monthly reporting period (end June and December)	Project staff time
Project Implementation Review (PIR) Report	PMU under supervision of the LTO and cleared and submitted by the GEF Coordination Unit to the GEF Secretariat	1 August of each reporting year	Project staff time
Co-financing Reports	PMU, NPD, PPCUs	Semi-annual basis; considered as part of the semi-annual PPRs	Project staff time
GEF Tracking Tools	NPM; GEF Coordination Unit, reviewed by the LTO	Mid-point and end-of-project	Project staff time
Technical Reports	Project staff and consultants; peer-reviewed by LTO/CTA/TWGs	As appropriate	Project time and consultant costs
Mid-term lessons learned workshop	Project staff, short-term consultants and FAO	Project mid-term	US$5,000
Independent Mid-term Review (MTR) Report	BH , PMU, LTO, OED, GEF Coordination Unit, PTF, Review mission	During the mid-term of project year 3	US$70,000
Lessons learned workshop	PMU, PPCUs, TWGs, short-term consultants and FAO	Project end	US$5,000
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE)	BH , PMU, LTO, OED, GEF Coordination Unit, PTF, Evaluation mission, and other partners	Three months prior to Terminal Evaluation Review meeting	US$100,000
Terminal Report (TR)	BH, NPM, LTO, GEF Coordination Unit	Two months before project end	0 (as completed by PMU)
Processing of Terminal Report at FAO headquarters	BH, LTO and GEF Coordination Unit, TCS Report Group	At the end of project implementation	US$7,000
Overall estimated cost of project staff time for M&E			**US$100,380**
Total budget for M&E			**US$371,580**

PART III: CERTIFICATION BY GEF PARTNER AGENCY(IES)

A. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies[57] and procedures and meets the GEF criteria for CEO endorsement under GEF-6.

Agency Coordinator, Agency Name	Signature	Date (MM/dd/yyyy)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
Alexander Jones Director Climate and Environment Division FAO Rome		19/04/18	Kentaro Aoki, Technical Officer, FAO GEF Coordination Unit Investment Centre Division FAO	+39 06 57055680	jeffrey.griffin@fao.org; kentaro.aoki@fao.org
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LIST OF ANNEXURES

Annex A: Project results framework
Annex B: Responses to project reviews
Annex C: Status of implementation of project activities
Annex D: Calendar of expected reflows
Annex E: Environmental, social and risk management plan

[57] GEF policies encompass all managed trust funds, namely: GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF and CBIT.

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
Development objective: ***improving and maintaining the livelihoods of rural Afghan communities by addressing unsustainable land and forest use***							
Project Objective *To support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity*		Number of tCO_2e sequestered through deployment of sustainable land and forest management practices resulting in reduced GHG emissions from land and forest degradation *[from GEF Indicator 4 – CCM2 Pr4]*	Zero tCO_2e sequestered	765,034 tCO_2e	1,530,069 tCO_2e sequestered	Site visits, project reports; FAO EX-ACT tool; Results of soil sampling analysis for soil carbon change between Year 1 and 6	Local communities actively engage in project activities Security and other constraints do not prevent implementation of on-the-ground activities Rangeland and forest restoration is successful and results in sequestration of carbon SLM/SFM practices deliver tangible benefits to targeted communities
		Number of ha of production landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their management demonstrated by objective data *[from GEF Indicator 9.1 – BD4 Pr9]*	Zero ha	56,000 ha (2,000 ha of HCVFs, 4,000 ha of other forest types and 50,000 ha of rangelands)	230,000 ha (10,000 ha of HCVFs, 20,000 ha of other forest types and 200,000 ha of rangelands)	Site visits, project reports, participatory M&E, yearly production reports to compare yields	
Component 1: ***Capacity building at national, sub-national and district levels for SLM/SFM***							

