

Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation: GEF support to Dryland Countries

Approach Paper

September 2022

Background

1. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established in 1991 to serve as financial mechanism supporting countries in meeting their commitments to multilateral environmental conventions related to the achievement of global environmental benefits. From its 4th replenishment phase (GEF-4) onwards the GEF has been moving from a focal area siloed approach in which projects each address one environmental issue at a time toward more integrated programming. In GEF-6, integrated programming became a specific strategy to tackle the main drivers of environmental degradation and to achieve impact at scale. Tackling the main drivers of environmental degradation through integrated programming has been justified by the fact that many of these drivers overlap geographically and interact with each other, often extending their influence beyond national boundaries. This has implications on how GEF support is used in recipient countries. To participate in integrated multiple country initiatives, governments need to find a balance between their national sustainable development priorities and their commitments to contribute to the global goals of the multilateral environmental conventions they participate in. In this context, performance of GEF support in countries has been an increasing focus of attention for donors and recipient countries alike across GEF replenishment phases.
2. Starting in GEF-4, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the GEF responded to the demand for country level evidence by conducting Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPEs).¹ While comprehensive and appreciated especially by recipient countries, these evaluations focused each on only one country. As such, CPEs could not provide a representative, generalizable picture of what works and why in specific regional contexts or thematic portfolios. To address this shortcoming, in 2017 the IEO introduced the concept of Strategic Country Cluster Evaluations (SCCEs). SCCEs focus on a limited set of common themes across clusters of countries and/or portfolios involving a critical mass of GEF investments towards comparable or shared environmental challenges and have gained over the years a substantial experience with GEF programming.
3. This SCCE covers countries with a high share of drylands in their total land area. Drylands cover over 40 percent of the earth's land surface and are home to more than two billion people. Selection of drylands as the main focus of this SCCE is based on dryland countries' comparable land-based

¹ From 2006 to 2016 the IEO has conducted 26 CPEs using the country as the unit of analysis to examine the totality of GEF support across all GEF Agencies and programs.

environmental challenges including water scarcity, high climate variability, desertification, land degradation and drought. These countries also face challenges to human well-being in terms of health, food security, nutrition, livelihoods, social relations and security, all of which is at risk from dryland degradation. After a concise introduction underscoring the main drylands-related environmental and socioeconomic challenges and their importance in GEF programming strategies and interventions, this Approach Paper describes the rationale, objectives, key questions and design of the Drylands SCCE.

Drylands: at a crossroad between environment and development

4. Identified as land areas with an Aridity Index (AI) of less than 0.65,² drylands extend over more than 40 percent of the earth’s land area. Drylands are classified in four types of sub-habitat (Table 1). Accounting for 21 percent of all the drylands, ‘dry sub-humid’ lands are often naturally dominated by broad-leaved savannah woodlands, fairly dense tree canopies, and perennial grasses. ‘Semi-arid’ lands account for 37 percent of all drylands. These lands are often dominated by thorny savannahs with a great diversity of grass species. ‘Arid’ lands account for 26 percent of all drylands and are often comprised by annual grasslands. ‘Hyper-arid’ lands cover 16 percent of the world’s drylands. These lands are largely unvegetated, with most cultivation and plant growth concentrated in oases and croplands where plants are irrigated by local groundwater sources.

Table 1: Global figures for the four types of drylands

Dryland sub-habitat	Aridity index	% global land area	% global population	% rangeland	% cultivated	% other
Dry Sub-humid	0.50–0.65	8.7	15.3	34	47	20
Semi-arid	0.20–0.50	15.2	14.4	54	35	10
Arid	0.05–0.20	10.6	4.1	87	7	6
Hyper-arid	<0.05	6.6	1.7	97	0.6	3
Total		41.3	35.5	65	25	10

Source: Safriel *et al.*, 2005

5. In terms of land use, rangelands cover two thirds of the world drylands, a quarter of drylands are used for rainfed and irrigated farming, and around 10 percent are either forest lands or are occupied by towns and cities. While an estimated 44 percent of croplands and 50 percent of livestock worldwide are found in the drylands, food production represents only a fraction of the value to society that drylands provide. Dryland forests contribute to national economies directly through provision of fuel, timber and non-timber forest products, and indirectly through protection of watersheds and other

² The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) defines drylands as arid, semi-arid, and dry, sub-humid areas that receive less precipitation than the evaporative demand, and plant production is thus water limited for at least a substantial part of the year. The Aridity Index is a measure of the ratio between average annual precipitation and total annual potential evapotranspiration ([Joint Research Center, European Commission, 2019](#)). A land area with an AI of 0.65 or less indicates that potential evapotranspiration is at least 50 percent greater than actual mean precipitation.

ecosystem services.³ Overall, drylands support one third of the area within Global Conservation Hotspots: places that are both biologically diverse and seriously threatened (Davies *et al.*, 2012). Dryland biodiversity regulates climate locally, through provision of shade and shelter, and globally, through capture and storage of carbon. Despite having relatively low plant biomass, and hence relatively low organic carbon per hectare (in vegetation and soil), dryland soils contain 27 percent of the global soil organic carbon pool, whilst accounting for 97 per cent of inorganic carbon reserves, due to the increasing accumulation of inorganic soil carbon as aridity increases (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

6. Water scarcity is the driver of the main environmental concerns in drylands. Extreme unpredictability in rainfall occurs because as climates get drier, rain events tend to become more erratic, with high variability from one year to the next, contributing to land degradation, due to loss of groundcover during drought which leaves land susceptible to wind erosion. In turn, degraded land stores less water, leading to more severe effects of both drought and flood. In the drylands such consequences are more acutely felt due to the relative scarcity of water. Estimates of the extent of land degradation in the drylands are between 25 and 30 percent of global land area.⁴ Desertification, commonly defined as land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities, has been described as the greatest environmental challenge of our time and climate change is making it worse (Carbon Brief, 2019). Risks from desertification are projected to increase due to climate change. Under shared socio-economic pathway SSP2 ('Middle of the Road') at 1.5°C, 2°C and 3°C of global warming, the number of dryland population exposed (vulnerable) to various impacts related to water, energy and land sectors (e.g. water stress, drought intensity, habitat degradation) is projected to reach 951 (178) million, 1152 (220) million and 1285 (277) million, respectively (IPCC, 2019). A growing number of countries, particularly in the developing world, are voicing concerns about the closely related challenges of Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD).

7. Drylands populations rely largely on rural livelihoods, directly or indirectly managing land. Poverty levels in the drylands, measured in terms of literacy rates and health indices, are above average in most dryland countries. Adult female literacy rates in the humid lands of West Africa, for example, are around 50 percent, but they drop to between 5 and 10 percent in the drylands. In the drylands of Asia, infant mortality rates are around 50 percent above the global mean (Middleton *et al.*, 2011). Drylands are also home to many of the world's most populated cities. The way the drylands are managed directly affects life in such urban settings. Desertification can compromise the safe and regular supply of water, clean air, food and fuel, as well as opportunities for recreation. Population growth is placing ever-greater demands on the drylands and increasing pressure on dryland biodiversity.

8. Poverty and desertification are closely related. Dryland populations are finding it increasingly difficult to continue practicing traditional sustainable land management due to rural population growth

³ Over a third of the world's major river basins, as mapped by the World Resources Institute (WRI), fall at least 50 percent within the drylands.

⁴ An analysis of long-term trends (25-year span) using remote sensing to measure inter-annual vegetation found land degradation hot spots covering about 29 percent of global land area, but with dryland-dominated biomes affected to an above-average extent (Le *et al.*, 2014).

and a breakdown in local resource governance⁵ that results in weak land tenure and conflicts between herders and farmers over the use of land. Such conflicts occur as already fragile ecosystems and local communities are pushed beyond coping capacity by the combined effects of climate change and population growth. Importantly, poverty in the drylands is rooted in the historical neglect of these so-called “low potential” areas. Several countries have legally classified drylands as “wastelands”. Resources have been channeled into humid lands, leaving drylands starved of investment, security and basic services. Research in India and China, however, has shown that drylands can give higher returns on investment than so-called high-potential lands.⁶ More recent research conducted in the Sahel shows that every US dollar invested into dryland restoration yields on average US\$1.2 returns, and that at most, ten years are needed for restoration activities to break even from the social perspective, accounting for both market-priced and non-market ecosystem benefits (Mirzabaev, A., Sacande, M., Motlagh, F. *et al.* 2021).

Drylands in GEF programming strategies

9. Drylands have been part of successive Land Degradation Focal Area (LDFA) strategies since GEF-1 and GEF-2 through Operational Program 12, and featured also in GEF-3, when Land Degradation was established as a separate GEF focal area. GEF-4 and GEF-5 LDFA strategies specifically mention drylands in the description of sustainable agriculture and rangeland management, forest landscapes and integrated landscapes strategy objectives. Drylands-related objectives of GEF-6 LDFA strategy target sustainable land management, climate-smart agriculture and ecosystem services from forests.

10. Initially largely project-based, from GEF-4 onwards LDFA strategies in drylands are being increasingly implemented through a programmatic approach. Large programs like the Strategic Investment Program (SIP)/TerrAfrica in GEF-4 and the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) in GEF-5 (Box 1) were followed in GEF-6 by the Resilient Food Systems Integrated Approach Pilot (RFS IAP),⁷ and the Dryland Sustainable Landscapes (DSL) Impact Program in GEF-7.⁸ Another major GEF-7 program, the Food Systems, Land Use, and Restoration Impact Program (FOLUR) provides countries with support

⁵ The effectiveness of governance structures in drylands common access resources is often limited by a combination of weak capacities of State entities in their oversight, enforcement and facilitation roles; failure to value and support traditional governance mechanisms; and the inability of such mechanisms to adapt to changes in the nature and magnitude of threats to natural resources or to changes in demographic and cultural conditions.

⁶ In China, a combination of agricultural reform and investment in agricultural research and development, education, roads and electricity stimulated growth in the non-farm rural sector, supporting development of agriculture as well as providing job creation for urban migrants (Fan (ed), 2008). A similar pattern was observed in India where rural non-farm employment grew and poverty declined in response to infrastructure investment, particularly in places where literacy rates were raised (Ravallion and Datt, 1999).

⁷ With an envelope of US\$116 million GEF grant and US\$805 million co-financing, the RFS IAP promotes sustainability and resilience through management of the natural resources—land, water, soils, trees and genetic resources—that underpin food security in 12 Sub-Saharan Africa countries. Eight out of 12 RFS child projects are drylands-related.

⁸ With a US\$95.8 million GEF grant and US\$809 million co-financing the DSL program aims at avoiding, reducing, and reversing further degradation, desertification, and deforestation of land and ecosystems in drylands through the sustainable management of production landscapes in 11 countries in Central Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

aligned with the drylands-related objectives of the GGWI.⁹

Box 1: TerrAfrica and GGWI

Launched in 2008, the SIP/TerrAfrica program provided \$1 billion of development financing, including \$150 million in GEF resources and \$580 million from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group, to invest in 36 projects across 27 countries. The SIP/TerrAfrica portfolio included 9 countries in the Sahel region and eventually became the catalyst for the next generation of integrated landscape management investments in the GGWI. In 2011, the GEF and World Bank deepened their engagement to support the ambitious GGWI to transform the Sahel into a stable, sustainable, resilient region through improved management of natural resources, land, water, and climate risks. The Sahel and West Africa Program in Support of the GGWI (SAWAP), a \$1.1 billion multi-trust fund programmatic approach to implement SLM in targeted landscapes and climate vulnerable areas in 12 countries, is financed by the GEF, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), the IDA, and country contributions.

