



The GDI Reference Guide

Conserving our planet, hectare by hectare

Version 0 - draft: 19 November 2011

Version 0 is the review draft of the GDI Reference Guide. In early January 2012, we will incorporate comments and suggestions to produce Version 1 which will be used in the two-year pilot phase of the GDI (2012-2013).

We especially need suggestions on internationally-agreed criteria and indicators for the GDI Standard presented in Chapter 2 and on internationally-agreed practical guidance materials for inclusion in Chapter 4 of the Guide.

We most welcome your comments and suggestions by 31 December 2011. Please send these to: gdi@earthmind.net.

Thank you for helping us to establish a new standard and certification system for biodiversity-responsible land management. In so doing, we hope to facilitate increased private sector support for conservation and development on the ground.

© Earthmind 2011

Earthmind, Geneva, Switzerland

gdi.earthmind.net

The GDI Reference Guide - Version 0

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1 What is GDI certification? | 3 |
| 2. The GDI standard | 3 |
| 2.1. Management plan objectives..... | 3 |
| 2.1.1 Conservation of biodiversity | 3 |
| 2.1.2 Sustainable & equitable use | 4 |
| 2.1.3 Economic & social development | 4 |
| 2.2 Geographically-defined area & area manager | 5 |
| 2.3 Baseline assessment & stakeholder consultations | 5 |
| 2.4 Monitoring, evaluation & reporting | 5 |
| 3. The GDI process | 6 |
| Step 1: Become a GDI-registered area | 6 |
| Step 2: Design the GDI management plan (up to 2 years)..... | 6 |
| Step 3: Become a GDI-compliant or GDI-certified area..... | 6 |
| Step 4: Implement the GDI management plan (5 years)..... | 7 |
| 4. Guidance for GDI management | 7 |
| 4.1 Guidance on management plan objectives | 8 |
| 4.1.1 Conservation of biodiversity | 8 |
| 4.1.2 Sustainable & equitable use | 9 |
| 4.1.3 Economic & social development | 10 |
| 4.2 Guidance on the area & its manager | 10 |
| 4.3 Guidance on baseline assessment & stakeholder consultations..... | 10 |
| 4.4 Guidance on monitoring, evaluation & reporting | 11 |
| 5. GDI fees | 11 |
| Annex A: CBD policy & the GDI | 12 |
| Annex B: The business case for the GDI | 13 |
| Annex C: Use of terms | 14 |
| Annex D: GDI registration | 17 |

Disclaimer: Earthmind is a not-for-profit organisation based in Geneva and registered under Swiss Federal Law. While the authors and Earthmind have exerted great care and diligence with respect to the contents of this document, they make no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in, or for any omissions from, this document.

1 What is GDI certification?

The **Green Development Initiative (GDI)** supports the management of geographically-defined areas in accordance with the objectives and guidance of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**.¹ Since its launch at the 1992 Rio Conference, the CBD has been ratified by over 190 countries making it the internationally-accepted policy framework for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

As set out in this Reference Guide, the GDI is establishing an international standard and certification system for verifying land management plans that deliver conservation and development outcomes in accordance with CBD. In so doing, **GDI certification** facilitates recognition of and support for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable and equitable use on the ground.

Further information on CBD policy and the business case for the GDI can be found in Annexes A and B respectively. Annex C provides a list of definitions of key terms used for GDI certification.

2. The GDI standard

The **GDI standard** is based on the objectives of the CBD and best practices for environmental management programmes. The standard sets out the minimum requirements for a GDI-compliant or GDI-certified land management plan.

2.1. Management plan objectives

2.1.1 Conservation of biodiversity

The land manager must conserve and, where appropriate, restore biodiversity.

The first objective of the CBD, as set out in Article 1, is “the conservation of biological diversity.” The CBD further defines ‘in-situ conservation’ - which is the focus of GDI certification - as “the conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings and, in the case of domesticated or cultivated species, in the surroundings where they have developed their distinctive properties.”

