



# Cooperative Republic of Guyana National Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Targets

## Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission

National Focal Point Agency to the  
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification  
Ministry of the Presidency  
Georgetown  
Guyana

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THE GLOBAL  
MECHANISM  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development embodies the bold and global ambition to shift the world to a more sustainable and resilient trajectory. The target of achieving a land degradation-neutral world is a centerpiece of this agenda by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Guyana joined forces with a global consortium of over one hundred and fourteen (114) UNCCD country parties that are committed to translate the global Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) target into country-specific targets and actions. Actions that generate multiple benefits: from climate change mitigation and adaptation to zero hunger; from ensuring access to clean water to creating decent work and green jobs.

Globally, it is estimated that desertification is threatening the livelihoods of 1 billion people in over 100 countries, and each year 12 million hectares of arable land are lost to drought. The extent and severity of land degradation worldwide combined with the negative effects of climate change, population growth and an ever-increasing demand for natural resources requires immediate and assertive action. The economic costs of desertification and land degradation are estimated at USD 490 billion per year. Avoiding land degradation through sustainable land management can generate up to USD 1.4 trillion of economic benefits. Policies and programmes to halt and reverse land degradation have long suffered from the absence of a clear overarching goal and quantitative, time-bound targets to guide action and make progress measurable.

## 2. UNITED NATIONS CONVENTIONS TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (UNCCD) GLOBAL LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY TARGET SETTING PROGRAMME (LDN-TSP)

### THE UNCCD PROCESS:

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To confront this distressing global threat, the concept of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) was endorsed at the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD (COP 12) held in Ankara, Turkey in October, 2015 in which Guyana was well-represented by its Political Focal Point to the UNCCD, Lt. Col. (ret'd) Joseph Harmon, Hon. Minister of State. The COP is the highest decision making body of the UNCCD. It agreed to integrate the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and target 15.3 on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in particular, into the implementation of the Convention by striving to achieve SDG target 15.3 “as strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the UNCCD.” The COP decisions integrate SDGs, specifically SDG15-*Life on Land* and target 15.3 which 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, thereby invited all UNCCD country parties to formulate voluntary targets to achieve LDN by 2030. The LDN target setting process provides a major opportunity for countries to increase coherence, scale, and resource

mobilization by using LDN as a lens to foster coherence of national policies, actions and commitment.

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 an area*, rather than the end to land degradation. It serves as a catalyst for increased, concerted and realistic actions to measure the progress of actions in combating land degradation thereby achieving neutrality by 2030 and crafting a consolidated pathway for the post 2030 developmental agenda. LDN is a simple idea and a powerful tool. It means securing enough healthy and productive natural resources by avoiding degradation whenever possible and restoring land that has already been degraded. At its core are better land management practices and better land use planning approaches that will improve economic, social and ecological sustainability for present and future generations.

In order to support countries into translating the COP decisions into action at the country level, the UNCCD's Science Policy Interface (SPI) developed a LDN conceptual framework that provides a scientifically sound basis for understanding LDN and developing practical guidelines for implementing and monitoring national processes for achieving LDN. COP 12 has given countries a clear roadmap for the next 15 years – now the challenge is to capitalize on this momentum. The LDN Target Setting Programme (LDN-TSP) led by the Convention's accredited entities are supported by bilateral and multi-lateral partners. The programme is assisting countries in making the LDN concept a reality by 2030 through the provision of practical tools and guidance for the establishment of voluntary LDN targets, accelerating the implementation of transformative programmes and projects, with positive changes. LDN target setting is not a stand-alone process but should be embedded in overarching national development policy processes. Strong country ownership and the active involvement of all stakeholders groups and sectors impacting the land based natural capital are required to allow the LDN target setting-process to contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030 and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **3. THE PROCESS OF LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY TARGET SETTING PROGRAMME (LDN-TSP) IN GUYANA:**

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The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana through the focal Ministry to the UNCCD, the Ministry of the Presidency (MoTP) indicated its willingness for Guyana to participate in the LDN-TSP to support the establishment of Land Degradation Neutrality Targets and associated measures in Guyana. As such, Guyana voluntarily opted in the Target Setting Process (TSP) programme in April 2016 which paved the way for the implementation of a twelve (12) month TSP by the National Focal Point Agency to the UNCCD, the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC). The TSP officially commenced in September 2016 and concluded in August 2017 with the drafting of the country's National Land Degradation Neutrality Setting Programme Report 2017-2030.