11. Drylands received increased attention in GEF-7. The Land Degradation Global Benefits Index (LD GBI) of the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) was revised to account for the challenge of combating desertification in drylands, including the need for adaptation to drought risks (GEF, 2018). Since then, the LD STAR allocation for all countries includes a 0.6 weight for proportion of dryland area (i.e., the higher the proportion of drylands in a country, the higher is the STAR allocation).

12. Drylands continue to feature prominently in GEF programming in GEF-8. The LDFA strategy described in the GEF-8 Programming Directions broadly focuses on addressing the drivers of land degradation in production landscapes where agricultural, forestry and rangeland management practices underpin the livelihoods of rural communities, smallholder farmers and pastoralists (GEF, 2022). The LDFA strategy aligns with GEF's vision to achieve healthy and resilient ecosystems by promoting Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and supporting the achievement of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).¹⁰ Within this broad focus, the LDFA places a specific emphasis on SLM related approaches in drylands addressing, among other issues, drought-prone ecosystems and populations. GEF investments include planned support to the implementation of relevant aspects of national drought plans, LDN target setting, and other drought-related activities falling within GEF's mandate to generate global environmental benefits. As for the LDFA-specific support modalities, joint programming with other GEF focal areas is planned to be actively pursued in GEF-8, especially in integrated programs and multifocal projects. This effort will consider opportunities to develop dedicated LDFA programmatic initiatives where they are likely to trigger transformational changes in the natural resource management sectors.

GEF support to drylands

13. Over the years, the GEF has invested a substantial share of its funding in the sustainable management of drylands, reflecting the programmatic directions described in the previous section. A

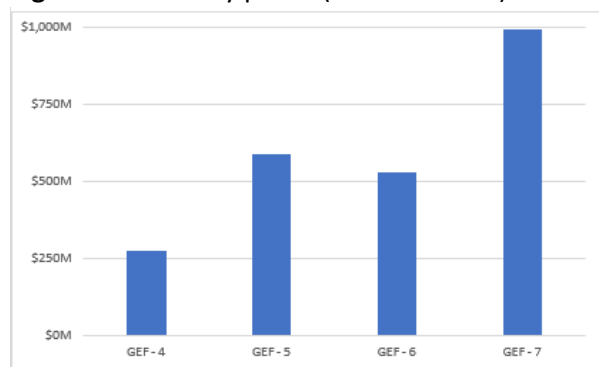
⁹ At the time of this writing, 28 child projects out of 31 are identified under FOLUR as drylands-related, totaling US\$286.67 million grant funding and US\$2,578.56 million cofinancing.

¹⁰ LDN aims to balance anticipated losses in land-based natural capital and associated ecosystem functions and services with measures that produce alternative gains through approaches such as land restoration or rehabilitation, and SLM (UNCCD, 2016).

simple text search on the GEF Portal identified 379 projects focusing on drylands all over the world since GEF-4 to GEF-7, totaling US\$2,39 billion in grants, equivalent to 11 percent of the total GEF-4 to GEF-7 financing.¹¹ With the launch of two large impact programs having a substantial share of their financing dedicated to dryland interventions, namely the DSL and the FOLUR, GEF support to drylands increased substantially in GEF-7, reaching over US\$996.29 million in grants and US\$7,46 billion in co-financing (Figure 1).

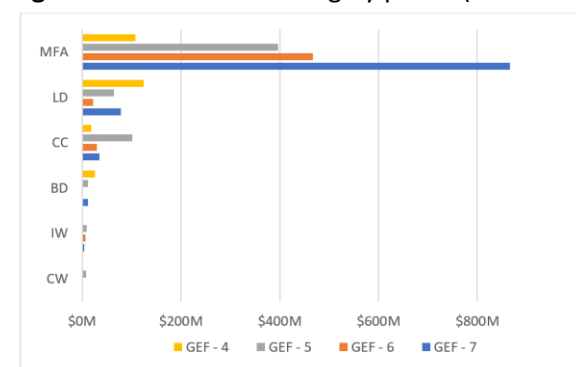
14. Eighty four percent of GEF-4 to GEF-7 drylands-related financing comes from the GEF Trust Fund. The balance is funded through the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) with six percent, the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) with one percent, and nine percent is invested in Multi Trust Fund (MTF) projects. Multifocal support, accounting for US\$1,83 billion grant funding and including both the DSL and the FOLUR GEF-7 Impact Programs, constitutes the large majority of the GEF-4 to GEF-7 drylands-related investment, followed by land degradation, accounting for US\$289 million (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Grants by phase (GEF-4 – GEF-7)



Source: GEF Portal

Figure 2: Focal area funding by phase (GEF-4 – GEF-7)



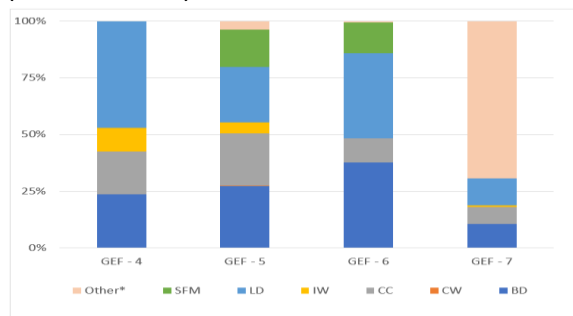
Source: GEF Portal

15. The main share of funding for multifocal interventions originates from funds earmarked to biodiversity, climate change and land degradation. The land degradation and biodiversity shares in multifocal funding maintained comparable levels from GEF-5 to GEF-7. These two funding shares declined in GEF-7 due to their inclusion in impact programs together with Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and climate change funding (Figure 3).

16. The number of GEF Agencies involved in drylands interventions has increased across the GEF phases mainly due to the shift in GEF programming towards integrated interventions, typically involving greater focal area coverage and often spanning across multiple GEF geographic regions. Agency technical specialization has become more important: with 18 percent of the total funding dedicated to drylands-related projects, FAO, a specialized UN Agency, is the third largest implementer after the World Bank and UNDP (Figure 4).

¹¹ Drylands-related projects were identified by a text search for the terms “dryland*”, ‘dry land’, ‘arid’, ‘semi-arid’, ‘semiarid’, ‘sub-humid’, ‘subhumid’, ‘desertification’, ‘degradation’, ‘drought’, ‘flood’, ‘sustainable land management’, ‘sustainable land and ecosystem management’, ‘sustainable land and forest management’, ‘sustainable land and water management’, ‘sustainable integrated landscape management’ or ‘sustainable land and agroecosystem management’ in three fields: 1) Project Title, 2) Project Components, and 3) Project Objective. After reviewing the text that came up in the field, a judgement was made about whether to include or exclude the project based on its emphasis on drylands or semi-arid landscapes.

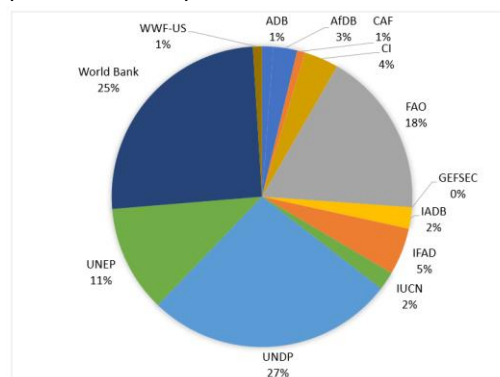
Figure 3: Multifocal support by funding component (GEF-4 – GEF-7)



Source: GEF Portal

Note: Other* includes funding for multifocal projects not disaggregated by focal area, IAPs and Impact Programs.

Figure 4: Grants share by Agency (GEF-4 – GEF-7)



Source: GEF Portal

17. Thirty six percent of GEF drylands-related support is constituted by projects under implementation, the majority of which are GEF-6 interventions. (Table 2).

Table 2: Project status by GEF phase (GEF-4 – GEF-7)

Project Status	GEF - 4		GEF - 5		GEF - 6		GEF - 7		Totals	
	#	US\$M	#	US\$M	#	US\$M	#	US\$M	#	US\$M
Pending Approval					3	\$16.10	30	\$201.92	33	\$218.02
PIF/PPG Approval/Clearance							12	\$5.15	12	\$5.15
Council Approved							37	\$272.19	37	\$272.19
CEO Approved / Endorsed					12	\$52.38	48	\$368.76	60	\$421.14
Under Implementation			40	\$275.10	54	\$434.70	14	\$148.28	108	\$858.07
Completed / Closed	64	\$276.06	62	\$315.90	3	\$24.90			129	\$496.93
Totals	64	\$276.06	102	\$591.00	72	\$528.09	141	\$1,403.40	379	\$2,391.44

Source: GEF Portal

18. Forty seven percent of GEF financing support to drylands from GEF-4 to GEF-7 has been provided through programmatic child projects. Funding for child projects decreased to 11 percent in GEF-5, but rose again to 24 percent with the IAPs in GEF-6 and 44 percent in GEF-7 with the Impact Programs (Table 3).

Table 3: Programmatic versus non-programmatic support by GEF phase (GEF-4 – GEF-7)

Replenishment Phase	Programmatic support (Child Projects)		Non-programmatic support (Standalone Full- and Medium-sized Projects, and Enabling Activities)		Totals	
	#	US\$M	#	US\$M	#	US\$M
GEF - 4	53	\$222.68	11	\$52.38	64	\$276.06
GEF - 5	21	\$133.95	81	\$457.06	102	\$591.00
GEF - 6	27	\$271.95	45	\$256.13	72	\$528.09
GEF - 7	50	\$494.91	91	\$501.37	141	\$996.29

Source: GEF Portal

Available evaluative evidence

19. Evidence from evaluations conducted by the GEF IEO and GEF Agencies' evaluation units provides an informative picture of what is known already about what works, how and why in dryland settings. It also helps identify a few specific issues to be covered by this evaluation. For example, the issue of over-targeting. The latest Annual Performance Report (APR) indicates that the GEF is unlikely to meet five of the GEF-5 targets for 13 of the corporate environmental results indicators. Although not drylands-specific, two of these indicators can be related to drylands: (i) "agricultural/rangeland systems under sustainable land management", and (ii) "wider landscapes under sustainable management". As the corporate targets for these two indicators were higher than the aggregate targets of approved GEF-5 projects, the APR concludes that target setting for GEF-5 period related to sustainable land management seemed to be too aspirational and unrealistic (GEF IEO, 2021).

20. GEF-6 evaluative evidence consistently indicates that the GEF focal area strategies have been responsive to the guidance from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Both the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6) (GEF IEO, 2018) and one of its component studies, the Land Degradation Focal Area Study (GEF IEO, 2017) note that the GEF LDFA Strategy on combating desertification in Africa with emphasis on drylands is aligned with UNCCD global priorities. The LD study reports that as UNCCD expanded the scope of the LDN framework from drylands to include global lands (Safriel, 2017), new projects in the GEF-6 pipeline had increased their focus on responding to LDN targets through both SLM and restoration activities. However, OPS6 reports that about three-quarters of these did not include a restoration component. The balance between SLM, restoration and rehabilitation in GEF interventions in dryland settings may be different today. To note, GEF support earmarked to the land degradation focal area addresses unsustainable land management practices and degradation issues beyond arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas as driven by country priorities and needs.

21. The Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation (SCCE): Sahel and Sudan-Guinea Savanna Biomes (GEF IEO, 2022a) is the most geographically relevant GEF IEO evaluation, as both biomes are characterized by arid and semi-arid climates with strong climatic variation and irregular rainfall. The SCCE notes that climate can severely impact household livelihoods in many parts of these two biomes' drylands, especially in the Sahel. Evidence indicates that in these countries, sustainability of project outcomes takes time to materialize, with financial sustainability being the biggest challenge. Sustainability is enhanced in interventions operating locally at the nexus between environment and development objectives. In its recommendations, the SCCE underlines the importance of planning at the design stage for setting up viable financial mechanisms and measures to continue delivering benefits after project completion.

