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WORKSHOP REPORT

Inception workshop: **NATIONAL TARGET SETTING TO ACHIEVE LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY IN AFRICA**

Konya, Turkey, 28 – 30 May 2016



June 2016

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1. Introduction

In view of the launching of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN TSP), which is implemented by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and other partners, an inception workshop for country Parties from Africa that committed to set national LDN targets and expressed interest to join the Programme was held in Konya, Turkey from 28 to 30 May 2016.

The workshop was organized by the Global Mechanism and the Secretariat of the UNCCD and hosted by the Government of Turkey through the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs. It was planned back to back with the International Training Course on Combating Desertification, which was hosted by the Government of Turkey in Konya, Mersin and Adana.

The event brought together 70 participants including government officers from 33 African countries, the host Government, the UNCCD Secretariat/Global Mechanism representatives as well as international partners (see Annex 2 for the list of participants).

2. Workshop objectives and LDN target setting steps

The main objectives of the workshop were to:

- Familiarise workshop participants with the **approach** to LDN TSP;
- Identify **opportunities for leverage** through the LDN TSP; and
- Create a **mutual understanding** about the LDN target setting roadmap and mutual accountabilities.

Over the two day workshop, country representatives had the opportunity to familiarize with the methodological and operational approaches related to the target setting process and exchange their views and propositions for the implementation of the LND target setting process in their countries. Furthermore, this workshop provided an initial platform for regional exchange and collaboration along this process among African countries. The content of the workshop was mainly focused on the presentation of the LDN target setting process along with the step by step approach (see below) and how to use this initiative as a vehicle to achieve SDG target 15.3.

1. Government leadership and stakeholder engagement
2. Setting LDN baseline
3. Identifying LDN trends
4. Identifying drivers of LDN
5. Defining national voluntary LDN targets
6. Mainstreaming LDN in land use planning
7. Identifying measures to achieve LDN targets
8. Facilitating actions towards LDN

9. Monitoring progress towards LDN
10. Reporting on LDN

3. Workshop outcomes

- **LDN target setting process outputs and outcomes.** The expected outputs and outcomes from the implementation of the LDN target setting process at country level and a timeline (see Annex 1) was presented and discussed with the countries.
- **Stakeholder engagement.** Participants underlined the need to create a clear method/strategy to engage with the private and public sector in the context of the LDN target setting process, including their active participation in the LDN national working groups. There is a common need for concise information on the LDN concept to be used in the context of the LDN target setting process at country level, in particular for the mobilization of key stakeholders and decision makers. Providing them with clear expected outcomes for instance, will be necessary. Furthermore, there is a need to develop a communication strategy to raise awareness on LDN. Most participants suggested developing a concept note as a first step to reach out to key stakeholders.
- **High level commitment.** The engagement of national decision makers, including most senior governmental representatives, will be required in order to ensure country leadership. The UNCCD National Focal Points as well as national LDN working groups will need to be further empowered in order to increase their impact at national level. Furthermore, synergies within the different focal points (e.g. UNFCCC, CBD, etc.) and other national/international initiatives must be ensured through the operation of the national working groups and countries could also consider the creation of steering committees.
- **Coherence with ongoing national processes.** It is important to make use of existing coordination mechanisms in the area of LDN/Sustainable Land Management when establishing national LDN working groups. Strategic identification of key stakeholders that cover relevant national areas related to LDN will be pivotal to ensure consistency and enable the environment for this process. Furthermore, sectorial national objectives that could diminish the LDN objectives should be analysed. Any work done in the context of the LDN target setting process should be clearly linked to the previous work already carried out in the context of the UNCCD, including work on NAP/UNCCD and the establishment of integrated investment frameworks related to SLM.
- **Ambition level of the LDN targets.** The 2015 baseline to be established as part of the LDN target setting process is considered as the minimum level of ambition expected. Countries are encouraged to go beyond this and set more ambitious targets when possible. The ambition level will depend on the involvement of local communities and stakeholders, regional and sectoral synergies, continue validation and feedback among stakeholders and

enabling the environment (legal gaps, bottlenecks, etc.). It could also vary depending on the level of support that some countries have or require to meet their targets.

