

**BLOCK A PDF**  
**Tenure Innovations in the Drylands: Facilitating Access to Land**

PART I — ELIGIBILITY	
<p>1. Project name: <i>Tenure Innovations in the Drylands: Facilitating Access to Land</i></p>	<p>2. GEF Implementing Agency: <i>United Nations Development Programme</i></p>
<p>3. Country or countries in which the project is being implemented: <i>Globally</i></p>	<p>4. Country eligibility: <i>Choice of countries to be determined through UNCCD and PDF A processes; all countries chosen will have ratified the UNCCD.</i></p>
<p>5. GEF focal area(s), and/or cross-cutting issues: <i>Land Degradation With relevance to biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change</i></p>	<p>6. Operational program/Short-term measure: <i>OP 15: Sustainable Land Management</i></p>
<p>7. Project linkage to national priorities, action plans, and programs:</p> <p><i>The UNCCD, which was adopted in 1994, insists that governments signatory to the convention take measures to control and prevent the spread of desertification in their territories or to transfer technical support and funds to states that suffer from desertification. The convention appreciates that desertification often occurs as a result of structural social and economic problems, including poverty and lack of access to land, and poorly defined or inequitable land tenure regimes. It also acknowledges that attempts to combat desertification have failed in the past due to a lack of local level involvement and compatibility with indigenous cultures in the conceptualisation of land tenure systems. The UNCCD represents a national obligation for countries to improve these laws in the future and to ensure that they do not continue to contribute to further degradation.</i></p> <p><i>This program aims to enable sustainable land management in the drylands, through support for efficient, effective and equitable common resource use arrangements. The program focuses on removing capacity and policy obstacles in addressing land degradation and desertification. In doing so the program will connect with national priorities outlined in National Action Programmes (NAPs) to combat desertification. Linkages will likely be made with Sub-Regional Action Programmes (SRAPs) and Regional Action Programmes (RAPs). Most of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are also in the process of preparing Millenium Development Goal (MDG) reports and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers These documents enshrine the principles of sustainable development, and are complemented by other national framework documents, such as National Environmental Action Plans, NAPs, BSAPS and NCCCs that provide guidance on sustainable land management.</i></p> <p><i>The Declaration from the WSSD 2002 specified the provision of access to agricultural resources for people living in poverty, especially women and indigenous communities, and promote, as appropriate, land tenure arrangements that recognize and protect indigenous and common property resource management. Several other international soft law instruments are also relevant. For example, global plans of action developed at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in 1996 acknowledged that land reform is a fundamental aspect of achieving sustainable development. In addition, most major international and regional human rights instruments guarantee a right to property or peaceful enjoyment of possessions. These rights, often exist in international and domestic legislation but are not effectively implemented.</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, at a Side Event organized by UNDP at the UNCCD CRIC 1 meeting in 2002, support was provided by many delegates to the need for the GEF and UNDP to take on a catalytical role in enhancing the enabling environment and creating a platform for knowledge networking for innovations in land tenure and the sustainable management of drylands.</i></p> <p><i>More detailed linkages with national priorities and programs will be outlined once specific countries have been selected in the PDF process.</i></p>	
<p>8. GEF national operational focal point and date of country endorsement:</p> <p><i>'' ' j ' '' j ' j</i></p>	

## 9. Project rationale and objectives:

### **RATIONALE**

*Land is a critical productive asset, and many livelihoods depend on this asset, particularly in the developing world. For the poorest drylands populations, land degradation is a major factor that affects their ability to achieve food security and improve their standard of living. Because drylands typically have low vegetation cover, they are particularly vulnerable to mismanagement that results in the removal of grasses, bushes and trees protecting the thin layer of fertile topsoil from wind and waterborne erosion. Poorly-managed, intensified land use, and deforestation of productive drylands results in land that cannot support agriculture, and sometimes not even pastoralism.*

*The reversal of land degradation is vital for the livelihoods of poor people living in the drylands, and also for the conservation of the world's biodiversity, considering that 40% of the Earth's surface is classified as drylands. This task requires significant investments in human capital and resource management systems, including land reform efforts. The issue of land tenure, in particular, is highly relevant. Land tenure systems which impose unequal access to, and control of, resources for marginal populations can contribute to the degradation of dryland areas. Effective, secure, access to land resources can provide an essential incentive for land users to invest in sustainable land use practices.*