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
Outcome 1.1 Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors for SLM/SFM		Increased capacities of MAIL/DAIL NRM and other relevant government institutions and staff to plan for and implement SLM/SFM	Baseline scores for capacity on: • Institutional, policy and legal framework for SLM/SFM: 2.7 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 2.8 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 2.5	Mid-term milestone scores for capacity on: • Institutional, policy and legal framework for SLM/SFM: 3.0 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 3.0 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 2.8	Target scores for capacity on: • Institutional, policy and legal framework for SLM/SFM: 3.2 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 3.2 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 3.0	Institutional capacity assessments of MAIL, NEPA, MRRD and IGDK; Pre- and post-training capacity assessments using capacity scorecard for trainees receiving capacity development through the 'Centre of Excellence for NRM'	Strong inter-institutional collaboration supports successful establishment of Centre of Excellence for NRM Capacity building is undertaken using effective and appropriate training methods Trainees are able to apply new skills for daily activities related to SLM/SFM Security and other constraints do not hinder access to sites for undertaking inventories Strong inter-institutional collaboration supports formulation of REDD+ Readiness Roadmap
Output 1.1.1. *National 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' established for coordinating the capacity development and knowledge management on SLM/SFM at all levels*	1.1.1.1 Undertake an assessment of institutional capacity for implementing SLM/SFM within MAIL, NEPA, MRRD and IGDK, to inform the establishment of the 'Centre of Excellence for NRM'; 1.1.1.2 Develop a methodology for establishing the 'Centre of Excellence for NRM', detailing the outline of the centre as well as the structure within the centre; 1.1.1.3 Set up a MoU between FAO, MAIL/NRM and other relevant institutions for establishing a 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' within host institution such as MAIL/NRM according to the provisions of the methodology [Activity 1.1.1.2]; 1.1.4 Develop a financing strategy for a 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' under host institution for the duration of the	Existence of MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM'	No MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' currently exist	MoU, organogram and methodology for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' have been formulated and endorsed by government	MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' have been formulated and endorsed by government	Review of MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy and other relevant documents	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
	proposed project and outline a strategy for sustainability of the centre following project completion including *inter alia*: • a contractual agreement to employ a full-time manager to establish the centre within host institution during project implementation; and • a training programme for employees within member institutions to continue management and coordination of the centre following project completion.						
Output 1.1.2. *Training programme developed and delivered to national and sub-national government officials on land degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes*	1.1.2.1 Develop a long-term capacity building programme in local languages that details materials required for training government officials at the national, provincial and district levels on mainstreaming SLM/SFM principles into planning and budgeting processes; 1.1.2.3 Develop a training package for provincial- and district-level technical staff to enhance knowledge and improve implementation of decentralised planning for SLM/SFM; 1.1.2.4 Deliver the training package [Activity 1.1.2.3] for provincial- and district-level technical staff to enhance knowledge and implementation of decentralised planning for SLM/SFM; 1.1.2.5 Provide a short training for the inter-ministerial Committee for Environmental Coordination, and facilitate interaction between committee members to support and promote integrated and cross-sectoral planning and decision-making on SLM/SFM at the national level.	Existence of a long-term capacity building programme and a training package outlining modules and course material Number of people trained (% women)	No long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material exist No people have been trained	A long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material have been formulated 45 people (including at least 20% women) have been trained using the training packages, modules and course material	A long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material have been formulated A total of 95 people (including at least 20% women) have been trained using the training packages, modules and course material	Review of capacity building programme, training programme and modules Training session reports and attendance registers	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
Output 1.1.3. *Fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources – including ecosystem goods/services, rangeland/forest condition and socio-ecological resilience – undertaken for Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces*	1.1.3.1 Develop a nation-wide methodology for conducting fine-scale inventories of forest and rangeland resources; 1.1.3.2 Develop a training programme on the methodology [Activity 1.1.3.1] for conducting fine-scale inventories at both the national and provincial level; 1.1.3.3 Undertake a forest and rangeland resources inventory and provide technical reports for the following: • classification of rangeland and forest ecosystem types; • current extent of rangeland and forest ecosystems; • Soil carbon survey in the selected forest ecosystem [Activity 2.1.3.3]; • ecosystem goods and services provided by these ecosystems; • rangeland and forest condition, detailing degradation and threats to ecosystem functioning; • current status of GIS mapping; and • socio-ecological resilience of these ecosystems to current and future trends of global climate change.	Existence of a forest/ rangeland inventory for each target province	There are no forest/rangeland inventories for the target provinces	Methodologies for conducting fine-scale forest and rangeland inventories have been developed	Fine-scale forest inventories have been conducted for Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces Fine-scale forest inventories have been conducted for Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces	Review of methodologies and inventories for each province	
Output 1.1.4. *National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap – including provisions for a national MRV system – formulated*	1.1.4.1 Develop a national REDD+ Readiness Roadmap to support the development of a National Forest Monitoring System to reduce emissions from forest and rangeland landscapes; 1.1.4.2 Share and publicise the developed roadmap [Activity 1.1.4.1] with relevant government and non-government stakeholders by conducting meetings, workshops and conferences.	Existence of REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system	There is currently no REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system	A draft REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system has been formulated	A final REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system has been formulated	Review of REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document and reports Workshop/ meeting/ conference reports	
Outcome 1.2. Enhanced		Number of Community	Zero	At least 10 Community Development	At least 10 Community Development	Training session	Capacity building is

