



The GEF Small Grants Programme

Community Action, Global Impact

Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management Fact Sheet

Established in 1992, the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), implemented by UNDP, embodies the very essence of sustainable development by “thinking globally, acting locally”. By providing financial and technical support to projects that conserve and restore the environment while enhancing people’s well-being and livelihoods, SGP demonstrates that community action can maintain the fine balance between human needs and environmental imperatives.

KEY FACTS

- Over the past 19 years, the Small Grants Programme has invested \$450 million and leveraged similar levels of co-financing for over 13,500 projects by communities in 122 countries.
- The programme provides grants of up to \$50,000 directly to local communities including indigenous peoples, community based organizations and other non-governmental groups.
- The decentralized structure of SGP encourages maximum country and community-level ownership and initiative.
- The unique SGP National Steering Committees are the key decision making bodies of the SGP country programmes that bring together the civil society, the government and other key stakeholders to work towards community –based environmental efforts.

FOCAL AREAS

The Small Grants Programme aims to deliver global environmental benefits in the focal areas of biodiversity conservation, climate change, protection of international waters, prevention of land degradation (primarily desertification and deforestation), and elimination of persistent organic pollutants through community-based approaches.

LAND DEGRADATION

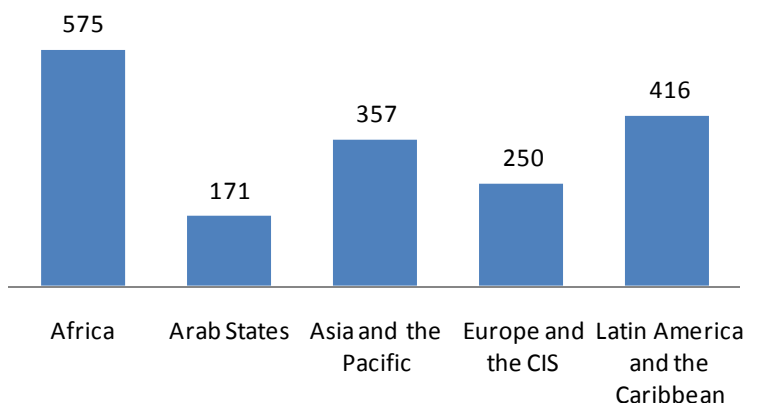
To date SGP has supported 1,760 community-based land degradation projects with a total investment of \$46 million. The Programme has been able to leverage US\$ 53 million in in-cash and in-kind co-financing.

During the next 4 years (2011-2014) SGP will support community based land degradation activities in the following areas:

- Maintain or improve the flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain livelihoods of local communities;
- Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in wider landscapes.

The focus will be on three production systems: agriculture, rangelands and forest based landscapes. The approach will encompass collaborative adaptive management principles (ACM) in which communities will be experimenting and innovating new methodologies leading to increased application of adaptive management tools for Sustainable Land Management.

LAND DEGRADATION PORTFOLIO BY REGION



SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Since 1992, the GEF Small Grants Programme has supported over 2,700 projects related to the protection and restoration of forests. Given SGP's commitment towards strengthening the efforts of local communities to conserve and sustainably manage forests, the programme has supported community-based projects that protect over 12,900,000 hectares of forests from human and non human impacts, and has helped communities restore 1,746,360 hectares of degraded forest worldwide.

Types of projects: forest rehabilitation, forest protection and enhancement of forest socio-economic functions.



The rehabilitative activities include reforestation, raising tree seedlings, tree planting, enrichment planting, woodlots establishments, social forestry approaches, woodlots and home gardens, and the conventional agro forestry. The protective functions include watershed management, soil and water conservation, sand dune stabilization, avalanche control, desertification control, coastal areas protection, conservation area protection, natural regeneration support/afforestation, use of traditional tree management techniques for tree crop management, occupancy management of forest, and communal tree farms establishments. While, the socio-economic functions activities include management of communal forests for: recreation, tourism, education and conservation of spiritual and cultural heritage and general provision of social services.

For its Fifth Operational Phase SGP will also foster the participation of communities in REDD + mechanisms as a viable option to tackle aspects of reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation through agricultural and other land use based practices.

DEMONSTRATION AND INNOVATION

To foster innovation at the community level, SGP pilots and demonstrates small-scale activities and new approaches in land degradation and sustainable forest management as a way to identify good practices for up-scaling and replication at a larger scale. SGP shares the lessons learnt globally through networks and other mechanisms, including international meetings, events and awards.

An example of a good practice that has been replicated is the use of community gardens as an alternative to livestock raising and a way to combat land degradation in Mongolia. Through the project a herder community fenced 2 hectares and planted over 2000 sea buckthorn seedlings along with other fruits, established a wind protection belt area and created a tree nursery that produces about 200,000 tree seedlings a year.

Four years after the creation of the garden the community was able to harvest 1.8 ton of sea buckthorn, 300 kg of black currant and some quantities of other berries. Land degradation and soil erosion stopped and the land is fully recovered. In addition, the community is deeply engaged in the protection of the Haraa river ecosystem and has also started beekeeping. The project has been replicated by 4 neighboring communities as well as 11 individuals and small companies in the Bayangol soum area.



PARTNERSHIPS

SGP works with local, national and international partners and stakeholders to generate a greater impact on-the-ground. For example, in 2007 SGP established a partnership with the **Global Mechanism of The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (GM/UNCCD)** to promote the active involvement of local communities in the implementation of the UNCCD, combat land degradation and share the lessons learned from the implementation of these projects.

SGP welcomes opportunities to work with partners at various levels to tackle land degradation and sustainable forest management issues by enabling community action.