



KM:Land Initiative: First Phase

Medium-sized Project:

Ensuring Impacts from SLM – Development of a Global Indicator System

3rd Expert Advisory Group Meeting

1-3 June 2009, Rome, Italy

(hosted by FAO)

Meeting Report

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1. Introduction

The KM:Land project held its 3rd Expert Advisory Group (EAG) meeting from 1-3 June 2009 at the FAO facilities in Rome, Italy. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss and review the selection of project-level impact indicators, and to harmonize the KM:Land project-level indicator work with the emerging GEF-5 strategy. The specific objectives of the EAG meeting were as follows:

- Review and discuss measurement methodologies and reporting procedures of project-level impact indicators;
- Finalise the selection of project-level impact indicators;
- Harmonize the KM:Land project-level impact indicator work with the emerging GEF-5 strategy;
- Discuss the preparation for a joint scientific publication on the indicator system by the EAG;
- Consult with EAG members on measures for review and update of indicators and guidance materials; and,
- Consult with EAG members on the development of the KM:Land Learning Network and the overall KM:Land knowledge management (KM) strategy for the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area (LD FA).

Since the 2nd EAG meeting in January 2008, the KM:Land project underwent an Adaptive Management Review (AMR) in order to assess how the KM:Land project can continue to relate to the emerging needs of the GEF with regards to the development of an indicator system (see presentation summaries, Annex 1). The main outcomes of the AMR advised the KM:Land initiative to move forward with the task of developing methodologies and reporting procedures for project-level impact indicators (based on the selected four global-level indicators: land cover, land productivity, water availability and rural poverty), and a further task was given to develop a framework for the design of new projects in order to assist agency task managers to link intervention logics with project impacts and with the GEF tracking tool development.

Since the completion of the AMR, the KM:Land initiative made progress on the project-level indicator and intervention logic work, and continued its work on the LN. Specifically:

- a report was prepared on the feasibility of a core set of project-level indicators for use across the GEF SLM portfolio based on a review of current indicator use in GEF projects;
- an initial report on criteria for selecting indicators, measurement methodologies and reporting procedures was prepared by the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Techniques (WOCAT);
- a report was prepared on a proposed strategy for an integrated project-level impact indicator system for the GEF LD FA;
- a review of GEF-project intervention logics was undertaken and a report prepared with a proposed approach for strengthening GEF SLM project designs through impact pathways; and,
- a draft concept note was prepared on the KM:Land Learning Network (LN).

The first day of the EAG meeting was dedicated to presentations and feedback on the progress made on the development of project-level indicators and impact pathways. During the second day, discussions centered on the linkages between the KM:Land project and the GEF-5 strategy and RBM framework, and the selection of project-level indicators. The final day focused on the concept of a KM:Land Learning Network. The full meeting agenda can be found in Annex 2.

2. Outcomes of the 3rd EAG Meeting

The presentations (see Annex 1) and discussions held during the 3rd EAG meeting led to a number of important developments within the KM:Land initiative. Specifically:

1. A set of project-level indicators were selected for further development and finalization of measurement methodologies and reporting procedures for use in GEF SLM projects.
2. A set of project-level core output indicators need to be identified to be integrated into the GEF-5 strategy, RBM and Theory of Change (TOC) development.
3. The water availability indicator selected as part of the global-level indicators needs to be reviewed for use in the GEF resource allocation framework (RAF).
4. Recommendations were made on the proposed intervention logic/impact pathways strategy.
5. A way forward was set for the development of the KM:Land Learning Network and possible linkages identified with the development of the GEF knowledge management strategy.
6. Linkages between the KM:Land initiative, the GEF RBM strategy and the emerging GEF-5 strategy were identified.

The following sections provide details on the above outcomes reached during the meeting.

2.1. Project-level Indicator Selection

Key project-level impact indicators were selected to be used across all projects in the GEF LD FA. The indicators will allow for linking between the global, portfolio and project levels through roll-up of impacts.

The selection was based on the selected 4 global-level indicators: land cover, land productivity, water availability, and human well-being. A mix of direct and proxy indicators were selected, and it was also agreed that a further set of indicators were needed to establish contextual information.

The following core- and sub-indicators were selected for identifying impacts at the project level:

Core Indicator	Measureable Sub-indicator
Land cover	Land cover differentiating between water surfaces, built land, bare land, cropland, forestland, pasture
	LUS for projects operating at the land-use level
Carbon sequestration	Total emissions reductions (ton of CO ₂)
Land productivity	NPP (NDVI corrected)
	Annual agricultural production data including arable, livestock and forest crop production data
	Number of crop varieties, species, etc.
Water availability	<i>To be decided upon further consultation (eg. GEF IW: Water)</i>
Human well-being	Percentage of rural population below the poverty datum (fixed general datum)
	Maternal health
	Proportion of chronic undernourished children under the age of 5 in rural areas

Suggestions for the sub-indicators for Water Availability include: water availability; number of people with access to drinking water; number of people using water for bathing and number of times; water stress; water conflicts; water-use efficiency; water withdrawal. It was also suggested that national statistics can be used to collect this data. For the human well-being indicator, it was suggested that the information being collected at the country level for MDG indicators could be used, however, one must be sensitive to the sovereignty issues surrounding some data sets.

The following contextual indicators were selected:

Required Contextual Information
30-years of mean monthly rainfall (for near stations/gridded)
Extreme natural events: Floods, storms, fires, droughts (including historical data): frequency and magnitude (number of people affected over time)
Population density
Local, national and global prices for key agricultural inputs and outputs
Other extreme events: violent conflicts, refugee out/influx, civil unrest, market crisis

It was suggested that the indicators from the climate change FA be considered for linkages to climate change adaptation issues. It was also suggested that these contextual indicators be integrated into the key elements and drivers and TOC.