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
capacity of local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans		Development Committees, Forest Management Committees and Rangeland Social Associations trained		Committees, Forest Management Committees and/or Rangeland Social Associations trained	Committees, Forest Management Committees and/or Rangeland Social Associations trained	reports and attendance registers	undertaken using effective and appropriate training methods Trainees – including government staff and local communities – are able to apply new skills for daily activities related to SLM/SFM Resource materials are easily understood and adapted to local contexts Awareness-raising activities easily reach and are understood by targeted groups, and results in greater understanding of SLM/SFM concerns Consultation and participatory
Output 1.2.1 *Resource materials on local-level planning, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tools*	1.2.1.1 Develop training material and relevant toolkits in local languages on local-level planning, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM; 1.2.1.2 Deliver training and distribute toolkits [Activity 1.2.1.1] to local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces on participatory, community-based approaches to planning, implementation and M&E of SLM/SFM.	Number of resource materials on SLM/SFM tailored to local socio-economic and environmental conditions	Zero resource materials developed tailored to local conditions	At least sets of 4 resource materials developed, including on the following themes: • Land degradation and restoration assessments • Livelihood and resilience assessments • Approaches and technologies for SLM/SFM and restoration • M&E of SLM/SFM interventions	At least sets of 4 resource materials developed, including on the following themes: • Land degradation and restoration assessments • Livelihood and resilience assessments • Approaches and technologies for SLM/SFM and restoration • M&E of SLM/SFM interventions	Review of SLM/SFM resource materials	
Output 1.2.2 *Training provided to local-level technical government staff on*	1.2.2.1 Conduct training for MAIL NRM technical officers to enable them to use toolkits and other tools (e.g. questionnaires, decision-making support tools, standardised methodologies) for planning and implementation of	Number of local-level technical government staff members	Zero local-level technical government staff members have been trained	At least 25 local-level technical government staff members have been trained	At least 25 local-level technical government staff members have been trained	Training session reports and attendance registers	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
facilitation of community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for inter alia animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation and sustainable resource use	SLM/SFM practices that are locally-relevant; 1.2.2.2 Develop and conduct training for NRM technical officers on international best practices, including *inter alia* the following themes: • animal husbandry; • rangeland and grazing management; • conservation of forest resources and biodiversity; • sustainable use of natural resources from rangelands and forests; and • natural regeneration and local-participatory M&E.	trained (% women)					planning with local communities is effective in identifying priorities of various groups (including women) and does not result in conflict between resource users Security and other constraints do not prevent implementation of on-the-ground activities
Output 1.2.3. *Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based and gender-sensitive SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E*	1.2.3.1 Develop comprehensive and nationally-relevant awareness-raising campaign materials (e.g. posters, brochures, booklets, video and radio broadcast messages) in local languages to raise awareness on the benefits of SLM/SFM practices and the importance of M&E systems; 1.2.3.2. Conduct an awareness-raising campaign [Activity 1.2.3.1] at the national, provincial and district level to raise awareness on the benefits of SLM/SFM practices and the importance of M&E systems; 1.2.3.3 Develop an ongoing awareness-raising campaign for rangeland farmers that includes awareness on availability of pastoralist fields schools.	Number of awareness-raising activities undertaken, disaggregated by type and theme	Zero awareness-raising activities undertaken	At least 5 awareness-raising campaigns undertaken on the following themes: • Threats causing rangeland and forest degradation • The benefits of SLM/SFM • The importance of M&E to inform SLM/SFM decision-making	At least 20 awareness-raising campaigns undertaken on the following themes: • Threats causing rangeland and forest degradation • The benefits of SLM/SFM • The importance of M&E to inform SLM/SFM decision-making	Review of awareness-raising materials and project reports	
Output 1.2.4. *Community Development Committees (CDCs), Forest Management Associations (FMAs) and*	1.2.4.1 Develop training material and packages for CDCs, FMAs and RMAs to develop community-based plans for SLM/SFM [making use of assessments undertaken in Activity 2.1.1.2], including the following themes:	Number of community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed	Zero community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans have been developed	At least 10 community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed	At least 10 community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed	Training session reports and attendance registers	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
Rangeland Management Associations (RMAs) supported to develop participatory, community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans	• characterisation of rangeland, forest and other natural resources relevant to communities; • identification of the full range of community resource users and their respective needs; • establishment of a formal decision-making structure on SFM/SLM that is representative of – and endorsed by – all stakeholders; and • formalisation of benefit-sharing and conflict-resolution mechanisms. 1.2.4.2. Make training material packages accessible to CDCs, FMAs and RMAs to enable them to develop and validate community-based SLM/SFM plans; 1.2.4.3. Deliver training [Activity 1.2.4.1] to communities to enable them to develop and validate community-based SLM/SFM plans, including the following themes: • participatory resource mapping to characterise resource availability, land tenure and climate hazards, with a focus on rangeland and forest areas; and • integrated land- and forest-use planning detailing areas for activities such as inter alia grazing, wood-fuel collection, agriculture, conservation and restoration/reforestation. 1.2.4.4 Develop community-based NRM plans through participatory community planning approaches, including identifying areas for restoration and rehabilitation.					Review of SLM/SFM plans	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
Output 1.2.5. *Pastoralist field schools conducted on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/SLM practices*	1.2.5.1 Develop a framework and implementation modality for conducting pastoral field schools; 1.2.5.2 Develop a comprehensive training programme for pastoralists on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/SLM practices; 1.2.5.3 Undertake pastoralist field schools making use of the newly-developed awareness [Activity 1.2.3.3] and training programme [Activity 1.2.5.2].	Number of pastoralists trained (% women)	No pastoralists have been trained and no pastoralist field schools have been conducted	Existence of a training programme for the pastoralist field schools	At least 300 pastoralists (20% women) trained through pastoralist field schools	Review of training programme for pastoralist field schools Reports and attendance registers for pastoralist field schools	
Component 2: ***Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes***							
Outcome 2.1 Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces		Area of forest resources restored in the landscape, supported by forest management actors, training and materials [from GEF Indicator 5 – SFM3 Pr7]	Zero ha	2,000 ha of HCVFs and 4,000 ha of other forest types restored	10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types restored	Site visits, project reports, participatory M&E	Strong involvement of local communities in project activities SFM practices are successful in addressing degradation and supporting community livelihoods, delivering tangible benefits to targeted communities Security and other constraints do not prevent implementation of on-the-ground activities
Output 2.1.1. *Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVFs in Kunar and Paktya provinces*	2.1.1.1 Identify areas where HCVFs occur in Kunar and Paktya through technical and community consultations; 2.1.1.2. Undertake biodiversity assessments in identified areas [Activity 2.1.1.1] in Kunar and Paktya, focusing on threatened and rare species as well as economically valuable species; 2.1.1.3. Based on biodiversity assessments [Activity 2.1.1.2], inform and technically support communities to regulate the management of such areas in a	Number of biodiversity assessments conducted in Kunar and Paktya provinces	Zero biodiversity assessments have been conducted in Kunar and Paktya provinces	At least 1 biodiversity assessment conducted in each of Kunar and Paktya provinces (2 total)	At least 1 biodiversity assessment conducted in each of Kunar and Paktya provinces (2 total)	Review of biodiversity assessments and field reports	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
	manner that provides sustainable socio-economic benefits through conserving ecosystem functioning [linked to Activity 1.2.1.2].						Project activities are implemented in a way that minimises risks posed by climate-induced hazards
Output 2.1.2. *Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-timber forest products to reduce pressure on forest resources in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces*	2.1.2.1 Identify areas to establish community nurseries and woodlots through community participation; 2.1.2.2. Identify species' to be planted as HCVFs, fuelwood and building materials through experts and community consultation meetings; 2.1.2.3. Establish nurseries and woodlots in selected areas [Activity 2.1.2.1] using identified species' [Activity 2.1.2.2] to reduce pressure on forests through improved local access to fuelwood and building materials.	Number of nurseries and woodlots established	Zero nurseries and woodlots established	At least 10 nurseries or woodlots established	At least 10 nurseries or woodlots established	Site visits to nurseries and woodlots and review of project reports that include community consultations	
Output 2.1.3. *Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/ restoration and SFM implemented over 10,000 ha of HCVFs (Kunar and Paktya) and 20,000 ha of other forest types (Badghis) leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches*	2.1.3.1 Rehabilitate and restore 10,000 ha of HCVFs in selected areas [Activity 2.1.1.1] to provide habitat for threatened, endangered and rare species; 2.1.3.2 Rehabilitate and restore 20,000 ha of non-HCVFs in selected areas [Activity 1.2.4.4]; 2.1.3.3 Conduct a soil survey for soil carbon measurement [Activity 1.1.3.3].	[same as Project Objective Indicator 1]				Site visits to restored landscapes and review of project reports; Results of soil sampling analysis for soil carbon change between Year 1 and 6 to estimate the amount of carbon change per hectare;	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
Output 2.1.4. *Diversified livelihood options promoted to reduce pressure on forest resources, including agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces*	2.1.4.1. Undertake community livelihood surveys to identify livelihood options to meet community needs and to reduce pressure on forest resources; 2.1.4.2 Provide alternative livelihood options such as agro-forestry programmes and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products.	Number of households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	Zero households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	At least 20 households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	At least 50 households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	Site visits to targeted communities and review of project reports	
Component 3. ***Community-based rangeland management***							
Outcome 3.1 Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces		Land area under effective agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management practices and/or supporting climate-smart agriculture [GEF Indicator 1.1 – LD1 Pr2]	Zero ha	At least 50,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices.	At least 200,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices.	Site visits, project reports, participatory M&E	Strong involvement of local communities in project activities SLM practices are successful in addressing degradation and supporting community livelihoods, delivering tangible benefits to targeted communities Security and other constraints do not prevent
Output 3.1.1. *Climate-resilient SLM interventions – including soil and water conservation, rotational grazing and restoration/*	3.1.1.1 Develop a detailed implementation mechanism/methodology for climate-resilient SLM interventions; 3.1.1.2 Support the implementation of applying rotational grazing systems based on spatial and seasonal variability;	[same as Outcome 3.1]					

