



THE GLOBAL
MECHANISM
United Nations Convention
to Combat Desertification



Convention on
Biological Diversity



BRIEFING
NOTE

LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY FOR **BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION**



Land Degradation Neutrality for Biodiversity Conservation

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Published in 2019 by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Bonn, Germany

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Contributing organizations: Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Suggested citation: Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and CBD. 2019. Land Degradation Neutrality for Biodiversity Conservation. Bonn, Germany.

This publication was made possible with the financial support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN); the Changwon Initiative of the Government of the Republic of Korea; and the Ankara Initiative of the Government of the Republic of Turkey.

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Cover photos: ©UNCCD/Salvacion Angtuaco,
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Back photo: ©Shutterstock/Quick Shot

Design and layout: QUO Global

ISBN 978-92-95117-37-2 (hard copy)

ISBN 978-92-95117-38-9 (e-copy)

This publication is available for download at
<https://www.unccd.int/publications>

LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY FOR **BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION**

KEY MESSAGES

- ② Land degradation and biodiversity loss are strongly related and are both the causes and consequences of a single environmental crisis affecting all life on land.
- ② Addressing both challenges, while also achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), demands common approaches and solutions, involving integrated policymaking and action at both global and national levels.
- ② The strong overlap between the main drivers of land degradation and biodiversity loss shows the potential for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) to address these drivers, through concerted actions to protect ecosystems, manage land sustainably and deploy nature-based solutions to address climate change.
- ② In order to increase synergies in implementation among the Rio Conventions (the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), there is great potential to align LDN targets and measures with existing and future commitments on biodiversity and climate change, so as to take advantage of the expected multiple co-benefits of these activities. Likewise, national strategies and targets that could be adopted to implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework could seek to align with existing commitments already taken by countries to achieve LDN.
- ② International agencies, national governments and donors should focus more resources on building capacities for the design and implementation of LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes that can deliver multiple objectives.
- ② The 2021-2030 UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the CBD's post-2020 global biodiversity framework provide a unique opportunity to scale up joint UNCCD and CBD implementation and make a pivotal contribution to achieving the SDGs.



INTRODUCTION

The urgency of addressing land degradation and biodiversity loss together

Land degradation and biodiversity loss are among the most pressing environmental challenges facing humanity. Land degradation has reduced the productivity of nearly one-quarter of the global land surface, impacted the wellbeing of about 3.2 billion people and cost about 10% of annual global gross domestic product in lost ecosystem services.¹ An estimated 23% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions derive from agriculture, forestry and other land uses, contributing to climate change.² Land-use change, habitat loss and fragmentation and other factors involved in land degradation processes are driving unprecedented losses in the biodiversity that underpins many of the benefits derived from nature. The average abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats has fallen by at least 20% and around 1 million species face extinction unless the pressure on nature can be reduced. Many of the global biodiversity targets set for 2020 will not be met (see also Box 1).³

Awareness of the gravity of environmental degradation and the threat it poses to the sustainability of economies and societies is on the rise. The urgency of this challenge has resulted in increasing pressure on leaders and experts to find solutions that can

yield clear immediate benefits, and which could become the foundations of a more sustainable outcome. The search for effective policy responses is supported by the rapid emergence of new scientific insights, but knowledge gaps regarding Earth's natural and human systems and their interactions still persist. At the same time, there is increasing evidence and understanding of how the causes and consequences of global warming, the degradation of ecosystems and the loss of biological diversity are tightly interwoven. Plans and actions to address them, as well as to prevent and mitigate the associated risks, must also be strongly integrated.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (collectively known as the Rio Conventions) are spearheading global environmental policymaking on land, biodiversity and climate to address the multiple challenges that countries are facing in these areas. However, effective implementation of these Conventions depends, to a large extent, on the existence and expansion of operational synergies among them.⁴ Making progress toward their mutual objectives requires integrated assessments and planning to establish priorities, maximize synergies and balance trade-offs.