22. The Evaluation of GEF Support to Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) notes that most GEF forest work has focused on tropical forests and that SLM practices have often been preferred over more expensive restoration activities due to their direct linkages with food security and livelihoods benefits (GEF IEO, 2022b). Findings from this evaluation indicate that forests of high environmental value and high levels of needs are relatively neglected in drylands. Forests such as Miombo, Mopane, tropical dry forests and central Asian forests have benefited from comparatively few GEF interventions. Some dryland countries were underfunded given the levels of deforestation threat as well as forests' intimate

connections with livelihoods and local economies.¹² While dryland forests have been part of the GEF LDFA strategies of earlier GEF phases, these forests have only been explicitly mentioned since GEF 5 through GEF 7. It is only recently that the GEF started focusing on the drylands through the GEF-7 DSL Impact Program. However, funding for this program was limited thus allowing only half of the countries that applied to be included in the program.

23. Project level evaluative evidence on what works, how and why in dryland areas is included as case studies in several GEF IEO evaluations. In the Syria CPE, the regional project *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Dryland Agrobiodiversity* (GEF ID 400) disseminated over 16 target varieties of wild relatives of fruit trees and native species while promoting alternative land-use practices through collaboration with farmers. This approach was replicated to other agricultural lands across the country (GEF IEO, 2009). The Nicaragua CPE assessed the *Conservation of Dry Forest and Coastal Biodiversity of the Pacific Coast of Southern Nicaragua: Building Private-Public Partnerships* project (GEF ID 1735) as being overly ambitious and weak in design in terms of what can be achieved during the lifetime of a project given the scale of the challenges (GEF IEO, 2012). In the Country Cluster Portfolio Evaluation: GEF Beneficiary Countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the *Dry Forest Biodiversity Conservation* project (GEF ID 815) in Grenada was not making significant progress toward impact level results because it didn't have strong stakeholder ownership from national institutions during design and implementation (GEF IEO, 2012a).

24. More recent examples are reported in the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7). Among these is the Great Green Wall Initiative cited in the previous section, implemented through an integrated ecosystem management approach. This approach includes integrating sustainable dryland management and restoration, regeneration of natural vegetation, and water retention and conservation measures. Engaging a wide range of stakeholders promoted by GGWI, including national governments, international organizations, private sector and civil society, all of which working together under pan-African coordination has been instrumental to help halt land degradation (GEF IEO, 2022).

25. Both the Evaluation of Multiple Benefits of GEF's Support through its Multifocal Area Portfolio (GEF IEO, 2018a) and the Evaluation of Programmatic Approaches in the GEF (GEF IEO, 2018b) highlight the case of the project *An Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM) Approach to the Conservation of Biodiversity in Dryland Ecosystems* (GEF ID 2369), implemented under a partnership between the People's Republic of China and the GEF. The GEF-PRC partnership aimed to address desertification, deforestation, and biodiversity loss resulting from land degradation in three of China's western dryland provinces. Under IEM, a set of principles was developed to involve local stakeholders (i.e., local governments, local research institution, and universities) to build capacity to combat land degradation through a bottom-up approach, which was a new approach for China.

26. The Evaluation of the Role of Medium-Sized Projects (MSP) reported on the impact of the *Enabling Sustainable Dryland Management through Mobile Pastoral Custodianship: World Initiative on Sustainable Pastoralism* project (GEF ID 3660), which started out as a policy-oriented initiative to help institutionalize sustainable development in rangelands and pastoral systems into a larger regional program. The project was leveraged and became catalytic in upgrading IUCN's Eastern Africa Drylands

¹² Underfunding is to be read with the understanding that the GEF provides opportunities, entry points and/or incentives. The priorities that countries chose to invest in are decided by the countries themselves.

program for sustainable land management within pastoral systems and contributed to the Global Environment Benefit 2, which relates to sustainable land management (GEF IEO, 2020).

27. GEF Agency evaluation offices have looked at aspects of drylands mostly in relation to either natural resources management or agriculture. An evaluation on natural resources degradation and vulnerability by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) found that the World Bank has not adequately addressed the vulnerability of resource dependent people where resource degradation threats are prominent (World Bank, 2021). A joint IFAD/FAO evaluation on engagement in pastoral development highlighted that the facts that pastoral systems in dryland economies continues to produce substantial economic value despite the lack of infrastructures and an often unhelpful policy environment, suggests high potential returns to investment under conditions of structural variability in these contexts (FAO OED/IFAD IOE, 2016). Both the Evaluation on the Role and Contribution of UNDP in Environment and Energy (UNDP, 2008) and the Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to South-South and Triangular Cooperation (UNDP, 2013) discuss how the Drylands Development Centre (DDC) supported by UNDP has contributed to the development of strategies tied to drought.

Purpose, objectives and approach

28. The purpose of the Drylands SCCE is to provide country-level evaluative evidence on the performance of GEF interventions focused on environmental issues related to drylands in countries with a large drylands' extent. This evaluation is designed to feed into the 8th Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS-8).

29. The Drylands SCCE has two overarching objectives:

- a) assessing the relevance and coherence of GEF investments in dryland countries, and
- b) assessing GEF results and sustainability in terms of environmental benefits and associated socioeconomic co-benefits in dryland countries.

30. Gender will be assessed as cross-cutting issue, in consideration of the widely recognized importance of supporting women's empowerment in dryland regions (NRI, 2015). Other cross-cutting issues include the private sector role in dryland restoration, rehabilitation and SLM, and resilience to both climate and non-climate related shocks and stresses.

Key evaluation questions

31. Based on the above evaluation purpose and objectives, the Drylands SCCE will seek to answer the following questions:

KQ1) *To what extent has GEF support been relevant to the specific environmental challenges in dryland countries, and are there any gaps?*

32. Land degradation and desertification are more pronounced in drylands and lead faster to environmental decline than in other world ecoregions. The impacts of climate-related events such as drought and floods in drylands are likely to exceed tipping points where total crop failure and significant biodiversity loss are possible. Population growth combined with the effects of high climate variability weakens local natural resource governance with increasingly frequent conflicts between herders and farmers over the use of land. Drylands host several fragile states and are subject to conflict-related out-

migrations. There's more poverty in drylands than elsewhere. The specificities of drylands environmental and related socioeconomic challenges will be considered in a relevance gap analysis.

33. The available evaluative evidence indicates that the GEF is in line with UNCCD on incorporating more programs and projects in dryland areas, but recent findings point at unaddressed critical dryland forest ecosystems. While the current GEF LDFA Strategy is aligned with UNCCD priorities on combating desertification in Africa with emphasis on drylands, other important dryland world regions may be neglected. This analysis will be cognizant of the fact that the GEF land degradation focal area support addresses unsustainable land management practices and degradation issues that go beyond arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas as driven by country priorities and needs.

KQ2) How have GEF interventions interacted thus far with similar government- and/or donor-funded activities in terms of either contributing to or hindering policy coherence in dryland countries?

34. This question intends to be forward looking as it relates to the GEF-8 focus on supporting enhancement of country policy coherence and tackling disincentives to nature protection and climate mitigation. The analysis will take an in-depth look at GEF's long and diverse support to countries' environmental policies and laws over the last four replenishment phases to see if and how it has influenced environmental policy coherence. Policy coherence will be predominantly assessed in case studies, given that it affects different ministries/sectors.

KQ3) To what extent have GEF interventions in dryland countries produced their targeted environmental outcomes and associated socioeconomic co-benefits?

35. Both literature and project level evidence clearly show that environmental considerations are deeply intertwined with socioeconomic needs in developing countries, where 90 percent of drylands population lives. The effectiveness analysis will aim at producing a balanced assessment of GEF performance with respect to main environmental and socioeconomic outcomes of its drylands-related support. Factors highlighted by existing evaluative evidence such as the appropriateness of drylands-specific metrics related to land degradation and SLM, and how realistic has GEF corporate target setting been post GEF-5, will be looked at as part of both aggregate analyses and case study deep dives.

KQ4) Have natural resource governance and other socio-economic factors been considered in the design and implementation of GEF drylands interventions, and if yes, with what results and sustainability?

36. Dryland populations have thus far been unable to adapt to changes in the nature and magnitude of threats to the resources they need for their livelihoods. The traditional mechanisms governing resource use are breaking up. Often, this results in social conflicts of different nature over equitable and sustainable resource use. At the same time, the integration of socio-economic development with environment conservation/sustainable use both at national and local levels are particularly important for the sustainability of GEF interventions, especially in dryland areas. While generally supported by GEF decision makers, the type and intensity of efforts and resources deployed to support such integration often depend on the interest of country governments. Many among them believe it is difficult to achieve both objectives at the same time, considering that rather than a nexus, major trade-offs exist between environment and socio-economic/livelihoods objectives. An example of trade-off is when SLM is prioritized over natural landscape restoration because of livelihood needs, as highlighted by the LD focal area study and the SFM evaluation.

37. Members of the GEF-8 Replenishment Group reiterated their continued interest in having a deeper understanding of the factors contributing or hindering the sustainability of outcomes. OPS7 highlighted the importance of engaging a wide range of stakeholder for ownership, a contributing factor mentioned in several of the evaluations discussed in the previous section. Sustainability of outcomes will be assessed in depth, with the aim of understanding what are the most important hindering as well as the main contributing socioeconomic factors at play in dryland countries, with a focus on local resource governance. Information on resource governance extracted from project documents and collected during country case studies will be used to assess how GEF interventions plan to influence and/or have influenced local resource governance mechanisms and structures, including through capacity building activities targeting effective and equitable stakeholder participation in sustainable resource management.

KQ5) To what extent have the cross-cutting issues of gender, resilience and the private sector been taken into consideration in GEF programming and implementation in dryland countries?

38. The importance of supporting and empowering women living in drylands is widely recognized. After five years since its introduction, it will be possible to critically assess the effectiveness of the GEF policy on gender equality (GEF, 2017) in terms of performance on gender and women's empowerment in dryland settings. Case study deep dives will review if gender performance on paper translates into real women's empowerment on the ground. As for resilience, a key aspect in the geographic regions covered by this evaluation, the analysis will look at how resilience is considered in project design and implementation.

39. The role of the private sector in drylands is underestimated and will be assessed as a cross-cutting issue. As seen, drylands have often been neglected in terms of investment, security and basic services. The literature reviewed, however, provides examples showing that drylands can give higher returns on investment than so-called high-potential lands. Research conducted in the Sahel found that every US dollar invested into dryland restoration yields higher returns than \$1. A joint IFAD/FAO evaluation on engagement in pastoral development highlighted that the fact that pastoral systems in dryland economies continue to produce substantial economic value despite the lack of infrastructures and an often unhelpful policy environment, suggests high potential returns to investment in these contexts. The potential and actual role for the private sector in dryland settings will be looked at for restoration, rehabilitation as well as sustainable land management activities, among others.