The targets set are aimed at addressing the main drivers of land degradation in Guyana, while achieving no net loss at the minimum—the elementary concept of land degradation neutrality with the wider goal of increased net gain beyond neutrality. LDN aims to balance anticipated losses in land-based natural capital and associated ecosystem functions and services with measures that produce alternative gains through approaches such as land restoration and sustainable land management. The LDN concept was developed to encourage implementation of an optimal mix of measures designed to avoid, reduce and/or reverse land degradation in order to achieve a state of no net loss of healthy and productive land.

The preparation of Guyana's National Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme Report was spearheaded by the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission, the National Focal Point Agency to the UNCCD and supporting roles provided by key stakeholders with technical guidance from the services of a local consultant. The in-country effort of the GLSC was in partnership with the UNCCD's Regional Office of Latin America and the Caribbean, a sub-office of the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD's Secretariat. The process of setting up LDN Targets in Guyana has been supported by robust working groups and sub-working groups comprising of key ministries, agencies, private sector, indigenous and civil society organizations. As stated before, the overall coordination and preparation of Guyana's National LDN-TSP Report was for a period of twelve (12) months to realise its finalisation.

The attainment of the LDN targets in Guyana would support harmonisation with climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, food and water security, disaster risk reduction, and poverty reduction. The global indicators adopted by the UNCCD for monitoring and reporting on Target 15.3 progress are:-

- Land cover and land cover change
- Land productivity, and
- Carbon stocks above and below ground

The LDN baseline data for Guyana was provided by the UNCCD in collaboration with its partners and was validated under the direction of a LDN National Working Group with in-depth analysis by a technical sub-committee of the National Working Group. The analysis of the global dataset for Guyana's baseline data under the three indicators outlined above revealed **no severe** overall level of the land degradation phenomena in Guyana compared with the global average. The global data set provided indicated that **0.003%** of the total land area for Guyana is degraded. Despite this low rate of degradation, the cost of land degradation is exuberant globally. In the case of Guyana, it is estimated that the total cost of land degradation is within the range of US\$170 million, which equates to 10% of the country's GDP. Moreover, a considerable share of the costs of land degradation (34%) is due to the decline in provision of ecosystem services (e.g food availability, wood production, etc.) which has a significant impact on the population of the country. The remaining share refers to the regulating the ecosystem services (e.g carbon sequestration, water regulation flows), which has an impact not only at the country level, but also on the regional and global scale due to the

transboundary nature of these services that provide incentives for international cooperation. Furthermore, a recent global assessment on land degradation shows that for Guyana the returns on taking action against land degradation versus inaction are estimated at US\$5 for every dollar invested in reverting land, underlining the strong economic incentives for bold actions on achieving LDN. Consequently, with integrated and concerted actions, Guyana could reverse the loss of income due to degradation up to 10% of the country's GDP, which quantifies to approximately US\$170 million annually by the global assessment of the country.

The three indicators supported identification of hotspots based on negative trends in the three indications. The indication of hotspots will support concerted focus on areas selected and will eventually receive further attention through transformative projects interventions. The selected hotspot areas are Bartica, Region 7, Annai, Region 9 and Kwakwani, Region 10. The national outreaches targeted local stakeholders of the hotspot regions as part of the early LDN awareness rising and familiarization of the LDN concept.