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
rehabilitation with palatable species – implemented over 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands	3.1.1.3 Establish seed banks of selected locally-appropriate, hardy, climate-resilient fodder crops; 3.1.1.4 Establish fodder banks that are demarcated and managed specifically for fodder production (*Atriplex nummularia* or *Alpha alpha*); 3.1.1.5 Rehabilitate rangelands through mixed reseeding, revegetation and establishing dune-stabilising windbreaks; 3.1.1.6 Implement soil and water conservation measures including *inter alia* 'check dams', contour bunds and other appropriate measures.						implementation of on-the-ground activities Project activities are implemented in a way that minimises risks posed by climate-induced hazards
Output 3.1.2. *Enhanced livelihoods through strengthened value chains for products from livestock husbandry*	3.1.2.1 Introduce improved livestock management practices into rangeland farming that have *inter alia* greater feed conservation rates and increased alternative livelihood; 3.1.2.2 Develop a reporting system and identify relevant stakeholders to form a 'pasture network' to disseminate information on *inter alia*: • livestock owners; • veterinary services; • livestock health and disease prevention experts and service providers; • markets; and • products. 3.1.2.3 Introduce, distribute and provide extension services through the established 'pasture network' [Activity 3.1.2.2].	Number of households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	Zero households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	At least 20 households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	At least 50 households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	Site visits to targeted communities and review of project reports	
Component 4. ***Knowledge management and M&E***							
Outcome 4.1. Improved knowledge to inform planning and implementation		Improved capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM	Baseline score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 2.6	Mid-term milestone score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 2.8	Target score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 3.0	Surveys of government staff on access to information and	Strong inter-institutional collaboration supports successful establishment

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
of SLM/SFM practices						knowledge management on SLM/SFM	of national information and resource centre
Output 4.1.1. *National information and resource centre with associated M&E system and database for SLM/SFM established*	4.1.1.1 Establish a 'knowledge hub' within the 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' for all SLM/SFM-related information to be accessible at all levels; 4.1.1.2 Conduct an analysis of current gaps and barriers that hinder knowledge improvement and information-sharing to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices. 4.1.1.3 Identify and detail the operational modality, technical specification, MoU and ToRs of the 'knowledge hub' [Activity 4.1.1.1] by making use of an online platform; 4.1.1.4 Assess and revise type of knowledge management services, contents, operation and maintenance of the online platform [Activity 4.1.1.3].	Existence of 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre with M&E system and database	No 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre with M&E system and database currently exists	Organisational and operational structure of 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre formulated	'Knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre operationalised	Project reports Review online platform	Potential users are easily able to access information for the national information and resource centre Security and other constraints do not hinder access to sites for undertaking participatory M&E
Output 4.1.2. *Local-level, participatory M&E system for SLM/SFM established for monitoring of rangeland and forest condition, including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration*	4.1.2.1 Design a local-level, participatory M&E system for rangeland, forest, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration, taking into account literacy levels, gender balance and the local language context; 4.1.2.2 Undertake participatory M&E [Activity 4.1.2.1] within Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya with the relevant DAIL staff using a learning-by-doing approach; 4.1.2.3 Design a methodology and framework for the M&E system [Activity 4.1.2.1] and the process of undertaking M&E activities [Activity 4.1.2.2]; 4.1.2.4 Consolidate and develop reports on the M&E system for rangeland, forest and biodiversity	Number of participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Zero participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Existence of framework document outlining design and implementation protocols for participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition	At least 10 participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Review of framework document and protocols Review of M&E assessments	Lessons learned and best practices are easily captured and synthesised Dissemination of lessons learned and best practices reach the targeted groups, where they are easily understood and applied