Box 1: Land degradation and biodiversity in numbers^{3,5}

The wellbeing of 3.2 billion people is impacted by land degradation.

Nearly one-quarter of the global land surface has reduced productivity due to land degradation.

About 1 million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction.

At least 680 vertebrate species have gone extinct since the 16th century.

The average abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats has fallen by at least 20%, mostly since 1900.

One-third of the solution to the climate crisis can be found through restoration, conservation and other land management actions.



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The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes major environmental objectives among its 17 global goals and 169 associated targets, has underlined the complexity facing policymakers at all levels and the need to seek mutually-supporting implementation strategies that can deliver multiple benefits at scale.

Evidence of alignment in policies can be found in the targets and action plans developed by governments under the three Rio Conventions. Moreover, with the upcoming adoption of a new global framework for biodiversity under the CBD in 2020, there is now an opportunity to more closely align and integrate strategies for biodiversity conservation, Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and climate change.⁶ Building on the outcomes of the LDN target setting process, this paper shows how the voluntary targets that countries have adopted in pursuit of LDN and the global biodiversity goals of the CBD mutually support efforts to protect land, its rich biodiversity and the many goods and services that land provides.

Land Degradation Neutrality

In 2015, the UNCCD adopted SDG Target 15.3 and the goal of LDN⁷ (see Box 2 for a full definition) as a strong vehicle to drive implementation of the Convention and accelerate the achievement of multiple SDGs, including those related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and biodiversity conservation.

To make LDN a reality, the UNCCD developed a scientific conceptual framework, technical guidance and practical tools to help countries to assess the current state of their land and the drivers of degradation. Through the LDN Target Setting Programme,⁸ the Global Mechanism and the secretariat of the UNCCD, in collaboration with 18 international partners, assist countries to set LDN targets and associated measures, and to move toward LDN through policy integration and investment in transformative projects and programmes. As of September 2019, 122 countries have committed to this voluntary process, and more than 80 have already set LDN targets,⁹ signaling a strong political commitment to LDN and sending a message to the international community on the relevance of LDN.

Box 2: What is Land Degradation Neutrality?

The UNCCD defines Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) 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*”.

LDN is an integral part of SDG 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.

LDN encourages countries to adopt a broad range of measures to avoid or reduce land degradation through appropriate planning, regulation and sustainable land management practices, combined with localized action to reverse past degradation, through land restoration and rehabilitation, to achieve a state of no net loss of healthy and productive land.

ANALYSIS OF LDN TARGETS AND MEASURES IN RELATION TO BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

According to a recent landmark assessment,¹⁰ the most significant drivers of the decline in global biodiversity are changes in land and sea use, the direct exploitation of organisms and climate change. By addressing land-use change and the sustainable management of natural resources as well as building resilience against the impacts of a changing climate, LDN contributes directly to combating all three drivers.

This support for biodiversity conservation can be illustrated in more detail by comparing the overall objectives of LDN with those of the CBD; assessing the LDN targets set by countries against the CBD's Aichi Biodiversity Targets (ABTs) and how these are being operationalized through the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs); and by looking at how LDN implementation plans of particular countries also advance biodiversity goals.

The UNCCD recently submitted to the CBD a “proposal on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework,” which highlighted the potential for LDN targets and measures to contribute to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The submission also outlined how area-based targets could be incorporated into the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and could support the implementation pathways of the CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC.¹¹

Mutual objectives

The CBD has three fundamental objectives:¹²

- the conservation of biological diversity,
- the sustainable use of its components, and
- the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

The scientific conceptual framework that underpins LDN¹³ lists five objectives, with three of them being particularly supportive of those of the CBD. These relevant LDN objectives seek to:

- maintain or improve the sustainable delivery of ecosystem services,
- seek synergies with other social, economic and environmental objectives, and
- reinforce responsible and inclusive governance of land.