The land productivity of the hotspot areas has been declining, although not pervasive, in the past ten years (based on the global data source) which could affect socio economic livelihood of the people and threaten food security. Field visits to some of the affected hotspots areas revealed that land degradation is increasingly affecting the ability of land to provide ecosystem goods and services. The impact of land degradation could become severe and can even be further exacerbated by a reduction in crop and pasture productivity and fuelwood and non-timber forest products, which are closely linked to poverty and food insecurity in these areas. The damage to soil, loss of habitat, water shortages, and siltation reduce biodiversity and ecosystem services and have economic consequences.

Relevant **stakeholder** groups such as the Guyana Women's Miners Association have also been involved in the LDN target setting process through the LDN national working groups in order to ensure ownership and evaluate trade-offs early on in the planning process. LDN Target(s) will be **integrated** into existing environmental, agricultural, infrastructure and overall development policies and plans. Most importantly, the expectation is that they will become an essential component in integrated land-use planning through the overarching planning framework in the Green State Development Strategy (GSDS).

Guyana prepared its aligned National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Land Degradation (2015-2025) to the UNCCD's ten year 2008-2018 strategy. This is the enabling framework for the progressive strengthening and mainstreaming of land degradation issues into national policy and planning, as well as facilitating access to funds for priority actions and projects that were identified. Guyana's effort to finalize its LDN TSP is therefore deemed a proactive and pragmatic step within this framework for early actions that will garner results for the protraction of healthy soil and enhance food security and poverty reduction.

The proposed time horizon for the **achievement of country specific LDN targets is the year 2030, which is also**, aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development (SDG target 15.3). All targets set are **measurable** according to the LDN indicator framework endorsed at the national and global levels.

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THE HIGH-LEVEL NOTE**

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This high-level note is considered as the primary means for governments to communicate nationally and internationally the **steps they will take to achieve LDN in their own countries** based on national context and circumstances, national priorities and economic path. This note reflects Guyana's ambition for achieving LDN based on the national LDN targets defined and takes into account domestic circumstances and capabilities that underline the country's commitment to the LDN response hierarchy (avoid, reduce, reverse). It shall be endorsed by the national Government at the highest possible level.

- The high-level note is **ambitious**, with the expectation that it will lead to transformative projects and policies and done transparently, so that stakeholders can track progress and ensure that the stated targets are met by 2030.
- The high-level note is considered as the primary means for governments to **communicate** nationally and internationally the steps they will take to achieve LDN in their own countries. The note reflects measures for achieving LDN based on Guyana's national LDN targets defined and taking into account domestic circumstances and capabilities. It shall be endorsed by the national Government, i.e. Cabinet, and by extension, the focal Ministry to the UNCCD, the Ministry of the Presidency that is chairing the LDN National Working Group through the Hon. Minister of State, Minister Harmon, Political Focal Point to the UNCCD.

#### **5. MOTIVATION FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA TO COMMIT TO LDN:**

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LDN is aligned with Guyana's national development priorities; along a Green Economic Pathway through the national overarching Country Development Framework, the Green State Development Strategy (GSDS). Achieving LDN will not only improve livelihood and contribute to food security in Guyana but also improve the country's GDP and economic well-being relative to the people living in affected areas. Land degradation is one of the key drivers of climate change and results in extreme events such as drought in Guyana especially Region 9 (hotspot area).Below average rainfall leads to reduced recharge of inland water sources in rain fed crop and livestock irrigation area. Thereby, achieving a land degradation neutral Guyana by 2030 is strong on the development agenda.

- **The Constitution of Guyana;**

The commitment to uphold the conservation and protection of the environment is enshrined in Guyana's Supreme Law, the Constitution of Guyana under Article 36-The Environment which states "In the interest of present and future generations, the State shall protect the environment and make rational use of its land, water and mineral resources as well as its flora and fauna, and will take all appropriate measures to protect and conserve the environment." This creed is pledged by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana in association with the people of the country; duty-bound to honor and translate the preservation of our environment sustainably. In overcoming global environmental challenges, Guyana is committed to this constitutional position of conserving the natural environment and our ecosystems. The maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity and utilization of natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Guyanese, both present and future is the ultimate national directive.

