

MINUTES

Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM) 3rd Steering Committee Meeting

Dushanbe, Tajikistan
3 – 4 April 2009

A. Introduction

1 The 3rd Steering Committee Meeting was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan from 3-4th April 2009. Participants comprised of the CACILM Steering Committee members from five Central Asian Countries — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and the development cooperation partners including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the CCD Project of GTZ (Germany), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD, International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The Heads of the CACILM National Secretariats and representatives from the CACS and donor partners attended the Steering Committee Meeting as Observers. The 3rd Steering Committee Meeting was hosted by the Agency for Land Management, Cartography and Geodesy. The meeting was organized and administered by the National Secretariat of Tajikistan and the Multicountry Secretariat.

2 The purpose of the Steering Committee Meeting was: i) to review the progress of CACILM during 2008, ii) to discuss the Evaluation of the CACILM Inception Phase, and iii) to develop a financing Strategy and Implementation Plan for the CACILM Implementation Phase II.

B. Agenda

3. The Steering Committee meeting agenda provided for (i) annual progress and financial reports of the Multicountry Secretariat, (ii) presentation of the Performance Monitoring Report on CMPF for 2008, (iii) reports on the implementation of the research, information systems and knowledge management components of CACILM Multicountry Program Framework (CMPF-SP), (iv) report on Evaluation of the CACILM Inception Phase, and (v) presentations and discussions related to financing of the Implementation Phase.

C. April 3rd Opening Session: Progress of the CACILM Inception Phase

4. The Director of the Agency for Land Management, Cartography and Geodesy, Mr. Zokirov addressed the Steering Committee, welcomed all participants and opened the meeting. The Country Director of ADB for Tajikistan, Mr. Ojiro welcomed participants and expressed appreciation and support for the work of the CACILM national and donor partners. The Agenda for the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting was adopted.

5. The Head of Multicountry Secretariat summarized the work of the MSEC, NSECs and multicountry components of CACILM Multicountry Program Framework – Support Project (CMPF-SP). A summary of total CMPF finances available to CACILM, on GEF-3 funding approved, and on the disbursements of CMPF-SP for 2008, was reported to the Steering Committee. The overall progress of the implementation of the SLM multicountry components: SLM research, SLM information systems, SLM knowledge management, was reported.

6. The Head of the Multicountry Secretariat presented the Performance Monitoring Report on the CACILM Multicountry Program Framework (CMPF) for the year 2008. To improve reporting at CACILM program level, MSEC recommended that SLM projects should

be required to report their results to the NCCS; that these SLM projects should use project indicators that directly align with the outcome indicators of the National Program Frameworks; and, that sharing of results with others SLM stakeholders in their country and in other CACs is to be integrated into concept and workplans of SLM project and adequately resourced.

7. The CACILM Committee Members commented on the reports presented by the Multicountry Secretariat and expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by MSEC and the NSECs during the Inception Phase. MSEC was requested by GTZ to amend the financial report to include information on the total funding available for SLM within the CACILM partnership in addition to the funding available through GEF co-financing. The Committee Members of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan recommended that the projects of the CACILM Partnership should report their results to the CACILM Steering Committee Meetings. Steering Committee Members from Kyrgyzstan and GTZ proposed that actions in the resource mobilization not be limited to GEF and CACILM collaborate with other international organizations already active such as CAREC, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and others.

8. The key findings and recommendations of the Independent Evaluation of the CACILM Implementation Phase were presented to the Steering Committee. Discussion of the report findings and recommendations followed with comments provided by all Steering Committee Members. There was a general agreement on the Evaluation's findings and recommendations with a request for provision of more details. The key findings are the following:

- a. There is widespread acknowledgement of the value of the CACILM partnership as being a useful vehicle for addressing the root causes of land degradation in a coordinated and harmonized manner.
- b. There is also recognition that the framework for implementation and a core set of foundational projects were launched during the Inception Phase. It is acknowledged that the challenges associated with the inception phase were wholly underestimated and that the expectations rather high.
- c. There is a consensus on the need to improve CACILM implementation modalities, to better articulate impacts and the added value of CACILM, and to revisit the strategic, operational and institutional/administrative aspects of CACILM as a whole and the structures in place.