It was suggested that the indicator development should link with other ongoing similar initiatives, such as: 2010 Biodiversity Indicators (UNEP-WCMC); UN-Water Indicators; LADA; Dryland Science for Development Consortium (DSD) White Papers; UNCCD UN-Land network initiative. Additionally, the indicator development from other GEF FAs should be considered.

Various concerns were raised in relation to the project-level indicator development and to be taken into consideration. The Experts emphasized that it is essential to make clear who the target audience of these indicators will be, which was clarified to be the GEF Secretariat and agency task managers, although the engagement of project managers was also seen as important. Furthermore, it was noted that emphasis was put on state and stress reduction indicators (policy and institutional reform), and that process indicators also need to be included in order to assess future impacts beyond the life of a project (see also section 2.4 on intervention logics).

Additional concerns were raised as to whether the capacity to measure these indicators exists. It was also noted that the indicator development is at this stage a theoretical proposal, and that a practical application and cost analysis should be undertaken to assess whether these are implementable, and whether the level of funding needed is available.

Concerning the WOCAT proposal on indicator selection and measurement methodologies and reporting (see presentation summary, Annex 1), the Experts shared their concerns on the use of a rating system in that: they usually are based on implicit value systems which are not recognized or understood (especially by policy-makers); they could create a social stigmatism; and, self-rating systems usually tend to be very successful and therefore their accuracy is questionable.

It was clarified that the rating system would be used to monitor changes over time, linking both social and physical changes, using a minimum amount of resources. The rating system would set targets and

values which would allow tracking of progress, and would contribute towards a decision-support system on where interventions should be made.

Together with WOCAT, the Experts agreed that WOCAT could contribute to the indicator development where they are strongest: through measurement methodologies and documentation of impacts on the ground. However, gaps remain, especially in tools that capture long-term catalytic effects; as such, the WOCAT indicator proposal needs to be complemented by other approaches.

Concerning the proposed integrated indicator strategy (see presentation summary, Annex 1), the Experts commented that absolute measurement is difficult to achieve, and therefore a hybrid approach which combines direct and proxy indicators, and a system which uses relative measurements to measure relative changes, should be considered. The Experts were concerned about the issue of attribution, and how these indicators could be aggregated to the portfolio level. A focus on indicators that support attribution at the country level was favoured.

Once the development of project-level indicators is complete, the KM:Land project will prepare a limited set of guidance and training materials on an integrated project-level impact indicator system, where the impacts can also be rolled up to the portfolio level. The guidance materials will provide definitions, methodologies, and guidance on how the indicators should be used and how the indicators help to achieve the objectives identified in a project's Project Document.

It was agreed that the EAG members would not produce a publication regarding the indicator work, and that this publication would instead be produced by the KM:Land team. The EAG members agreed to peer-review the indicator work before it is finalized.

Finally, based on the strategic developments emerging in the GEF (see section 2.6 and presentation summaries, Annex 1) a distinction was made between project-level impact indicators and intermediate outcome indicators needed to measure progress of core outputs.

2.2. Project-level Core Output Indicators

In light of the GEF-5 strategy document and GEF RBM framework (see section 2.6), where a set of core outputs support each of the four FA Objectives and Outcomes (see presentation summary in Annex 1) and would be captured through a tracking tool, it was agreed that it would be useful for the KM:Land project to develop a set of project-level core indicators in order to measure the core outputs and outcomes of the LD FA, in addition to the project-level impact indicators already being developed. Whereas the impact indicators will determine long-term effects, the core output indicators would be objective- and project-specific, tied to a project's timeframe, and would measure the outcomes at the end of a project. These core output indicators will be used in the tracking tools being developed by the GEF to assess portfolio-level outcomes and progress, for monitoring and outcome tracking, and will be linked to the GEF RBM framework.

2.3. Revision of Water Availability Indicator in the Selected Set of Global-level Indicators

During the 2nd EAG meeting held in January 2008, the EAG members identified 4 core global indicators, including one on water availability (please see meeting report from the 2nd EAG meeting). The EAG members felt that the water availability indicator needed to be re-examined and better defined. Furthermore, the water indicator is considered to be cross-sectoral and thus discussions with other

water projects, water and sanitation projects, and projects which integrate water availability and risk assessment based on climate change scenarios should be initiated.

The GEF Secretariat requested that the KM:Land project examine the map entitled “Areas of Physical and Economic Water Scarcity”¹ and its approach in order to review the water availability indicator and to discuss whether it is useful as an alternative approach to the selected water availability indicator.

Concerning the other selected global-level indicators, it was agreed that they would remain intact and no further revisions should be made. Furthermore, it was suggested that the KM:Land global indicators provide input to the global environmental benefits (GEB) index development of the GEF RAF/System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) and that this could be done through involvement of the KM:Land project team in the related working group.

2.4. Intervention Logic/Impact Pathways

The Experts appreciated the proposed approach to intervention logics and impact pathways proposed by the KM:Land project and indicated that it is a good approach for moving forward, as it is one that focuses on identifying problems and solutions.

A few suggestions for improvement to the approach include:

- clarification of the issue of attribution;
- refine the “outputs/outcomes/impacts” chain, including terminology, particularly at the “Approaches” level;
- a restructured “linear” model to make it more user-friendly for those not familiar with RBM frameworks;
- relate the model to causal diagrams in order to identify opportunities; and,
- the indicators selected through KM:Land could be inserted into the diagram at the appropriate level.

For ongoing LD FA projects, their intervention logics cannot be changed. However, participants agreed that the impact pathway model is a useful exercise that should become a required component of the new project design process, as it can help to justify investments. This can be done through a training or capacity-building exercise and should target agency task managers and project managers. Once a project has started, a fresh reiteration of the model should be made in order to take into account any new developments. The impact pathway model can help to identify different categories of indicators at each level, but also remains a useful exercise on its own by explicitly identifying certain elements of a project. Each project could have their own intervention logic, but it would also be useful for each to fit into a generic model as well.