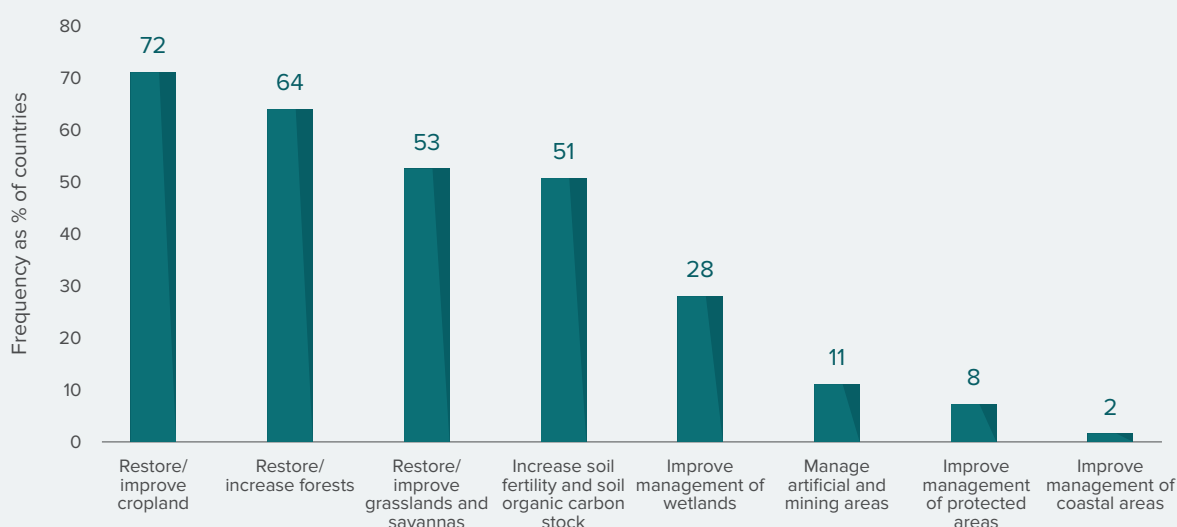
Maintaining or improving the sustainable delivery of ecosystem services encourages countries to manage and use land resources in ways that sustain or enhance the health of both natural and human-influenced ecosystems. This strongly implies the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity, thus aligning with the second objective of the CBD. Similarly, many elements of biodiversity – for example, birds and insects that pollinate crops, and micro-fauna that maintain soil quality – are of fundamental importance to the delivery of ecosystem services, such as the supply of food and materials. Thus, many measures taken to achieve LDN could also support the first CBD objective of conserving biodiversity.

The third CBD objective on benefit-sharing is not addressed directly by the three LDN objectives. However, the principles of fairness and equity are strongly implied by the LDN goal of responsible and inclusive governance. The LDN framework indirectly supports all the aims of the CBD through its promotion of synergies with other social, economic and environmental objectives.



Figure 1

Frequency of LDN targets by target group for all LDN-reporting countries as of November 2018.



Source: LDN target setting country reports

Compatible targets

The synergies between efforts to combat land degradation and conserve biodiversity become more concrete when looking at the LDN targets adopted by countries alongside the ABTs, which represent the conservation priorities of the international community.

The LDN targets can be divided into eight main groups (see Figure 1). The dominance of targets related to the protection and restoration of forests and agricultural land reflects their prominence in the countries' analyses of the drivers of land degradation during the LDN target setting process.¹⁴

The ABTs are at the heart of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. In 2018, Parties to the CBD adopted a comprehensive and participatory process¹⁵ for the development of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted in 2020. Initial government submissions indicate support for reinforcing synergies within the United Nations system and between biodiversity-related agreements, including with the UNCCD. There is also support for using the ABTs as a starting point for discussing future targets.¹⁶ Thus, it is likely that integrated policymaking will become more relevant than ever, particularly in the context of the recently declared 2021-2030 UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

The ABTs are grouped under five Strategic Goals. All of the Goals and Targets can be advanced by

measures undertaken in pursuit of LDN. For example, under Strategic Goal A, which is to mainstream biodiversity across government and society, ABT 1 aims to raise awareness of the values of biodiversity. This target could well be promoted by LDN projects that include awareness-raising around sustainable agriculture and forestry. Similarly, 8% of countries that have made commitments to LDN also indicated that they plan to improve the management of protected areas, an objective which would directly contribute to the achievement of effective conservation of terrestrial areas under ABT 11 (part of Strategic Goal C).

