

Western and Central Africa



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IFAD recognizes the phenomenal cost of uncontrolled land degradation in terms of poverty and prolonged episodes of famine. At the same time, it is convinced that careful management of marginal lands can continue to feed the populations that depend on them. It perceives rural poverty reduction to be synonymous with natural resource management. Seventy percent of IFAD-supported projects are located in ecologically fragile and marginal environments, targeting the poorest and most deprived segments of the rural population.

In 2001, IFAD was recognized by the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for its expertise in land degradation, becoming a GEF executing agency. The IFAD-GEF partnership has enabled the creation of mutual synergies. Building on IFAD's experience, the GEF is likely to widen its range of intervention possibilities in degraded ecosystems and post-conflict situations. In addition, the IFAD-GEF partnership has generated a strong multiplier effect: for each GEF dollar, IFAD mobilizes an average of US\$5.26. At the same time, IFAD's project impact in select cases has been amplified by placing local development in the perspective of global environmental concerns.

Although its comparative advantage for the GEF relates to land degradation, IFAD has developed experience in other agroecological settings falling under various GEF focal areas, such as biodiversity and climate change. Further, its flexible programme approach and long-term lending framework are conducive to close collaboration with the GEF in addressing global environmental concerns while meeting local development needs.

Regional strategy

IFAD's regional strategy in Western and Central Africa is consistent with both the Fund's overall commitment to achieving the

Millennium Development Goals and its strategy of enabling rural poor people to overcome poverty. Major elements of the regional context in which the strategy needs to be articulated include: a weak human-capital base; inappropriate or insufficiently pro-poor policies and institutions; low agricultural productivity, combined with degradation of the natural resource base; inadequate and poorly maintained rural infrastructure; and the need to operate more effectively in the global marketplace. IFAD's strategy in the region focuses on three cross-cutting approaches: investing in women, enhanced participation and building on indigenous knowledge. Moreover, IFAD will continue to work on the generation and dissemination of improved agricultural and natural resource technologies, concentrating on areas in which population growth has increased pressures for intensification and on the promotion of community-based natural resource management activities.

Examples of IFAD's natural resource management initiatives

IFAD's involvement in the Sahel has actively encouraged technologies such as alternative tillage practices, low-cost water-conservation and erosion-control techniques, appropriate livestock/crop combinations, improved and early-maturing seed varieties requiring less water, and agroforestry. In Senegal's Diourbel, Fatick and Kaolack regions, IFAD has long supported the introduction of agroforestry technologies, including village woodlots and the planting and protection of *Acacia albida*, the ana tree, in farmers' fields. In Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger, it has fostered the adoption of water catchment through *zai* or *tassa* and *demi-lunes*. IFAD's operations in Mauritania involve oasis protection and environmentally sensitive development. Its community development project in Niger, which supports innovation by the participants, and its community-based natural resource management programme in Nigeria's Niger Delta seek to rehabilitate and ensure environmentally sound use of the natural resource base, while working to sustainably improve the livelihoods of the poorest people. A strong community-based participatory approach to natural resource management has been the theme of IFAD's Participatory Integrated Watershed Management Project in the Gambia and the Sustainable Rural Development Programme in Burkina Faso.



At the regional level, IFAD implemented a GEF medium-sized project, *Supporting Capacity Building for the Elaboration of National Reports and Country Profiles by African Parties to the UNCCD*. IFAD's contribution consisted in preparing analytical case studies on the adoption and mainstreaming of best practices in sustainable land management (rangelands and agroforestry) for poverty reduction. The studies were based on its operational experience in three African projects: *Special Programme for Soil and Water Conservation and Agroforestry in the Central Plateau* (Burkina Faso), *Livestock and Rangelands Development Project in the Eastern Region* (Morocco) and *Intensified Land Use Management Project in the Buberuka Highlands* (Rwanda).

Through its grants to regional bodies and NGOs, IFAD supports agricultural research, training, studies and community development. For example, by encouraging discussion of the rural and agricultural policies proposed by the New Partnership for Africa's Development, IFAD supports the Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers in West Africa. Another example is an IFAD grant to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture to foster the use of multipurpose cowpea varieties as part of an integrated crop/livestock system in the Sahel: nitrogen fixation in the soil, high quality fodder and food security for people.