The participants noted the similarity of the intervention logic to that of the TOC and RBM framework of the GEF (see presentations by GEF Secretariat in Annex 1), and indicated that it would be useful if these approaches are linked. The GEF Secretariat further indicated that the intervention logic should link with the GEF tracking tool development, and development of project-level core output indicators.

¹ International Water Management Institute, 2007.

Participants agreed that the intervention logic framework could become part of an advisory function to projects to assist them in monitoring outcomes and impacts over time. It is recommended that the KM:Land project develop a 1-2 page guidance note which would assist projects in developing an intervention logic; this could be done through a training or capacity-building exercise.

2.5. Learning Network and Knowledge Management

The KM:Land project team presented a preliminary strategy for a LN (see presentation summary, Annex 1). Furthermore, a discussion with CoMap (The Centre for Community Mapping²) on the design concept of a LN has been initiated in conjunction with the IW:Science project, also being implemented by UNU-INWEH. IW: Science focuses on the synthesis of science emerging from GEF IW FA projects over the last 10 years. As such, the KM:Land and IW:Science projects have moved forward together on the KM and learning concepts within the GEF FAs in order to enhance synergies on learning processes.

The meeting participants appreciated the comprehensive LN proposal and provided constructive feedback on the LN concept. Before proceeding with the development of the LN, the Experts offered some suggestions for consideration. These include:

- To make the system user-driven: conduct a demand analysis to assess what will be useful for users and at what cost;
- To Identify user and producer motivation for the use of such a LN;
- To conduct an analysis of existing LN in order to identify current structures, demands, use, and gaps;
- To consider how the information will be validated, and how it will be managed;
- To reflect on the issues of ownership and long-term funding for continuation of the LN – to consider other agencies (eg., UNDP) who have internalized these types of projects for global knowledge management;
- To consider linking with other LN initiatives (eg., LADA, WOCAT, Google) and to consider what would be the added value of an additional LN;
- To consider the idea of how to link GEF project websites in order to facilitate the dissemination of information;
- To consider how to streamline the wealth of information coming from GEF SLM projects;
- To address the gap of knowledge exchange between users, particularly for decision- and policy-makers, and to identify any other gaps in knowledge exchange with the help of agencies; and,
- To consider that information sharing is often a challenge at all levels (inter-institutionally, regionally, nationally, internationally), so there needs to be incentives for those willing to share their information with others.

The GEF Secretariat noted that the type of LN proposed by the KM:Land project is something they would like to pursue, however, they will have to consider what types of resources they have available for such an initiative. Since projects generally have short timeframes, it would be more useful if knowledge sharing is mainstreamed to countries or institutions where it can be independently sustained.

The GEF Secretariat would also like to consider how to streamline the different types of learning tools emerging from each project, and in this respect, could be assisted by KM:Land project. The KM:Land

² Based at the University of Waterloo, Canada.

team could further provide input to the TAG and FA teams to help define learning areas and learning needs in the emerging GEF-5 strategy.

The GEF Secretariat further noted that it would be more useful to focus on the needs of the LN target groups, rather than those of the GEF. However, the GEF would like a means to show results and achievements at the portfolio/programme level, especially to target groups such as donors, and this can be done through knowledge management and knowledge sharing. This aspect should be reflected in the KM:Land LN strategy.

The KM:Land LN proposal is still in its early development stages, and has an ambitious platform. Participants agreed that the KM:Land project team, together with the GEF, need to reflect on what type of approach and direction the LN should take, for example, whether it should be an initiative with a narrow focus on the immediate needs of the GEF Secretariat and LD FA, an initiative with a cross-FA focus, or one that extends beyond the GEF to external communities. All agreed that whatever form it takes, the LN should be interactive and innovative, and should focus on innovative approaches for sharing results and information. The KM:Land project team should work closely with LADA-FAO and WOCAT to redefine the current proposal.

2.6. Linkages between KM:Land and GEF

Since the last KM:Land EAG meeting (January 2008) and completion of the AMR (October 2008), the GEF Secretariat has progressed on the development of the GEF-5 strategy and development of RBM framework (see presentation by GEF Secretariat in Annex 1). With these developments, there have been shifts in priorities and focus insofar as GEF is interested not only in measuring impacts of projects, but also in linking these to outcomes and outputs. Each GEF FA has redefined goals, with an increasing focus on project and portfolio levels. The KM:Land project, while conceived during GEF-3, is still extremely valuable to the GEF and has the opportunity to contribute to and guide the strategic development occurring in the GEF.

The current priority for the GEF is to develop a strategy that will show results to its donors for their investments. The GEF is therefore focusing on developing the logic for the RBM framework, which includes the TOC component, and which will be reflected in the GEF-5 strategy. A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to the LD FA has been established to guide this strategy. It was suggested that the KM:Land project team be closely linked and provide input to the TAG in order to ensure close collaboration between the KM:Land project and GEF.

Once the logic and strategy are in place, the focus will become the development of indicators and the development of a tracking tool for measuring progress from outcomes to impacts based on the RBM framework. All types of indicators will be needed, and they will need to be included in project logframes and PIRs. The selected indicators will support the designed tools, and there will be a strong link with the RAF/STAR in order to link the resources with the results (RBM).

A number of opportunities for collaboration between the KM:Land project and GEF were identified during the meeting with regards to the indicator work, RBM framework and intervention logic, tracking tool development, and LN strategy. The remaining activities to be implemented during the last months of this MSP were outlined for close implementation with the GEF (see section 3).