9. The UNDP presented on the structure, content and status of the Multicountry Capacity Building Project (MCB). The implementation, management and reporting systems for the MCB were summarized, including roles for the CACILM Steering Committee, MCB Project Steering Committee (PSC), National Coordination Councils (NCC), Multicountry Capacity Building Unit and National Capacity Building Units. CACs stated that the MCBP should not created duplicate structure and the MCBP stuff be attached to the NSECs in each CAC.

10. The Global Mechanism provided a brief on the development of Integrated Financing Strategies (IFS) for each CAC under the Capacity Building Project starting with the Designing Integrated Financing Strategies (DIFS) capacity enhancement workshops at multicountry and national levels. It was emphasised that the success of the IFS depends on the marketability of the integrated Investment Framework and in this regard, it is crucial that a coherent set of interventions are developed that are able to leverage landscape level changes and improvements in ecosystem services as a means to increase resilience to climate change.

11. Following the UNDP and GM presentations, there was discussion, questions and clarifications on the capacity development activities of the MCB, and how the proposed

management structure system will align with the existing CACILM structure in the CACs and at multicountry level.

D. April 3rd Second Session: Progress of the CACILM Inception Phase Program Development and Financing of the CACILM Implementation Phase

12. The Program Development consultant, Dr. Ruzicka, presented a Synthesis Report on Priorities, Investments, and Funding Sources for CACILM Implementation Phase. Discussion of the report findings and recommendations followed with comments provided by all Steering Committee Members.

13. CAC strategies and initiatives relevant to the CACILM Implementation Phase were presented by the Steering Committee members. Uzbekistan summarized the national priorities for the Implementation Phase, including initiatives related to impacts of climate change on agriculture, water issues including drought management, and capacity building particularly for farmers. Kyrgyz Republic informed the Steering Committee of priority land and water resource management, food processing and related initiatives. Tajikistan summarized opportunities and challenges associated with development and approval of SLM projects in alignment with climate change issues. Turkmenistan provided a comprehensive list of initiatives that would align with land degradation and adaptation to climate change. Kazakhstan summarized the ministries and departments of the government at national and local levels involved in land management and rural development and informed the Steering Committee of a wide range of projects suitable for CACILM in the future.

E. April 4th Opening Session: Development and Financing of the CACILM Implementation Phase

14. Co-Chairman Mr. Zokirov opened the session. Co-Chairman Mr. Everitt summarized the discussions and consensus reached on the agenda items of the previous day. Mr. Everitt clarified the actions required of ADB to extend the activities of the CMPF-SP until 30th September 2009, under ADB RETA-6357. Mr. Everitt emphasized the need for the CACILM Partners to expedite the preparation a plan for the development and financing CACILM Inception Phase.

15. The Program Development consultant, Dr. Ruzicka, summarized the discussions and options for developing financing of the CACILM Implementation Phase. He then presented a strategic approach, and recommendations on institutional arrangements, national and multicountry programs, funding sources, documentation required, and a proposed workplan and strategy.

16. The Members of the Steering Committee commented upon the strategy and plan proposed by Dr. Ruzicka. GTZ recommended inclusion of programming be expanded to include biodiversity and a role for private sector participation, and confirmed the Government of Germany would continue to support CACILM during the Implementation Phase. GTZ underlines that visible national commitment to CACILM is a prerequisite for the sustainability of CACILM and an indispensable requirement for German support GTZ recommends a subcommittee be formed to guide the process development and submission of the proposal for the Implementation Phase, and to ensure the findings of the Evaluation of the Inception Phase are embedded in this process. The UNDP will support the continuation of CACILM, and recommended the CACs take action to increase the ownership and awareness of the program in their country. The FAO stated that it would be pleased to continue to provide technical support to CACILM. ICARDA, as representative of the CGIAR's Program for Sustainable Agriculture in Central Asia and the Caucasus (CAC), is strongly supportive of