IFAD/GEF initiatives

IFAD's GEF portfolio in the region is growing. The first IFAD/GEF approved project was in Mali: **Biodiversity Conservation and Participatory Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Inner Niger Delta and its Transition Areas, Mopti Region** (total project cost of US\$19.9 million, including US\$6.3 million GEF funding, US\$12.0 million from IFAD and cofinancing of US\$1.6 million from the Government and project participants).

This GEF component was designed to be implemented within the framework of a flexible lending mechanism project that IFAD launched in 1999 in the Sahelian regions of Mali. The *Sahelian Areas Development Fund (SADeF) Programme* aimed to improve incomes and living conditions through food security and to expand access to health care and education. Lessons learned during the first phase guided the expansion into new regions (Mopti, Kayes) during Phases II (2003-2006) and III (2007-2010).

The six-year GEF initiative has been fully blended into the IFAD project, complementing and enhancing the second and third phases. Its main objectives are to: (i) enable SADeF to adopt an integrated ecosystem approach to restoring and developing the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries potential, while holistically addressing the underlying causes

of environmental degradation; (ii) promote community-based conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the most biodiversity-rich and threatened ecosystems ('hotspots') of national and global significance in the Interior Delta of the Niger (Mopti) – for example around the three Ramsar sites; and (iii) activate a participatory local development process that builds on indigenous knowledge. These objectives will be backed up by an enabling institutional and policy environment and capacity-building.

IFAD expertise in natural resource management in the region will lead to the development of further high-quality, impact-oriented GEF projects, working towards a sustainable management of natural resources that yields both local and global benefits.

IFAD's partnerships within TerrAfrica

IFAD is also an active member of TerrAfrica, a catalytic partnership initiated by the World Bank and its partners to promote a new paradigm for framing and implementing sustainable land management in sub-Saharan Africa. TerrAfrica enables all parties to work collectively and in coordination to prevent and address the agricultural, environmental and socio-economic consequences of land degradation in vulnerable African countries. It adopts a cross-sectoral approach by linking investments; research and a strategy for its dissemination; and partnerships to promote sustainable land-management. Such a platform offers an effective alternative to mainstream sustainable land management interventions in sub-Saharan Africa.

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Eastern and Southern Africa



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Regional strategy

IFAD's interventions in the region are based on three cross-cutting principles: (i) careful targeting; (ii) empowering rural poor people,

through organization and knowledge, to strengthen their own productivity, increase their assets and assert their collective influence vis-à-vis government and the private sector; and (iii) democratic accountability of governments. IFAD will focus on four strategic themes fundamental to poor people's economic prospects: promoting efficient market linkages; developing rural financial systems; improving access to and management of land and water; and creating a better knowledge and technology system.

Eastern and Southern Africa may suffer more from loss of soil fertility than any other region. Consequently, conservation technologies such as alternative tillage practices or appropriate cross-cropping combinations will be applied in order to safeguard long-term resource base sustainability while offering immediate scope for increased production and subsequent production-system intensification – and hence sustained poverty reduction. Investment in smallholder land management systems, already central to the Fund's operations in Lesotho and Zimbabwe, will assume increased importance as IFAD capitalizes on its relations with the GEF.

Since resource mismanagement and degradation originate also from a lack of market access and competitiveness, IFAD has adopted a 'whole system' approach tackling conservation within the entire structure of the rural political economy. Its investments in water development and management for smallholders throughout the region illustrate this approach (in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe). IFAD's new programmes will increasingly centre on enabling smallholders to augment crop yields from existing, farmer-operated and maintained water-management and harvesting systems in dryland areas, viable for supplementary irrigation of a single crop, such as rice.

Examples of IFAD's natural resource management initiatives

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A four-year pilot programme is under development to ensure that security of land tenure and access to land by rural poor people are addressed in IFAD's poverty-reduction activities. Start-up funding from the Norwegian Trust Fund, the Sustainable Livelihoods Trust Fund of the Department for International Development (United Kingdom) and the Innovation and Mainstreaming Initiative Fund has been used to employ a regional land-tenure programme manager, charged with conducting preliminary documentary research and strengthening IFAD in-house learning.

IFAD/GEF initiatives

Community Based Integrated National Resources Management: Improving Ecosystem Integrity and Rural Livelihoods, Ethiopia (total estimated project cost US\$30.4 million, including US\$5.4 million from GEF, US\$5.0 million from IFAD, to be confirmed, and other cofinancing of US\$20.0 million).