3. Way Forward for the KM:Land project

The activities to be implemented by the end of the KM:Land project (end of 2009), with the project's remaining resources, include the following:

- (i) Global-level Indicators
 - a. Leave the selected global indicators intact, with only further refinement of the water availability indicator.
 - b. Link the global indicators with the development of the GEB index being used in the GEF RAF/STAR through participation in the related working group.
 - c. Produce a consolidated publication on KM:Land indicator work (see ii-f and iii-b).
- (ii) Project-level Impact Indicators
 - a. Finalise the sub-indicator(s) for the water availability indicator.
 - b. Define methodologies for the selected set of impact indicators, and collaborate with the GEF on this (including harmonization of terminology).
 - c. Link the indicator selection with those from the other GEF FAs.
 - d. Peer-review of indicator work by EAG members.
 - e. Produce guidance materials on indicator selection and methodologies.
 - f. Produce a consolidated publication on KM:Land indicator work (see i-c and iii-b).
- (iii) Project-level Core Output Indicators
 - a. Propose a set of project-level core output indicators, to be aggregated to the portfolio-level, reflecting the core outputs outlined in the GEF-5 strategy under the four LD FA Objectives and Outcomes, including an indicator on capacity development and the catalytic role of GEF (leverage).
 - b. Produce a consolidated publication on KM:Land indicator work (see i-c and ii-f).
- (iv) Intervention Logic/Impact Pathways
 - a. Further refine the intervention logic and link it to the GEF RBM framework and tracking tool development.
 - b. Develop a guidance note on intervention logics/RBM.
- (v) KM framework
 - a. Refine the LN proposal to include other LN options, a demand analysis, a cost options component, a proposal for how to improve the social networking component (including incentives), and an analysis on ways to internalize LN options. Explore knowledge products options that go beyond the raw information.
 - b. Consult with other ongoing LNs (eg., LADA-FAO, WOCAT) and GEF Secretariat to refine the design concept.
 - c. Link the LN and KM processes with the PIR process to make them useful for project managers.
 - d. Liaise and collaborate with the GEF Secretariat on the development of the KM strategy.
 - e. Upload some basic information to the GEF website.
 - f. Identify and consult with KM focal points in other agencies.

It was suggested that communication and collaboration between the GEF Secretariat and the KM:Land project team be improved in order to ensure close linkages between the ongoing strategic developments in the GEF and the implementation of activities in the remaining time left to the KM:Land project.

4. Conclusions

The 3rd EAG meeting of the KM:Land project achieved excellent progress on the way forward for the indicator selection, development of intervention logics, and development of a knowledge management strategy. Close linkages were established between the KM:Land project and the ongoing strategic developments occurring at the GEF, and the remaining activities for implementation were identified.

Finally, the EAG members felt their role within the KM:Land project has evolved, given the many developments that have occurred during this project's lifetime. As such, they felt that their official role within the KM:Land project has completed, and elected not to produce a joint publication.

Annex 1: Summary of Presentations

(in sequence of presentation – please see meeting agenda, Annex 2)

1. The Challenge of Measuring Impacts from SLM – Development of a Global Indicator System

Richard Thomas, KM:Land Project Team, UNU-INWEH

The KM:Land EAG meeting was held to receive feedback and advice from the EAG members on the continued development of indicators, in particular, project-level indicators.

When looking at the selection of project-level indicators and development of their methodologies, it is important to keep in mind the following points (as adapted from Conservation Measures Partnership, 2004):

- Focus M&A exclusively on your goals, objectives and activities in order to collect only the information that is useful to you;
- M&A should be matched to the scale you expect to influence with your intervention; and,
- Indicators must meet the information required within the amounts of resources available for monitoring.

2. Update on status of KM:Land following Adaptive Management Review

Brigitte Schuster, KM:Land Project Team, Consultant

Following the EAG meeting in Bonn in January 2008, the KM:Land initiative underwent an Adaptive Management Review from February – October 2008. The purpose of the AMR was to identify how the KM:Land project relates to the emerging needs of the GEF with regards to the development of an indicator system, and to adjust the MSP accordingly.

The main outcomes of the AMR include:

- The four global-level indicators selected at the EAG meeting in January 2008 were endorsed for use for resource allocation by the GEF.
- The task of developing methodologies for impact indicators at the project level was confirmed with consent given to move forward with this work.
- A further task of developing a framework for the design of new projects was included in order to assist agency task managers with linking intervention logics with project impacts and linking with the tracking tool development at the GEF.
- Establishment of new timelines: a no-cost extension for project activities until the end of 2009.
- A smaller Steering Committee was established, which comprises UNU-INWEH, UNDP, GEF STAP and GEF Sec as an observer. Interactions with the agencies will be done indirectly through the GEF LD Task Force.

Key strategic developments that have occurred during and since the AMR, that are still ongoing and which need to be taken into consideration, include: the GEF-5 Strategy planning process; the development of the GEF Focal Area strategy through a new results-based management (RBM) framework; development of UNCCD impact indicators; and, the first scientific-style conference of the UNCCD CST in September 2009.

3. Status of Project-level Indicator Selection

Brigitte Schuster, KM:Land Project Team, Consultant

Project-level impact indicators are being developed in order to track impacts of GEF LD FA projects in both environmental and development terms. The indicators are being developed for the GEF Secretariat and will be measured by GEF projects and rolled up to the portfolio level, and will allow the GEF to track the impacts of their investments.

Input from the EAG members on the project-level indicator development is sought for guiding the refinement of indicator methodologies and reporting procedures; linking the indicator development with the RBM framework of the GEF-5 FA strategy; finalizing the indicator selection; and, preparing for a joint publication on the indicator system.

Following the EAG meeting in June 2009, work on the project-level indicators will continue through consultations with agencies through the members of the GEF LD Task Force; the preparation of guidance materials for project managers; consultations with project managers for the 'testing' of the guidance materials; and, training of agency staff.