*The need for tenure innovations that address the highly variable ecological characteristics (i.e. rainfall) of the drylands is imperative. Traditionally communal ownership in the drylands reflected the complexity of ecological conditions. Changes beginning in the colonial era, and accelerating since independence of many developing nations — such as the creation of national borders which restrict mobility, repeated droughts, a population explosion, surplus production for markets, etc — have pushed mobile groups from arid to semi-arid areas and farmers from sub humid areas into semi-arid areas. Conflict due to competition over scarce resources has often resulted, both within and between each group, leading to a scramble for land and in turn mining of the soil fertility in the absence of guarantees that the benefits of sustainable management will accrue to a land user. The result has been increased landlessness, conflicts over land and its resources, a reduced resilience among the pastoralist communities to deal with drought and land degradation. To date land titling is the most commonly practiced form of land tenure, despite abundant and growing evidence that titling does not necessarily provide the incentives for better land management. For example, in the case of mobile land use, the key challenge in land tenure reform is to ensure that there are reciprocal agreements of access between land users. Land tenure on the basis of title for mobile populations would be inappropriate, as it would confer right of disposal, potentially taking a part of the resources out of the land use system.*

### **CHALLENGES**

*There are five major challenges that policy-makers face in developing and implementing effective land tenure policies.*

- 1. How can we ensure that land tenure systems and land tenure reform processes are truly participatory, accessible, and transparent?*
- 1. What institutional structures can be established at local, national and international levels to support legal aspects of land tenure security and reform?*
- 1. How can national processes address the overlaps and contradictions between formal and informal, customary and modern land tenure systems, and hybrid systems?*
- 1. How can rights to control over land of marginalized groups, including women, be promoted and protected?*
- 1. How can land tenure systems and land tenure reform processes take a holistic, comprehensive, and co-ordinated, view of the institutional and physical environment?*

## **OBJECTIVES**

*The objective of this program is to enable sustainable land management in the drylands (typically common or multi-user resources) through support in addressing the key challenges outlined above. In doing so the program will help to remove policy and capacity obstacles and identify innovative practical ways in which sustainable drylands ecosystem management can be achieved. It will establish the necessary conditions at both national and local levels, which will result in investments in sustainable land management practices. This project will address some of the root causes that prevent effective custodianship of drylands and will compare and contrast land policy experiments around the world.*

*The immediate objectives of the medium sized project are two-fold:*

**Advocacy**, for greater recognition of the specific ecology of drylands and of complementarities between mobility and sedentary use of dryland resources as an efficient and sustainable form of land management; and greater awareness by national stakeholders of policy options to support such shared resource use arrangements.

**Capacity Building**, by disseminating best practices for supporting the process of land tenure reform in a politically neutral and ecologically and locally appropriate manner, and building capacity of often recently decentralized authorities for a second, investment phase of the program.

*This program will build upon the experience gained by UNDP's Drylands Development Centre (DDC) in this area. Recently DDC (with funding from CIDA and DFID) has assisted Southern Africa at the national and regional level through the development of a Community of Practice that will act as a land tenure knowledge networking mechanism. This program is expected to be a multi-donor effort, over a 2-3 year period, that would set the stage for more national level projects and programmes later on. The programme is expected to generate global, national, and local benefits. Global benefits are expected to accrue from building the enabling environment for sustainable land management and secure access to land in the drylands (leading to increased investment in the land and decreasing levels of degradation) within the context of sustainable development; national benefits are expected to accrue from the adoption of viable policy options for sustainable development and innovations in land tenure systems in countries; and local benefits are expected to accrue from capacities built for improved custodianship of the drylands and a reduced level of vulnerability to the ecological variability of the drylands.*

*The GEF increment is expected to focus on addressing the key challenges to creating an enabling environment for effective land tenure innovations, catalysing coordinated donor action, and disseminating innovative solutions. These key challenges will be selected during the PDF A participatory preparatory process. Co-financing is expected to provide a sustainable baseline situation in key selected countries where advocacy and capacity building efforts will have immediate impact.*