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
	conservation as well as carbon sequestration, that will feed back into the established knowledge hub [Activity 4.1.1.1] as well as into the lessons learned [Activity 4.1.4.1].						
Output 4.1.3. *Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated*	4.1.3.1 Collate best practices from similar projects within the country as well as neighbouring countries; 4.1.3.2 Synthesise collected best practices [Activity 4.1.3.1] into guidelines to inform different user-groups/applications on the following: • training government on assessing land degradation and integrating SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting [Output 1.1.2]; • conducting fine-scale inventories of rangeland resources [Output 1.1.3]; • training government on facilitating community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM [Output 1.2.2]; • developing community-based and gender-responsive plans for SLM/SFM [Output 1.2.4]; • conducting pastoralist field schools on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management [Output 1.2.5]; • conducting biodiversity assessments in HCVFs [Output 2.1.1]; • regenerating/rehabilitating/restoring forests and implementing SFM [Output 2.1.3]; and • implementing climate-resilient SLM interventions in degraded rangelands [Output 3.1.1]. 4.1.3.3 Develop a strategy for effective knowledge management and information-sharing to be	Number of synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated	Zero synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated	At least 4 synthesised best-practice guidelines developed, with a least one each on the following themes: • rangeland management and restoration; • improved livestock and herd management; • restoration of HCVFs; and • restoration of other forest types.	At least 4 synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated, with a least one each on the following themes: • rangeland management and restoration; • improved livestock and herd management; • restoration of HCVFs; and • restoration of other forest types.	Review of best practice guidelines and strategy for effective knowledge management and information-sharing	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
	delivered to project beneficiaries as best-practice guidelines based on collected [Activity 4.1.3.1] and synthesised information [Activity 4.1.3.2] on: • SLM/SFM measures; • rangelands and associated livestock; and • water conservation measures.						
Output 4.1.4. *Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces collated and disseminated nationwide as well as regionally*	4.1.4.1 Identify and specify available channels for receiving and collecting lessons learned from rangeland farmers, and collect any related documents to collate into lessons learned [i.e. through the 'pasture network' established under Activity 3.1.2.2]; 4.1.4.2 Collate lessons learned and feed back into the 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' [Activity 1.1.1.1] and specifically into the 'knowledge hub' [Activity 4.1.1.1] to be used to inform future planning; 4.1.4.3 Regional sharing of lessons learned to neighbouring countries with similar socio-economic and environmental contexts to be used to inform future planning.	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Zero lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Review of lessons learned and disseminatio n channels	
Output 4.1.5. *Mid-term review (MTR) and Terminal Evaluation (TE) conducted*	4.1.5.1 Conduct an MTR for the project, and develop and revise an MTR report integrating results from the workshop [Activity 4.1.5.2]; 4.1.5.2 Conduct a MTR workshop in Kabul with relevant stakeholders from all five target provinces to assess project implementation; 4.1.5.3 Conduct a TE for the project, and develop and revise the TE report integrating results from the workshop [Activity 4.1.5.4];	Existence of MTR and TE reports	Zero reports	1 MTR report	1 TE report	Review of MTR and TE reports	

Results chain	List of activities per Output	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Target	Means of verification	Assumptions
	4.1.5.4 Conduct a TE workshop in Kabul with relevant stakeholders from all five target provinces to assess project implementation and the overall outcomes.						