4. Connecting Global SLM Indicators to Existing Project-level Results

Caroline King, KM:Land Project Team, Consultant

A desktop review of project documents for the current GEF SLM projects was undertaken in order to assess the use of the KM:Land SLM indicators presented. The review included MSPs, FSPs and Strategic Programmes, such as the Country Partnership Programmes, CACILM Central Asia, TerrAfrica SIP-Africa, MENARID and SFM.

The review found that indicators relevant to the selected KM:Land indicators are frequently proposed in the project documents of Full Sized Projects. The presentation of relevant indicators including definition of baselines and targets in the project documents was examined.

General observations on the feasibility and challenges of each KM:Land SLM indicator were presented on the basis of the review as follows:

- a) Productivity
 - Dimensions to capture: volume, diversity, environmental trade-offs, comparisons between areas with- and without-project intervention
 - Challenges: generic measures, scale to project area, aggregation to global level
- b) Land use in all agro-ecosystems
 - Purpose: to locate the project and enable comparisons to other locations
 - Current Applications: generic land use types, mapping, hectares under SLM, connection to existing knowledge systems
 - Concerns: feasibility, need for a systematic approach, need for simplicity and accessibility
- c) Total system carbon
 - Debates: above- and below-ground carbon, use of remote sensing, soil carbon management

- Current Applications: increasing attention from STAP, methodological controversies, dedicated GEF projects
 - Concerns: serious methodological challenges and a collective learning curve taking place within the GEF projects and the wider scientific community
 - Opportunities: contribute to the wider learning curve
- d) Water availability
- Role in global indicator system: water quantity and water quality, or water availability
 - Current use: usually in risk assessment, with increasing references to water-use efficiency
 - Challenges: definition of intervention watersheds, and predicted effects of climatic and hydrological changes
- e) Rural income
- Dimensions to capture: quantifiable, diversity, environmental trade-offs, comparisons between areas with- and without-project intervention, advocacy dimension
 - Challenges: national poverty line, scale to project area, use of household surveys, aggregation to global level

Further opportunities were identified for connecting the project-level indicator use through consultation of agency task managers, STAP review process, forthcoming project inception workshops, mid-term and final reviews, and the regional KM:Land training workshops.

5. Survey of Biophysical and Socio-economic Project Indicators for Consideration by the KM:Land Initiative

Hanspeter Liniger, WOCAT

WOCAT proposed a short list of project-level indicators and methods for measurement and reporting (see draft report by WOCAT).

A standard format was developed for the sub-indicators which includes the following components: definition, unit of measurement, SLM framework, core indicator, contribution to ESS and human well-being, importance, limits of the indicator, sensitivity, scale, methods/measures, value, and rating system.

The proposed methods for measurement should be simple but robust, and should include different stakeholders (land users, SLM specialists, etc.). A number of easy, measurable indicators will facilitate the aggregation to the core indicators and measuring impacts of SLM interventions. Scaling up results at the project level is useful as a decision support tool for determining where to invest, at what cost, and with what impacts, among other things. The methods proposed include interviews and discussions; field observation and photo monitoring; and, secondary information, statistics.

The proposed impact assessment of the core indicators begins with mapping practices and study site selection. Once these have been determined, the following four steps follow:

- Step 1: Setting the benchmark – defining the benchmark for each sub-indicator
- Step 2: Rating and scoring – very useful at project level for determine where to make an assessment

- Step 3: Aggregating sub- to core indicators – can help to estimate overall impact of projects
- Step 4 : Monitoring and visualizing the change – should be introduced from the beginning

In conclusion, the proposed project-level indicator system can be looked at in terms of the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats:

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for reporting, impact assessment and decision support at the project level • Allows for aggregation to national, global and portfolio levels • Offers a compromise between minimum data required, simple system, and useful results • Offers a comparison between different projects and specific interventions • Allows for impacts to be allocated to SLM interventions and practices 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting and assessment only useful if it contributes to justification or reallocation of project activities • Proxies can be used but only with specific SLM information • Use of knowledge management, and especially knowledge, requires an investment (which usually pays)
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposes a common system which can be used by various implementing agencies 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing as little as possible with as much as needed

6. LADA – Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands

Riccardo Biancalani, FAO-LADA

The main objectives of the LADA project are to develop tools and methods to assess the magnitude and rate of LD and its impacts on ecosystems, to carry out a global assessment of LD and more detailed assessments in six pilot countries (Argentina, China, Cuba, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia), and to build assessment and monitoring capacities and enable/focus SLM practices.

The technical aspects of the project include global land use systems, and global and national assessments. Capacity building is also a main component of the project, and this is being done through training initiatives through Regional Training Centres and a LADA website. The Regional Training centres will be established in each pilot country during 2009. The main targets of the training are extension officers (those on the ground) and those working at the coordinating level in technical institutions. A key challenge will be how to implement a sustained training system once the LADA project has finished, and this will largely depend upon availability of further funding.

The LADA project has made progress in developing methodologies and tools, conducting assessments, and developing indicators. It is recommended that the LADA methodological framework be applied at the local and national levels for LD assessments together with the WOCAT framework for local assessments of SLM interventions. Requests for participation from other countries and regional organisations have been made and concerted actions from the main stakeholders are needed in order to meet these requests.

7. Framework, Tools and Approaches for Local-level Land Degradation/SLM Assessment

Sally Bunning, FAO

The LADA project contains a “local” component which focuses on developing approaches and tools for local level LD and SLM assessment. Through study area transects, assessment sites and rapid/reconnaissance assessments, LADA-L gains a community-level understanding of institutional and policy-related factors that influence NRM, understands the community territory in terms of NRM strategies and poverty-LD linkages, develops an understanding of community perspectives and priorities and the dynamics of the area (changes/trends). Each site is assessed through indicators on, *inter alia*, vegetation, major land use, hydrology and water resources, and soil.