*The project addresses the GEF's OP 15, in particular, by addressing the two expected program outcomes (listed below - #10) related to capacity building through: strengthening institutional and human capacity for improved planning and implementation of sustainable land management; strengthening the policy, regulatory and incentive structures for sustainable land management (through land tenure innovations); and strengthening of information management systems to support decision-making at the national and local levels on integrated land use planning and management (through knowledge networks). The project will also meet the OP's assumptions of being country driven, of being tailored to country and stakeholder absorptiveness, of mainstreaming into implementing agency regular programs and activities, and building up partnerships and promoting coordination. The project falls under OP 15's Eligible Activity of Targeted Research which aims to: (a) better understand the policy and institutional failures that drive land degradation — in this instance it would be to gain an understanding of policy obstacles for land reform; and (b) facilitate the refinement and adoption of innovative sustainable land management practices and technologies, (in this instance it would be innovations in land tenure in particular) to improve and sustain the preservation/ restoration of ecosystem stability, functions and services as well as the economic well-being of people under different socioeconomic conditions.*

*Ecologically suitable and equitable land tenure reform is one of the most challenging and critical issues for sustainable land use in the drylands. It lies at the intersection of governance, conflict resolution, and ecologically informed land use planning. Though there has been a tremendous amount of literature produced on land tenure and some experimentation at a practical level, little distillation of lessons learned, or application of these lessons has occurred. The need for more action in this area, despite political obstacles, is evident.*

*UNDP is uniquely positioned to manage a programme on land tenure reform, as opinions are often perceived to have a basis in political or economic dogma. Land tenure decisions are extremely sensitive, and usually involve the resolutions on numerous points of potential conflict. The United Nations, however, is able to act in countries on a basis of trust and political independence. It can therefore help broker between interested parties with different points of view and can offer services under which donors can pool their funds and thereby help depoliticize the process.*

10. Expected outcomes:

*The exact nature of the program's outcomes and activities will be determined in full consultation with a full range of stakeholders and partners. It is expected that the outcomes will fall under two major components:*

- 1. **Increased awareness** of policy decision-makers (through **advocacy** activities) of: a) the specific ecology of drylands; b) the complementarities between mobility and sedentary use of dryland resources as an efficient and sustainable form of land management; and c) policy options to support such shared resource use arrangements.*
- 2. **Built or improved capacity** to support the process of land tenure reform in a politically neutral and ecologically and locally appropriate manner.*

11. Planned activities to achieve outcomes:

***OUTCOME 1: Increased awareness** of policy decision-makers (through **advocacy** activities) of: a) the specific ecology of drylands; b) the complementarities between mobility and sedentary use of dryland resources as an efficient and sustainable form of land management; and c) policy options to support such shared resource use arrangements.*

**ACTIVITIES:**

*Transfer knowledge (concerning tenure innovations) between continents, focusing on similarities between root causes, and including a Global Land Tenure Reform in the Drylands conference*  
*Facilitate a Community of Practice of drylands land tenure experts, starting with a mapping of developing country expertise*  
*Develop a global Best Practices Manual on land tenure reform processes, to be used as a policy tool by decision makers*  
*Commission an applied study on capacity for land tenure reform for .*  
*Mainstream land tenure reform into PRSPs, NAPs, SRAPs, RAPs and NEAPs*  
*Advocate nationally endorsed ecozone-specific legal codes for enabling multi-user land tenure in the drylands*  
*Support the development of public space for a policy dialogue on land tenure reform, through involvement of the national media, particularly to challenge assumptions about the superiority of modern (individual, right of disposal) tenure as a one-size-fits-all solution, particularly featuring the voices of those marginalized by this process*  
*Promote a Declaration of Commitment at either a national or regional level, as CILSS as an output from the major regional conference on decentralization and land tenure reform (Praia+9, late 2003) and as Presidents of the SADC countries have undertaken.*

***OUTCOME 2: Improved capacity** to support the process of land tenure reform in a politically neutral and ecologically and locally appropriate manner.*

**ACTIVITIES:**

*Develop best practices for specific but common situations involving common resource use in drylands, particularly between mobile and sedentary users*  
*Train policy makers at various levels in the operationalization of decentralized land tenure reform*  
*Network between associations of dryland users, to facilitate the updating of traditional common resource sharing arrangements and to create demand for flexible arrangements to be validated by the State*  
*Create best practices for conflict resolution mechanisms*  
*Develop early warning systems for resource conflict*  
*Develop pilot projects as pre-investment activities*  
*Support for developing innovative legal arrangements for the State to both recognize and help enforce local common resource sharing arrangements*  
*Strengthen access to land tenure related information at the local level*  
*Co-ordinate parties interested in the land tenure reform process in a country, under the neutral UN banner*