This project encompasses two of the largest, most densely populated and critical watersheds in the Amhara region – the Lake Tana Basin in the west and the highly degraded and drought-prone Borkena-Robi in the east. At full development, its ultimate goal is to restore ecosystem integrity and watershed management through best practices and technologies so as to improve land productivity, broaden the farming population's livelihood base and reduce vulnerability to climatic shock, backed up by a favourable policy and regulatory climate. The initiative will mainstream sustainable land management practices in government strategies for agriculture, water resources, forestry, livestock and biodiversity. An innovative aspect is the creation of synergies from the Rio conventions: responding to concern about land degradation in the Ethiopian National Action Plan (improving land use practices and soil fertility), while simultaneously engaging in afforestation and agroforestry to enhance carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions (UNCBD and UNFCCC).

Mount Kenya East Pilot Project for Natural Resource Management (total project cost US\$26.9 million, including a GEF component of US\$5.1 million, an IFAD component of US\$16.7 million and other cofinancing of US\$5.1 million).

This GEF initiative is embedded in an IFAD investment project that addresses poverty as the source of pressure on protected areas, with the GEF financing serving to improve protected area management, rehabilitate indigenous and plantation forest areas and mitigate conflicts between people and wildlife. Within the framework of poverty reduction through natural resource management, the project is building the capacity of local-level governance to attain: a more equitable abstraction of river water and its more efficient use in irrigation; community-based water resource management in critical catchment areas to enhance the content of soil organic matter; improvement of river water quality and quantity, including increased dry-season base flow to arid and semi-arid lands; and conservation of the Mount Kenya ecosystem and its biodiversity. It is envisaged that the integrated ecosystem management approach could eventually be replicated in other regions of Kenya and in other countries with similar agroecological characteristics and problems associated with the location of protected areas within agricultural areas of high population density.

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Near East and North Africa



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Regional strategy

The gradual transformation of countries in the Near East and North Africa (NENA) subregion from economies heavily controlled by the state

to more market-oriented economies presents many opportunities and risks for rural poor people. Opportunities include: improved representation of their needs in policy-making; more choices in what to produce and how to produce it; better access to markets and services; and, overall, greater potential for entrepreneurship and creative income-generating activities. The risk is that rural poor people are likely to be left behind in the decisions made and in access to services. IFAD's role in the region is to improve access to these new opportunities and minimize the risks that may accompany the transformation process. Given the degree of poverty and the ecological characteristics of the region (water shortages and widespread desertification), IFAD's strategic objectives focus on the following themes: empowerment of rural poor people; income diversification; gender issues and natural resource management.

IFAD projects have indirectly created an enabling macroenvironment for long-term resource conservation, while enlisting community participation in rangeland-management and soil-and-water conservation plans. For loans and grants alike, close collaboration between the NENA Division and the Global Mechanism has served to mainstream the UNCCD in IFAD's regional strategy.

Examples of IFAD's natural resource management initiatives

A six-year, US\$30.2 million IFAD-initiated project in Al-Haouz Province, Morocco, seeks to develop sustainable natural resource management systems to improve and diversify the income sources of 50,000 disadvantaged rural people in some 210 villages in mountain zones. An innovation is the inclusion of target communities as dialogue partners for local government offices. Rangeland regeneration and its significant environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits have been the focus of projects in Jordan (US\$9.0 million) and the Syrian Arab Republic (US\$104.9 million).

In Jordan, pilot areas were set up to demonstrate sustainable long-term rangeland development techniques. In Syria, project participants have been involved in reseeding and shrub planting over a 3 million-hectare area spanning eight provinces; this constitutes a replicable, participatory methodology for sustainable natural resource management.

The US\$49.0 million *Western Sudan Resources Management Programme* – in addition to reporting on a number of technical



packages for pasture regeneration and strengthening community organization – has promoted the development of a governance structure for land resources that is efficient, equitable and environmentally sustainable. IFAD has also taken the opportunity to contribute to implementation of national action plans (NAPs), for example in Tunisia, by creating synergies between its portfolio and a government-funded initiative that develops NAP projects at the local level through a participatory approach.