LADA-L aims to relate the local level with national level assessment of degradation types and effects on ecosystem services. There is a need for developing a scoring system for LADA-L assessment of ecosystem services. Sustainable livelihoods approaches are also taken into account to ensure that non-natural sciences issues are being looked at.

Finally, the (unintended) negative impacts of projects and wider effects offsite on ecosystem functioning in complex landscapes must be examined.

8. Strategy for an Integrated Project-level Impact Indicator System

David Niemeijer, KM:Land Project Team, Consultant

The proposed strategy for an integrated project-level impact indicator system is an alternate approach with a strong focus on the use of proxy indicators. It is based on two indicator sets: global-level indicators used for prioritization of resource allocation, and project-level indicators to be aggregated for assessment of portfolio-level impacts. It is designed to measure the total impact of GEF projects through a small set of indicators (with a required sub-set) at low cost.

The strategy proposes aggregation of relative change as opposed to the use of scoring. A reduction in measurement costs will be possible through involvement of local stakeholder in the collection of simple data at intervals, using data already collected by local NGOs or the government,

Attribution can be achieved by measuring external indicators that are known to affect the indicators of interest, and through using a control area for each project (only feasible if measurement costs are low). In addition, a number of external indicators have been included in order to help control outside factors.

9. Using GEF SLM Project Impact Pathways to Track Impact

David Niemeijer, KM:Land Project Team, Consultant

Currently, the SLM projects within the GEF LD portfolio make no explicit connection between project activities and GEB, and there is a disconnect between project outputs, outcomes and impacts. An analysis of existing projects shows a failure to achieve desired impacts. Given the nature of GEF projects, understanding impact pathways is essential, and as such, the current proposal suggests how to track impacts through impact pathways.

In order to track impacts, it is essential to connect project outputs with the desired project impacts. For the process to be effective, it must focus on key constraints (knowledge, institutional capacity, finances, policy), work in parallel with the different impact levels (supra-national, national, sub-national, local,

global), define outputs in terms of removing key constraints to SLM, and create strong connections between outputs, outcomes, impact pathways and desired impacts.

A generalized impact pathway and output-outcome-impact model can be constructed for GEF SLM projects. The first step in such an approach is problem diagnosis, which must be achieved in order to properly design an intervention that will have impacts. Following problem diagnosis, key constraints would then be identified and addressed. Once key constraints have been removed, a project is able to reach its final outcomes and achieve its desired impacts. Real impacts can only be expected if constraints are absent or removed at each level and in each domain.

This approach could be used to strengthen project design by identifying shortcomings in project design from its inception. It would make implicit assumptions explicit, determine at what level interventions should take place, determine how interventions in one domain are related to those in other domains, highlight strengths and weaknesses as well as design flaws, and emphasize the achievement of impacts through well-defined impact pathways.

The proposed approach can also be used to estimate project impacts by tracking progress using a standard output-outcome-impact model. Each output would be expressed in relation to a measurement at project inception and in terms of a percentage of a full goal. It would include required and optional indicators, with the required indicators forming the basis for aggregation across projects.

10. Results Based Management (RBM) at the GEF

Deborah Hines, GEF Secretariat

The RBM component of GEF-5 will focus on portfolio-level outcome progress monitoring and outcome tracking. It will aim to standardize the terminology and streamline its processes in order to achieve coherence and synergies across all FAs. As part of the KM process, the RBM component will align with GEF strategic planning, risk management, evaluation and RAF. Learning and knowledge will be a key component in the GEF and RBM strategies for developing a coherent framework for improved decision-making across FAs through commonalities of results across FAs.

Tracking results is included in many stages, including project design, implementation and evaluation (Eg., OECD DAC results chain). While project design and evaluation are the responsibility of agencies, GEF sees its role in the intermediate step of project implementation.

The current status of the RBM framework is that results are defined at the outcome and output levels, but these have not yet been harmonized with indicators. The KM:Land project can help to identify which indicators can be applied in the strategic framework at the project and portfolio levels, as well as at the global level.

The TOC approach is based on theories of how projects are supposed to achieve their objectives and necessitates the formulation of an hypothesis of change. It includes assumptions and factors influencing the achievement of results, including threats, opportunities and barriers, and examines how and why these can influence theory and hypothesis. It also looks at causal mechanisms linked to projects in order to determine what needs to be in place for achievement of objectives.

TOC is proposed as an effective means of measuring impacts because it complements on-site field-based evaluations; shows achievement of outcomes and progress towards impacts; and, determines whether

key assumptions held and whether intended impact drivers were active and intermediate stages achieved.

11. Moving Target(s): A Changing GEF and the Need for KM:Land to Adjust

Andrea Kutter, GEF Secretariat

The GEF is currently undergoing a very dynamic phase as it approaches GEF-5 and develops its strategy. The GEF-5 strategy is characterized by a drive for results being implemented through an RBM framework, and the inclusion of portfolio monitoring. Additionally, the potential application of STAR across all FAs is being considered. The GEF is also currently aligning itself with the 10-year strategy of the UNCCD, and linking evaluation with knowledge management and project design through the application of the Theory of Change (see presentation by Deborah Hines, above) and the GEF Evaluation Office.

The GEF-5 strategy for the LD FA is being developed under the guidance of a TAG. The framework will be finalized in autumn 2009, and input can still be provided to the TAG until then. The final framework will include indicators, baselines and targets, as approved as part of the GEF-5 replenishment. Additionally, the strategy will include the development of a LD FA Tracking Tool based on the core outputs and indicators for application in GEF-5, the alignment of STAR with the global environmental benefits index, and a link with the GEF Evaluation Office linking monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management.