- **The Green State Development Strategy (GSDS Framework);**

At the national policy level, Guyana's Green State Development Strategy (GSDS), launched in 2017, provides opportunities for LDN to be incorporated into the national development strategy. The GSDS is a "framework" which will provide guidance on the areas to be prioritized in the development of a national development strategy. A thematic area identified in the GSDS framework that is relevant to LDN implementation is the "Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and Expansion of Environmental Services: stewardship of natural patrimony". Under this priority area, land forms an important aspect as it provides valuable services for human well-being and ecosystems services. The Strategy will guide Guyana's economic and socio-cultural development extending to 2030 which again coincides with achieving LDN. It will lay the principle foundations for inclusive green economic and social growth, provide a roadmap for achieving sustainable development goals (SDG 15) and related targets (15.3), and outline a long-term vision for a prosperous and equitable future.

- **Aligned National Action Plan (NAP) 2015-2025;**

The current framework document for UNCCD implementation in Guyana is the Aligned National Action Plan to Combat Land Degradation (2015-2025) which is aligned to the UNCCD's Strategic Plan(2008-2018). The Aligned NAP was approved by Cabinet in April 2016 and endorsed by the UNCCD secretariat. It builds on the previous NAP of 2006 and seeks to facilitate the strengthening and mainstreaming of land degradation issues into national policy and planning, as well as be useful in accessing funds/budgets for priority actions and projects identified within the Aligned NAP. The preparation was participatory with contributions from lead agencies (Government), civil society, and other stakeholders whose inputs greatly enriched the Action Plan. In line with governmental interventions, the NAP aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability for affected and ecosystem through good environmental stewardship. The success of the implementation of NAP lies on the preparation of viable projects within the framework of the NAP priority areas. The integration of LDN within this framework serves as a

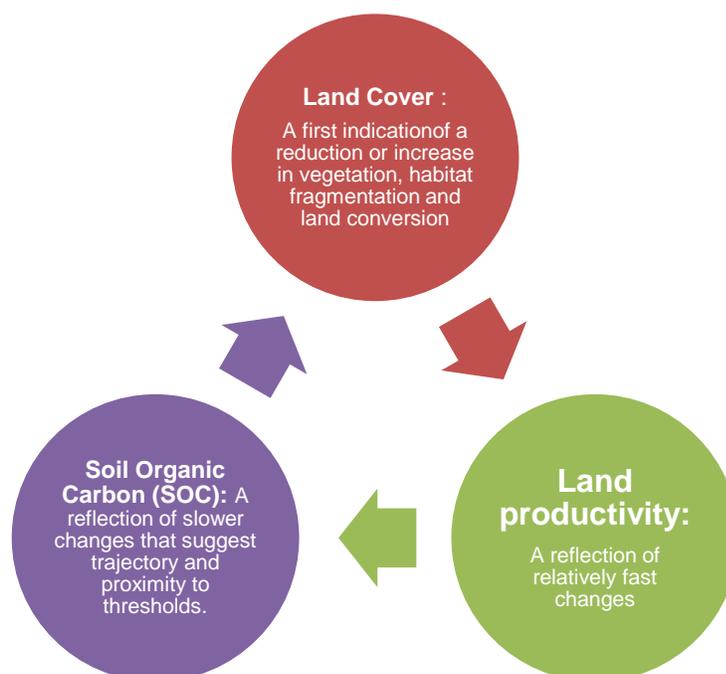
further step in achieving the construct of the Aligned NAP. The importance of action plans are increasingly important since the current pressures on land are huge and expected to increase. For instance, there is rapidly escalating competition between productive, services, other economic land uses, and the demand for land functions that provide food, water, and energy, and those services that support and regulate all life cycles on Earth.