- **Paving the way for new opportunities.** Implementation of the LDN target setting process will require of technical, financial and human resources. Thus, the successful implementation of this process will open a space in the national agenda to develop a strategic framework to mobilizing resources and finding opportunities to build capacities on LDN. Furthermore, mainstreaming LDN in the local agenda will pave the way for future inclusion of LDN related-actions in the national budget.
- **Approach to create a leverage game plan.** Assessing the multiple benefits of LDN target setting - the why? -, mapping out the land-related national policies and development goals – the what? - and identifying the key partners for this process - the who? - (see Annex 3), will provide countries with key answers for leveraging LDN target setting at national and international levels. It will help them identify critical entry points to more effectively tap into climate and biodiversity finance for instance, from the Green Climate Fund, NDCs implementation and the CBD Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative among others. Participants conducted a scoping exercise to understand how to develop their own leverage game plans including engagement of decision makers and key stakeholders such as the private sector.

4. Agreed mutual commitments and next steps

- Participants agreed on the following outputs and outcomes to be expected from the LDN target setting process at country level:
 1. Government leadership and stakeholder engagement ensured (September 2016)
 2. LDN baseline established and mapped (February 2017)
 3. LDN targets and associated measures defined (June 2017)
 4. LDN mainstreamed in selected policies and commitments (December 2017)
 5. LDN transformative projects/programmes and innovative finance mapped out (December 2017)
- International organizations such as UNDP, IUCN, GIZ, AUC reiterated their commitment to support the LDN TSP in Africa.
- Hiring of the country consultants in the context of the LDN-TSP should be completed as soon as possible in order to ensure timely implementation.

Annexes

Annex 1. LDN TSP outputs and outcomes and timeline

Annex 2. List of participants

Annex 3. Summary of Working Groups discussions

Annex 4. TOR for the workshop

Annex 1. LDN TSP outputs and outcomes and timeline



LDN TSP outputs and outcomes (DRAFT)

Transformative LDN projects/programmes and innovative financing mapped out	
LDN included in selected policies and commitments	
LDN target established	
Key policy/technical measures to achieve LDN identified	High level note of measures to avoid, minimize and reverse LD
LDN trends and drivers mapped, including possible "hot spots"	LDN SWOT analysis on legal and institutional environment established
LDN baseline established and mapped	
Government leadership and stakeholder engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDN Leverage Game Plan established • Most senior government and major international partners mobilized • Multi stakeholder engagement established 	



LDN TSP mutual commitments

Transformative LDN projects/programmes and innovative financing mapped out		December 2017
LDN included in selected policies and commitments		
LDN target established		June 2017
Key policy/technical measures to achieve LDN identified	High level note of measures to avoid, minimize and reverse LD	
LDN trends and drivers mapped, including possible "hot spots"	LDN SWOT analysis on legal and institutional environment established	
LDN baseline established and mapped		February 2017
Government leadership and stakeholder engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDN Leverage Game Plan established • Most senior government and major international partners mobilized • Multi stakeholder engagement established 		September 2016

Annex 2. List of Participating Countries and Organizations

S.No	Country / Organization
1	Benin
2	Burkina Faso
3	Cameroon
4	Cape Verde
5	Central African Republic
6	Côte d'Ivoire
7	Democratic Republic of Congo
8	Egypt
9	Equatorial Guinea
10	Eritrea
11	Gambia
12	Ghana
13	Guinea
14	Guinea Bissau
15	Kenya
16	Lesotho
17	Madagascar
18	Malawi
19	Mali
20	Mauritius
21	Morocco
22	Niger
23	Nigeria
24	Republic of Congo
25	São Tomé and Príncipe
26	Seychelles
27	Sierra Leone
28	South Africa
29	Sudan

30	Swaziland
31	Togo
32	Turkey
33	Uganda
34	Zimbabwe
35	African Union Commission (AUC)
36	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
37	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
38	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
39	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Annex 3. Summary of Working Groups discussions

Question 1: How to ensure highest governmental commitment and leadership as well as engagement with key stakeholders?