Key criteria & indicators

- The overall impact of the plan on biodiversity must be positive within the management area as measured against the baseline assessment.
 - Document conservation actions and monitor biodiversity impacts.
- The possible impact of the plan on biodiversity outside the management area must be assessed and, if required, mitigated.
 - Document assessed impacts and monitor any required mitigation actions.

¹ <http://cbd.int>

- Populations of invasive species should be reduced or eliminated in a biodiversity-responsible way within the management area.
 - Document actions and monitor the status of invasive species.

2.1.2 Sustainable & equitable use

The land manager must ensure that any use of biodiversity is ecologically sustainable and does not undermine the conservation of biodiversity.

The second objective of the CBD is “the sustainable use of its components.” The CBD defines sustainable use as “the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.”

The plan must also ensure that any use of biodiversity is socially equitable.

The third objective of the CBD is “the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.” For GDI certification, equitable use refers to all the components of biodiversity and not just genetic resources. For example the CBD Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity explains that: “The needs of indigenous and local communities who live with and are affected by the use and conservation of biological diversity, along with their contributions to its conservation and sustainable use, should be reflected in the equitable distribution of the benefits from the use of those resources.”²

Key criteria & indicators

- The use of ecosystems and species must be subject to national and international regulations, including, if relevant, listings of endangered species under the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and listings of protected areas under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the World Heritage Conventions.
 - Document the relevant regulations regarding use and how these are adhered to in the plan.
- As appropriate, the plan may include voluntary environmental and social standards and schemes for the sustainable and equitable production of goods or services so long as these do not undermine the conservation of biodiversity.
 - Document the use of such standards and schemes and monitor potential impacts on biodiversity.

2.1.3 Economic & social development

Particularly in developing countries, the plan must contribute to economic and social development within the management area and, as appropriate, in surrounding areas.

In its Preamble, the CBD recognises that: “economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries”

² <http://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/addis-gdl-en.pdf>

and that “conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity is of critical importance for meeting the food, health and other needs of the growing world population, for which purpose access to and sharing of both genetic resources and techniques are essential.”

Key criteria & indicators

- For an area in a developing country, development outcomes shall be an integral part of the plan.
 - Specify the development actions and monitor the impact of the plan on development.
- Relevant criteria and indicators, as appropriate, ought to be based on the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and on consultations with local communities.³
 - Document the integration of relevant MDGs and local development priorities and associated criteria and indicators into the plan.

2.2 Geographically-defined area & area manager

The management plan must precisely state the boundaries of the area to be managed and its size in hectares. GIS coordinates and a topological map must be included with the GDI registration.

The area must have a manager with clear rights and responsibilities to manage it. Evidence of the manager’s authority must be included with the GDI registration or within the two-year registration period.

The manager must demonstrate the competency and capacity to address conservation and development issues.

2.3 Baseline assessment & stakeholder consultations

The management plan must be based on the findings of a thorough baseline assessment and stakeholder consultations. Evidence of this must be reflected in the set of conservation and development actions included in the management plan.

The baseline assessment and a report on stakeholder consultations must be available to the GDI Secretariat upon request.

2.4 Monitoring, evaluation & reporting

The management plan must include a transparent monitoring, evaluation and reporting programme including the submission of annual performance reports to the GDI Secretariat. The management plan and the annual reports will be made available to the public on the GDI online registry.

A regular and robust programme of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting is a critical component of a GDI-compliant management plan. Transparency with respect to

³ <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/index.htm>

conservation and development outcomes and also with respect to adaptive management in response to lessons learned and unexpected environmental, economic and social change is expected.

3. The GDI process

The GDI approach aims to certify that specific areas are being managed in compliance with CBD objectives and guidance. The first step is in **the GDI process** is to become registered. This is followed by designing and implementing a GDI compliant or certified management plan. There are four key steps as follows:

Step 1: Become a GDI-registered area

To become a **GDI-registered area**, the land manager needs to submit the required registration information set out in Annex D. This information is used to establish the eligibility of applicant. Once registered, the manager will have a two-year period in which to become GDI-compliant or GDI-certified.