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS

GEF STAP Comments at PIF Submission

1. The PPG should help clarify the way forest and rangeland management are linked and can be integrated on the ground in the context of this project. This could entail, for example, targeting geographical units such as watersheds to plan interventions at landscape scale that integrate both forestry and grazing.	The PPG phase focused on potential ways in which to integrate different approaches to natural resource management that could integrate both forestry and rangelands. The approach mandated by the Government of Afghanistan within the National Resource Management Strategy (2017–2021) clearly outlines community-based natural resource management – including both community-based forest management and community-based rangeland management – as the preferred approach. This is thus the approach to be adopted during execution of this project, *viz.* community-based rangeland and forest management by engaging community-driven local associations, as provided for under through the focus on community-based planning activities under Outcome 1.2 of the proposed project. During the course of the community-based planning, it is expected that priorities relating to either/both forests and rangelands will be identified and addressed, based on the local environmental context. In addition, the proposed project will enhance the capacity of SLM/SFM planning in which forest and rangeland management practices are integrated and showcase it through intervention for example in Badghis province.
2. The knowledge management strategy includes a national resource centre with an online platform to be used as a repository. It is however unclear whether this centre will be a staffed physical entity, and provide other KM services, such as distribution of printed materials, or training.	This resource centre identified in the PIF – together with the training programme – has been integrated into the NRM Centre of Excellence (see Outcome 1.1 and 4.1) at the request of the Government of Afghanistan. Rather than considering the training/capacity building and the national resource centre as separate actions, MAIL identified them as being complementary and mutually dependent. To this end, it was requested that a Centre of Excellence for capacity development within the NRM sector be supported. This will cover both the training and the knowledge management initiatives highlighted in the PIF and further developed in the project document during the PPG phase. The Centre of Excellence (CoE) will indeed be a physical entity with staffing able to support knowledge management and training services. MAIL co-financing will support the following: • Physical premises for the NRM CoE • Research facilities to support the NRM CoE • Time of technical staff and specialists to support training and knowledge management activities • Training opportunities such as workshops • Development and dissemination of guidelines, best practices, etc. These will be complemented by project financing to ensure that the NRM CoE is adequately equipped and has sufficient support for capacity development as per the gaps identified. The detailed outline of the CoE is descrived in the Annex of the Project Document.
3. The proposal recognizes the need to build resilience to climate change. The project developers may be interested to consult the Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Assessment (RAPTA) Framework at www.stapgef.org for guidance on assessing and enhancing resilience, evaluating intervention options and devising adaptive implementation pathways.	The principles captured in the RAPTA framework were used to elaborate on the project design. This led to an enhanced consideration of multi-stakeholder engagement and governance, particularly with the broader inclusion of government agencies within the project management and governance structure, as well as greater inclusion of the needs of indigenous peoples in the form of the *Kuchi* nomads. Furthermore, the systems description and assessment approaches were used to identify relationships between the socio-economic and bio-physical aspects of the problems to be addressed as well as the proposed solutions. This led to a focus on community–natural resource nexus as being a key driver of environmental degradation as well as a key area of intervention to achieve global environmental benefits. The project focus on community-based natural resource management – including SLM and SFM – was renewed to ensure that project activities lead to more resilient and sustainable social and environmental systems. The options and pathways approach was used to assess the project's desired outcomes vis-à-vis the actions originally identified during the project identification phase. Through consultation and appraisal of intervention options, additional options were identified (e.g. the inclusion of alternative energy sources to reduce pressure on forest/rangeland resources) as well as extant options enhanced (e.g. integration of the national resource centre with the training programme to support establishment of a national Centre of Excellence on NRM). Finally, the learning, M&E and knowledge management aspects were re-visited and strengthened during the PPG phase. This includes the role of iterative and reflective M&E to guide project management as well as to inform design and implementation of project activities. This lead to increased budget being allocated to Outcome 4.1 as the main component of learning, M&E and knowledge management within the project design. This will support upscaling and replication of project activities outside of the project areas, based on successful dissemination of lessons learned to other areas within the country.

GEF Council Comments at PIF Submission

4. Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but asks that the following comments are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal: The expected co-finance of US$35,000,000 to be provided by the Government of Afghanistan seems to be very high. The project document therefore should be more explicit on the budgetary origin and the proportion of expected in-kind and financial contributions. Germany strongly recommends considering an alternative implementation scenario that would secure feasibility even in case of only moderate contributions of the host government.	We appreciate the comments from the Germany council member and have ensured that these comments were fully considered during the PPG phase and reflected in the CEO Endorsement Request and FAO project document. The indicative co-financing from the Government of Afghanistan identified in the PIF was based on the MAIL's 2015 annual budget allocations for activities such as forest/ watershed management, desertification control, rangeland restoration and protected areas management. This estimate assumed that budgetary allocations would remain constant throughout the period of project implementation, and included co-financing for on-the-ground activities as well as staff time and other forms of in-kind co-financing. During the PPG phase, these figures were updated according to current budget allocations as well as proposed result matrix for MAIL, NEPA, MRRD, IGDK and FAO in close consultation with these institutions. This included a review of the indicative co-financing sources and amounts from the PIF, as well as identification of new/diversifing sources of co-financing, providing breakdowns of the final co-financing amounts and contributions as detailed in the co-financing agreements included in Annex 16 of the Project Document. These are summarised below. MAIL is currently implementing two programmes, namely: i) the 'Community-based Natural Resource Management Programme', with a total budget of over US$30 million for the next five years; and ii) the 'Kabul Greenbelt Project', which has a total budget of over US$40 million for the next seven years. Through these two projects, MAIL has committed to in-kind cofinancing for the proposed project to the amount of US$38,656,984. This funding is confirmed, and will contribute to this GEF project in terms of on-the-ground activities, infrastructure and equipment, and human resources. MRRD is currently implementing the following initiatives in Afghanistan that have committed to in-kind cofinancing to the proposed project: i) 'Capacity development and knowledge management for sustainable land and forests'; ii) "Preparation and implementation of training programs for civil servants at national and provincial levels"; and iii) 'Knowledge management'. The total funding confirmed for these initiatives is US$3,630,249. They will contribute to this GEF project in terms of facilitation and provision of training for land and forest assessments and planning, improved public awareness on community-based SLM/SFM, provision of premises and facilities, and prevention of degradation of agricultural and other lands. The Independent General Directorate of *Kuchis* (IGDK) is currently implementing the following projects across Afghanistan: i) 'Capacity building and policy development project', with a budget of US$800,000; ii) 'Research project', with a budget of US$2,000,000; and iii) 'Rangeland allocation and management', with a budget of US$1,400,000. The IGDK has therefore committed in-kind cofinancing in the amount of US$3,400,000 to the proposed project. This cofinancing is confirmed, and will contribute to this GEF project in terms of capacity building of government officials and community members, assessments of rangeland resources, and community-based management of rangeland areas. NEPA has a large presence throughout Afghanistan and because of the alignment of the proposed project components with their ongoing activities across the country, NEPA committed to in-kind cofinancing in the amount of US$710,000. This amount is confirmed and will contribute to the GEF project in terms of capacity building of government staff and local communities for community-based SLM and SFM planning, improved management of forests for biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration, and improved knowledge management for SLM/SFM. Finally, FAO committed to an in-kind cofinancing amount of US$7,860,000 to be linked with existing country and regional programmes. The implementation scenario has been carefully designed to be feasible given the contributions of the host government and FAO as co-financiers. While disbursement status of co-finacing will be monitored under the M&E Plan, project outputs are not solely reliant upon such co-financing contributions, but would be

