TERMS OF REFERENCE

Country Consultant - Support to the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Process in selected countries¹

Consultancy reference number: CCD/19/GM/68

Background

Desertification, along with climate change and the loss of biodiversity were identified as the greatest challenges to sustainable development during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found. In the 10-Year Strategy of the UNCCD (2008-2018) Parties to the Convention further specified their goals: "to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability".

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, including goal 15, which aims to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”. As main expected results it defines under target 15.3 to “combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world” by 2030.

In October 2015, the 12th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNCCD, organized in Ankara, Turkey, agreed to:

- Define Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and endorse the concept as a strong vehicle for driving implementation of the UNCCD;
- Invite country Parties to formulate national voluntary targets to achieve LDN and to integrate LDN targets into UNCCD National Action Programmes;
- Establish LDN partnerships recognizing the unique role of UNCCD in addressing target 15.3 and the contributions required from other bodies, agencies and Conventions to achieve LDN.

In September 2017, the 13th session of the COP of the UNCCD further decided to:

- Continue to support Parties in their efforts to achieve land degradation neutrality, including the formulation and implementation of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and

¹ See annex for the list of countries related to this vacancy announcement.
the alignment of national action programmes with the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework, and

• Continue to strengthen international cooperation for the achievement of land degradation neutrality, including inter alia, by fostering synergies and increasing coherence among the three Rio conventions and other related initiatives contributing to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

The Global Mechanism is an institution of the UNCCD, mandated to assist countries in the mobilization of financial resources from the public and private sector for activities that prevent, control or reverse desertification, land degradation and drought. As the operational arm of the convention, the Global Mechanism supports countries to translate the Convention into action and to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality at the national level.

The Global Mechanism provides advisory services, promotes partnerships and demonstrates innovations at the country level. It aspires to be a trusted international partner that translates cutting-edge knowledge into tailored, country-level action. As scale and impact can only be achieved through partnerships - knowledge partnerships, implementation partnerships, and funding partnerships – the Global Mechanism puts a particular emphasis on strategic partnerships.

The country consultant will support the implementation of the LDN Target Setting Process by providing technical backstopping to the national LDN target setting process in selected countries (see annex).

**Consultant task’s**
Under the overall supervision of the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism and the Team Leader of the LDN Programme, the direct supervision of the Regional Leads of the LDN Programme and in close cooperation with Global Mechanism and UNCCD Secretariat colleagues, the national experts will support the National Focal Point of the UNCCD throughout the implementation of the LDN target setting process at national level, including in particular:

1. Drafting country-specific work plan and detailed budget;
2. Supporting the establishment/functioning of the LDN National Working Group, including
   a. ensuring a balanced representation and effective participation of government, science, private sector, development partners and civil society, focusing on land-related sectors;
   b. ensuring the alignment of the LDN target setting process to the national SDG process and other development priorities.
   c. acting, as appropriate, as secretary of the LDN National Working Group during meetings and consultations with stakeholders, performing relevant facilitation support services on demand.
3. Leading the country analysis (desk review) of LDN enabling environment, assessing the interlinkages with other national development priorities (e.g., UNCCD’s National Action Plan SWOT analysis and alignment process, Integrated Investment Frameworks for
Sustainable Land Management, National Development Plans, UNFCCC’s Nationally Determined Contributions, CBD’s National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans) and supporting actions to mainstream LDN into the national development agenda.

4. Effectively supporting the establishment of LDN baseline and the assessment of LDN trends and drivers at national and subnational levels in order to inform the LDN target setting process;

5. Identifying priority areas for immediate LDN actions (“LDN hot spots”), covering all land degradation processes significantly present in the country;

6. Articulating, as appropriate, national voluntary targets and associated measures for review and validation by the LDN National Working Group;

7. Drafting technical and analytical reports as requested (e.g., LDN leverage plan; national LDN baseline, established targets and identified measures; LDN legal/institutional environment, LDN trends and drivers; synthesis report on the LDN target setting process to be shared at UNCCD CRIC17);

8. Perform other duties as requested.

**Expected outputs**

Expected outputs will be discussed and agreed with the Regional LDN Programme Leads on a monthly basis based on the country-level work plan of the Programme, including

- Country work plan
- Analysis of LDN legal and institutional environment
- Analysis of LDN baseline, trends and drivers
- Proposed LDN targets, associated measures and transformative project ideas
- High level note and synthesis report summarizing the national LDN target setting process

**Requirements**

- Advanced university degree in environmental engineering, natural resource management, development economics, or related disciplines
- A minimum of 5 years working experience related to natural resource management (NRM)
- Extensive knowledge on NRM monitoring, including methodologies on monitoring and assessing land use change, land productivity and soil organic carbon
- Demonstrated technical knowledge of GIS and remote sensing applied to natural resources monitoring and assessment at (sub)national level
- Substantial knowledge on project management and monitoring, including result-based management and result based budgeting
- Demonstrated knowledge in the effective facilitation of complex multi stakeholder processes
• Knowledge on the UNCCD or related Conventions. Experience in working with UNCCD stakeholders in the country an asset
• Knowledge of English is required as well as professional knowledge of the language in the country/ies of assignment (see annex). Additional UN languages would be an asset
• Demonstrated ability to work independently, handle multiple tasks, work under pressure and deliver assignments on time

Contractual Terms
This consultancy will be home-based in the country of assignment or remotely and will include missions as required by the Programme. Consultants may be requested to cover several countries within the same (sub)region. Consultancy fees will be based on qualifications and the level of experience, payment will be on a lump sum basis against delivery of outputs.

Submission of applications
Applications should be submitted by e-mail to staffing@unccd.int with a cover memo, CV and/or UNCCD Personal History Form (P11)², specifying the position (IMPORTANT: please specify also the country/ies of interest): CCD/19/GM/68 – Country Consultant – Support to the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Process in [COUNTRY NAME(S)].

The deadline for applications is 20 September 2019. Only applications submitted by the deadline will be considered.

Due to the volume of applications received, receipt of applications cannot be acknowledged individually. Please address your application as indicated above and please do not address or copy your application to an individual at the Secretariat or Global Mechanism. Candidates who do not receive any feedback within three months of the deadline should consider their application as unsuccessful.

Date of issuance: 22 August 2019

² https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/UNCCD%20P-11%20Form_1.pdf
Annex: Preliminary list of countries covered by the consultancies

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