A summary of the GEF-5 Strategy for the LD FA is as follows:

Goal: To contribute to arresting and reversing current global trends in LD, specifically desertification and deforestation.		
Impacts: Improved provision of agro-ecosystem and forest ecosystem services. Reduced GHG emissions from agriculture, deforestation and forest degradation and increased carbon sinks. Sustained livelihoods for people dependent on the use and management of natural resources		
Objective 1: Maintain or improve a sustainable flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustaining the livelihoods of local communities.	Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enhanced enabling environment within the agricultural sector • Improved agricultural (crop and livestock) management • Functionality and cover of agro-ecosystems maintained • GHG emissions from agriculture reduced • Carbon stock in agro-ecosystems increased 	Core Outputs – O1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that integrate SLM principles • Land where improved agricultural, land and water management practices are applied • GHG balance in agricultural systems
Objective 2: Generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid zones, including sustaining livelihoods of forest-dependant people	Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enhanced enabling environment within the forest sector • Improved forest management • Functionality and cover of existing forest ecosystems in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid zones maintained • GHG emissions from deforestation reduced 	Core Outputs – O2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that integrate SFM principles • Land where improved SFM practices are adopted • Land covered by forest and trees • CO₂ emissions avoided

<p>Objective 3: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscapes</p>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced enabling environments across sectors in support of SLM • Good management practices in the wider landscape demonstrated and adopted by relevant economic sectors 	<p>Core Outputs – O3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated and harmonized policies among relevant sectors in place • Land with unchanged cover by economic sector (status quo)
<p>Objective 4: Increase capacity to apply adaptive management tools in SLM</p>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved project performance using new and adapting existing tools and methodologies • Increased capacities of Countries to fulfill their obligations in accordance with the provisions provided in the UNCCD 	<p>Core Outputs – O4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated and mainstreamed results-oriented UNCCD action programme

12. Sustainable Land Management – Harmonisation of Indicators

Anna Tengberg, UNDP

The KM:Land project needs to be harmonized with the GEF-5 RBM framework and strategy. Currently, the indicator selection includes state indicators measuring on-the-ground impacts (land cover, productivity, total system carbon, water and livelihoods). Indicators will be needed for different types of projects and interventions and may be used across FAs and can be taken a step further to include process indicators such as capacity development (at systemic, institutional and individual levels), the creation of an enabling environment (through revisions to legislation, regulations and policies), and institutional reform and cross-sectoral coordination and integration.

Harmonisation can also take place across the other GEF FAs – International Waters, Biodiversity and Climate Change. Though each FA will have its own set of core indicators, a number of cross-cutting indicators will apply. Some examples include water indicators, indicators on ecosystem services, and indicators on climate change adaptation.

The intervention logic proposed by the KM:Land project can be fine tuned to align with the Outcome and Outputs outlined in the GEF-5 LD FA strategy and in the development of the FA Tracking Tool. Furthermore, the opportunity exists to contribute to the development of the learning objectives of the LD FA.

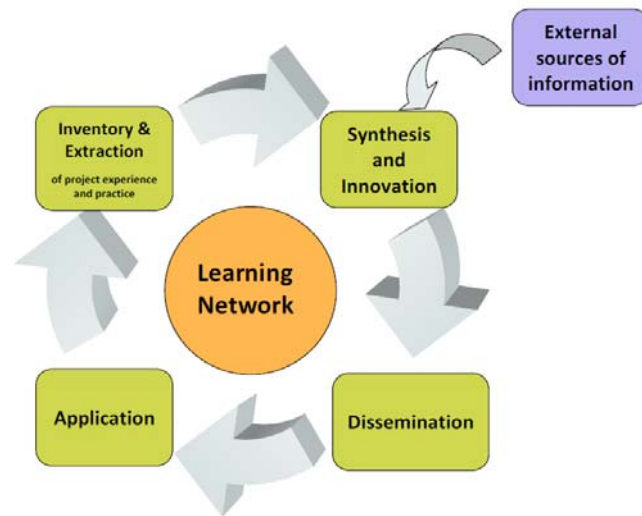
Finally, the opportunity exists to contribute to the development of cross-cutting sustainable forest management (SFM) indicators and to explore whether any linkages can be made with the UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD).

13. Strategy and concept of the Initial KM:Land Learning Network

Brigitte Schuster, KM:Land Project Team, Consultant

Since 2002, a considerable amount of information on controlling, preventing and mitigating LD has been generated by GEF projects without any significant way of capturing this information. As such, the KM:Land team has is developing an initial strategy for a LN.

The overall learning and KM process is cyclical, and entails four main steps which are implemented repeatedly and concurrently:



The main functions of the LN include:

- Creating an informal network of individuals for enhanced inter-project communication;
- Providing a platform for dialogue through an online portal;
- Establishing a mechanism to share and access SLM resources and creating an informational (project) inventory for GEF;
- Creating new knowledge through synthesis and development of generic lessons;
- Building capacity for adaptive management through integration of learning and monitoring;
- Adding value through retaining knowledge in "living" ways.

The initial LN will target GEF project teams, agency staff members, national and regional focal points for LD projects, and independent SLM professionals. It is proposed that at a later stage, the LN will also target land users, decision-makers and scientists.

The proposed LN has synthesized the lessons learned from existing LN to propose a system that is demand-driven, flexible and adaptive to respond to changing needs, supported by specialist expertise, requires minimum input from users, is accessible to all stakeholders, and does not rely heavily on technology. Institutional ownership of the LN is essential for long-term sustainability.

The LN will comprise a web portal, a virtual resources centre, and a networking tool (Communities of Practice) to facilitate exchange of information and dialogue. It is proposed that a global meeting is convened at the end of the KM:Land project for consultation and advice on a second phase. It is proposed that partnerships with other existing LN within and outside of the GEF family are established.