12. Stakeholders involved in project:

*As this is a global project involving knowledge networks, a number of stakeholders will be involved. More specific details will be provided once countries have been selected in the PDF process, but it is expected that the UNCCD, governments, bilateral donors, UNDP Country Offices, sub-regional organizations, other UN agencies (eg. FAO), civil society, NGOs and research institutions will all be involved in the project.*

#### PART II - INFORMATION ON BLOCK A PDF ACTIVITIES

13. Activities to be financed by the PDF:

*The PDF A resources, combined with co-financing from several partners, will be used for the following preparatory activities (sources of funding in parentheses):*

- o Organization of a Side Event at UNCCD COP 6 to raise awareness on the program, obtain feedback from delegates, and fine tune the preparatory process (CIDA and UNDP funded)*
- o Preparation of a Challenge Paper on Land Tenure that will feed into this process (CIDA funded)*
- o Distribution of the program concept and vision at various for a*
- o Draft of the MSP proposal developed (GEF and UNDP)*
- o Organization of a planning workshop, with full participation of all stakeholders identified, to fine tune and validate the MSP proposal (GEF and UNDP)*
- o MSP proposal submitted and PRODOC finalized*

14. Expected outputs and completion dates:

*The main outputs of the PDF A are the following :*

- a. A Challenge Paper on Land Tenure (August 2003)*
- b. Agreed upon process for selection of pilot countries (September 2003), implemented*
- c. Preliminary studies, to determine policy obstacles and critical land tenure issues within selected countries (November 2003).*
- d. Endorsement of the Program from various global and regional meetings (December 2003)*
- e. Minutes/proceedings of a Stakeholder Workshop (December 2003)*
- f. Funds mobilized for the Program, including from co-financiers*
- g. A Medium Sized Proposal*
- h. A UNDP-format PRODOC*

15. Other possible contributors/donors and amounts:

Consultation with CIDA, DFID, GTZ and AusAid are in progress and/or proposals are being prepared to submit to these agencies. Secured funding has already been received from the Swiss Coop. CIDA and DFID.

16.

PART III - INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANT INSTITUTION

*Dryland Development Center of UNDP is submitting the proposal on behalf of partners and intended beneficiaries.*

*The DDC is a division of UNDP based in Nairobi that has the mandate to manage Donor funded Trust Funds. DDC is currently overseeing the implementation of a GEF PDF B for the Coping with Drought project.*

*Dryland Development Center of UNDP is submitting the proposal on behalf of partners and intended beneficiaries.*

PART IV - INFORMATION TO BE COMPLETED BY IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

22. Project identification number:

**2857**

23. Implementing Agency contact person:

*Myriam Niamir-Fuller*

24. Project linkage to Implementing Agency program(s):

*The United Nations Development Programme's Drylands Development Centre, DDC, (formerly UNSO) has been working with communities, countries, and various organizations to respond to a wide range of drylands management and development issues since 1973. DDC is involved in various programs and activities that support of the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification, and has recently launched a new Integrated Drylands Development Program that has a global coverage and will contribute to the goal of poverty reduction through the sustainable development of drylands leading to reduced vulnerability and improved livelihoods. This program has three outcomes: National policy and planning frameworks address social and environmental root causes of drylands degradation; vulnerability of poor populations in dryland areas reduced; and local communities in the drylands benefit from participatory systems of local governance for natural resource management. The IDDP continues DDC's long tradition of working on sustainable natural resources and land management. DDC is expected to lead UNDP's efforts in sustainable land management.*

*Recently DDC has established a Drylands Development Knowledge and Learning Network, a people-centred initiative that focuses on creating linkages between drylands development research, policy and operational activities, as well as people and institutions that work at different levels and in various locations. DDC is interested in tapping into the best, cutting-edge research and information in order to inform and influence development policies and programs. In addition to establishing a forum that encourages innovative thinking and the questioning of established practices, the goal is to feed information and discussions from the network into decision-making processes at a variety of levels. Currently DDC is focused on creating a community of practice within this network that will concentrate on land reform issues, globally.*