Most of IFAD's technical assistance grants in NENA – tied to specific loan projects – are related to UNCCD implementation in that they introduce low-input techniques for better soil and water conservation, higher integration of crops with livestock and ecologically friendly farming systems. In collaboration with the Global Mechanism, IFAD provided a US\$75,000 IFAD/NGO Extended Cooperation Programme grant for an NGO/civil society organization initiative that promoted desertification control and participatory natural resource management in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. It also provided a grant of US\$92,000 in the Arabian Peninsula, implemented by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, for sustainable natural resource management and improvement of rangeland and irrigated production systems through more efficient use of water and indigenous plant species. Other partners in this grant included the National Agricultural Research Systems of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

IFAD/GEF initiatives

Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management Practices, Jordan (total cost US\$39.6 million, including US\$6.8 million from GEF, US\$11.6 million from IFAD and other cofinancing of US\$21.2 million).

The overall goal of IFAD's *Agricultural Resource Management Project – Phase II* was to increase the food security and income levels of resource-poor households through an integrated programme comprising soil and water conservation and a credit programme to provide alternative income sources for women. The GEF initiative complements ongoing and proposed baseline activities under the IFAD project in the highland areas of the Governorates of Karak, Maan and Tafila. Its goal is to mitigate the causes of land degradation and its effects on the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems. It will achieve this through an enabling policy and incentive framework that mainstreams integrated land use planning and sustainable land management in national planning. The project will support land degradation monitoring at both national and local levels to

enable the Government to assess the effectiveness of land degradation mitigation measures in achieving global benefits and to identify practical and cost-effective project-level indicators.

Participatory Control of Desertification and Poverty Reduction in the Arid and Semi Arid High Plateau Ecosystems of Eastern Morocco (total cost US\$15.4 million, including US\$6.0 million from GEF, US\$6.4 million from IFAD and other cofinancing of US\$3.0 million).

This GEF proposal was jointly formulated and cofinanced by IFAD and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The project will promote desertification control by natural regeneration of pastoral resources through rotational grazing and establishment of set-aside areas for native seed production. It will strengthen the capacity of range users' associations to manage common lands and will develop an enabling policy and regulatory environment facilitating community-level conflict resolution regarding land use.

Support to Sustainable Land Management in the Siliana Governorate, Tunisia (total cost US\$29.0 million, including a GEF grant of US\$5.4 million, US\$12.0 million from IFAD and other cofinancing of US\$11.6 million).

This GEF intervention will complement the second phase of IFAD's *Integrated Agricultural Development Project in the Governorate of Siliana* by seeking to mainstream sustainable land management strategies in national and local development priorities. It will achieve this through: (i) cross-sectoral coordination – vertically between national and regional stakeholders and horizontally among local-level stakeholders; and (ii) an enabling institutional environment. The project will serve as a model for replicating land- and water-conservation principles and tools within other integrated agricultural projects in Tunisia. Additional benefits will include biodiversity conservation through protection of ecosystem integrity and function, and mitigation of climate change through increased tree and vegetative cover.

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Latin America and the Caribbean



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Regional strategy

IFAD's regional strategy in Latin America and the Caribbean seeks to empower rural poor people, capitalize on market opportunities,

engage in policy dialogue, pursue equitable access to and sustainable use of natural resources, build partnerships and cross-fertilize experiences across regions. With regard to empowerment, strengthening of the organizational and technical capacity of rural poor people is emphasized, with a view to optimizing the use of natural resources on their lands through a participatory approach. Regarding access to land and water, IFAD seeks to ensure equitable access in order to encourage grass-roots organizations to invest in: conservation of resources; development of technologies requiring low external inputs; and diversification of economic activities, including the integration of livestock, agriculture and agroforestry. One of the indicators of the impact of the regional strategy is the development of new, cost-effective methods for natural resource management.

Examples of IFAD's natural resource management initiatives

IFAD's US\$15.4 million *Strengthening Project for the National Micro-Watershed Programme* in Mexico applies the territorial, legal framework of the micro-watershed in order to improve the management and conservation of soil, water and vegetation. The goal is to significantly reduce poverty, marginalization and discrimination among the poorest indigenous and non-indigenous groups in eight selected states. Rehabilitation of natural resources and agricultural and microenterprise development to reduce the poverty and marginality of rural and indigenous communities were the themes of a US\$25.4 million sustainable development project in Mexico's semi-arid north-west. It is expected that reduced soil erosion, better overall watershed management and biodiversity restoration will promote and expand ongoing environmental-service payment schemes (carbon sequestration, soil and water management and biodiversity).

