



UNCCD Management Response: Independent Review of the GGW Accelerator

This document represents a UNCCD management response to the findings of the comprehensive review conducted by Mr. David Todd on the performance of the Great Green Wall Accelerator and its contribution to the delivery of the Great Green Wall Initiative. The insights provided by the comprehensive review are valuable and we acknowledge the efforts of all stakeholders involved in the GGW Initiative in particular the Pan-African Agency of the GGW (PAAGGW).

The review report highlights the commendable progress made by the Accelerator in key areas such as governance, monitoring, and resource mobilization. UNCCD recognizes the dedication of the GGWA team in managing relationships, advocating for effective governance and in supporting national authorities in the development of strong national coalitions. The development of a harmonized results management framework has provided an inclusive versatile mechanism for measuring GGW progress. The achievements outlined in the review demonstrate the Accelerator's proactive approach and commitment to the goals of the Great Green Wall Initiative. However, we acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the relationship between the Accelerator and the Pan-African Agency. We understand the need for clarity on how the Accelerator and the Pan African Agency should collaborate to foster a stronger partnership to support implementation.

In line with its terms of reference, the independent review does not present direct recommendations, keeping in mind that the context in which the GGW Accelerator operates involves several key actors and also factors that are beyond the UNCCD reach. Instead, it outlines four options for the next steps, assessing the potential strengths and weaknesses of each. These options also indicate actions that could be taken toward moving forward.

Having carefully considered the options and the most productive ways forward, the UNCCD emphasizes the importance of the following actions:

- **The immediate execution of the institutional Audit of the Pan-African Agency:**

That the commissioned audit by the PAGGW Council of Ministers in 2021, for the benefit of the PAAGGW and its member states, to identify areas for development - be completed as soon as possible. The audit must be available to serve as a foundation for enhancing the Agency's capacities, addressing resource constraints – personnel and skill sets, and ensuring its readiness to assume the responsibilities currently undertaken by the Accelerator. This audit will guide the development of a robust plan to strengthen the PAA's capabilities and enhance these in time for 2030. A clear budget with requirements for the PAAGGW can only be properly established once the audit is completed. UNCCD will be pleased to continue participating in this process as a member of the steering committee, in an advisory capacity.

- **That an independent review of the whole GGW Initiative for the period 2021-2024 be carried out.**

This review should be commissioned by the Minister Coordinator for the GGWI -on behalf of the Council of Ministers- and carried out by an internationally recognized firm.



In follow-up to the independent review, the UNCCD, through the GGW Accelerator, will prepare for a follow-up phase of the GGWI for the period 2025-2030, based on the findings of the independent review. The review report emphasizes the critical role of the Pan-African Agency in the long-term success of the GGW Initiative. With that in mind, the Accelerator will plan to continue operations over the period 2025-2030 with a more focused and specific mandate. The GGW Accelerator will develop a phased exit strategy and will stop its direct support to the initiative before 2030, when the PAAGGW should be at full capacity. At this stage the PAAGGW will be able to take on any new vision for the region developed, in line with the Great Green Wall vision and strategy of the African Union. As a part of this exit strategy, the UNCCD team will continue to support and build the capacity of National Agencies and the Pan-African Agency in response to their specific needs.

In that respect, the GGW Accelerator aims to carry out the below actions in follow-up to the independent review. To deliver on this, the GGW Accelerator estimates it will require an investment of USD1.5 million/year for five years (total USD7.5million) to cover staffing and operations for the development of the phase to 2030 (limited to the below tasks and excluding the costs of the independent review and audit).

Action to be taken	Deadline	In charge
Resource Mobilization Framework: The GGW Accelerator will provide the necessary advice and guidance framework for the mobilization of resources required for implementation of the GGW Initiative in the period 2025-2030. By the end of 2024, the Accelerator will have assisted the PAA in preparing a new resource mobilization framework and strategy. This new approach will draw on the conclusions of the above-mentioned independent review and the upcoming audit and target implementation at multiple levels including local, national and regional. We will begin joint implementation and roll out the Harmonized Results Management framework and strategy in 2025.	End of 2024	GM
Monitoring: The GGW Accelerator will finalize the multi-purpose platform, continue to build capacity on its use for the PAGGW and the National Agencies, while making it accessible for the transparent use of all relevant stakeholders. In the next period, long-term sustainability, including growth and interoperability will be assessed planned and secured by 2030.	End of 2024	GGWA
Capacity Development/Readiness Strategy: Recognizing that this activity should largely fall within the remit of the PAAGGW, the Accelerator would focus its capacity building activities on: (i) collaboration (at national/cross-boundary level – supporting the development of multi-stakeholder engagement for national or regional coalitions), (ii) integration of non-state stakeholders, (iii) resource mobilization (guidance on how to write and apply for funding or readiness), (iii) monitoring of results/use of data.	2030	PAGGW with GGWA
Greater Sahel Collaboration: In order to build the long-term sustainability of the GGWI and the viability of investments into the programme and to set it within an evolving regional context, the Accelerator will emphasize the importance of practical trans-Sahara and Circum-Sahara collaboration within the context of the greater Sahel region. The GGW accelerator will promote partnerships extending beyond individual government led efforts, to integrate regional non-state stakeholders into the delivery of the GGW Initiative thereby enhancing the collective impact, and developing a pipeline of projects.	2030	GGWA