



## Sustainable Arid Land Management (SALAM): A Partnership Programme for the Gulf and Neighbouring Arab States

### Context

The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD (GM) seeks to develop a multi-country programme that brings the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries together with the neighbouring Arab States in a partnership for promoting Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices to facilitate improved livelihoods and ecological services.

The programme meets the special profile of the region with regard to the respective countries' different development trajectories and unique ecological context. The GCC countries, namely, The United Arab Emirates, The State of Bahrain, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, The Sultanate of Oman, The State of Qatar and The State of Kuwait have special economic and environmental profiles. Beyond the borders of the GCC countries, the region also includes countries with developing and economies in transition that face challenging socio-economic, political and environmental hurdles. The neighbouring Arab States that this programme proposes to engage include: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and the Palestinian Authority.

### SALAM Programme Brief

The SALAM programme is being proposed by the GM as a complementary initiative for further strengthening the respective countries' efforts to address land degradation related issues. The GM seeks to build on the existing momentum of the countries by building a strong partnership between the countries themselves, and external partners for pursuing a common vision for reversing the trends of land degradation and for improving socio-economic conditions of local communities.

The programme will be designed and implemented following a participatory approach involving a wide range of national, regional and international stakeholders.

#### SALAM Goal

Promote sustainable land management practices and strengthen technical and financial cooperation between the GCC Countries, neighbouring Arab States and development cooperation partners under the framework of a strategic partnership to support sustainable development trends in the region.

The programme consists of the following three components:

1. A component tailored to the GCC countries to respond to their specific requirements with regard to technical, knowledge and other needs related to pursuing SLM.

2. A component designed in response to the needs of the neighbouring Arab States with regard to access to technical and financial support for adoption of SLM.
3. A component on establishing a multi-country forum for SLM bringing together the countries, development cooperation partners, research institutes and the private sector.

The programme shall be implemented over a period of five years, focusing on sharing state-of-the-art-knowledge on SLM and pioneering innovative initiatives at national level, as a means for mobilizing financing for UNCCD implementation.

In general, the anticipated outcomes will relate to the adoption of international norms and best practices governing

SLM by the GCC and neighbouring Arab States. The programme seeks to enhance the enabling policy, legislative, institutional and incentive frameworks, as well as the approach to land-use planning, through establishing a cycle of expert thematic consultation forums within the region under the SALAM Partnership Platform (SPP).

During the design phase, the modalities and governing principles of the SPP will be elaborated for bringing together a core group of GCC countries under a strategic partnership for advancing the principles of the UNCCD in their countries as well as for supporting neighbouring Arab states. It is expected that specific bilateral or multilateral partnerships will form to bring together the countries from the region with international partners for undertaking specific SLM related activities. These partnerships may take various forms centring on technical support, advocacy, financing or any other agreed upon relevant combination.

Launching this programme during the current International Year for Deserts and Desertification (IYDD) provides an appropriate context for strengthening the visibility and importance of dryland issues on regional and international environmental agendas. It will also provide an opportunity to build the required collaborative efforts between the diverse Arab and international donors and institutions working on SLM.

#### SALAM Objectives

1. Promote networking and exchange of state-of-the-art-knowledge on sustainable land management through the establishment of a regular forum of thematic expert consultations.
2. Implement in member countries innovative strategies and initiatives emanating from the thematic expert consultation process.