KM and the development of a LN is critical to maximizing impacts from GEF investments through: contributions to improved project design and implementation; scaling up of successful practices and principles; retaining valuable experiences from project managers; innovation through links to the broader SLM community; and, contributing to the strategic planning of the GEF LD FA.

Beyond the GEF, a LN would enable the GEF findings to be available to a broader community and would facilitate the flow of information between the international development and scientific communities as well as with other stakeholders.

Annex 2: Meeting Agenda

Monday 1 June 2009

Chair: Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH

Rapporteur: Harriet Bigas, UNU-INWEH

Session 1: Opening Session

- 8:30 Welcome Remarks (Sally Bunning, FAO; Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH)
- 8:40 Objectives and Modus Operandi of EAG meeting (Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH)
- 9:00 Update on status of KM:Land following Adaptive Management Review (Brigitte Schuster, KM:Land Project Team)

Session 2: KM:Land Progress on the Development of Project-level Indicators

- 9:10 Status of project-level indicator selection (Brigitte Schuster, KM:Land Project Team)
- 9:20 Indicator use in case study projects and outlook on consultations with project managers (indicator testing) (Caroline King, KM:Land Project Team)
- 9:40 Proposal of measurement methodologies and reporting procedures for project-level indicators (Hanspeter Liniger, WOCAT)
- 10:00 *Coffee break*
- 10:30 Lessons from national and local assessments of the LADA project for GEF project-level indicators methodologies (Riccardo Biancalani and Sally Bunning, LADA)
- 10:55 Plenary discussion on indicator methodologies and reporting procedures
- 12:30 *Lunch*
- 14:00 Wrap-up of discussion on indicator methodologies and reporting procedures
- 14:20 Using GEF SLM project impact pathways to track impact (David Niemeijer, KM:Land Project Team)
- 14:40 Strategy for an integrated project-level impact indicator system for the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area (David Niemeijer, KM:Land Project Team)
- 15:00 Plenary discussion on linking impact pathways with project-level indicators and strategy for an integrated indicator system
- 16:00 *Coffee break*
- 16:30 Plenary discussion continued
- 17:00 Wrap-up of Day 1 discussions
- 17:30 Close of day

Tuesday 2 June 2009

Session 3: Linkages between KM:Land Project-level Indicators, Impact Pathways, and the GEF-5 Strategy

Chair: Andrea Kutter, GEF Secretariat

Rapporteur: Harriet Bigas, UNU-INWEH

- 8:30 Recap of Day 1 (Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH)
- 8:40 In-depth review of the GEF LD results framework (Deborah Hines, GEF Secretariat)
- 9:00 Overview of the GEF-5 strategy results framework and development of a tracking tool system (Andrea Kutter, GEF Secretariat)

- 9:20 Steps towards harmonizing the GEF M&E system (Anna Tengberg, UNDP)
- 9:40 Plenary discussion Part I: Linkages of integrated indicators with GEF-5 strategy
- 10:50 *Coffee break*
- 11:20 Plenary discussion Part II: Conceptual framework for design of new projects and development of tracking tools
- 12:30 *Lunch*
- 14:00 Wrap-up of Plenary discussion Parts I & II

Session 4: Project-level Indicator Selection

Chair: Brigitte Schuster, KM:Land Project Team

Rapporteur: Harriet Bigas, UNU-INWEH

- 14:30 Plenary discussion Part III: Finalizing project-level indicator selection for impact evaluation of GEF LD FA and defining measures for review and update
- 16:00 *Coffee break*
- 16:30 Wrap-up of Plenary Discussion Part III
- 17:00 Close of day

Wednesday 3 June 2009

Session 5: Joint Scientific Publication on Indicators

Chair: Anna Tengberg, UNDP

Rapporteur: Harriet Bigas, UNU-INWEH

- 8:30 Recap of Day 2 (Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH)
- 8:45 Overview and outline of joint scientific publication (Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH)
- 8:55 Plenary discussion on the joint scientific publication, development of outline and allocation of tasks
- 10:00 Wrap-up and way forward
- 10:10 *Coffee break*

Session 6: Planning for KM:Land Learning Network

Chair: Andrea Kutter, GEF Secretariat

Rapporteur: Harriet Bigas, UNU-INWEH

- 10:40 Strategy and concept of the initial Learning Network (Brigitte Schuster, KM:Land Project Team)
- 11:00 Synergies with the UNCCD process led by the DSD Consortium (Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH)
- 11:20 Plenary discussion on the strategy and concept of the KM:Land Learning Network
- 12:20 Wrapping up and way forward

Session 7: Closing Session

- 12:30 Next KM:Land meeting, future engagement of EAG and next steps (Richard Thomas, UNU-INWEH)
- 12:45 Closing of EAG meeting
- 13:00 *Lunch at Il Grottino*

Annex 3: List of Participants

Name	Affiliation	Email
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Annex 4: List of Acronyms

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
CACILM	Central Asian and the Caucasus Integrated Land Management Programme
CDE	Centre for Development and Environment
CoMap	The Centre for Community Mapping
DSD	Dryland Science for Development Consortium
EAG	Expert Advisory Group
FA	Focal Area
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
GEB	Global Environmental Benefits
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gases
IW	International Waters
KM	Knowledge management
KM:Land	Knowledge management: land
LADA	Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands
LD	Land degradation
LDS	
LN	Learning Network
LUS	Land Use System
M&A	Monitoring and assessment
MENARID	Middle East and North Africa Programme
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MSP	Medium-sized project
NDVI	Normalized Difference Vegetation Index
NPP	Net Primary Productivity
NRM	Natural resources management
OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee
PIR	Project Implementation Review
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
RBM	Results based management
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SFM	Sustainable forest management
SLM	Sustainable land management
SIP	Strategic Investment Programme
SLUM	Sustainable land use management
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
TOC	Theory of Change
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNU-INWEH	United Nations University – International Network on Water, Environment and Health
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Techniques