	able to be delivered, if the co-financing is not fully realised. Please refer to the detailed project budget to see where finances have been linked to the specific project deliverables.
5. The United States is supportive of the proposed GEF concept and appreciates the strong emphasis on stakeholder engagement and a strong participatory process. Prior to CEO endorsement, we encourage the FAO to responding to the STAP recommendations and to elaborate and expand upon risk mitigation as the concept is further developed into a full project proposal.	We appreciate the support for the GEF concept from the United States council member, particularly concerning the community-based and participatory focus of the project. Stakeholder engagement continued throughout the PPG phase to ensure identification of and alignment with national- and local-level priorities. This included an inception workshop, a national-level consultation workshop, a provincial consultation workshop in Bamyan, a joint consultation workshop for representatives from all project provinces, and a validation workshop. Attendees of these workshops included representatives from a range of government agencies, NGOs, international development partners, donors and other stakeholders. The consultations served to identify the selection of project sites/extent of interventions, as well as to identify specific needs and measures to address these needs. The commitments and willingnesses to the project were also positively resulted as a form of co-financing contributions. For further details, please see Annex 15 and 16 of the FAO Project Document. We have ensured that all GEFSec, GEF STAP and GEF Council comments have been taken into consideration during the PPG phase. In particular, the GEF STAP recommendations were addressed as has already been described in this Annex B and in accordance with the comments from the United States council member. After due consideration of risks in relation to the project design, this project was certified as being "Low" risk under FAO's "Risk Classification Certification process". The risks identified during the PIF formulation were updated and further detailed in relation to changes within the country context since PIF approval. In addition, appropriate mitigation measures for these risks were identified and elaborated. Please refer to Section A.5 and Annex E of this CEO Endorsement Request as well as Section 2.4, Annex 4 and Annex 6 of the FAO Project Document.

ANNEX C: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION ACTIVITIES AND THE USE OF FUNDS[58]

A. Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: **300,000**			
Project Preparation Activities Implemented	***GETF/LDCF/SCCF/CBIT Amount ($)***		
	Budgeted Amount	***Amount Spent To date***	***Amount Committed***
Project management (BL5011)	14,286	0	14,286
Consultants for preparation of project submission documents (BL5013)	180,262	107,278	86,407
Travel	40,140	4,501	26,300
Training (PPG consultation and validation workshops), stationary	32,000	13,925	27,619
Expendable procurement for office small equipment	23,312	3,313	6,700
General operating expenses	10,000	6,671	3,000
Total	**300,000**	**135,688**	**164,312**

[58] If at CEO Endorsement, the PPG activities have not been completed and there is a balance of unspent fund, Agencies can continue to undertake the activities up to one year of project start. No later than one year from start of project implementation, Agencies should report this table to the GEF Secretariat on the completion of PPG activities and the amount spent for the activities. Agencies should also report closing of PPG to Trustee in its Quarterly Report.

ANNEX D: CALENDAR OF EXPECTED REFLOWS (IF NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT IS USED)

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

N/A

ANNEX E: ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

No. of risk	Risk	Risk description	Impact, likelihood & overall ranking (H/M/L)	Mitigation measure	Responsible party
1	Deterioration in security situation prevents the effective implementation of project activities in selected provinces and districts	**Social/technical risk:** Project staff are unable to visit provinces and implementation sites to consult with communities, support implementation and undertake M&E activities. Damages and losses may occur to project interventions through conflict situations.	**Impact:** H **Likelihood:** M–H **Overall:** M–H	An analysis of the security situation within selected provinces and targeted districts was undertaken during the PPG phase of the proposed project. The security situation will be reassessed during the inception phase of project implementation. This will be to ensure that up-to-date information is used for adaptive management and decision-making on selection of targeted districts and communities to ensure that the security situation is stable enough to not hinder implementation. The proposed project will adhere to UN Security Rules as stipulated in the Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) system under the guidance of UN-DSS at all times. FAO national and international staff, including implementing and leading government agency functions will be in adherence with the UN Rules and Regulations on Safety and Security. The lead government agency will continually engage with local governance structures – including community leaders, CDCs and *shuras* – to enhance security and community ownership. Local authorities and communities will be given considerable project responsibility. Local NGOs and other implementing partners with a track record of success in security-compromised areas (e.g. MADERA) will be engaged to support implementation based on their experience. Security costs will be incorporated into the budget with consideration of inflated costs.	PMU
2	Limited capacity of relevant national- and local-level institutions hinders effective planning and implementation	**Operational/technical risk:** Implementation of project activities do not achieve the desired outputs and outcomes, leading to inefficient resource use and lower credibility for the project among stakeholders.	**Impact:** L–M **Likelihood:** L **Overall:** L	Strong technical support has been provided by FAO throughout project design, which will be continued during the implementation phase of the project. Engagement of both national and international specialists will support the transfer of skills and expertise to government staff and other relevant stakeholders during the inception phase. Outcome 1.1 and 1.2 of the proposed project focus on training at all levels to ensure that sufficient capacity is built for planning, implementation and sustainability of all project activities. The main stakeholders and partners have been identified during the PPG phase and will continue to be engaged during the project's inception and implementation phases to facilitate the effective and sustainable rolling out of project activities. Capacity of relevant district officials will be built during project implementation to implement and monitor project activities.	PMU