Strategic Goal E to enhance implementation includes, under ABT 20, the mobilization of financial resources. This objective can be furthered through the integrated planning characteristic of the growing number of LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes, some of which are highlighted in this report.

The potential synergies appear strongest under Strategic Goal B ("Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use"), Strategic Goal C ("Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity") and Strategic Goal D ("Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services"). Figure 2 shows the ABTs most directly supported by the most common LDN targets set by countries so far.

Figure 2 Biodiversity goals and targets directly supported by LDN targets

Strategic Goal B: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use



Target 5

By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.



Target 7

By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.

Strategic Goal C: Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity



Target 11

By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially 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, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.

Strategic Goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services



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, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.



Target 15

By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.

Underlining the commonalities between the two initiatives, Figure 3 shows how the main groups of LDN targets support the selected biodiversity targets. Dark green shading indicates where an LDN target may strongly support a biodiversity target, while lighter green suggests a less direct but still significant support. The overlap between the two sets of targets shows that there is wide scope for measures taken in pursuit of LDN to contribute tangibly to the achievement of global biodiversity targets. However, the exact nature of that contribution will depend on the design and

implementation of LDN targets and measures adopted by each country. The positive contributions of LDN implementation for biodiversity conservation will vary among countries depending on their specific contexts. External factors, including the impact of global environmental change, could also influence their effectiveness. The potential gains for countries that, for example, promote integrated land-use planning are clear. How that potential can be realized is demonstrated in the next section with selected examples of good practice.

Figure 3 Main groups of LDN targets supporting relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets

LDN targets	Aichi Biodiversity Targets				
	ABT 5 Slow natural habitat loss/ degradation	ABT 7 Ensure sustainable land management	ABT 11 Protected areas and area-based conservation	ABT 14 Safeguard ecosystem services	ABT 15 Combat/ adapt to climate change
Restore/increase forests	●	●	●	●	●
Restore/improve cropland	●	●	●	●	●
Restore/improve grasslands/savannas	●	●	●	●	●
Improve management of wetlands	●	●	●	●	●
Increase soil fertility and soil organic carbon stock	○	●	○	●	●
Manage artificial areas and mining	●	●	●	●	●
Improve management of protected areas	●	●	●	●	●
Improve management of coastal areas	●	○	●	●	○

● LDN target may strongly support ABT
 ● LDN target may support ABT less directly, but still significant support
 ○ No significant support of ABT

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

The Philippines: implementing the Rio Conventions together

The Philippines has detailed how it intends to integrate its commitments under all three Rio Conventions with its national development strategies, especially those addressing agriculture, natural resource management and climate.¹⁷ The country has drawn on its action plans for biodiversity conservation and climate change to set its LDN targets and measures. It intends to take that process a step further by using an integrated approach to tap into the financial support needed to advance all of these goals simultaneously.

Among its national LDN targets, the Philippines aims to prevent and reverse conversion and degradation in forests, shrublands/grasslands, wetlands and croplands, covering 6.2 million ha by 2030. This will contribute directly to the biodiversity goals of slowing the loss of natural habitat and extending sustainable land management to protect ecosystem services. Moreover, the Philippines intends to achieve these targets by implementing three strategic programmes: the action plans developed under both the CBD and the UNCCD, as well as a plan for climate-resilient forest development.

In its NBSAP, the Philippines has set 20 national targets for 2028, including several that directly support the goals of LDN. These include halting the net loss of natural forest cover, restoring 1 million ha of degraded ecosystems and enhancing the delivery of ecosystem services from key biodiversity areas.¹⁸

At the sub-national level, the country has an LDN target of strengthening “consensus-based stewardship of protected areas and ancestral domains” and aims to mobilize stakeholders to address degradation and move those areas toward LDN. This target also has the potential to improve the ecological status of protected areas and Indigenous Community Conservation Areas in the Philippines, thus furthering biodiversity objectives.