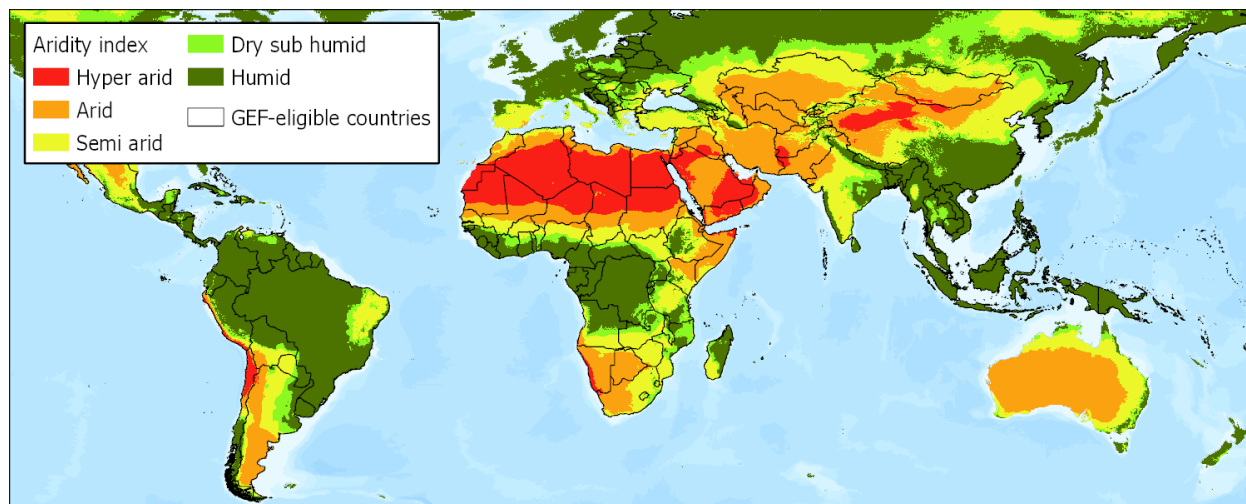
Scope

40. The portfolio of drylands-related interventions covered in this evaluation includes projects that deal specifically with drylands-related environmental issues (i.e., water scarcity, climate variability, land degradation, desertification, and drought, among others) and are located within GEF recipient countries with at least 50 percent or more of their total land area characterized as drylands, defined as lands with an aridity index of less than 0.65.¹³ The evaluation considers this 50 percent threshold to be large enough as a proxy indicator of the importance of drylands in the countries' environment and sustainable

¹³ Global Aridity Index and Potential Evapotranspiration (ET0) Climate Database v2. CGIAR Consortium for Spatial Information (CGIAR-CSI). Published online, available from the CGIAR-CSI GeoPortal at <https://cgiarcsi.community>

development agendas, needs and priorities. A global aridity index map was used to calculate the percent of drylands for each GEF eligible country (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Global Aridity Index Map



Source: Trabucco, A., and Zomer, R.J., 2018

41. The Drylands SCCE will selectively focus on GEF interventions from GEF-4 to date, irrespective of under which GEF focal areas these were categorized. All drylands-related full- and medium-sized projects within this period are included in the scope, regardless of whether these are part of a program (i.e., as child projects) or not. Enabling activities will be reviewed as part of the relevance and policy coherence analysis. The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is excluded from the scope as it has just been subject of a major joint evaluation by the GEF and the UNDP IEOs. Geographically, the evaluation will focus on drylands-related GEF interventions in Central Asia, in Middle East and North Africa (MENA), in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) and in the Southern Africa regions. GEF-7 SCCEs' evaluative evidence will be used for West, East and Central Africa drylands.

42. The list of 220 projects resulting from the application of the scoping criteria described in the previous paragraphs is provided in Annex 1. This list has been refined by screening for reference of humid areas based on easily identifiable language from relevant sections of the project documents. Those projects that work only in humid areas or wetlands have been excluded. Later on, during the portfolio and document reviews in the evaluation phase, if it clearly emerges that a project primarily focuses on humid areas it will be excluded at that point.

Evaluation Design and Approach

43. The SCCEs conducted in GEF-7 have demonstrated the effectiveness of applying a contained focus on selected themes coupled with a zoom-in approach that starts from aggregate analyses providing main trends as well as cases of positive, absent or negative change, to deep dive in those themes and unpack them through purposive evaluative inquiry (Carugi C., Vighh A., 2021). As was the case with GEF-7 SCCEs, a zoom-in, sequential approach will be applied to this SCCE, with deep dives on selected themes in specific countries, projects and sites, starting from aggregate analysis of the GEF portfolio covered in this evaluation, available terminal evaluations from the GEF IEO Terminal

Evaluations database and geospatial data at multiple scales. An evaluation matrix composed of the five key questions, relevant indicators, sources of information and methods is presented in Annex 2.

44. Clustering by dryland ecoregion/biome grouping (i.e., West Africa savannas; Miombo and Mopane ecosystems in Southern Africa; Central Asia grasslands, savannas and shrublands; among others) and aridity typology (arid, semi-arid, dry sub-humid) will be done prior to aggregate analyses and selection of countries and projects for case studies. Desk review techniques (through targeted document review protocols) will be used for answering the relevance, policy coherence, effectiveness and sustainability questions as well as the cross-cutting question on gender, resilience and private sector. The policy coherence analysis will use existing evaluative evidence and collect new data in-country in the form of official documents (policies, laws, other) as well as in-country perception gathering activities such as interviews with government representatives from various ministries. Effectiveness and sustainability analyses will be based on information and ratings extracted from terminal evaluations of completed projects as well as from case study deep dives. Gender will be analyzed through document review, portfolio analysis and case studies. The resilience analysis will use an adapted version of the Resilience, Adaptation and Transformation Analysis Framework (RAPTA) (CSIRO, 2019). Both the actual and potential roles of the private sector in dryland settings will be analyzed through aggregate analyses and case study deep dives.

45. A geospatial analysis will be used for answering the relevance of geographic targeting of GEF drylands-related interventions within the countries with a majority of their area covered by drylands included in the evaluation's portfolio. The analysis will overlay geospatial datasets that represent key indicators for environmental and socio-economic issues that are most critical in drylands such as water scarcity, land degradation and food security.¹⁴ Areas with high occurrence and severity of these issues will be compared with where the GEF's projects are located at the country or subnational level. This analysis will benefit from the geocoding and related geospatial analysis conducted for previous IEO evaluations, which will provide an indication of the global distribution of the dryland portfolio. The focus will be on projects with outcomes that can be observed geospatially. These include projects in the following focal areas: land degradation, climate change adaptation, SFM and biodiversity. Multifocal projects and regional programs composed of two or more of these focal areas will also be included in this analysis. Additionally, as done in previous SCCEs, geospatial analysis will be used to understand environmental and socio-economic change before, during and after GEF interventions in case study areas. Change of local environmental conditions will be measured using indicators such as (but not limited to): (i) forest loss as a proportion of the total land area (Hansen et al., 2013 and Curtis et al., 2018); and (ii) Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) (Didan, 2021) as a proxy indicator to examine, as feasible, the long-term spatial and temporal patterns of land productivity measured as vegetation density, among others. Limitations and sources of uncertainty in the datasets used will be acknowledged and considered. Results will help case study teams select locations to prioritize during field visits and help inform conversations with stakeholders.

46. The aggregate analyses—together with the geospatial analyses—will inform the selection and design of the case studies for this evaluation, in which the factors driving performance and sustainability of drylands-related interventions will be explored in depth. The plan is to conduct a limited - yet as representative as possible - number of case studies, identified based on the results of the portfolio and

¹⁴ The most up to date datasets on land cover change and natural ecosystem fluxes such as (but not limited to) those collated by the [WRI Land and Carbon Lab](#) will be used for this analysis.

the geospatial analyses and given the need to cover project sites. To select them, the aggregate analyses will help identifying hot spots of sustained (or absent) environmental change to which the GEF contributed. Select project post-completion verifications will be conducted as part of case studies.

47. Triangulation of the information and qualitative as well as quantitative data collected will be conducted at completion of the data analysis and gathering phase to determine trends and identify the main findings, lessons and conclusions.

Quality Assurance and Limitations

48. In line with IEO's quality assurance practice, two quality assurance measures will be set up for this evaluation. The first is a Reference Group, composed of representatives from the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies, STAP and CSO network. The Reference Group will: (i) provide feedback and comments on the approach paper, the preliminary findings and the evaluation report; (ii) help ensuring evaluation relevance to ongoing as well as future operations; 3) help identifying and establishing contact with the appropriate individuals for interviews/focus groups; and 4) facilitate access to data and information. The second quality assurance measure is an external peer reviewer, identified either from GEF Agency evaluation offices or from other recognized evaluation institutions, with experience in country-level and/or environmental evaluation. Her/his role is to advise throughout the evaluation process on: (i) the soundness of evaluation design, scope, questions, methods and process described in the approach paper; and (ii) implementation of the methodology and implications of methodological limitations in the formulation of the conclusions and recommendations in the draft and final reports.

49. Two limitations can be identified at this stage: (i) The availability and the quality of data in the portfolio (as not specifically mandated in the GEF, dryland interventions are not tagged in the GEF Portal); and (ii) Uncertainty about the conduct of field visits due to World Bank-imposed, Covid-related travel restrictions. The first limitation will be addressed by cross-checking the portfolio information downloaded from the GEF Portal with the management information systems of GEF Agencies as a priority before undertaking any analysis. The second limitation will be mitigated by selecting countries where Covid rates are such that travel is allowed by both World Bank and host country rules, and/or by hiring national consultants for the data gathering activities to be conducted during field missions to countries. The team will report on how these as well as other emerging limitations will be dealt with during the evaluation data gathering and analysis phase.

Audience and Stakeholder Engagement

50. The primary audience of this SCCE is the GEF Council. In addition, the evaluation will provide evidence that could be used to inform the GEF Secretariat's appraisal of project proposals coming from dryland countries. It could also be of interest to the broader constituency of GEF Agencies, to GEF member countries and non-governmental partners engaged in project design in dryland settings.

51. Regular stakeholder interaction will be sought with the GEF Secretariat, relevant GEF Agencies, STAP, and relevant country Operational Focal Points (OFPs) and other national stakeholders and key informants during country studies to enhance the evaluation process. This will include consultation and outreach while the evaluation is under way, and dissemination and outreach once the evaluation is complete. During evaluation preparation, the team will solicit feedback and comments from

stakeholders to improve the evaluation’s accuracy and relevance. An added benefit to engaging stakeholders during the evaluation process is stimulating interest in the evaluation results. The principles of transparency and participation will guide this process. Stakeholder interaction will provide qualitative data to supplement quantitative data, case study analyses and other research.

Process, Deliverables and Dissemination

52. The Drylands SCCE is being conducted between January 2022 and December 2023. The evaluation is conducted in two phases: I) aggregate analysis (portfolio, geospatial, terminal evaluations database, quality at entry, other); and II) field verifications (case studies). Geospatial analysis will be conducted in the second half of 2022, once the projects datasets geolocation task will be completed. Field verifications for case studies will start in the first half of 2023, once the results of the aggregate portfolio and geospatial analyses will be available. An initial work plan is presented here below. The work plan will be revised and fine-tuned as part of further preparations.

Task	Year Month	2022												2023											
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Approach Paper																									
Background information & portfolio data gathering		x	x	x	x	x																			
Approach Paper discussed with the reference group							x																		
Finalizing the approach paper								x	x																
Data gathering and analysis																									
Desk review/Portfolio analysis								x	x	x	x														
Geospatial analysis									x	x	x	x													
Quality at entry and other analyses									x	x	x	x	x												
Country case studies															x	x	x	x	x						
Triangulation brainstorming																			x						
Gap filling																			x	x					
Report writing																									
Draft report																					x	x			
Due diligence (addressing feedback and comments)																					x				
Final report																						x			
Presentation to Council																							x	x	
Dissemination and outreach																								x	

Resources

53. The Drylands SCCE is being conducted by a team led by a Senior Evaluation Officer from the IEO with oversight from the Chief Evaluation Officer and the Director of the IEO. The team will include one IEO Evaluation Officer for geospatial analysis related tasks and one IEO research assistant. The evaluation team will be supplemented by a team of evaluation analysts (STC) to help with desk reviews, portfolio analyses and with project site geocoding. National and/or international consultants with thematic and/or regional expertise will be selected for countries case studies and other related data gathering, analysis and reporting tasks. The evaluation will benefit from these consultants’ extensive knowledge of context and issues at hand in the case study countries. The number and typology of consultants will depend on the projects and countries selected for the case studies. The required skills mix includes practical, policy, and/or academic expertise in key GEF focal areas of the projects and programs under analysis (SLM, land degradation, climate change adaptation, biodiversity, among

others), evaluation experience and knowledge of external information sources that are relevant to GEF activities in the case study countries.