Step 2: Design the GDI management plan (up to 2 years)

During the two-year design period, the land manager must undertake a thorough baseline assessment and stakeholder consultations. Based on these, the manager will design a land management plan with a set of conservation and development actions and a programme for monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

During this period, the land manager will have the option to state publicly that the area is GDI-registered. Alternatively, if the applicant prefers confidentiality during this period, the GDI online registry will simply state that there has been a registration within a broad region such as Africa.

Step 3: Become a GDI-compliant or GDI-certified area

By the end of the two-year design phase, a green development management must be submitted to the GDI Secretariat for approval.

If the manager chooses to self-assess the implementation of the plan, then, once the plan is accepted, the area will be registered publically as a **GDI-compliant area**.

A land manager who would like the management plan to be certified by an independent third party should put this request to the GDI Secretariat at the time of registration or during the two-year design period. Once submitted, a qualified certification auditor will be contracted by the GDI Secretariat to undertake an audit of the management plan. This will include a visit to the area and consultations with stakeholders. Once verified by the auditor, the area will be registered publically as a **GDI-certified area**.

Step 4: Implement the GDI management plan (5 years)

GDI compliance or certification will be valid for a 5-year period.

If the agreed monitoring, evaluation and reporting programme is followed over this period and the conservation and development outcomes are positive, the area will maintain its GDI status.

Specifically for GDI-certified areas, the GDI Secretariat will contract an independent third party to verify performance through a review of published reports and, as may be required, consultations with the manager and stakeholders.

If the land manager fails to implement the plan, then the area will be put on a warning list. If this situation is not rectified within a year, GDI registration will be cancelled.

In the 5th year, the manager may submit an updated management plan to the GDI to continue its status as a GDI-compliant or GDI-certified area for a subsequent five-year period. For a GDI-certified area, the updated plan will need to be audited including a visit to the area and consultations with stakeholders.

4. Guidance for GDI management

This section highlights some of the guidance available to assist a land manager in registering with the GDI and designing a GDI-complaint management plan. **More guidance, including links to documents and websites, is available in the online GDI Reference Library:**

- <http://gdi.earthmind.net/library>

As every area on our planet is unique in terms of ecosystems and species, land tenure and land uses, and local communities and local economies, managers will need to apply a variety of methodologies and approaches to ensure positive conservation and development outcomes. GDI certification will ensure that the management plan for these outcomes is compliant with the GDI standard and thus with the internationally-agreed objectives and guidance of the CBD. It will also ensure that the manager systematically monitors, evaluates and publically reports on its implementation.

With respect to registering and planning within the GDI system, official guidance provided from the CBD takes priority. Secondly, as appropriate to the area, official guidance provide from other biodiversity-related conventions can be used. Such official guidance usually comes from decisions of the Conferences of the Parties of the various biodiversity-related conventions.⁴ These conventions include the following:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

⁴ <http://www.cbd.int/brc/>

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- World Heritage Convention

Thirdly, additional guidance for designing GDI management plans, particularly with respect to sustainable and equitable use, can come from established voluntary environmental and social standards. An important grouping of these voluntary initiatives is the membership of the ISEAL Alliance.⁵

4.1 Guidance on management plan objectives

The management objectives are the core of a GDI management plan. They provide the thematic focus for undertaking a baseline assessment and stakeholder consultations, for determining the conservation and development actions to be included in the plan, and for designing the targets and indicators for monitoring, reporting and verifying the green development outcomes.

4.1.1 Conservation of biodiversity

The central guidance from the CBD for the conservation of biodiversity is known as the Ecosystem Approach. The CBD and the other biodiversity-related conventions, however, provide further guidance regarding actions which a land manager could undertake to conserve or restore biodiversity. The global conservation community also provides additional guidance. These include the following:

Beginners' Guide to using the Ecosystem Approach (CBD): A strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way.

Benefits of Sustainable Land Management (UNCCD): Highlights local, regional and global benefits of sustainable land management (SLM).

CITES Appendices (CITES): Roughly 5,000 species of animals and 29,000 species of plants are protected by CITES against over-exploitation through international trade. They are listed in the three CITES Appendices. The species are grouped in the Appendices according to how threatened they are by international trade.