Benin: building LDN around a biosphere reserve

A new transboundary biosphere reserve protecting some 345,000 ha of degradation-threatened land is at the heart of Benin’s plans to achieve LDN. The reserve is a result of Benin’s stated goal of creating coherent policies for the environment and sustainable development, and exploiting the synergies this approach provides.¹⁹



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The establishment of the Mono Transboundary Biosphere Reserve is part of Benin's response to the rapid conversion of forests, savannas and wetlands to agricultural land and urban areas. The reserve lies in one of the five degradation 'hot spots' identified during the LDN target setting process.

The delta of the Mono River, which marks the boundary between Benin and Togo, is home to endangered flora and fauna as well as about 2 million people. Unsustainable farming, fishing and tree harvesting are placing both wildlife and human livelihoods at risk.

The UNESCO-recognized reserve includes a mosaic of landscapes including forest, savanna, lagoon and mangrove. It has designated 'core areas' of nearly 15,000 ha and another 43,000 ha of designated 'buffer areas' to protect the region's rich biodiversity, which includes animals such as hippos, manatees and red-bellied monkeys. With support from partners, including the German government, projects are helping to ensure that the biodiversity and ecosystem services secured by the reserve support the livelihoods of the people living there.

At the national level, Benin's LDN targets are aligned with the ABTs and the Ramsar Convention on Wetland Conservation, as well as its commitments under the Paris Agreement.

In its LDN target setting report, the country outlines its aim of slashing the steep 21% fall in forest and savanna cover recorded between 1990 and 2010 to 5% between 2010 and 2030. The residual decline will be offset by reforestation and new plantations. The

country also aims to halve the extent of forests with declining productivity and to improve productivity across more than 2.4 million ha of farmland. In addition, the country wants to halt the conversion of wetlands to other land uses altogether.

These aims dovetail with those it has pursued under the CBD. For example, under its NBSAP, Benin has been pursuing a 20% reduction in the rate of deforestation by 2020, an expansion of its forests and protected areas, and wider use by farmers of integrated soil fertility management techniques.²⁰

Chile: reforestation with native species

Chile is pursuing LDN with a focus on biodiversity-friendly native tree species and improving the management of livestock grazing near protected areas.²¹

The South American country is targeting 140,000 ha for replanting and afforestation by 2025. Actions to increase forest cover will be carried out using primarily native species. As well as delivering multiple valuable ecosystem services (Chile's LDN report emphasizes provisioning, regulation and cultural services), native trees typically support more biodiversity than exotic species.

Another ecological restoration programme targeting 20,000 ha aims for the restoration and sustainable use of forests and other native plant formations that have suffered degradation. Chile also plans to ecologically restore 10,000 ha affected by forest fires.

Another of Chile's nine "action measures" to achieve LDN is establishing buffer zones for livestock production. The objective is to minimize the impact of livestock on land that is valuable for conservation or as a carbon sink. For this, Chile is considering an assistance programme for landowners whose land is adjacent to protected areas, including biosphere reserves. The target is to design and implement buffer zones totalling 800 ha.

Some of these measures match well with activities included in Chile's NBSAP, such as the promotion of good practices in productive activities that impact native species and the quality of their habitats.²²

They also reflect some of the country's commitments to combat climate change, including the reforestation of 100,000 ha, and afforestation of a similar area of degraded land, mostly with native tree species, in order to sequester more greenhouse gases.

Chile also aims to protect its stocks of native trees by establishing programmes for the control and prevention of forest pests, with an emphasis on native resources. The target consists of surveying and monitoring plant resources across 300,000 ha.

Moldova: biodiversity-friendly green infrastructure

With a population of 3.6 million people, Moldova estimates economic losses from land degradation at around US\$251 million a year. Land degradation has intensified in the country since land reforms in the 1990s and the subsequent introduction of unsustainable farming methods; the country suffers from soil and water erosion that have reduced the soil organic carbon content of its agricultural lands.