## 6. SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL LDN BASELINE, INCLUDING THE CURRENT STATUS OF LAND DEGRADATION, BASED ON THE LDN INDICATORS FOR GUYANA

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The LDN indicators supported by the global dataset provide good coverage of the land-based ecosystem services that are used for LDN and can be used to monitor the quantity and quality of land-based natural capital and the ecosystem services that flow from that land base. In addition, the indicators address change in the system in independent yet highly relevant ways as depicted in Figure 1. The indicators that are used to measure the achievement of LDN are:-

- Land cover and land cover change
- Land productivity, and
- Carbon stocks above and below ground



## ➤ Indicator 1: Land Cover

The default Tier 1-Global data on Land Cover data for LDN target setting in Guyana was generated from the European Space Agency Climate Change Initiative Land Cover dataset.

It should be noted the following information for the land cover indicator:-

- The land cover/use change analysis was computed from the 2000-2010 time series (epochs). The 2000 year epoch was set as the baseline.
- The twenty-two original land cover classes of the FAO Land Cover Classification System were aggregated into six main land cover types listed in Table below, which are aligned with the six land-use classes recommended by the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

### Guyana's Global Land Cover Data Indication:

Data Coverage	Data Indication	Area of Change
National (Overall)Country Status	Land cover change from category I-forest to category II-shrubs, grasslands, and sparsely vegetated areas.	The estimated area of change was 6.1 sq.km (610 ha).

## ➤ Indicator 2: Land Productivity Dynamics (LPD)

Land Productivity refers to the total above-ground net primary productivity (NPP) defined as the energy fixed by plants minus their respiration (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). It is measured in tonnes of dry matter per hectare per year (tDM/ha/year). The dataset has been derived from a 15-year time series (1999 to 2013) of SPOTVegetation NDVI observations composited in 10-day intervals at a spatial resolution of 1 km. **The LPD values for Guyana showed that a total of 15% of the land is showing declining productivity, early signs of decline, or stable but stressed conditions, together estimated to be 32,411 km<sup>2</sup> (3,241,100 ha), most of which occurred in the Land Use/Cover category of forest and to a lesser extent in the category of shrubs, grasslands, and sparsely vegetated areas. A total of 84% of the land showed stable but not stressed/increasing productivity conditions. There was no data for 1% of the land.**

## ➤ Indicator 3: Soil Organic Carbon (SOC)

SOC is one of the most important constituents of soil, due to its capacity to promote plant growth, recycle nutrients to maintain soil fertility, and to clean and store freshwater whilst reducing downstream flooding and promoting dry season flows. Measured in tonnes of carbon per hectare, SOC is an indicator that is intrinsically connected to soil quality associated with nutrient cycling, water holding and its aggregate stability and structure. SOC stocks are therefore of local importance, but also

of global importance because of their role in the global carbon cycle; the SOC pool can be both a source and sink of carbon and is thus fundamental to the estimation of carbon fluxes. SOC stocks are largely influenced by anthropogenic activities such as land use change and management practices, which affect the productive potential of the soil. To obtain the change in SOC stock for use in LDN target setting, a modified Tier 1 IPCC methodology for compiling National Greenhouse Gas Inventories was employed to predict SOC trends at country level, based on land use/cover change. Such changes are combined with the SoilGrids estimate, the general bioclimatic zone, and minimal assumptions about the level of agricultural inputs in the new land use/cover, in order to make coarse estimates of SOC stock. ***Net area change for 2000-2010 and per cent loss in total soil organic carbon (SOC) stocks in Guyana was zero according to the Global dataset.***