English speaking Working Group

INPUTS NEEDED TO HELP WITH ENSURING HIGH LEVEL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR ENGAGEMENT IN LDN ACTIONS:

- Make sure to develop a good strategy to target the respective potential representatives (you can give examples from your own country)
- Revise and strengthen government policy
- Interest of the politicians, government – they judge you based on how/what you want to do can complement their current areas of interest
- Link LDN to food productivity-security issues,
- Policy alignment and fitting them to LDN
- Briefing to parliaments and high level officials about the LDN process
- Specialist to help countries develop their LDN targets and “bankable” projects

WHAT WE NEED TO DO AT HOME:

- Link up with the national agency working with SDGs
- Provide some expected outcomes to stakeholders
- Engage high level government officers
- Mobilize investment for sustainable resources management
- Strengthen current/ongoing national (regional or local) sustainable development programs
- Hire professionals to develop a clear communication strategy about LDN
- Formulation of a high level steering committee for LDN to identify the gaps in the legislations
- Aligning NAP with UNCCD 10 years strategy, involvement of local communities
- Creating synergy within different focal points (UNCCD, UNFCC etc.)
- Raising awareness at different levels (technical, local, high level) through the national target setting program
- Harmonizing existing natural resources policies; formulation of technical groups, and working groups that cover all relevant stakeholders,
- Formulation of strategies considering government and private sector priorities, and creating an enabling environment for private sector
- Ensure some linkages between LDN and the areas of interest of different stakeholders,
- Capacity building for analyzing and validation of data

- Involvement of the high level of government for global messages on LDN and creation of platforms for drylands issues

French speaking Working Group

- Awareness raising among policy makers and government officers on the negative impacts of LD as well as the opportunities and benefits of LDN
- Putting in place an effective communication plan
- Strong involvement of the most influential government and non-government representative and actors
- Ensuring high-political representation and key stakeholders participation in the national LDN inception workshops
- Producing policy-oriented briefing notes on LDN to use as communication means to inform government officials and policy makers
- High-level missions of GM within the countries to raise political awareness on the LDN process
- Tailoring LDN actions with the existing global mechanisms such as INDCs, Paris Agreement on climate change, and other international conventions
- Tailoring/mainstreaming LDN in the existing national legal and institutional frameworks

Question 2: How ambitious can countries be in setting national LDN targets?

English speaking Working Group

- Encouragement of local communities to identify their needs, giving them a communication platform through the program
- Ensuring ownership of local communities on the land management
- Creation synergies between initiatives in the region (e.g Eastern Africa)
- LDN should benefit from landscape restoration activities being done in the countries
- Setting of the targets based on clear knowledge of local communities
- Sharing the results of LDN pilot activities
- There are challenges of land ownerships (private vs government) when setting national targets. There are uncertainties/potential problems with ensuring that all parties will help with achieving the targets.

French speaking Working Group

- Country ambitions should rely on the capacities of the country as well as the importance of LD issue within the country
- Two levels of ambitions could be made: (i) unconditional ambition which could involve own commitment of the country and should not be based on external

support, and (ii) conditional ambitious, which include LDN actions upon an external support

Question 3: How to create game changing leverage opportunities through the LDN target setting process?

English speaking Working Group

Guiding question used by the group: What do we need and how do we go about leveraging?

Why? LDN business case

- Countries are facing budget constraints. The national budgets and priorities are already set and there is limited flexibility to use national funds for LDN TSP in the tight timeframe foreseen.
- Hiring of consultants will be important to support the completion of each of the ten steps.
- Being aware that the LDN TSP is funded by different funding sources (e.g. GEF, Turkish government), countries voiced their need for sufficient financial and human resources to implement a successful LDN target setting process. International donors should put their weight behind LDN.

What? National priorities and commitments

- LDN TSP must not be detached from national priorities of governments.
- The point was made that a few million dollars by donors put into LDN TSP are in vain if hundreds of millions of dollars invested by governments are used for unsustainable uses that contradict LDN. The statement was made that “we need to get right into the core business of the countries” by establishing an inter-sectoral LDN audit.
- Mainstreaming LDN means also that there needs to be clarity regarding where LDN fits into the national budget.

Who?

- Key players were already clearly mentioned in presentations and statements before (including national donors in the countries).
- National coordination committees should include all relevant stakeholders and there is the need to strengthen these committees.

How?

- Several participants suggested that a concept note should be developed as a first step. This concept note would be the initial note to send to stakeholders.
- The need was voiced to hire consultants to develop such a note containing clearly identified roles and responsibilities, definition of stakeholders, awareness raising strategy, a roadmap, and how to establish the baseline.
- There was confusion in the group regarding the roles and responsibilities of national and regional consultants within the LDN TSP. In a first attempt to define the difference between regional and national consultants, national consultants were seen as the workhorses regarding LDN in the country, those on the ground running the show, who do need the political support by NFPs and their governments. Regional consultants were seen as working with national consultants to make sure everyone is moving towards the targets and to identify possible issues that the UNCCD needs to come in.
- The group asked the GM for clarification regarding organizational aspects of the TSP, e.g. the roles and responsibilities of regional and national consultants, a timeline, the budget, and an organigram. The group also asked the GM to define clearly what it wants from the NFPs.
- Additional issues discussed regarding the “how” were awareness, communication, and the need for a clear language as well as the need for access to funding mechanisms.