Climate Change Adaptation Database (CBD): Provides web-based guidance on the integration of biodiversity within adaptation planning. It gathers information tools and case studies from a number of relevant partners.

Good practice guidelines for High Conservation Value assessments (HCV Network): Sets out good practices for the identification and management of High Conservation Values (HCVs), and HCV forests and areas.

Guiding Principles for the Prevention, Introduction and Mitigation of Impacts of Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species (CBD): Intended to assist governments to control invasive alien species, as an integral part of

⁵ <http://www.isealalliance.org/>

conservation and economic development. They comprise 15 principles on prevention, intentional and unintentional introduction, and mitigation of impacts.

IUCN Red List of Endangered Species (IUCN): Widely recognized as the most comprehensive, objective global approach for evaluating the conservation status of plant and animal species.

Migratory Species Appendices (CMS): Migratory species threatened with extinction are listed on Appendix I of the Convention. Migratory species that need or would significantly benefit from international co-operation are listed in Appendix II.

Principles and Guidelines for Wetland Restoration (Ramsar): Provides a step-by-step process guiding the identification, development and implementation of a restoration project.

Towards effective protected area systems: An action guide to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity Programme of Work on Protected Areas (CBD): Intended to assist protected area managers and policy makers in governments, NGOs, communities and everyone else committed to ensuring that protected areas fulfil their potential as cornerstones for biodiversity conservation and as pillars for achieving sustainable development.

World Heritage List (WHC): The World Heritage List includes 936 properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value.

4.1.2 Sustainable & equitable use

The CBD offers guidance on both sustainable use and the equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of biodiversity. Regarding equitable use, the CBD process is particularly focused on the use of genetic resources. There are also an array of standards and certification schemes for the production and harvesting of biodiversity-based goods and services ranging from agriculture to wild harvesting to tourism. This section provides a small selection of key guidance documents and sources for more information.

Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (CBD): A framework for advising stakeholders on how they can ensure that their use of the components of biodiversity will not lead to long-term biodiversity declines, but will instead promote conservation and contribute to poverty alleviation. Applying to both consumptive and non-consumptive uses of biodiversity, the Principles and Guidelines take into account issues related to policies, laws and regulations; management of biodiversity; socio-economic conditions; and information, research and education.

Business and Biodiversity Tools and Mechanisms (CBD): Online database of business and biodiversity-related guidance on certification, best practices, regulations, standards, and tools and mechanisms, including over 60 potentially useful certification schemes for biodiversity-based goods and services.

Existing instruments, guidelines, codes of conduct and tools addressing ABS (CBD): An online overview of instruments, guidelines, codes of conducts, policies and other tools developed for different types of users of genetic resources to assist with the implementation of the access and benefit-sharing provisions of the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol.

Fairtrade International Standards (Fairtrade International): Designed to tackle poverty and empower producers in the poorest countries in the world.

FairWild Standard (Version 2.0) (FairWild): Provides standard for sustainable wild plant collection operations wishing to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable collection, social responsibility and fair trade principles.

Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development (CBD): A comprehensive instrument for managing tourism activities in an ecologically, economically and socially sustainable manner. The guidelines emphasize a consultative approach involving multiple stakeholders, and are structured around ten steps, from development of an overall vision to implementation of adaptive management programmes.

4.1.3 Economic & social development

In support of the aim to link conservation and development on the ground, the main guidance on development outcomes comes from the UN Millennium Goals and its related targets and indicators.

Biodiversity, Development and Poverty Alleviation (CBD): Encourages development outlooks and practices that conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and promote access and benefit sharing arising from the use of genetic resources.

Official list of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) indicators (UN): Internationally-agreed framework of 8 development goals and 18 targets which are complemented by a set of 48 technical indicators. (Available in the GDI Reference Library.)

4.2 Guidance on the area & its manager

Online services such as Google or Bing can be used to determine the exact coordinates of the management area and assist in the production of a topographical map. Managers in need of credible expert advice on conservation and development may want to consult the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) which has government and non-government member organisations and commission experts across the world.