References

- Carugi C., Vighh A. (2022) [From the Big Picture to Detailed Observation: The Case of the GEF IEO's Strategic Country Cluster Evaluations](#). In: Uitto J.I., Batra G. (eds) *Transformational Change for People and the Planet*. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Springer, Cham.
- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), 2019. [Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Approach. A guide for designing, implementing and assessing interventions for sustainable futures \(version 2\)](#).
- Curtis, P.G., Slay, C.M., Harris, N.L., Tyukavina, A., Hansen, M.C. 2018. [Classifying drivers of global forest loss](#). *Science*: 361(6407).
- Davies, J., Poulsen, L., Schulte-Herbrüggen, B., Mackinnon, K., Crawhall, N., Henwood, W.D., Dudley, N., Smith, J., and Gudka, M., 2012. [Conserving Dryland Biodiversity](#). IUCN, Gland. xii +84p.
- Didan, K. 2021. [MODIS/Terra Vegetation Indices 16-Day L3 Global 250m SIN Grid V061 \[Data set\]](#). NASA EOSDIS Land Processes DAAC. Accessed 2022-06-15 from <https://doi.org/10.5067/MODIS/MOD13Q1.061>
- Fan, S., 2008 (ed). [Public Expenditures, Growth, and Poverty. Lessons from Developing Countries](#), The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore
- FAO OED and IFAD IOE. 2016. [FAO's and IFAD's Engagement in Pastoral Development: Joint Evaluation Synthesis](#).
- Hansen, M.C., Potapov, P.V., Moore, R., Hanther, M., Turubanova, S.A., Tyukavina, A., Thau, D., Stehman, S.V., Goetz, S.J., Loveland, T.R., Kommareddy, A., Egorov, A., Chini, L., Justice, C.O., Townshend, J.R.G. 2013. [High-Resolution Global Maps of 21st-Century Forest Cover Change](#). *Science*: 342(6160).
- Global Environment Facility (GEF), [Policy on Gender Equality](#). Washington DC: GEF, 2017.
- _____, [Updating the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources \(STAR\)18](#). Washington DC: GEF, 2018.
- _____, [GEF-8 Programming Directions \(Prepared by the GEF Secretariat\)](#). Fourth Meeting for the Eighth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund. Washington DC: GEF, April 1, 2022.
- Global Environment Facility Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO), [Country Portfolio Evaluation: Syria \(1994-2008\)](#). Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2009.
- _____, [Country Portfolio Evaluation: Nicaragua \(2006-2010\)](#). Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2012.
- _____, [Cluster Country Portfolio Evaluation: GEF Beneficiary Countries of the OECS \(1992-2011\)](#). Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2012a.
- _____, [Land Degradation Focal Area Study](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2017.
- _____, [Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF: the GEF in a Changing Environmental Finance Landscape](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2018.
- _____, [Evaluation of the Multiple Benefits of GEF Support through Its Multifocal Area Portfolio](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2018a.

- _____, [Evaluation of Programmatic Approaches in the GEF](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2018b.
- _____, [Evaluation of the Role of Medium-sized Projects in the GEF Partnership](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2020.
- _____, [Annual Performance Report 2021](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2021.
- _____, [Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF: Working Toward a Greener Global Recovery](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2022.
- _____, [Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation of Sahel and Sudan-Guinea Savanna Biomes](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2022a.
- _____, [Evaluation of GEF Support to Sustainable Forest Management](#), Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2022b.
- International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), [Technical Summary, 2019](#). In [Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems](#). In press.
- Le, Q.B., Nkonya, E. and Mirzabaev, A., 2014. [Biomass Productivity-Based Mapping of Global Land Degradation Hotspots](#). ZEF-Discussion Papers on Development Policy No. 193. Bonn, July 2014.
- Millennium Ecosystems Assessment (2005), [Chapter 22: Dryland systems](#). World Resources Institute, Washington, DC.
- Meyfroidt, P., et al. (2022). [Ten facts about land systems for sustainability](#). Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America.
- Middleton, N., Stringer, L.C. Goudie, A. and Thomas, D.S.G., (2011) [The Forgotten Billion: MDG Achievement in the Drylands](#). UNCCD-UNDP, New York and Nairobi.
- Mirzabaev, A., Sacande, M., Motlagh, F. et al. [Economic efficiency and targeting of the African Great Green Wall](#). *Nat Sustain* 5, 17–25 (2022).
- Natural Resources Institute, 2015. [New research for the UN on empowering dryland women: capturing opportunities in land rights, governance and resilience](#).
- Ravallion, M. and Datt, G., 1999. [When is growth pro-poor? Evidence from the diverse experience of India's states](#). *Policy Research Working Paper WPS 2263*. World Bank, Washington, DC.
- Safriel, U. and Adeel, Z. (2005). Dryland Systems. In: [Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Current State and Trends Volume 1](#). Hassan, R., Scholes, R. and Ash, N., (eds). Washington, DC: Island Press. p. 623–62.
- Safriel, U. (2017). Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in drylands and beyond – where has it come from and where does it go. *Silva Fennica* vol. 51 no. 1B article id 1650. <https://doi.org/10.14214/sf.1650>
- Trabucco, A., and Zomer, R.J. 2018. Global Aridity Index and Potential Evapo-Transpiration (ET₀) Climate Database v2. CGIAR Consortium for Spatial Information (CGIAR-CSI). Published online, available from the CGIAR-CSI GeoPortal at <https://cgiarcsi.community>
- UN, [Global Drylands: a UN system wide response](#). Environmental Management Group of the United Nations, 2011.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). [Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality at the country level](#). The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, 2016.

UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (UNDP IEO). 2008. [Evaluation of Role and Contribution of UNDP in Environment and Energy \(2004-2008\)](#).

UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (UNDP IEO). 2013. [Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to South-South and Triangular Cooperation \(2008-2011\)](#).

World Bank. 2021. [The Natural Resource Degradation and Vulnerability Nexus: An Evaluation of the World Bank's Support for Sustainable and Inclusive Natural Resource Management \(2009–2019\)](#). Independent Evaluation Group. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Annex I: Drylands SCCE Portfolio

GEF ID	Title	Phase	Agency	Country	Focal Area	Source	Project Status (as of 9-16-2022)	Terminal Evaluation
2139	SIP: Transboundary Agro-Ecosystem Management Programme for the Kagera River Basin (Kagera TAMP)	GEF4	FAO	Regional	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
2184	SIP: Stimulating Community Initiatives in Sustainable Land Management (SCI-SLM)	GEF4	UNEP	Regional	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
2268	SIP: Integrated Ecosystem Management in Four Representative Landscapes of Senegal, Phase 2	GEF4	UNDP	Senegal	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
2505	SFM Sustainable Forest Management in the Transboundary Gran Chaco American Ecosystem	GEF4	UNEP	Regional	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
2690	SFM Improving the Conservation of Biodiversity in Atlantic Forest of Eastern Paraguay	GEF4	WB	Paraguay	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
2794	SIP: Country Program for Sustainable Land Management (ECPSLM)	GEF4	WB	Ethiopia	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3028	SFM Safeguarding and Restoring Lebanon's Woodland Resources	GEF4	UNDP	Lebanon	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3362	SIP: Catchments and Landscape Management	GEF4	IFAD	Eritrea	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3364	SIP: Sustainable Land Management Pilot Project	GEF4	UNDP	Eritrea	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes

3367	SIP: Community-Based Integrated Natural Resources Management in Lake Tana Watershed	GEF4	IFAD	Ethiopia	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3368	SIP: Participatory Integrated Watershed Management Project (PIWAMP)	GEF4	AfDB	Gambia	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3370	SIP: Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management in Agropastoral Production Systems of Kenya	GEF4	UNDP	Kenya	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3372	SIP: Capacity Building and Knowledge Management for Sustainable Land Management	GEF4	UNDP	Lesotho	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3375	SIP: Agriculture Sector Development Programme -Support to SLM (ADP-SLM)	GEF4	WB	Malawi	LD	GET	Financially Closed	No
3376	SIP: Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building for SLM in the Shire River Basin	GEF4	UNDP	Malawi	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3377	SIP: Fostering Agricultural Productivity in Mali	GEF4	WB	Mali	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
3379	SIP: Participatory Environmental Protection and Poverty Reduction in the Oases of Mauritania	GEF4	IFAD	Mauritania	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3381	SIP: Oasis Micro-Basin Sand Invasion Control in the Goure and Maine Regions (PLECO)	GEF4	UNDP	Niger	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
3382	SIP: Community Driven SLM for Environmental and Food Security	GEF4	WB	Niger	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes

3383	SIP: Agricultural and Rural Rehabilitation and Development Initiative (ARRDI)	GEF4	IFAD	Niger	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
3384	SIP: Scaling up SLM Practice, Knowledge, and Coordination in Key Nigerian States	GEF4	WB	Nigeria	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3385	SIP: Sustainable Land Management in Senegal	GEF4	WB	Senegal	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3386	SIP: Innovations in Micro Irrigation for Dryland Farmers	GEF4	UNDP	Senegal	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3390	SIP: Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP)	GEF4	IFAD	Eswatini	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3391	SIP: Reducing Land Degradation on the Highlands of Kilimanjaro	GEF4	UNDP	Tanzania	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3396	SIP: Improving Policy and Practice Interaction through Civil Society Capacity Building	GEF4	UNDP	Regional	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3399	SIP: Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project II	GEF4	WB	Regional	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3403	SIP: Kalahari-Namib Project: Enhancing Decision-making through Interactive Environmental Learning and Action in Molopo-Nossob River Basin in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa	GEF4	UNEP	Regional	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
3449	SFM: Carbon Benefits Project (CBP): Modeling, Measurement and Monitoring	GEF4	UNEP	Global	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes

3468	SLEM/PPP: Institutional Coordination, Policy Outreach and M & E Project under Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management Partnership Program	GEF4	WB	India	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3469	SLEM/PPP: Sustainable Land Management in Shifting Cultivation Areas of Nagaland for Ecological and Livelihood Security	GEF4	UNDP	India	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3470	SLEM/PPP: Sustainable Rural Livelihood Security through Innovations in Land and Ecosystem Management	GEF4	WB	India	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3471	SLEM/PPP: Sustainable Land Water and Biodiversity Conservation and Management for Improved Livelihoods in Uttarakhand Watershed Sector	GEF4	WB	India	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3472	SLEM/PPP: Integrated Land Use Management to Combat Land Degradation in Madhya Pradesh	GEF4	UNDP	India	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3484	PRC-GEF Partnership: Capacity and Management Support for Combating Land Degradation in Dryland Ecosystems	GEF4	ADB	China	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3529	SIP: Harmonizing support: a national program integrating water harvesting schemes and sustainable land management	GEF4	UNDP	Djibouti	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3608	PRC-GEF Partnership: Sustainable Development in Poor Rural Areas	GEF4	WB	China	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3626	PAS: The Micronesia Challenge : Sustainable Finance Systems for Island Protected Area Management - under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	GEF4	UNEP	Regional	BD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3819	PAS: Forestry and Protected Area Management	GEF4	FAO	Regional	BD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes

3872	SIP: Monitoring Carbon and Environmental and Socio-Economic Co-Benefits of BioCF Projects in SSA	GEF4	WB	Regional	LD	GET	Financially Closed	No
3882	SLEM/CPP: Reversing Environmental Degradation and Rural Poverty through Adaptation to Climate Change in Drought Stricken Areas in Southern India: A Hydrological Unit Pilot Project Approach (under India: SLEM)	GEF4	FAO	India	CC	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
3893	Support to the Adaptation of Vulnerable Agricultural Production Systems	GEF4	IFAD	Mauritania	CC	LDCF	Project Implemented	No
4104	Sustainable Land Management	GEF4	WB	Chile	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4261	Integrating climate change risks into water and flood management by vulnerable mountainous communities in the Greater Caucasus region of Azerbaijan	GEF4	UNDP	Azerbaijan	CC	SCCF	Financially Closed	Yes
4330	Strengthening National Frameworks for IAS Governance - Piloting in Juan Fernandez Archipelago	GEF5	UNDP	Chile	BD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4332	Sustainable Land and Forest Management in the Greater Caucasus Landscape	GEF5	UNDP	Azerbaijan	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4533	Development of Tools to Incorporate Impacts of Climatic Variability and Change in Particular Floods and Droughts into Basin Planning Processes	GEF5	UNEP	Global	IW	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4559	Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi Bahri-Buri-Irrori-Hawakil Protected Area System for Conservation of Biodiversity and Mitigation of Land Degradation	GEF5	UNDP	Eritrea	BD	GET	Under Implementation	No
4583	Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Friendly Agriculture	GEF5	FAO	Turkey	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No

4600	Reducing Pressures on Natural Resources from Competing Land Use in Non-irrigated Arid Mountain, Semi-desert and Desert Landscapes	GEF5	UNDP	Uzbekistan	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4633	Shaanxi Weinan Luyang Integrated Saline and Alkaline Land Management	GEF5	ADB	China	LD	GET	Project Implemented	No
4642	Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change Mitigation Project	GEF5	WB	Uzbekistan	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
4720	Land Rehabilitation and Rangelands Management in Small Holders Agropastoral Production Systems in Soutwestern Angola	GEF5	FAO	Angola	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4740	Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides including POPs and Strengthening Pesticide Management in the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) Member States	GEF5	FAO	Regional	POPs	GET	Project Implemented	No
4744	Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation, SFM and Carbon Sink Enhancement Into Mongolia's Productive Forest Landscapes	GEF5	FAO	Mongolia	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4750	Multiplying Environmental and Carbon Benefits in High Andean Ecosystems	GEF5	UNEP	Regional	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4751	Mainstreaming SLM in Rangeland Areas of Ngamiland District Productive Landscapes for Improved livelihoods	GEF5	UNDP	Botswana	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4754	Sustainable Land Management Programme to Combat Desertification	GEF5	UNDP	Pakistan	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4761	Sustainable Management of Mountainous Forest and Land Resources under Climate Change Conditions	GEF5	FAO	Kyrgyz Republic	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes

4806	A Global Initiative on Landscapes for People, Food and Nature	GEF5	UNEP	Global	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
4822	Strengthening Resilience to Climate Change through Integrated Agricultural and Pastoral Management in the Sahelian zone in the Framework of the Sustainable Land Management Approach	GEF5	FAO	Mali	CC	LDCF	Project Implemented	Yes
4839	Establishing Integrated Models for Protected Areas and their Co-management	GEF5	UNDP	Afghanistan	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4908	GGW: Agriculture Production Support Project (with Sustainable Land and Water Management)	GEF5	WB	Chad	MFA	MTF	Project Implemented	Yes
4922	Decision Support for Mainstreaming and Scaling up of Sustainable Land Management	GEF5	FAO	Global	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
4932	Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWEco)	GEF5	UNEP	Regional	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
5044	Sustainable Land Use Management in the Drylands of North-west Argentina	GEF5	UNDP	Argentina	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
5083	Capacity, Policy and Financial Incentives for PFM in Kirisia Forest and integrated Rangelands Management	GEF5	FAO	Kenya	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
5135	Protecting Biodiversity and Multiple Ecosystem Services in Biological Mountain Corridors in Chile's Mediterranean Ecosystem	GEF5	UNEP	Chile	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	No
5187	GGW: Community based Rural Development Project 3rd Phase with Sustainable Land and Forestry Management	GEF5	WB	Burkina Faso	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes

5215	GGW: Forests and Adjacent Lands Management Project	GEF5	WB	Benin	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
5220	PSG: Sustainable Land Management Project 2	GEF5	WB	Ethiopia	MFA	MTF	Financially Closed	Yes
5229	Sustainable Land Management in the Qaroun Catchment	GEF5	UNDP	Lebanon	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
5232	Flood Control and Climate Resilience of Agriculture Infrastructures in Oueme Valley	GEF5	AfDB	Benin	CC	LDCF	Under Implementation	No
5252	GGW: Third Phase of the Community Action Program	GEF5	WB	Niger	MFA	GET	Financially Closed	No
5270	GGW Natural Resources Management in a Changing Climate in Mali	GEF5	WB	Mali	MFA	MTF	Project Implemented	Yes
5272	Scaling up Sustainable Land Management and Biodiversity Conservation to Reduce Environmental Degradation in Small Scale Agriculture in Western Kenya	GEF5	UNEP	Kenya	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
5327	Securing Multiple Ecosystems Benefit Through SLM in the Productive But Degraded Landscapes of South Africa	GEF5	UNDP	South Africa	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
5343	Scaling Up Community Resilience to Climate Variability and Climate Change in Northern Namibia, with a Special Focus on Women and Children	GEF5	UNDP	Namibia	CC	SCCF	Project Implemented	Yes
5347	Support to the Integrated Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Socotra Archipelago	GEF5	UNEP	Yemen	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No

5353	Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Dry Mountain Landscapes	GEF5	UNDP	Armenia	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
5406	Community-Based Sustainable Dryland Forest Management	GEF5	FAO	Gambia	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
5432	Integrating Climate Resilience into Agricultural and Agropastoral Production Systems through Soil Fertility Management in Key Productive and Vulnerable Areas Using the Farmers Field School Approach	GEF5	FAO	Angola	CC	LDCF	Under Implementation	No
5436	Disaster Risk Management and Urban Development Project	GEF5	WB	Niger	CC	LDCF	Project Implemented	No
5449	PSG- Sustainable and Inclusive Agribusiness Development Project	GEF5	WB	Senegal	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
5463	Securing Watershed Services through Sustainable Land Management in the Ruvu and Zigi Catchments, Eastern Arc Region, Tanzania	GEF5	UNDP	Tanzania	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
5479	Integrated SLEM Approaches for Reducing Land Degradation and Desertification	GEF5	WB	India	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
5487	Integrated Development for Increased Rural Climate Resilience in the Niger Basin	GEF5	AfDB	Regional	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
5556	West Balkans Drina River Basin Management	GEF5	WB	Regional	IW	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
5619	GGW Sudan Sustainable Natural Resources Management Project SSNRMP	GEF5	WB	Sudan	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No

5699	Supporting Sustainable Land Management in Steppe and Semi-arid Zones through Integrated Territorial Planning and Agro-environmental Incentives	GEF5	UNDP	Kazakhstan	LD	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
5723	West Balkans Drina River Basin Management Project	GEF5	WB	Regional	CC	SCCF	Project Implemented	Yes
5746	Scaling up and Replicating Successful Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Agroforestry Practices in the Koulikoro Region of Mali	GEF5	UNEP	Mali	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
5792	PSG-Sustainable Landscape Management Project under SAWAP	GEF5	WB	Mauritania	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
5855	Flood Hazard and Climate Risk Management to Secure Lives and Assets in Mali	GEF5	UNDP	Mali	CC	LDCF	Project Implemented	No
6960	Supporting Climate Resilient Livelihoods in Agricultural Communities in Drought-prone Areas	GEF6	UNDP	Turkmenistan	CC	SCCF	Project Implemented	No
8005	Sustainable Land Management for Increased Productivity in Armenia(SLMIP)	GEF6	IFAD	Armenia	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
8028	Support for Integrated Water Resources Management to Ensure Water Access and Disaster Reduction for Somalia's Pastoralists	GEF6	UNDP	Somalia	CC	LDCF	Under Implementation	No
9050	Building Resilience For Food Security and Nutrition in Chad's Rural Communities	GEF6	AfDB	Chad	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9094	Integrated Natural Resources Management in Drought-prone and Salt-affected Agricultural Production Landscapes in Central Asia and Turkey (CACILM2)	GEF6	FAO	Regional	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No

9132	Food-IAP: Reversing Land Degradation Trends and Increasing Food Security in Degraded Ecosystems of Semi-arid Areas of Central Tanzania	GEF6	IFAD	Tanzania	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9133	Food-IAP: Climate-Smart Agriculture for Climate-Resilient Livelihoods (CSARL)	GEF6	IFAD	Eswatini	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9134	Food-IAP: Agricultural Value Chains Resilience Support Project (PARFA)	GEF6	IFAD	Senegal	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9135	Food-IAP: Integrated Landscape Management to Enhance Food Security and Ecosystem Resilience	GEF6	UNDP	Ethiopia	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9136	Niger: Food-IAP: Family Farming Development Programme (ProDAF)	GEF6	IFAD	Niger	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9138	Food-IAP: Enhancing the Resilience of Agro-Ecological Systems (ERASP)	GEF6	IFAD	Malawi	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9141	GEF-IAP: Participatory Natural Resource Management and Rural Development Project in the North, Centre-North and East Regions (Neer Tamba project)	GEF6	IFAD	Burkina Faso	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9143	Food-IAP: Integrated Landscape Management to Enhance Food Security and Ecosystem Resilience in Nigeria	GEF6	UNDP	Nigeria	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9154	Managing the Human-wildlife Interface to Sustain the Flow of Agro-ecosystem Services and Prevent Illegal Wildlife Trafficking in the Kgalagadi and Ghanzi Drylands	GEF6	UNDP	Botswana	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9161	LCB-NREE: Nigeria Child Project: Comprehensive and Integrated Management of Natural Resources in Borno State	GEF5	AfDB	Nigeria	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No

9163	Enabling the use of Global Data Sources to assess and Monitor Land Degradation at Multiple Scales	GEF6	CI	Global	LD	GET	Financially Closed	Yes
9318	Climate Resilience in the Nakambe Basin	GEF6	UNDP	Burkina Faso	CC	LDCF	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
9339	AMAZON Coordination Technical Assistance	GEF6	WB	Regional	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9388	Land Degradation Neutrality of Mountain Landscapes in Lebanon	GEF6	UNDP	Lebanon	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
9389	Ensuring Sustainability and Resilience (ENSURE) of Green Landscapes in Mongolia	GEF6	UNDP	Mongolia	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9400	Safeguarding Zanzibar's Forest and Coastal Habitats for Multiple Benefits	GEF6	UNDP	Tanzania	MFA	GET	CEF Returned from GEFSEC	No
9405	Integrated Management of Oasis Ecosystems of Northern Niger (IMOE -NN)	GEF6	UNEP	Niger	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9476	LCB-NREE Chad Child Project: Integrated Management of Natural Resources in the Chadian part of the Lake Chad Basin	GEF5	AfDB	Chad	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	No
9497	LCB-NREE Niger child project: Improving Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Niger's Diffa Region	GEF5	AfDB	Niger	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9516	Reversing Deforestation and Degradation in High Conservation Value Chilgoza Pine Forests in Pakistan	GEF6	FAO	Pakistan	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No