Moldova's LDN targets and measures therefore focus on conserving and improving the fertility of its soils, by expanding forests and establishing greenbelts and buffer strips. These measures will provide added benefits in other areas. For instance, the green infrastructure foreseen for its degraded agricultural lands will directly favour biodiversity conservation.²³

Forest cover in Moldova is 13.7%, currently the lowest in Europe, but the country aims to increase that figure to 15%, which will support achievement of LDN by 2030.

Some of this new tree cover will be in the form of greenbelts to protect soil and water around farmlands and natural areas. Moldova also intends to use greenbelts to link fragmented areas of remaining forests, which would improve habitat fragmentation and provide migratory corridors for wildlife, as well as food and shelter for endangered species.

Moldova aims to complement the expansion of greenbelts with the planting or regeneration of farmland buffer strips covering 28,000 to 30,000 ha, or 3.5% of all agricultural land. These buffer strips – which can include non-cultivated field margins, hedgerows, shelterbelts

and riparian zones – can protect soils from both wind and water erosion and improve nutrient recycling. They are also often reservoirs of biodiversity, including beneficial insects, in intensively farmed landscapes.

Namibia and Jamaica: transformative projects addressing degradation and biodiversity loss together

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) supports a growing number of multifocal area projects designed to maximize benefits and minimize trade-offs in the pursuit of multiple environmental and social goals. The most common combination of focal areas in these projects is for land degradation and conserving biodiversity,²⁴ demonstrating an important path for countries seeking to achieve LDN through transformative projects and programmes.

In Namibia, the GEF has approved the concept for a project that aims to strengthen institutional coordination and governance for an integrated landscape management approach. The project includes the explicit goal of helping Namibia achieve the targets it has set under all three Rio Conventions. These include LDN targets on improving cropland productivity, reducing bush encroachment and restoring forest land. They also include Namibia's NBSAP goals to minimize the loss of natural habitat, and promote sustainable farming and forest and rangeland management.

The project calls for the implementation of integrated landscape management in five forested areas of about 20,000 ha each, with benefits for both livelihoods and biodiversity. Regional land-use plans will help create zoned areas for uses that will contribute to various national targets. The project includes the designation of new regional forest reserves and community forests, as well as the restoration of degraded forests.

In another example of a multifocal area project, the GEF has approved the concept for a project using an integrated landscape approach to conserve biodiversity and reduce land degradation in Jamaica.

This project will implement measures to strengthen governance and land-use planning to improve the management of about 55,000 ha, including Jamaica's three Key Biodiversity Areas. Its aims include reducing soil erosion and native forest loss, and increasing protection for dozens of threatened species.

The project supports Jamaica's LDN target of enhancing ecosystem resilience through the conservation and restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems. It will also help strengthen capacity for the implementation of LDN.

The project also includes the development of decision-making tools for land-use planning, including spatial mapping and economic valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services. It would be supported by a multi-institutional information management and monitoring system.



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CONCLUSIONS

The concept and approaches associated with LDN are powerful tools for policymakers addressing the urgent and inseparable challenges of land degradation and biodiversity loss. By helping to secure food and water supplies for both human populations and nature, and increasing the stock of carbon above and below ground, LDN is vital to protecting, conserving and enriching biodiversity and the ecosystem services derived from it.

The affinity between LDN and biodiversity conservation is evident from a comparison of the overall objectives of LDN and the CBD. Both aim to halt the loss of natural ecosystems, especially forests, and further the sustainable management of our limited natural capital. Each strives to ensure that local communities, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, have fair access to natural resources and a strong say in how they are managed.

The ways in which the two Conventions are being turned into action further underline the synergies between them. An analysis of the voluntary LDN targets that countries around the world have set and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the CBD show significant areas of complementarity. Progress on

the goals set under one of the Conventions will contribute to the success of the other – an invitation to doing more integrated work, from policy planning to technical implementation.