Google Maps (Google): Can be used to pinpoint the location of the management area with latitude and longitude coordinates.

IUCN: An international union of conservation and development expertise in its members, commissions and secretariat.

4.3 Guidance on baseline assessment & stakeholder consultations

The CBD guidance can be found in its Ecosystem Approach. NGOs such as Conservation International (CI) are experienced in undertaking assessments, particularly with respect to native species. Financial institutions such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC) can provide guidance on engaging stakeholders.

The Ecosystem Approach Advanced User Guide (CBD): Explains the type of actions that need to be taken and why these are important for meeting all the principles of the ecosystem approach.

Rapid Biodiversity Assessment (CI): A means of quickly collecting information on the species present in a given area; includes a Tool Kit providing information needed to plan, design, implement and publish rapid biodiversity surveys.

Stakeholder Engagement: A Good Practice Handbook for Companies Doing Business in Emerging Markets (IFC): Provides the reader with the good practice “essentials” for managing stakeholder relationships in a dynamic context, where unexpected events can and do occur, and facts on the ground change.

Voluntary Guidelines on Biodiversity-Inclusive Impact Assessment (CBD): Provides advice on the incorporation of biodiversity-related concerns into new or existing environmental impact assessment (EIA) and strategic environmental assessment (SEA) procedures.

4.4 Guidance on monitoring, evaluation & reporting

Regarding monitoring and evaluation, international agencies such as IUCN and the World Bank provide useful guidelines. The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is the main source for guidance on environmental and social reporting.

Approach for Reporting on Ecosystem Services (GRI): Looks at emerging thinking around ecosystem services and gives organizations options for reporting. It outlines the ways that companies can monitor and report their relationship with ecosystem services.

Biodiversity: A GRI Reporting Resource (GRI): Assists reporting organizations to understand biodiversity issues; the relationship to their activities and operations; discusses how the GRI Guidelines can be used to report on biodiversity; and provides further resources to help organizations with their biodiversity reporting.

Evaluating Effectiveness: A Framework for Assessing Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas (IUCN): Presents a common framework, which provides a consistent basis for designing assessment systems, gives guidance about what to assess, and provides broad criteria for assessment.

Guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation for Biodiversity Projects (World Bank): A 1998 document intended primarily to assist World Bank task teams and consultants in the design and implementation of monitoring and evaluation plans for biodiversity conservation projects or projects with biodiversity components.

5. GDI fees

During the two-year pilot phase of the GDI (2011-2012), the following pilot fee structure will be applied and tested. Based on lessons learned, the GDI Secretariat will assess and revise the fees as needed at the end of this phase.

All fees are in U.S. Dollars (USD) and are payable in full at the time of submitting documentation for GDI registration, compliance or certification. The fees are non-refundable.

- **GDI registration** - \$120
- **GDI compliance** - \$2,400 plus \$0.12 per hectare per year for 5 years
- **GDI certification** - \$12,000 plus \$0.12 per hectare per year for 5 years

Fee revenue is used to cover the operating costs of the GDI Secretariat including the contracting of third-party independent certifiers. As the Secretariat operates on a not-for-profit basis, any potential surpluses will be used to further the work of the GDI.

Annex A: CBD policy & the GDI

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which was launched nearly 20 years ago at the 1992 Rio Conference, sets out an internationally-agreed agenda for the conservation of biodiversity in the context of the development priorities of developing nations. It includes a commitment by all nations to provide financial resources and incentives in support of its implementation as well as a commitment by developed countries to provide new and additional funding to developing countries to further support its implementation. Since 1992, adequate resource mobilisation has remained a key challenge which has been addressed at each of the ten CBD Conferences of the Parties (COPs).

Notably, at COP9 in May 2008, the Parties agreed to a new Strategy for Resource Mobilisation which includes a focus on the development of innovative financial mechanisms for biodiversity to engage the private sector. COP9 called for "studies on approaches to develop markets and payment schemes for ecosystem services at local, national and international levels", and asked Parties "to improve actions and co-operation for enhancing the engagement of the business community (...) in the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention", and "to come forward with new and innovative financing mechanisms in support of the strategy for resource mobilization." In response to these decisions, the idea for a Green Development Initiative (GDI) was born in May 2008.