9526	Enhancing Integrated Natural Resource Management to Arrest and Reverse Current Trends in Biodiversity Loss and Land Degradation for Increased Ecosystem Services in the Tana Delta, Kenya	GEF6	UNEP	Kenya	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9556	Restoration of Arid and Semi-arid lands (ASAL) of Kenya through Bio-enterprise Development and other Incentives under The Restoration Initiative	GEF6	FAO	Kenya	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9583	Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Land Management (SLM) into Development Planning: Making Environmental Land Use Planning (ELUP) Operational in Argentina	GEF6	UNDP	Argentina	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9593	Management of Competing Water Uses and Associated Ecosystems in Pungwe, Busi and Save Basins	GEF6	IUCN	Regional	IW	GET	Under Implementation	No
9659	Kenya- Combating Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trafficking in Kenya through an Integrated Approach	GEF6	UNDP	Kenya	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9660	Strengthening Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management and Climate-Smart Landscapes in the Mid to Lower Zambezi Region of Zimbabwe	GEF6	UNDP	Zimbabwe	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9661	Mali- Community-based Natural Resource Management that Resolves Conflict, Improves Livelihoods and Restores Ecosystems throughout the Elephant Range	GEF6	UNDP	Mali	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9795	Forest Resources Assessment and Monitoring to Strengthen Forest Knowledge Framework in Azerbaijan	GEF6	FAO	Azerbaijan	MFA	GET	Project Implemented	Yes
9806	Rehabilitation and Integrated Sustainable Development of Algerian Cork Oak Forest Production Landscapes	GEF6	FAO	Algeria	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
9825	Large-scale Assessment of Land Degradation to guide future investment in SLM in the Great Green Wall countries	GEF6	UNEP	Regional	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No

9842	Shire Valley Transformation Program - I	GEF6	WB	Malawi	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9900	Land Degradation Neutrality Fund Technical Assistance Facility	GEF6	WWF-US	Global	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
9914	CPIC Conservation Finance Initiative - Scaling up and Demonstrating the Value of Blended Finance in Conservation	GEF6	IUCN	Global	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
9993	AVACLIM : Agro-ecology, Ensuring Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods while Mitigating Climate Change and Restoring Land in Dryland Regions	GEF6	FAO	Global	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10083	Sustainable Natural Resources Management Project -AF	GEF7	WB	Sudan	MFA	MTF	Under Implementation	No
10103	Climate change adaptation and livelihoods in three arid regions of Mauritania	GEF7	UNEP	Mauritania	CC	LDCF	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10169	Combating land degradation and biodiversity loss by promoting sustainable rangeland management and biodiversity conservation in Afghanistan	GEF7	FAO	Afghanistan	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10170	Integrated forest and biodiversity management for sustainable development in the Biban mountain range	GEF7	FAO	Algeria	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10178	Watershed approaches for climate resilience in agro-pastoral landscapes	GEF7	UNDP	South Sudan	MFA	MTF	CEF Returned from CU and GEFSEC	No
10179	Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management (SLM) for Large-Scale Impact in the Grazing Lands of Limpopo and Northern Cape provinces in South Africa	GEF7	IUCN	South Africa	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No

10180	Planning and implementing Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) in Djibouti's Dikhil and Tadjourah regions	GEF7	UNEP	Djibouti	CC	LDCF	CEF Sent back to MGR by PPO	No
10191	Moldova Agriculture Competitiveness Project GEF Additional Financing	GEF7	WB	Moldova	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
10192	Ecosystem conservation and community livelihood enhancement in North Western Zambia	GEF7	UNEP	Zambia	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10195	CSIDS-SOILCARE Phase1: Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) multicountry soil management initiative for Integrated Landscape Restoration and climate-resilient food systems	GEF7	FAO	Regional	MFA	MTF	Under Implementation	No
10204	Transforming agricultural systems and strengthening local economies in high biodiversity areas of India through sustainable landscape management and public-private finance	GEF7	UNEP	India	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10222	Enabling a policy environment for integrated natural resources management and implementation of an integrated approach to achieve land degradation neutrality in Moldova	GEF7	FAO	Moldova	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
10230	Strengthening Land Degradation Neutrality data and decision-making through free and open access platforms	GEF7	CI	Global	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
10243	Preventing forest loss, promoting restoration and integrating sustainability into Ethiopia's coffee supply chains and food systems	GEF7	UNDP	Ethiopia	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10249	Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia	GEF7	FAO	Mongolia	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10250	Integrated Landscape Management in Dry Miombo Woodlands of Tanzania	GEF7	FAO	Tanzania	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No

10251	Integrated landscape management to reverse degradation and support the sustainable use of natural resources in the Mopane-Miombo belt of Northern Namibia	GEF7	FAO	Namibia	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10253	Global coordination project for the SFM Drylands Impact Program	GEF7	FAO	Global	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10254	Transforming landscapes and livelihoods: A cross-sector approach to accelerate restoration of Malawi's Miombo and Mopane woodlands for sustainable forest and biodiversity management	GEF7	FAO	Malawi	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10255	Integrated sustainable and adaptive management of natural resources to support land degradation neutrality and livelihoods in the Miombo-Mopane landscapes of North-east Botswana	GEF7	FAO	Botswana	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10256	Land and natural resource degradation neutrality and community vulnerability reduction in selected Miombo and Mopane Ecoregions of Angola (Okavango and Cunene river basin)	GEF7	FAO	Angola	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10257	A cross-sector approach supporting the mainstreaming of sustainable forest and land management to enhance ecosystem resilience for improved livelihoods in the Save and Runde Catchments of Zimbabwe	GEF7	FAO	Zimbabwe	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10262	Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration in Tanzania's Forest Landscapes	GEF7	WWF-US	Tanzania	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10265	Promotion of sustainable food systems and improved ecosystems services in Northern Kazakhstan Landscape	GEF7	UNDP	Kazakhstan	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10291	Sustainable management of dryland landscapes in Burkina Faso	GEF7	IUCN	Burkina Faso	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No

10292	Strengthening forest management for improved biodiversity conservation and climate resilience in the Southern rangelands of Kenya	GEF7	IUCN	Kenya	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10299	Kazakhstan Resilient Agroforestry and Rangeland Management Project	GEF7	WB	Kazakhstan	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10306	FOLUR Global Knowledge to Action Platform to Support Transformational Shifts In Food and Land Use Systems	GEF7	WB	Global	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10309	Staying within Sustainable Limits: Advancing leadership of the private sector and cities	GEF7	CI	Global	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10322	The Food Securities Fund: A fund to finance sustainable supply chains at scale in Emerging Markets	GEF7	CI	Global	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10352	Conservation and Sustainable Management of Land Resources and High Nature Value Ecosystems in the Aral Sea Basin for Multiple Benefits	GEF7	UNDP	Turkmenistan	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10362	Resilient, productive and sustainable landscapes in Mali's Kayes Region	GEF7	FAO	Mali	MFA	MTF	CEF Returned from CU and GEFSEC	No
10364	Integrated Adaptation Program to enhance resilience of communities and ecosystems in the dry Miombo Woodlands of Tanzania Mainland and Dryland of Zanzibar	GEF7	FAO	Tanzania	CC	LDCF	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10365	Implementation of Armenia's LDN commitments through sustainable land management and restoration of degraded landscapes	GEF7	FAO	Armenia	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10367	Sustainable Forest and Rangelands Management in the Dryland Ecosystems of Uzbekistan	GEF7	FAO	Uzbekistan	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No

10369	Strengthening the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Forest Landscapes in Turkey's Kazdaglari Region	GEF7	FAO	Turkey	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10384	Land Degradation Neutrality for biodiversity conservation, food security and resilient livelihoods in the Peanut Basin and Eastern Senegal (Dékil Souf)	GEF7	FAO	Senegal	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10412	Sustainable Luangwa: Securing Luangwa's water resources for shared socioeconomic and environmental benefits through integrated catchment management	GEF7	WWF-US	Zambia	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10418	Building resilience through sustainable land management and climate change adaptation in Dodoma	GEF7	AfDB	Tanzania	MFA	MTF	CEF Returned from CU and GEFSEC	No
10420	Promoting Sustainable Agricultural Production and Conservation of Key Biodiversity Species through Land Restoration and Efficient Use of Ecosystems in the Dallol Bosso and Surrounding Areas (PROSAP/COKEBIOS)	GEF7	IFAD	Niger	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10439	Conservation and Sustainable Management of High-Value Arid Ecosystems in the Lower Amu Darya Basin	GEF7	UNDP	Tajikistan	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10444	Development of an integrated system to promote the natural capital in the drylands of Mauritania	GEF7	IUCN	Mauritania	LD	GET	CEF Returned from GEFSEC	No
10464	Paraguay FOLUR	GEF7	UNEP	Paraguay	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10480	Transforming Rice-Wheat Food Systems in India	GEF7	FAO	India	MFA	GET	CEF Revised by Agency	No
10481	Promoting Integrated Landscape Management and Sustainable Food Systems in the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria	GEF7	FAO	Nigeria	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No

10497	AGRI3 A Forest Conservation and Sustainable Agriculture Fund for Developing Countries	GEF7	CI	Global	MFA	GET	CEF Returned from GEFSEC	No
10500	Livelihoods Carbon Fund 3 (LCF3)	GEF7	CI	Global	MFA	GET	Council Approved	No
10505	Strengthen Management and Climate Change Resilience in Angola's Conservation Areas for Sustainable Development	GEF7	CI	Angola	MFA	MTF	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10528	Achieving land degradation neutrality targets through restoration and sustainable management of degraded land in Northern Jordan	GEF7	FAO	Jordan	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10533	Degraded Natural Forest Use Land Restoration and Management in Typical Water and Solid Erosion of China	GEF7	UNDP	China	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10538	Oasis Landscape Sustainable Management project	GEF7	WB	Tunisia	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10562	Resilient and sustainable livelihoods for rural Yemen	GEF7	FAO	Yemen	MFA	MTF	CEF Revised by Agency	No
10572	Integrated Landscape Management Gambia (INLAMAG) Project	GEF7	IFAD	Gambia	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10574	Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Rural Landscapes of Mexico	GEF7	CI	Mexico	MFA	GET	Council Approved	No
10583	Conservation Areas for Biodiversity Conservation and Development II-Additional Financing	GEF7	WB	Mozambique	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No

10589	Lake Naivasha Basin Ecosystem Based Management	GEF7	WWF-US	Kenya	MFA	GET	PIF Cleared	No
10598	Integrated Landscape Management for conservation and restoration of the Mt. Elgon Ecosystem in Western Kenya	GEF7	FAO	Kenya	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10601	Food System, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program in Uzbekistan	GEF7	FAO	Uzbekistan	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10633	Green Finance for Sustainable Landscapes Joint Initiative of the CPF (GF4SL)	GEF7	UNEP	Global	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
10634	Harnessing the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) for a Sustainable and Resilient Sahel	GEF7	UNEP	Regional	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
10637	Restoration Challenge Grant Platform for Smallholders and Communities, with Blockchain-Enabled Crowdfunding	GEF7	IUCN	Regional	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10671	Enabling Activities for Implementing UNCCD COP Drought Decisions	GEF7	FAO	Global	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
10672	Promotion of Integrated Biodiversity Conservation and Land Degradation Neutrality in Highly Degraded Landscapes of Iraq	GEF7	UNEP	Iraq	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10676	Biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and sustainable tourism development in North Macedonia	GEF7	UNEP	North Macedonia	MFA	GET	CEF Returned from CU and GEFSEC	No
10687	Climate security and sustainable management of natural resources in the central regions of Mali for peacebuilding	GEF7	UNDP	Mali	MFA	MTF	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No