**Table 1 Summary Matrix of Trend in LDN Indicators for Guyana**

No.	Indicator	Trend for Guyana	Reference Period	Data Source
1.	<b>Land Use /Cover</b>	Estimate area of change from category I-forest to category II-shrubs, grasslands, and sparsely vegetated areas was 6.1 sq.km (610 ha).	Years 2000-2010 (10 years baseline period)	Global data provided by UNCCD and its partners-the European Space Agency Climate Change Initiative Land Cover dataset
2.	<b>Land Productivity Dynamics (LPD)</b>	-15% of the land is showing declining productivity, early signs of decline, or stable but stressed conditions -Estimated to be 32,411 km <sup>2</sup> (3,241,100 ha), mostly in forest cover and to a lesser extent in the category of category II-shrubs - 84% of the land showed stable but not stressed/increasing productivity conditions. - No data for 1% of the land.	Years 1999 – 2013 (15 years' time series)	Global data provided by UNCCD-SPOT Vegetation NDVI observations composited in 10-day intervals at a spatial resolution of 1 km.
3.	<b>Soil Organic Carbon (SOC)</b>	Zero-Net area change and per cent loss in total soil organic carbon (SOC) stocks in Guyana was zero.	Years 2000-2010(10 years)	Global data provided by UNCCD Soil Organic Carbon SOC levels (ton/ha at 0-30 cm)

## 7. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE LDN TARGETS SET AND ASSOCIATED MEASURES IDENTIFIED:

Indicator	Measures	Area [ha]	Timeline
<b>Land Cover - Deforestation and loss of biodiversity</b>	<b><u>Measure 1:</u></b> Actions will be focused on avoidance and rehabilitation and restoration.		
	<b><u>Avoidance:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Forest Management</li> <li>• Reduced illegal logging (EUFLGT)</li> <li>• Improved regulations for land use planning</li> </ul>	<b>80,000</b>	2030
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protected Area System</li> <li>• Land use policy incorporating sustainable land management</li> </ul>	<b>2,000,000</b> (protection and conservation)	2030
	<b><u>Rehabilitation and Restoration:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mangrove (coastal)</li> </ul>	<b>200</b>	2030
<b>Land Productivity - Soil degradation erosion</b>	<b><u>Measure 2: Management to promote and improve</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable agriculture</li> <li>• Improved water management, drainage, irrigation, salt water intrusion</li> <li>• Improved land productivity</li> <li>• Sustainable land management</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Public Awareness/Communication</li> <li>• Mining hot spots</li> </ul>	500,000 ha	2030

Guyana recognizes that there are many possible mechanisms that can be adopted to protect land and the most appropriate combination will vary, depending upon the problems experienced, the direct and indirect drivers, and the extent of the degradation experienced. Land is a vital resource for the economic prosperity of Guyana. To address current and potential land degradation issues, emphasis is and will be placed on enabling sustainable agriculture, the preservation of biodiversity, facilitating the management of water systems (improved management of irrigation, drainage and

flooding), coastal protection, and enhancing forest carbon storage to combat climate change.

The targets and measures set for Guyana are in keeping with the negative trends identified in the two indicators; ***Land Use/Cover and Land productivity***. There was zero loss of Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) indicator, therefore focus will be placed on the other two which will continue to maintain the zero loss at least and improve the level of the SOC. The measures are based on the LDN timeline for achieving neutrality by 2030. They are based on the actions and initiatives that are already identified in the sectors where the trends were observed.

## **8. OUTLINE OF POLICY MEASURES TO INTEGRATE LDN INTO SELECTED NATIONAL PRIORITIES, SUCH AS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION**

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For LDN objectives to be achieved by 2030, it must be integrated into the enabling policy, legislative and institutional structure across all spheres. There must be a structural transformation for LDN to be part of the national and regional utilization of land. The health and resilience of land resources are largely determined by management practices, governance systems, and environmental changes. The transformation of natural ecosystems, the inefficient use of water resources, and the excessive use and misuse of agrochemicals contributes to land degradation at the local level as well as increase greenhouse gas emissions, reduce biodiversity, and uncongenial changes in rainfall on regional and global land scales. Land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change are now recognized as intertwined threats to multiple dimensions of human security and contribute to a downward spiral in the productivity and availability of resources.