At CBD COP10 in October 2010, the Parties agreed to an important, new **Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020** with five goals and 20 targets. Target 20 provided further official support to the COP9 strategy for resource mobilisation and thus for efforts such as the GDI to innovate financing modalities:

- **Target 20:** By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 from all sources, and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilisation should increase substantially from the current levels.

It is further expected that GDI certification will contribute to the following five targets of the Strategic Plan:

- **Target 4:** By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.
- **Target 7:** By 2020, areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.
- **Target 11:** By 2020, ...areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably-managed, ecologically-representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.
- **Target 14:** By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded.
- **Target 18:** By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected.

For CBD COP11 in India in 2012, the GDI Secretariat plans to update to the Parties on the progress since COP10 in the context of these strategic targets and relevant agenda items on resource mobilisation and business engagement.

Annex B: The business case for the GDI

Unlike internationally-traded commodities like maize, gold, petroleum and even carbon, biodiversity cannot be easily measured and weighed. It makes little sense to speak of a bushel, a troy ounce, a barrel or a metric tonne of biodiversity. Because biodiversity everywhere is unique in terms of ecosystems, species and habitats, it cannot easily be commoditised and traded, like we have done for greenhouse gas emissions.

Nevertheless, there is a clear 'market' for biodiversity. The international demand for biodiversity conservation is evidenced not only by the support for biodiversity-related conventions and the worldwide programmes of environment and development NGOs, but also by the increasing demands from consumers and investors for companies to be biodiversity-responsible. To facilitate this demand, the GDI approach is creating a simple unit which can be used to mobilise voluntary support for biodiversity - a **GDI-certified hectare**.

Behind a GDI-certified hectare is an international standard and certification scheme which requires land managers to undertake conservation and development actions, to measure and evaluate the impacts of these actions, and to report publically on their performance. GDI certification brings accountability and transparency with respect to the supply of conservation and development actions in clearly-defined, responsibly-managed areas. In so doing, it makes it easier for demanders of biodiversity conservation to provide direct support for biodiversity.

There are a number of substantive reasons why businesses in particular might want to adopt **GDI certification** and thus support the implementation of **GDI-certified managed plans for specific areas**. These include:

- Government regulations
- Government relations
- Investor requirements
- Supply chain sustainability
- Corporate social responsibility

Businesses may pay for GDI certification in response to a biodiversity-related national regulation. For example, Section 404 of the US Clean Water Act regulates the discharge of material into wet ecosystems with a goal to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters.” Supporting GDI-certified areas might serve to support national biodiversity strategies and thus improve a company’s relations with host governments. Businesses may also finance GDI-certified plans in response to an investor’s obligation, such as the requirement of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation that “plans for projects with particularly large potential adverse impact must be accompanied by detailed environmental management plans.”

Ensuring that production inputs are sourced from areas which are managed in a biodiversity-responsible way will be of a particularly importance for industries which have significant landscape dependencies in their supply chains, such as the food, bottled water, minerals and energy sectors. Furthermore, support for GDI-certified areas can provide a transparent way for companies to demonstrate their social responsibility with respect to reversing the loss of biodiversity.

GDI certification provides important opportunities as well for conservation and development NGOs. These NGOs might use the GDI approach to validate and raise funds for their field-based programmes. Likewise, multilateral and bilateral development assistance agencies might require GDI certification to validate their field-based grants.

By establishing GDI-certified unit for biodiversity-responsible management, the GDI approach expects to incentivise increased voluntary market-based support for conserving our planet, hectare by hectare.

Annex C: Use of terms

This section provides a list of relevant terms and their definitions for use in the GDI system. If available, the official definitions from the CBD are used.