A US\$15 million rural development project in El Salvador's Eastern Region emphasizes training and education to enable participants to reverse deforestation, soil erosion, desertification and loss of water. IFAD's US\$15.2 million *Development of the Central Corridor Project* in Ecuador integrates environmental criteria into the selection, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives to be funded and creates alliances with national and local environmental organizations and projects. Participatory planning under the project will be linked to existing territorial planning instruments



(protected area and forest management plans and conservation-corridor land zoning), while municipal government staff will be trained in sustainable land use planning.

The US\$20.5 million *Patagonia Rural Development Project* in Argentina has taken on the objective of halving poverty among the rural people of Patagonia, while securing their economic integration into the regional and national economic context. It will pursue the latter through improved access to business opportunities, local and national labour markets and technical and financial resources. The project also seeks to reduce Patagonia's environmental vulnerability by counterbalancing increased grazing intensity on pasture lands from established herders with appropriate water basin management and biodiversity conservation practices that limit soil degradation. Through a US\$11.9 million natural resource management project in Bolivia's Chaco and High Valley regions and the funding of a liaison officer within the Land Classification and Watershed Directorate of the Vice-Ministry of Natural Resources, IFAD assists in coordinating activities under the UNCCD, with a view to also enhancing smallholder capacity for sustainable natural resource management.

IFAD/GEF initiatives

Sustainable Land Management Project in the Semi-Arid Sertão, Brazil (total cost US\$15.4 million, including US\$6.2 million from GEF, US\$4.7 million from IFAD and other cofinancing of US\$4.5 million).

An IFAD-financed *Sustainable Development Project for Agrarian Reform Settlements in the Semi-Arid North-East* is enabling 30,000 rural poor families to manage productive activities in agriculture, microenterprise and small-scale agro-industry more efficiently and sustainably. The objectives of this GEF component, complementing the IFAD project, are to: minimize the causes of land degradation and its negative impact on the integrity of the *Caatinga* biome ecosystem in the north-east through implementation of sustainable land use systems; and enhance the quality of life of the communities affected by land degradation through a pilot cross-sectoral approach to productive activities.

This approach incorporates an ecological dimension into the socio-cultural and economic dimensions already adopted. The component establishes an incentive programme for those land use practices that generate environmental services and develops a payment mechanism for selected services (watershed protection and carbon sequestration). It integrates sustainable land management into the UNCCD National Action Plan (NAP) framework, which targets the semi-arid (Sertão) and dry, subhumid lands of the north-east.

Combating Land Degradation in the Arid and Semi-Arid Zones of Falcón and Lara States, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (total project cost US\$29.7 million, including US\$5.4 million from GEF, US\$15.0 million from IFAD and other cofinancing of US\$9.3 million).

The objectives of this project – which is linked to IFAD's – are to: re-establish and conserve the functional integrity of ecosystems in the semi-arid zones of the two states, with a special focus on soil and water conservation; and promote sustainable land management principles as a guide to productive activities. The project's proposed strategies are fully in line with the five priority NAP themes (sustainable development; education, training and awareness raising; scientific research and technological innovation; institutional strengthening; and inter institutional and international cooperation). GEF funds will be used to ensure access of key government decision-makers to the tools to promote sustainable land management and to incorporate its considerations into the management plans of pilot microbasins selected for GEF support – under which grazing regimes and forest product extraction would be defined according to degradation risk.

The project also offers an opportunity to test a pilot scheme of compensation for environmental services, with a view to an increasingly supportive policy environment permitting its more widespread application. Reduced grazing pressure will permit increased regeneration of native plant species on open-access rangelands and will eventually result in a net increase in carbon storage, while the management and improvement of natural rangelands and forests will promote sustainable goat production. Soil and water conservation and rational resource use in the microwatersheds will aid recovery of some of the semi-arid areas prone to degradation.

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Asia and the Pacific



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Regional Strategy

In Asia and the Pacific, IFAD's regional strategy focuses on less-favoured areas such as upland and mountainous regions, and

marginal coastal and rainfed areas.