The GLSC being the National Focal Point Agency to the UNCCD, such by virtue of this role is tasked with the coordination of obligations of the UNCCD in Guyana. However, a network of other key stakeholders drawn from ministries, agencies, civil societies and the private sector have already been engaged to steer the process. In addition to the awareness sessions held with the communities identified as hotspots. Additionally, central as well as the local Government structures must own the process.

For LDN to achieve its mandate there is need for enforcement of environmental compliance which is dependent on adequately technical capacities, monitoring infrastructure and adequately trained staff in enforcement institutions. Building a cadre of professionals in environment and natural resource management is an investment for the future that requires short and long term approaches. The Department of Environment of the Ministry of Presidency will play a key role in achieving this is through its mandate and capacity being developed along with the other focal points of the Rio Conventions.

Partnerships are critical for the success of LDN. To ensure an inclusive LDN partnership and stakeholder involvement in decision making, there is need for continuous representation from State and non-state actors (research institutions, private sector and civil society organizations, development partners). Participation of these non-state actors can be encouraged through provision of incentives to enhance investment in LDN, as well through mechanisms that provide a framework for building partnerships between these entities and the government.

## **9. FINANCING FOR ACHIVING LDN BY 2030 IN GUYANA**

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The twelve (12) months' process of setting up the National Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Process for Guyana was funded by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD. However, in order for Guyana to achieve LDN by 2030, sound environmental protection and management require sustainable financing. The national budget along with financing from donor agencies for specific projects and other intervention are the largest source of funding for protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources in Guyana. LDN must be mainstreamed in national funding mechanisms across all levels through different planning cycles. However, there are still financial limitations to achieve sound environmental stewardship. As such, there is need to complement central government's effort with private sector support and harnessing additional funding from multilateral funding mechanisms, development partners, civil society organizations but more so, innovative financing sources such as the LDN fund. Significant benefits of LDN can be realized and effectiveness increased through regional, bi-lateral and international cooperation. Guyana is a party to a number of multilateral and regional environmental agreements such as the other Guiana shield, Rio Conventions, CARICOM, and UNASAR. These agreements are important in providing a framework for conservation of shared resources between countries.

## **10. CALL TO OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, INCLUDING THE PRIVATE SECTOR, TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE COUNTRY EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE LDN**

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LDN seeks to leverage on ongoing initiatives drawn from efforts that are already mainstreamed in climate change and protection of biodiversity. A wide cross section of stakeholders' were engaged in setting up LDN TSP working groups in Guyana. LDN seeks to build further interest and integrated within the construct of the different levels of actors and influence. Effectively negotiating the sustainable use, management, and planning of land resources requires integrative systems and participatory stakeholder approaches rather than linear, sectoral isolated strategies.

LDN transformative projects could serve as a pilot to demonstrate an approach to address issues of land degradation, support to the maintenance of climate and reductions to emissions, and support for the conservation and protection of biodiversity from drivers of land degradation. The projects can benefit from opportunities to tap into private sector involvement. The private sector can offer a dynamic and efficient way to deliver and manage development agenda set by the government.

These efforts must be geared towards achieving the vision set out in the Green State Development Strategy so that future generations can gain from the benefits of sustainable, productive and economic use of the natural patrimony through resource leveraging. There are direct as well as indirect opportunities that are to be gained from the emerging oil and gas sector and its numerous scales benefits that will emerge. Guyana is at a unique juncture of its development trajectory. Catalyzing the potential benefits that will be part of this moment is utmost but at the same time care must be taken against the irrational use of the main resources when all opportunities begin. The LDN is one such measure to ensure a more secure future under the auspices of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **11. REQUEST OF GOVERNMENT HIGH-LEVEL NOTE ON MEASURES TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL LDN TARGETS:**

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The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana through the honorable Cabinet is hereby requested by the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission, the National Focal Point (NFP) Agency to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to endorse the National Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN-TSP) Report 2017-2030 for submission to Convention.