Action to achieve LDN and biodiversity conservation goals is increasing. The number of countries that have committed to the LDN process has passed 120. Governments are negotiating a new framework for biodiversity conservation that should be agreed in 2020. Many of the measures now being rolled out under the LDN process will help stop and reverse land degradation as well as help conserve biodiversity. This can be seen in the good practice examples from a range of countries.

To make progress with the pace and scale required to address the multiple environmental challenges and avert their combined threat to life, these measures must be urgently ramped up to fully exploit the synergies and efficiencies they provide. To do so will require drastically increased national and international awareness, commitment and investment, from both the public and private sectors, to protect and promote the sustainable use of our limited land resources.





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RECOMMENDATIONS

- ④ Parties to international agreements, including the UNCCD and the CBD, should develop their instruments, objectives and programmes in ways that recognize and take advantage of the many co-benefits and synergies highlighted in this paper. Doing so will facilitate reaching ambitious global goals and tackling urgent environmental challenges such as land degradation and the loss of biodiversity, in a more effective and impactful manner.

- ④ As the process of defining the post-2020 global biodiversity framework moves forward, country Parties should recognize and harness the potential that LDN and area-based targets offer to address the priorities of both the CBD and the UNCCD in an effective, complementary and mutually supporting manner.

- ④ International organizations should strengthen the technical and capacity-building support provided to governments and other LDN stakeholders. This will help maintain the strong momentum created by LDN to date and optimize its contributions to biodiversity conservation goals.

- ④ Governments should continue to strengthen coordination among ministries and departments with areas of authority relevant to LDN and biodiversity. This will help ensure that policies and strategies build on the synergies and savings available through integrated planning and prioritize prevention as the most cost-effective way of addressing land degradation and biodiversity loss.

- ④ Financial support for governance and capacity building should be used to enhance the ability of countries to craft policies and programmes for LDN, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and other national priorities that have wide stakeholder support and promote integrated planning and action.

- ④ LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes should be designed and implemented in ways that contribute to LDN and biodiversity goals as well as multiple SDGs, involve all relevant stakeholders, consider gender issues, and reflect a balance between the different social, economic and environmental priorities and interests at stake.^{25,26} Significant financial support should be directed for this purpose, and the 2021-2030 UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration represents a unique opportunity to mobilize the resources needed.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ IPBES. 2018. Summary for policymakers of the assessment report on land degradation and restoration of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. R. Scholes et al. (eds.). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. 44pp.
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- ⁴ Decision 3/COP.14 invited “Parties, that have committed to voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, to implement measures to accelerate their achievement, as appropriate, by...[fostering] synergies among the Rio conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements, including the consideration of joint programming activities at the national and sub-national level”. Full text available at <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/sessions/documents/2019-10/cop23add1%20-%20advance.pdf>
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- ⁸ <https://www.unccd.int/actions/ldn-target-setting-programme>
- ⁹ <https://knowledge.unccd.int/home/country-information/countries-with-voluntary-ldn-targets>
- ¹⁰ IPBES, 2019. Ibid. p.1
- ¹¹ The full proposal is available at: <https://www.cbd.int/api/v2013/documents/6E70A3E5-6477-6E6E-E8A1-0DCEF9D8D1E4/attachments/UNCCD.pdf>
- ¹² The articles of the Convention can be viewed on the CBD website <https://www.cbd.int/>. Its objectives are in Article 1.
- ¹³ Orr, B.J. et al. 2017. Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality. A Report of the Science-Policy Interface. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Bonn, Germany. Details of the three LDN objectives are outlined on pp. 33-34.
- ¹⁴ UNCCD, 2019. Technical Review of the LDN TSP Country Reports: Data Analysis. Unpublished.
- ¹⁵ Decision 14/34 of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Available at <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-34-en.pdf>
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- ¹⁷ https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/ldn_targets/Philippines%20LDN%20TSP%20Country%20Report.pdf
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www.unccd.int/about-us/global-mechanism

ISBN 978-92-95117-37-2 (hard copy)

ISBN 978-92-95117-38-9 (e-copy)