What else do we need?

In addition to the above, the group identified further needs:

- Countries are lacking data to come up with a good baseline. Strong need to develop a sustainable monitoring system.
- Need for capacity building on baseline establishment and monitoring system as well as on data acquisition.
- Need for support regarding the mainstreaming as a national level undertaking, e.g. how to engage with the mainstreaming process, need for proper coordination and support in preparing of materials, process and game plan.
- Especially important were the two final identified needs:
 - Empowering the established national working group to create leverage (to become national LDN authority), and
 - Strengthen the NFPs.

French speaking Working Group

WHY?

Most countries LDN is needed because of:

- Economic, environmental and social benefits of LDN
- LDN related opportunities in supporting efforts to control and reduce conflicts through sustainable land management, combating desertification and climate adversities in Africa
- Opportunities of LDN to have sustainable and coherent national land policy and fiscal instruments

WHAT?

- Most representatives from francophone African countries agreed on using the existing policy mechanisms/frameworks at both national and regional levels as game leverage opportunities for LDN Target Setting process in their respective countries.
- Emphasis was put on: National economic and social development plans, the Regional and continental economic and development policies and programs/initiatives (ECOWAP, CAADP/NEPAD, African Mining Vision, 3A initiatives (Adaptation-Africa-Agriculture)) and mining development policies.

Who?

- Key stakeholders to involve in the NDL target setting process are the civil society organizations, international partners, universities and research institutes, indigenous and local people, parliamentarians, specific lobbying groups particularly in mining sector, local government and collectivities.

How?

- a) Establishing inter-sectoral working groups with specific thematic sub-groups*
- b) Strengthening the technical capacities of the working group*
- c) Establishing an effective communication plan and strategy*
- d) Strong technical and financial support from both the government and international partners*

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE
INCEPTION WORKSHOP
NATIONAL TARGET SETTING TO ACHIEVE
LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY IN AFRICA
Konya, Turkey
28 – 30 May 2016

Background

Following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the endorsement of SDG target 15.3 as guiding principle for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD supports countries preparedness to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) by 2030.

Land degradation is a global phenomenon, which is leading to the reduction and loss of the biological and economic productive capacity of land. It is caused by human activities, exacerbated by natural processes and magnified by climate change and biodiversity loss. Some 25% of the global land surface is considered to be degraded; every year, 12 million hectares are added to the total area of degraded land. The economic costs of land degradation are estimated at USD 490 billion per year, corresponding to three to six per cent of the global agriculture gross domestic product.

Recognizing that desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) are major global environmental and developmental concerns, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was established in 1994 and is ratified by 196 member-states of the United Nations and one regional economic integration organization (the European Union). The main mission of the Convention, as indicated by the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-18) is “to provide a global framework to support the development and implementation of national and regional policies, programmes and measures to prevent, control and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought through scientific and technological excellence, raising public awareness, standard setting, advocacy and resource mobilization, thereby contributing to poverty reduction”.

In September 2015, the global community agreed on “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, including 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and 169 targets. Goal 15 urges countries to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Target 15.3 aims to “combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land

degradation-neutral world” by 2030. The proposed indicator to measure the achievement of SDG target 15.3 is “Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area”. The proposed sub-indicators for SDG target 15.3 are land cover, land productivity, soil organic carbon stocks. They correspond to the progress indicators adopted by the UNCCD.

According to the Decisions 2 & 3/COP12 taken in October 2015 by the 12th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNCCD, held in Ankara, Turkey:

- “striving to achieve SDG target 15.3 is a strong vehicle for driving implementation of the UNCCD”;
- LDN is defined as “a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security remain stable or increase within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems”;
- Countries are invited to “formulate [national] voluntary targets to achieve LDN”; and
- UNCCD bodies are requested i) to provide “guidance for formulating national LDN targets and initiatives”; and ii) to facilitate “the use of UNCCD indicator framework as a contribution to the monitoring, evaluation and communication of progress towards the national LDN targets”.