10688	Restoring and Enhancing the Value of Degraded Lands and Forest Ecosystems for Enhanced Climate Resilience in Benin (PIRVaTEFoD-Benin)	GEF7	UNDP	Benin	MFA	MTF	CEF MGR Cleared	No
10692	Integrated Community-based Management of High Value Mountain Ecosystems in Southern Kyrgyzstan for Multiple Benefits	GEF7	UNDP	Kyrgyz Republic	MFA	GET	CEF MGR Cleared	No
10693	Combating land degradation through integrated and sustainable range and livestock management to promote resilient livelihoods in Northern Punjab	GEF7	FAO	Pakistan	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10695	Restoration of ecosystems, integrated natural resource management and promotion of SLM in Mbuluzi River Basin of Eswatini	GEF7	UNEP	Eswatini	MFA	GET	CEF Revised by Agency	No
10708	Towards a Land Degradation-Neutral Azerbaijan	GEF7	FAO	Azerbaijan	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10718	Restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem services at the landscape scale on productive agroforestry areas and their natural environment	GEF7	FAO	Chile	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10723	Regeneration of Livelihoods and Landscapes (ROLL) Project	GEF7	IFAD	Lesotho	LD	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10732	Sustainable and Integrated Water Resource Management in Gediz River Basin in Turkey	GEF7	FAO	Turkey	MFA	GET	CEO Endorsement Cleared	No
10735	Connecting Watershed Health with Sustainable Livestock and Agroforestry Production	GEF7	WB	Mexico	MFA	GET	Under Implementation	No
10789	Building Community Based Integrated and Climate Resilient Natural Resources Management and Enhancing Sustainable Livelihood in the South-Eastern Escarpments and Adjacent Coastal Areas of Eritrea	GEF7	FAO	Eritrea	MFA	MTF	CEF Returned from CU and GEFSEC	No

10792	Adaptive Agriculture and Rangeland Rehabilitation Project (A2R2) - Somalia	GEF7	IFAD	Somalia	MFA	MTF	Council Approved	No
10806	Global Support Programme III: Strengthening Capacities of Country Parties for UNCCD Monitoring and Reporting	GEF7	UNEP	Global	LD	GET	Under Implementation	No
10816	Sustainable investments for large-scale rangeland restoration (STELARR)	GEF7	IUCN	Global	LD	GET	CEF Returned from GEFSEC	No
10819	Enhancement of agro-ecological management system through promoting ecosystem-oriented food production	GEF7	FAO	Turkey	LD	GET	CEF Returned from CU and GEFSEC	No
10852	Green Finance & Sustainable Agriculture in the Dry Forest Ecoregion of Ecuador and Peru	GEF7	CAF	Regional	MFA	GET	Council Approved	No
10854	Conservation and Sustainable Management of Land Resources and High Value Ecosystems in Lake Sevan Basin for Multiple Benefits	GEF7	UNDP	Armenia	MFA	GET	Council Approved	No
10863	Towards Land Degradation Neutrality for Improved Equity, Sustainability, and Resilience	GEF7	FAO	Cabo Verde	LD	GET	Council Approved	No
10866	Comprehensive land management in forestry and agri-food systems of three water basins in Argentina to contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and to mitigation and adaptation to climate change	GEF7	CAF	Argentina	LD	GET	Council Approved	No
10869	Promoting sustainability in the agave-mezcal value chain through restoration and integrated management of biocultural landscapes in Oaxaca	GEF7	UNEP	Mexico	MFA	GET	Council Approved	No
10870	Promoting Sustainable Approaches to Ecosystem Conservation in the Imatong landscape of South Sudan	GEF7	UNEP	South Sudan	MFA	GET	Council Approved	No

10874	Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in the Day and Mabla Mountains	GEF7	UNDP	Djibouti	MFA	GET	Council Approved	No
10876	Sustainable Management and Restoration of Degraded Landscapes for Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in India	GEF7	UNDP	India	LD	GET	Council Approved	No

Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

Key Questions	Indicators/basic data/what to look for	Sources of information	Methodology
KQ1) To what extent has GEF support been and relevant to the specific environmental challenges in dryland countries, and are there any gaps?	- Existence of dryland specific objectives, components, regions, intervention typologies - Perceptions on responsiveness and alignment	- GEF strategy documents - Convention documents - UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC Secretariat staff	- Document review - Interviews
	- Existence of national operational strategies related to GEF focal areas in dryland countries - Alignment of GEF support with national environmental priorities and budgets	- Country stakeholders - Available country data (laws/policies, strategies and budgets)	- Document review in country case studies - Interviews in country case studies - Field observations in country case studies
	- Existence of coherent strategies linking GEF investments to a programmatic portfolio addressing dryland environmental and socioeconomic issues	- GEF strategy documents - IAPs & IPs program and child project documents - GEF stakeholders (Secretariat, Agencies, STAP)	- Document review - Quality-at-entry analysis - Interviews
	- Comparison of areas with high occurrence and severity of the main drylands environmental and socioeconomic challenges with where the GEF's projects focusing with LD, BD, CCA and forests are located at the country or subnational level	- Project documents from GEF Portal, Agency verified - Geospatial datasets (WRI Land and Carbon Lab , other) - Coordinates of project sites already geocoded - Coordinates of project sites to be geocoded	- Document review - Relevance of geographic targeting analysis
	- Alignment with national LDN targets and implementation plans, NBSAP objectives and Nationally Determined Contributions	- Project documentation - Portfolio data from GEF Portal, Agency verified	- Document review - Quality-at-entry analysis
	- Engagement of national CCD, CBD and UNFCCC focal points in project design	- Country stakeholders - Available country data	- Interviews and document review in country case studies
KQ2) How have GEF interventions interacted thus far with similar government- and/or donor-funded activities in terms of either contributing to or hindering policy coherence in dryland countries?	- Examples of influential GEF normative support to environmental policy coherence in dryland countries - Examples of synergies with other donors' support to the environmental sector in dryland countries - Alignment of GEF support with other donors' support to the environmental sector in dryland countries	- Project documents from GEF Portal, Agency verified - IEO study on the Impact of GEF Support on National Environmental Laws and Policies in Selected Countries - IEO's country-level evaluations - Available country data (documentation from other donors)	- Document review - Meta assessment - Document review in country case studies
	- Existence of explicit commitment to environmental policy coherence, formally included into national legislation and/or national strategy and/or action plan - Existence of specific mandates and mechanisms (planning & budgetary processes, guidelines or regulations) that allow ministries and public agencies to align respective sectoral programs, budgets and policies - Existence of a mechanism for cross-sectoral coordination for ministries and public agencies to share information and allocate responsibilities and resources - Existence of legal frameworks and mechanisms for engaging stakeholders (civil society, business and industry, science and academia) in the design and implementation of environmental plans and policies	- Available country data (laws/policies, strategies and budgets; documentation from other donors) - Country stakeholders	- Document review in country case studies - Interviews in country case studies

Key Questions	Indicators/basic data/what to look for	Sources of information	Methodology
KQ3) <i>To what extent have GEF interventions in dryland countries been effective in producing their targeted global environmental benefits and associated socioeconomic benefits?</i>	- Aggregate effectiveness and outcome ratings, and their variation over time in dryland countries - Distribution of dryland intervention typologies by level of environment and development synergy promotion (SLM, restoration, other)	- APR database - TEs/TERs documents	- Comparative rating analysis between different cohorts of dryland situations (dry sub-humid, semi-arid, arid, etc.) by region, Agency, intervention typology, other
	- Appropriateness of drylands-specific performance metrics related to land degradation and SLM, and of the corresponding GEF corporate target setting	- GEF Programming, RBM and corporate scorecard documents	- Document review
	- Evidence/examples of the most prevalent GEBs and associated socioeconomic co-benefits of GEF drylands related interventions	- Project documents from GEF Portal, Agency verified - Country stakeholders - Available country data	- Document review - Interviews in country case studies - Document review in country case studies
	- Perceptions on the most important factors having influenced variations in those dryland countries having shown the largest change in performance - Perceptions on the existence of a nexus or a trade-off between environment and socioeconomic development	- Country stakeholders - Available country data	- Interviews in country case studies - Document review in country case studies
KQ4) <i>Have natural resource governance and other socio-economic factors been considered in the design and implementation of GEF drylands interventions, and if yes, with what results and sustainability?</i>	- Aggregate ratings of likely sustainability of outcomes - Aggregate financial, socio-political, institutional, and environmental risks to sustainability ratings	- APR database - TEs/TERs documents	- Portfolio analysis - Document review - Post-completion verification
	- Aggregate geospatial data on: (i) forest loss and other land use change as a proportion of the total land area; (ii) NDVI; (iii) LDN indicators such as soil organic carbon and net primary productivity and (iv) socio-economic indicators; among others. - Hot spots of positive, negative and no change based on the above mechanisms, and identification of main underlying factors in each example	- GIS/Remote Sensing databases (i.e., Trends.Earth) - TEs/TERs of projects that will be and have been geocoded - Country stakeholders - Available country data	- Aggregated geospatial analysis aimed at identifying hot spots of positive, negative or no change - Field observations in country case studies - Post-completion verification
	- Evidence/examples of positive, negative and absent change, and identification of main underlying factors in each example	- Central stakeholders - Country stakeholders - Available country data	- Interviews - Document review in country case studies - Field observations in country case studies - Post-completion verification
	- Perceptions on stakeholder incentives related to immediate socioeconomic needs vs. long term environmental outcomes	- Country stakeholders - Available country data	- Interviews in country case studies - Post-completion verification

Key Questions	Indicators/basic data/what to look for	Sources of information	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence and application of negotiated norms and regulations on resource use, considering the needs of different stakeholders within the target landscapes - Effective and equitable application of sanctions on transgressions of such norms and regulations - Constructive and equitable resolution of conflicts regarding the management of dryland landscapes - Effective representation in decisions of the interests of different stakeholder groups, including the marginalized - Evidence/examples of conflict sensitivity approach application in GEF dryland interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TEs/TERs documents - Country stakeholders - Available country data - Evaluation of GEF Support in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Interviews in country case studies - Post-completion verification
KQ5) To what extent have the cross-cutting issues of gender and resilience been taken into consideration in GEF programming and implementation in dryland countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of gender analysis and management plans - Existence of sex disaggregated / gender sensitive indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portfolio data from GEF Portal, Agency verified - Project documents from GEF Portal, Agency verified - OPS6 and OPS7 data on gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portfolio analysis - Document review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender ratings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GEF AMRs and corporate scorecards on gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portfolio analysis
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of women's inclusion and women's empowerment - Linkages between country gender plans, policies, strategies and project strategies and plans on gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country stakeholders - Available country data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews in country case studies - Document review in country case studies - Field observations in country case studies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of resilience considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents from GEF Portal, Agency verified - APR data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Adapted RAPTA framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence/examples of integration of resilience considerations in GEF supported interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country stakeholders - Available country data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews in country case studies - Document review in country case studies - Field observations in country case studies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of regulatory framework enabling the private sector to address environmental issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TEs/TERs - IEO's country-level evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Meta assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of access to private sector funding after project completion - Perceptions on the most important factors having influenced the access to private sector funding for GEF supported SLM or restoration activities in dryland countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country stakeholders - Available country data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews in country case studies - Document review in country case studies - Field observations in country case studies