



## **Additional note to the German National Report to UNCCD regarding the voluntary reporting on the implementation of Strategic Objective 1 (Land Degradation Neutrality) in Germany**

In this National Report 2018, Germany is not able to report to UNCCD on SDG-Indicator 15.3.1. The main reasons for this are currently insufficient data, a lack of national assessment criteria of land cover change as well as the not yet finalized consultation on the development of an indicator on soil quality for the National Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Before releasing individual characteristics of land degradation, Germany deems it necessary to ensure their classification into an overall arithmetic system (according to Figure 1 in the metadata prescription on SDG indicator 15.3.1, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-15-03-01.pdf>). The Federal Statistical Office has not set up a national ecosystem account yet, as numerous debates are still ongoing at the international level regarding definitions, distinctions and classifications as well as potential data sources.

According to the Agenda 2030 (UN resolution 70/1) the reporting on SDG indicators shall be based preferably on national data. Depending on the objective, Germany has different national data sources. Existing data sets provide only partial aspects of the phenomenon of land degradation so far, such as:

- The Thünen Institute (German Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries):
  - o The National Forest Inventory delivers information about forests from periodic samples.
  - o With regard to the sub-indicator soil organic carbon, extensive sample results on the status of agricultural soils will be available at the end of 2018 within the framework of the First Soil Condition Survey in Agriculture (BZE-LW). The survey will presumably take place every ten years.
  - o Information regarding the status of forests already exists from the First Forest Soil Condition Survey 1987-1993 and its follow up 2006-2008.
- For national climate reporting purposes, Germany uses a close grid of samples on land use change as basis for modelling THG-emissions. This grid is harmonized with the National Forest Inventory and uses its forest information as well as data on soil organic carbon from the Forest Soil Condition Survey.
- German Federal Statistical Office:
  - o The land survey of the Federal Statistical Office provides quantitative statements on land cover. However, time comparisons are not possible without restriction, especially due to changes in the national cadaster information system in 2016.
  - o Agricultural statistics (e.g. Agricultural Census, Agricultural Structure Survey) include further information on land management
- The structural data on organic farming by the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) include data on organically cultivated area.



- The official statistics of the German Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (Main Survey on Land Use) provides regular data on agricultural land use and production on district level.
- The Soil Overview Map (BÜK 1:200.000) allows for a nationally consistent display of soil types / soil associations.
- The Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG) provides data on land cover from the Digital Land Cover Model for Germany, which serves for correction, control and validation purposes in the context of national climate reporting on LULUCF.
- Remote sensing data (radar as well as optical data) of Sentinel and Landsat satellites or of other optical sensors like RapidEye or SPOT are publically available.
- Information on the trend of changes in soil (pollutants, soil organic carbon, soil biology) can be obtained through the system of Continuous Soil Monitoring Plots, which are run by the federal states. Pursuant to §19 of the Federal Soil Protection Act (BBodSchG), this data is merged by the Federal Environment Agency (UBA). The Soil Condition Survey provides further area-representative data on changes.
- The EDAPHOBASE (Database on Distribution and Ecology of Soil Animals, Senckenberg Museum Görlitz) contains data on soil zoology and site-specific characteristics.

### LDN-relevant processes in Germany

Even though Germany does not report on LDN in 2018, there are still LDN-relevant processes and data on partial aspects in Germany (see statements above). The following section describes the national efforts of deriving a national indicator as well as environmentally relevant legal framework conditions.

#### A. German National Strategy for Sustainable Development (DNS)

- With the publication of the DNS in January 2017, the German government adopted its decision to monitor soil quality through the development of a perspective indicator. In line with the interministerial consultation between BMEL and BMU, such an indicator is expected to be available by 2020. The indicator shall be derived from existing data sources, preferably from an overall processing system, be regularly available, comprehensive and reproducible.
- Moreover, the DNS contains further LDN-relevant targets, which are measured by specific indicators and reported in the context of the regular updates of the DNS. They include:
  - % of agricultural areas under organic farming until 2030 (indicator 2.1.b),
  - reduction of soil sealing for settlement and infrastructure to less than 30ha/day until 2030 (indicator 11.1.a),
  - compliance with threshold of 50mg/l nitrate in groundwater at all measuring points (indicator 6.1.b),
  - reduction of the nitrogen surpluses of the overall balance to 70 kg/ha of agricultural land per year (indicator 2.1.a), and
  - reduction in area of increased nitrogen input by 35 % until 2030 compared to 2005 (indicator 15.2)



## B. Legal environmental framework

- Federal Soil Protection Act (BBodSchG), Federal Soil Protection and Contaminated Sites Ordinance (BBodSchV)
- Soil protection requirements in other areas of law (construction law, legislation on the use of fertilizers, pesticide legislation, waste legislation)
- Implementation of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) through regulations in the BImSchG regarding the initial state report and the obligation to restore
- Intervention provision according to §§13ff of the Federal Act for the Protection of Nature (BNatSchG), including the requirement of avoidance and the obligation for compensation
- Obligation for compensation within the framework of land-use planning
- Environmental impact assessment pursuant to the environmental impacts assessment act (UVPG)
- Regulations concerning the necessity of a planning permission with regard to infrastructure measures (duty of consideration of soil concerns)
- National regulations regarding the implementation of the Water Framework Directive as well as the Fauna and Flora Directive (FFH)
- Cross-compliance obligations as well as greening requirements according to EU common agricultural policy
- Instruments of overall planning (spatial planning regulations by the national government and the federal states)
- Forest laws by the national government and the federal states