In response to above Decisions, the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD has established a global Programme in support of National Voluntary Target Setting for LDN. The main objective of the “LDN Target Support Programme” (LDN-TSP) is to enable country Parties to define national baselines and to identify targets and measures to achieve LDN.

Objectives

The main objectives of the inception workshop are:

- Launch the LDN target setting process for participating countries in Africa
- Become familiar with the concept of LDN
- Discuss the scope and implementation arrangements of the programme
- Review methodologies proposed to be used in the LDN target setting process
- Discuss roadmap for LDN implementation at country level

Participants

- UNCCD National focal points
- LDN country consultants and regional consultant
- LDN-TSP team (UNCCD secretariat/Global Mechanism)
- LDN target setting partners and workshop host institution(s)

Venue

The workshop will take place in Konya, Turkey, from 28 – 30 May 2016, including a fieldtrip on 30 May.

The workshop will be held in English and French, interpretation facilities will be available.

Additional information on logistical arrangements will be provided by the organizers prior to the workshop.

Draft Agenda

The agenda will include the following items, which will be further defined and arranged within a two-day workshop schedule.

- Opening remarks (by Host institution, UNCCD) and quick round of introductions
- Objectives of the workshop, expected outcomes and review of the agenda
- Background: SDG process (adoption of target 15.3 and its monitoring indicator), UNCCD progress indicator framework, LDN Pilot Project, COP 12 (Decisions 2&3)
- Defining LDN: the LDN conceptual framework
- Defining the right frame for national LDN target setting processes: building upon UNCCD National Action Programmes and Integrated Investment Frameworks, streamlining LDN in the national SDG implementation agenda, broad stakeholder participation through national LDN working groups including private sector
- Presentation of the country guidelines for LDN target setting:
 - ✓ Methodologies, indicators and data/datasets
 - ✓ Defining (sub)national LDN baseline, drivers and negative trends
 - ✓ National consultation/validation process
 - ✓ Setting (sub)national LDN targets and identify measures to achieve them
 - ✓ Analysis of LDN costs and co-benefits
- ✓ LDN implementation and financing: identification of possible financeable projects
- Overview of the LDN target setting process at national level, work plan and timeframe
- Overview of the working modalities, communication and reporting procedures during the LDN target setting process
- Elaboration of draft country work plans for the LDN target setting process
- Any other business [this item is to allow for some flexible time in order to be able to accommodate any possible requests coming from countries or to allow for additional time for clarifications/discussions).
- Closing remarks (Host institution, UNCCD)

Saturday, 28 May 2016

Time	Session
08.00	Registration
09.00	Workshop opening
09.30	Coffee break
10.00	Workshop objectives and agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of workshop objectives and agenda • Introduction round of workshop participants
11.00	Introduction to LDN and LDN target setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: Introduction to LDN target setting • Q & A
12.00	Lunch Break
13.30	LDN Target Setting: presentation of LDN target setting process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: Government leadership and stakeholder engagement • Step 2: Setting the LDN baseline • Step 3: Identifying land degradation trends • Step 4: Identifying drivers of land degradation • Step 5: Defining national voluntary LDN targets • Q & A
15.30	Working group session (2 working groups, Engl. + French, each with facilitator, rapporteur) (including coffee break) Guiding questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to ensure highest governmental commitment and leadership as well as engagement with key stakeholders? • How ambitious can countries be in setting national LDN targets? Presentation and discussion of working group findings
17.45	Wrap up

Sunday, 29 May 2016

Time	Session
08.30	Reflections on day 1 and outlook for day 2
08.45	LDN Target Setting: presentation of LDN target setting process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 6: Mainstreaming LDN in land use planning • Step 7: Identifying measures to achieve LDN targets • Step 8: Facilitating action towards LDN • Step 9: Monitoring progress towards LDN • Step 10: Reporting on LDN • Q + A
10.30	Coffee Break
11.00	Now is the time - creating "game changing" leverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory remarks • Working group session (same working groups as day 1) Guiding question: How to create game changing leverage opportunities through the LDN target setting process?
12.30	Lunch Break
14.00	Presentation and discussion of working group findings
15.00	The way forward – creating the LDN target setting road map

	(including coffee break) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of the generic roadmap of the LDN target setting process (milestones, timeframe, operational modalities, etc.)• Discussion, agreements, commitments, requirements
17.00	Workshop closing

Monday, 30 May 2016

Field trip