No. of risk	Risk	Risk description	Impact, likelihood & overall ranking (H/M/L)	Mitigation measure	Responsible party
				Collaborations, engagements and knowledge-sharing will be facilitated between local institutions within each targeted province. Regular technical oversight missions will be undertaken to the targeted provinces by FAO staff and/or technical advisors. On-the-ground training will be provided to all project implementers which will facilitate the 'learning-by-doing' approach of the proposed project. Appropriate remuneration and benefits will be offered to secure appropriately qualified project staff who will be evaluated against specific goals and targets outlined as per the proposed project.	
3	Climate risks – especially drought – impact on ecosystem rehabilitation activities and accelerate desertification	**Environmental risk:** Delays in implementation and/or reduced success of project activities and interventions in forest and rangeland landscapes. Adverse weather conditions could indirectly impact on the creation of additional livelihoods for local communities if there are delays in project activity implementation.	**Impact:** M **Likelihood:** L–M **Overall:** M	The SLM/SFM practices to be implemented under the proposed project activities focus on climate-resilient and climate-smart measures that will reduce the vulnerability of rangeland/forest ecosystems and community livelihoods to such extreme climate risks. Planning processes at both the national and local levels include contingency planning for drought conditions and other extreme climate events. All proposed project activities and interventions have been designed to follow international best practice guidelines that take climate and other environmental risks into account. Species for re-vegetation in both forest and rangeland landscapes will be chosen during the inception phase based on the local ecological conditions in the selected project implementation sites. Under Outcome 1.2, communities will be well-trained on restoration protocols, care of seedlings/saplings and post-rehabilitation follow-up to maximise the success of restoration activities. This training will be incorporated into the long-term capacity development programme that will be established through the 'Centre of Excellence' under Outcome 1.1, while relevant knowledge will be made accessible through knowledge management activities under Outcome 4.1. The project will be implemented in close coordination with ANDMA to ensure that advance warning of extreme climate events is obtained to direct project activities. Appropriate restoration approaches for forests and rangelands will include consideration of potential extreme events specific to each province and target district, and will take into account relevant protection measures. Climate variability has been taken into account into the design of the proposed project activities and will be reassessed during the inception phase of implementation.	PMU
4	Disease outbreaks affect livestock of participating communities	**Environmental risk:** Benefits of the project related to improved productivity of rangelands are not realised as	**Impact:** M–H **Likelihood:** L–M	Training for technical government staff will include topics such as the treatment of livestock against potential diseases. Communities will be trained on livestock treatment under Outcome 1.2 of the proposed project.	PMU

No. of risk	Risk	Risk description	Impact, likelihood & overall ranking (H/M/L)	Mitigation measure	Responsible party
		communities are unable to benefit from improved rangeland conditions.	**Overall:** M	Outcome 3.1 of the proposed project includes establishing a pastoralist network to improve access to veterinary assistance and animal health care. Improved livestock breeds will be introduced, selected based on *inter alia* resistance to common diseases.	
5	Low levels of participation from national- and local-level stakeholders hinders progress	**Institutional/social risk:** Decrease in project ownership and support from government agencies and relevant partners. Poor updates of policy, strategic and technical guidance results.	**Impact:** M–H **Likelihood:** L **Overall:** L–M	National- and provincial-level stakeholders have been engaged and consulted with during the design of the proposed project. This engagement will continue during project implementation to ensure strong buy-in and involvement at all levels. Furthermore, communities will be involved during project implementation through a fully participatory process specifically during community-based planning and implementation of the on-the-ground activities. This engagement at the community level will promote ownership of the proposed project among participants. The PMU will continue to ensure relevant government agencies are fully involved in the project implementation phase through the project's implementation arrangements that engage project partners in various roles through the PSC, the PMU and the TWGs. Roles and responsibilities will be discussed, clearly defined and agreed upon, and contributions of each partner identified for the successful execution of the proposed project. Strong leadership from the lead government agency will be ensured from the beginning of the project implementation phase through regular meetings and engagement on planning and decision-making. Local-level activities will be implemented by participating communities according to MAIL's "Implementation and handover procedures for natural resource projects". Agreements will be established with participating communities detailing the role of the community in planning and implementing restoration and protection activities, as well as the ongoing management and sustainability of project interventions after the lifespan of the project. On-the-ground coordination will be undertaken in conjunction with district-level government structures, particularly MRRD, MAIL and IGDK.	PMU
6	Knowledge generated through the proposed project is not widely used or taken up	**Social/technical risk:** Limited replication, upscaling and long-term support of project activities through lack of information on how to implement them and what the benefits are.	**Impact:** M–H **Likelihood:** L **Overall:** L–M	The demonstration of benefits of the proposed project approach will provide practical examples that are easily understood by communities, encouraging the continuation of uptake, utilisation and adaptation of approaches. The national resource centre (established under Outcome 4.1 of the project) will include provisions to ensure access to and dissemination of knowledge generated through the project. Knowledge-sharing activities of the proposed project will use a range of approaches to target priority groups within communities through appropriate channels of	PMU

No. of risk	Risk	Risk description	Impact, likelihood & overall ranking (H/M/L)	Mitigation measure	Responsible party
				communication (i.e. pastoral groups), increasing the chance that the knowledge is taken up by the target audiences.	
7	Lack of engagement with indigenous people results in negative impact of project activities on their lives and livelihoods	**Social/political risk:** No community ownership of activities	**Impact:** M–H **Likelihood:** L **Overall:** L	During the PPG phase, indigenous peoples were intensely consulted with and involved in designing project activities and selection of project sites. This engagement will continue throughout project implementation to ensure that the needs and priorities of *Kuchi* nomads are included in planning and implementation of project activities. Specifically, the IGDK has been a key stakeholder in the development of the proposed project and will continue to be so during project implementation.	PMU