the CACILM Program and suggested that ICARDA, as well as the CGIAR Program as a whole, could play a stronger role in bringing the resources and expertise of the CGIAR to Central Asia, particularly with reference to field level water management and sustainable crop production and water management in dry areas (ICARDA expertise), and institutional aspects of water management (expertise of IWMI, the International Water Management Institute which is member of the CAC Program Consortium). ICARDA also emphasized the need for strengthening long-term capacity building in the CACILM Program, and have all SLMR and other activities such as the capacity building project more closely linked, e.g. through working on common benchmark sites for demonstration and research. IFAD will support the CACILM program of multicountry and national projects, but can make firm funding commitments on a case by case basis only. Global Mechanism stated that the continued participation of GM is ensured through their role as a partner of the SLM Capacity Building Project.

17. The Members of the Steering Committee of the CACs commented on the preparation of the financing strategy and implementation Plan. Kazakhstan agreed that the National Program Frameworks should be updated, and recommended the UNDP country offices take a more prominent role in assisting CACILM, and that programs for carbon sequestration by vegetation in desert, steppe landscapes and pastures be included in the Implementation phase. Kazakhstan recommended that a donor conference be convened on land degradation and climate change adaptation follow the Steering Committee Meeting. The Kyrgyz delegation expressed their support for the plan for developing CACILM Implementation Phase, and that there should be no gap between the inception and implementation phases. Tajikistan supported the plan as presented and expressed concern about the commitment of GEF as a partner of CACILM, and recommended that the Steering Committee undertake immediate dialogue with GEF regarding their continued support. Turkmenistan noted the results achieved by CACILM in mobilizing national and multicountry programs and initiatives during the Inception Phase. Turkmenistan noted the success of the CACILM partners in establishing dialogue and cooperation should be emphasized in the plan for the Implementation Phase, and in particular that the successes and results of the Inception Phase be documented and provided to GEF and other new partners who would benefit from joining CACILM. Uzbekistan expressed strong support to immediately adopt the plan and schedule Development and Financing of the CACILM Implementation Phase as tabled. Uzbekistan recommended that design work commence immediately, and that the existing National Council, National Secretariats form the subcommittees as necessary with the donor partners to expedited development and submission of the plan for the CACILM Implementation Phase.

F. Major Points of Discussion, Recommendations and Decisions

18. The Steering Committee accepted the progress reports and the CACILM Performance Monitoring Report 2008 of the Multicountry Secretariat as tabled. MSEC was requested by GTZ to amend the financial report to include information on the total funding available for the CACILM partnership in addition to the funding available through GEF co-financing.

19. The Steering Committee accepted the report on the Evaluation of the CACILM Inception Phase as tabled. The Steering Committee Members agreed to provide written comments to Global Mechanism once a revised version of the Evaluation was circulated. The report will then be finalized and submitted for endorsement by the Steering Committee. It was agreed that a workplan would be included in the Evaluation to ensure proper follow up and implementation of the recommendations. Co-Chairman ADB requested the recommendations of the Evaluation Report be prioritized, and suggested the following: (i) articulate necessary changes to the operations and the support to and by the national level; (ii) refine multicountry orientation, operations and support to CACILM at all levels; (iii)

(iv) specify needs for donor harmonization of procedures to facilitate smoother deployment of joint projects.

20. CACILM continues to be relevant. Despite the challenges identified by the evaluation, CACILM remains a unique platform for advancing policy dialogue for improving framework conditions, mobilization of resources and improving coordination between all partners for sustainable land management in Central Asia. SC members are therefore strongly committed to support the CACILM Full Implementation Phase.

21. CACILM derives its added usefulness from the existence of the Multicountry Partnership and the multicountry and national support structures. The structures add value to CACILM in terms of being the platform for coordination of investments, harmonization of procedures, exchange of experiences and a driver for further capacity development. CACILM national representatives and donor partners agree to support this structure during Phase II.