Consequently, it embraces environmental sustainability as a central pillar of programme design, and it is only natural that it works closely with the GEF in developing and implementing programmes to enable poor people – many of them indigenous peoples – to benefit financially from the environmental services they provide to the world at large. Such services include sustainable land management, carbon sequestration, hydrological services and conservation of biodiversity.

Examples of IFAD's natural resource management initiatives

In Pakistan, IFAD is supporting a US\$21.8 million initiative in the Southern Federally Administered Tribal Areas. It seeks to improve the resource base through rehabilitation of irrigated areas, soil and water conservation and range management, and it demonstrates the technical feasibility and financial attractiveness of conservation works and forestry activities undertaken by communities.

In the area of leasehold forestry and livestock, an IFAD project in Nepal, with a total cost of US\$12.7 million, is improving household forage and tree-crop production in 22 districts. The project is also enhancing the Government's capacity to implement leasehold forestry in a gender-sensitive manner as a national poverty-reduction instrument.

In Andhra Pradesh, in India, IFAD is jointly implementing a grant with Community Forestry International that seeks to strengthen the capacity of women-administered self-help groups to manage natural resources and develop livelihood-generating activities. The links established between these groups and forest protection committees serve to improve access of target groups to natural resources.

In the Pacific, a US\$2.0 million IFAD project focuses on youth and women's access to basic services in remote and neglected upland areas and outer islands, which are subject to over-exploitation of resources and the associated land degradation and vulnerability to natural disasters.

IFAD/GEF initiatives

Rehabilitation and Sustainable Use of Peatlands in South East Asia (total cost US\$22.2 million, including US\$5.0 million from GEF and US\$17.2 million IFAD and other cofinancing).

In partnership with the Secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations



(ASEAN), IFAD is supporting this GEF regional initiative in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The initiative seeks to reverse the loss and degradation of peat swamp forests in Southeast Asian countries by building local government and community capacity for sustainable peatland use and management, backed up by an enabling policy climate and a self-sustaining financial mechanism. The expected outcomes are improved biodiversity protection and carbon storage in the targeted peatlands and reduced incidence of peatland fires and the associated smoke/haze pollution.

The initiative draws on IFAD's experience in rural development in the ASEAN region and will incorporate IFAD's *Rewarding Upland Poor for Environmental Services* (RUPES) programme (US\$1.4 million). RUPES recognizes and rewards upland communities for the environmental services they provide through an innovative, long-term financing mechanism based on transfer payments.

Drylands Ecological Conservation and Rehabilitation Project, China (total project cost US\$45.6 million, including US\$7.5 million from GEF, US\$9.5 million from IFAD and other cofinancing of US\$28.6 million).

This IFAD/GEF project focuses on the conversion of economically marginal and ecologically fragile holdings to permanent vegetation. It is cross-supporting IFAD/World Food Programme projects in China: the *South Gansu Poverty Reduction Programme* and the ongoing *Environment Conservation and Poverty-Reduction Programme in Ningxia and Shanxi*. The South Gansu loan project will rehabilitate or build agricultural and social services infrastructure, develop human resources capacity and establish a microfinance scheme. The GEF component aims to mainstream an integrated ecosystem approach in major land degradation management programmes in selected provinces in China's western region that are afflicted by increasing degradation and desertification. It seeks to achieve this through: (i) policy review; (ii) capacity-building of selected local, regional and provincial programme management offices and line agencies to develop a more coordinated, integrated approach to sustainable land management; (iii) pilot field activities to address the underlying root causes of specific arid/semi-arid land environmental problems within an integrated ecosystem management framework; (iv) targeted research; and (v) increasing public awareness of the ecological approach to addressing environmental degradation. It will further the following global benefits: biodiversity conservation, increased storage of greenhouse gases, conservation and sustainable use of water and reduced transnational air pollution.

Participatory Coastal Zone Restoration in the Eastern Province of Post-Tsunami Sri Lanka (total cost US\$14.8 million, including US\$7.2 million from GEF, US\$7.1 million from IFAD and other cofinancing of US\$0.5 million).

IFAD's rapid reaction to the tsunami disaster through the *Post-Tsunami Coastal Restoration and Resource Management Programme* sought to further long-term recovery and involve local capacities by developing microenterprises (particularly by women) and access to financial services, and a GEF component was fully integrated with this initiative.