Adaptive management: A systematic process of continually improving management policies and practices by learning from the outcomes of existing programs (IUCN)

Biodiversity or biological diversity: The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems. (CBD)

Biological resources: Includes genetic resources, organisms or parts thereof, populations, or any other biotic component of ecosystems with actual or potential use or value for humanity. (CBD)

Climate Change: A change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods. (UNFCCC)

Consensus: General agreement, characterised by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests. Note - Consensus should be the result of a process seeking to take into account the views of interested parties, particularly those directly affected, and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. It need not imply unanimity. (ISEAL)

Domesticated or cultivated species: Species in which the evolutionary process has been influenced by humans to meet their needs. (CBD)

Dryland: Arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, other than polar and sub-polar regions, in which the ratio of annual precipitation to potential evapotranspiration falls within the range from 0.05 to 0.65. (UNCCD)

Ecosystem: A dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit. (CBD)

Ex-situ conservation: Conservation of components of biological diversity outside their natural habitats. (CBD)

Genetic material: Any material of plant, animal, microbial or other origin containing functional units of heredity. (CBD)

Genetic resources: Genetic material of actual or potential value. (CBD)

Habitat: The place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs. (CBD)

High Conservation Values (HCVs): Encompass the whole scale from species to landscape, and include exceptional or critical ecological attributes, ecosystem services and social functions. (HCV Resource Network)

Index: A numerical scale used to compare variables with one another or with some reference number. (Biodiversity Indicators Partnership)

Indicator: A measure or metric based on verifiable data that conveys information about more than itself. (Biodiversity Indicators Partnership)

In-situ conservation: The conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings and, in the case of domesticated or cultivated species, in the surroundings where they have developed their distinctive properties. (CBD)

Invasive alien species: Alien species that become invasive are considered to be a main direct driver of biodiversity loss across the globe. (Global Invasive Species Programme)

Landscapes: A geographical mosaic composed of interacting ecosystems resulting from the influence of geological, topographical, soil, climatic, biotic and human interactions in a given area. (IUCN, related the CBD concept of 'ecological complexes' in the above definition of biodiversity)

Measure: A standard unit used to express size, amount or degree. (Biodiversity Indicators Partnership)

Metric: A system or standard of measurement. (Biodiversity Indicators Partnership)

Protected area: A geographically defined area which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives. (CBD, related to a GDI management area)

Sustainable use: The use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations. (CBD)

Stakeholders: Persons, groups or institutions with interests in a project or programme. Primary stakeholders are those ultimately affected, either positively (beneficiaries) or negatively (for example, those involuntarily resettled). Secondary stakeholders are the intermediaries in the aid delivery process. (FAO)

Standard: A document that provides for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is not mandatory. (WTO)

Wetlands: Areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres. (Ramsar)

Annex D: GDI registration

Eligibility to become GDI-registered is decided on the basis of the information provided at the time of registration.

1. The area

Submit precise information on the area to be managed, including boundaries and size in hectares.

Include GIS coordinates and a general description of the area's natural and built features.

Attach a topographical map.

2. The manager

Submit details of the legally-responsible land manager and supporting evidence.

Alternatively, submit the plans for establishing the manager, e.g. through a cooperative agreement, during the two-year design period.

Include details on the manager's capacity to design and implement a GDI-complaint management plan for the area, specifying available conservation and development expertise.

3. Baseline assessment & stakeholder consultations

Submit the baseline assessment and a report on the stakeholder consultations.

Alternatively, submit a 'rapid' baseline assessment and the plans for undertaking a through baseline assessment and stakeholder consultations during the two-year design period.

Describe the current status of the area with respect to both conservation and development and identify current and potential threats to be addressed in the management plan.

4. Green development outcomes

Submit a signed statement on the proposed key outcomes expected from implementing a GDI management plan with respect to (a) conservation of biodiversity, (b) sustainable & equitable use of biodiversity, and (c) economic & social development.

Provide a signed statement by at least one independent conservation and development expert in support of these expected key outcomes.

5. Design period programme

Submit a work programme to develop a GDI-compliant or GDI-certified management plan within the two-year design period.

Building from the baseline assessment and stakeholder consultations, determine a set of positive conservation and development actions, and establish a programme for monitoring, evaluation and reporting.