22. As recommended by the Evaluation, the SC endorses the need to review the existing CACILM architecture and its functions at national and multi-country levels with a view to assure sustainability and optimize support for the Full Implementation Phase.

23. CACILM partners are committed to support a smooth transition from the Inception Phase to the Full Implementation Phase, without any loss of momentum in funding support. The partners understand that ensuring such continuity requires speedy completion of well defined Phase II preparatory steps that can secure timely support by core donors. It is understood also that speedy completion of agreed procedural steps is not a substitute for a more deliberate implementation of activities such as capacity building that are by their nature more long-term.

24. The Steering Committee supported the proposal of the countries that the implementation staff of Capacity Building project be attached to the NSECs to ensure better coordination and implementation of the MCB Project activities. The NCCs which consists of all CACILM stakeholders and partners, will carry out the responsibility of the Project Steering Committee in each CAC. GTZ and UNDP position is that budget decisions concerning the MCBP are the sole responsibility of MCBP project staff assisted by UNDP Country Office, GTZ and GM.

25. The Steering Committee endorsed the concept financing strategy, implementation plan and schedule. Effort will be taken to build convergence with the work being undertaken under the MCB project and IFS development. The Schedule and Responsibilities for Preparation of the Financing Strategy and Implementation Plan and Revision of the NPFs is attached as an Addendum to the Minutes.

26. CACILM needs to respond to changing technical and institutional conditions at both national and regional levels. Certain concerns (climate resilience, food security, water management, biodiversity) have acquired more prominence in recent years and CACILM must adapt accordingly. By demonstrating linkages with newly articulated concerns, in particular adaptation to climate change, CACILM Phase II needs to widen the range of financing options. The SC endorses the need to bring National Programming Frameworks and CMPF support activities in line with the newly emerging concerns.

27. The steering committee accepted the invitation from the Kazakh delegation to host the Fourth Steering Committee Meeting in Kazakhstan in October 2009. The invitation to host a donor conference on land degradation and climate change adaptation in conjunction with the steering committee was also accepted, in principle. A number of constraints were identified that may limit the potential success of the donor conference. The constraints will need to be considered by the hosts. It was suggested as an alternate option to conduct extended conference with participation of Ministers and Donors to discuss the common actions.

Addendum to the Minutes of the 3rd CACILM Steering Committee Meeting:

Schedule and Responsibilities for Preparation of the Financing Strategy and Implementation Plan and Revision of the NPFs		
Activity	Schedule	Responsibilities
Review of existing institutional structure supporting CACILM and proposals for its possible adjustment	30 April 2009	National Secretariats to discuss with NCC and other national authorities as appropriate. Proposals to MSEC
Clarification of GEF likely support for Partnership (multicountry) activities	15 May 2009	ADB; to be communicated to CACILM partners
NPFs updated to incorporate important new developments in each CA country and climate change considerations	30 June 2009	National Secretariats, with guidance by Program Development Consultant and support from GTZ
Project concepts for all national Phase II proposals	15 July 2009	Project proponents to submit to NSECs
Re-confirmation of individual national Phase II projects for formal inclusion into Indicative Financing Plan	31 July 2009	National Secretariats to consult respective NCCs and submit to MSEC
Final Implementation Plan	31 July 2009	ADB. Circulate to MSEC, SC members, NCCS and NSECs
Reformulated Multicountry Partnership Framework Program Document for Submission to principal partnership donor (GEF or non-GEF)	31 May 2009 (first circulation) 31 August 2009 (submission to GEF)	ADB to circulate first draft to SC members and NCCs, and submit to either GEF for GEF-5 financing or to other support fund(s)
Project concepts (e.g. PIFs, if GEF funding) for donor-supported subprojects at the national and multicountry levels	31 October 2009	ADB and donors expecting GEF or other co-financing , each for their respective projects