Complementing IFAD's diversification of income-generating activities, the GEF initiative's long-term goal is to rehabilitate tsunami-affected ecosystems in Sri Lanka (mangroves, coastal lagoons and sand dunes) in order to provide sustainable, full ecosystem services, including adaptation against extreme climatic events.

Central Asian Countries Initiative on Land Management

This regional, country-driven initiative, based on a multi-donor partnership in which IFAD is a major partner, encompasses the five central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Total financing of about US\$700 million for a ten-year period is envisaged, comprising US\$100 million from GEF, US\$450 million from the Asian Development Bank, US\$100 million from central Asian countries and US\$50 million from other bilateral and multilateral sources.

By developing national-level programmatic frameworks for sustainable land management, the initiative aims to achieve: strengthened policy, legislative and institutional frameworks; capacity-building of key institutions to plan and implement land management; and an optimal mix of appropriate enabling policies and targeted project investments for improved land management. Each framework will set out the necessary policy, legislative and institutional conditions; describe the means to mainstream sustainable land management in national development planning; and set up a monitoring and evaluation system to measure progress against benchmarks. The strengthening of an integrated approach to sustainable land management at the national level will provide a strong basis for subsequently addressing transboundary issues. The initiative lends itself to the development of complementarities with the sustainable land management programmes of its task force members.

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IFAD/GEF comparative advantage

As a specialized United Nations agency dedicated to eradicating rural poverty in developing countries, IFAD works with impoverished communities in some of the most remote and environmentally fragile areas of the world, promoting sustainable water and land management practices that help protect the environment. Through loans and grants approaching US\$9.0 billion since 1978, IFAD programmes and projects have enabled nearly 300 million rural poor people to improve their livelihoods.

As an executing agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with recognized expertise in sustainable rural development, IFAD has built a diversified GEF portfolio covering a wide range of sustainable land management, biodiversity and climate-change related activities. These include mainstreaming biodiversity in productive landscapes, integrated ecosystem management and increasing carbon sequestration and adaptation. IFAD is also working towards integration of the major environmental conventions and towards bridging the gap between local development objectives and global environmental concerns.

In support of international efforts, IFAD translates local efforts in sustainable natural resource management into global environmental benefits through its partnerships at the grass-roots community level and mainstreams global environmental concerns in national and sectoral plans for sustainable development.

IFAD's operations are driven by the country strategic opportunities paper (COSOP), a strategic guiding instrument for the identification of choices and opportunities through which IFAD investments can ensure a positive impact on poverty. The COSOP sets out a medium-term strategic framework for IFAD's country operations and has proven to be an effective tool in identifying impact-oriented IFAD/GEF investment opportunities.

Moreover, through its performance-based allocation system, IFAD is well placed to ensure predictability in resource allocation and harmonization with the GEF Resource Allocation Framework.

The IFAD-GEF partnership is committed to enhancing the overall impact of its joint portfolio of projects by building on a newly strengthened quality assurance system. This system will capitalize on IFAD's strong

technical capacities while mobilizing the complementary expertise of other international financial institutions.

IFAD adds value to the GEF family through its flexible programme approach, long-term lending framework and cofinancing, which play a crucial part in enabling the GEF to intervene in 'marginal' ecosystems of global significance. In addition, IFAD contributes to the GEF through its diversified and innovative partnerships, including access to funds from other cofinanciers – such as the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries Fund, Islamic Development Bank, European Union, Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development, West African Development Bank and KfW (a German Development Cooperation) – in addition to bilateral donors, national governments, NGOs, civil society and, more importantly, rural poor people themselves. These investments and resource flows act as a catalyst and have an important multiplier effect on both IFAD and GEF investments. For each dollar provided by the GEF, an average of US\$5.26 is mobilized by IFAD. At present, GEF funding of about US\$36.0 million has leveraged total cofinancing of approximately US\$191.0 million.

IFAD is also strongly committed to introducing innovations for rural poor people by complementing local know-how with the transfer of new techniques and approaches that can be adapted to local needs. Such efforts are strengthened through strong knowledge management and dissemination of best practices in order to achieve broader impact.

From an operational point of view and as a guarantee of transparency and data accuracy, IFAD maintains the highest fiduciary standards according to international best practices. It is one of the few United Nations agencies applying International Financial Reporting Standards, in conjunction with a yearly external audit and ad hoc internal audit investigations.



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