



WORKSHOP REPORT

LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY TARGET SETTING – FOLLOW-UP AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PILOT COUNTRIES

Nairobi, Kenya, 15 October 2016



November 2016



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

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1. Introduction

In 2014/15, the UNCCD carried out the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) pilot project, which assisted 14 affected country Parties¹ in the formulation of possible LDN national targets based on the indicator framework adopted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

In follow-up to the decisions taken by the 12th session of the UNCCD Conference of Parties (COP 12), the UNCCD Secretariat and Global Mechanism, with support of international partners, launched the LDN Target Setting Programme (LDN TSP). Building on the LDN Pilot Project, the Programme aims at enabling country Parties to define national LDN baselines, set voluntary LDN targets and identify associated measures to achieve them.

Following the interest expressed by the 14 pilot countries to participate in the LDN TSP, a workshop for UNCCD National Focal Points from these countries was held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 15 October 2015. The workshop was organized by the Global Mechanism and the Secretariat of the UNCCD with support of other partners, and was held back to back with the 15th session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 15).

The event brought together 25 participants including UNCCD National Focal Points from 13 countries, the UNCCD Secretariat/Global Mechanism representatives and international partners (see Annex 1 for the list of participants).

2. Workshop objectives and format

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Provide participants with an update about LDN and the LDN TSP;
- Take stock of the LDN process in the 14 pilot countries; and
- Identify required action to complete the LDN target setting process in the pilot countries.

During the workshop, country representatives had the opportunity to discuss the lessons learned and the achievements of the pilot project, and familiarize themselves with the most significant developments since the pilot project in the methodological and operational approaches related to the target setting process.

¹Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Bhutan, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Grenada, Indonesia, Italy, Namibia, Senegal and Turkey.

After two brief presentations from UNCCD staff on the LDN TSP as well as on lessons learned, achievements and recommendations derived from the pilot project, the workshop developed as an interactive discussion among participants on priorities and needs for support to move ahead with the LDN target setting process.

3. Workshop outcomes

LDN TSP building blocks: Participants familiarized themselves with the concept of the four building blocks for the LDN target setting process, i.e. i) leveraging LDN, ii) Assessing LDN; iii) Setting LDN targets and associated measures; and iv) Achieving LDN. They welcomed the further development of the LDN target setting conceptual framework, which drew on the pilot countries' experience, such as:

- a more precise and standardized step-by-step approach to LDN target setting;
- better default databases and soil organic carbon (SOC) trends values available;
- strengthened partnerships with data providers; and
- greater attention to the involvement of the higher political level in LDN vision and target setting.

Furthermore, participants noted that the inclusion of LDN in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has created momentum for bold action and long-term engagement on LDN at the highest political level nationally and internationally.

Status of LDN target setting in countries: Participants in general confirmed that the LDN baseline established, the voluntary LDN targets set and the hotspots selected during the pilot project remain valid starting points for the LDN target setting process, and will be refined as capacities increase. They also confirmed that the corrective measures identified to counteract the negative trends of land degradation detailed in their country reports² are still relevant and that some have started to be implemented, using domestic resources or international support.

Participants agreed that although some needs and priorities are common to all the pilot countries, country-tailored follow-up activities and support should also be considered.

² See <http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/RioConventions/RioPlus20/Pages/LDN-Project-Country-Reports.aspx>

Agreed priorities for future action

As a result of the discussion on priorities and needs expressed by countries at the workshop, participants identified the following nine priority areas for further action:

1. Priority to facilitate action in hotspots

This includes the implementation of concrete activities in geographic areas that were identified during the pilot phase as hotspots and that can help demonstrate the significance of the LDN concept to a wide range of stakeholders and ensure continued mobilization of local, national and international stakeholders.

2. Continuity and enhancement of LDN data support

This includes the provision of updated and upgraded data on the three biophysical indicators³ as well as assistance for improving national data sets at higher resolution for mountainous countries and small islands states as well as for hotspots. Furthermore, this includes strengthening national monitoring systems and national capacities for LDN data processing and monitoring.

3. Development of investment project proposals

This includes the formulation of investment project proposals in geographic areas identified during the pilot as relevant and a priori feasible for ambitious LDN action as part of the plan to achieve the LDN targets set, and strengthening capacities for the formulation of investment projects

4. Strengthening of private sector engagement in LDN

This requires the elaboration of specific messages on economic cost of land degradation as well as opportunities for profitable investment and economic diversification including green job creation, taking into account the *Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*, endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security.

5. Ensure the integration of LDN in financing mechanisms such as Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Global Environment Facility (GEF 6 and GEF 7)

This includes tapping in GCF and GEF opportunities for funding in support to policies, measures and investments in LDN, as well as positioning LDN in the criteria for GEF7 resource allocation through close link between UNCCD and GEF national focal points and relevant international partners.

³ Land cover, land productivity, SOC.

6. Integration of LDN in national SDG and climate change processes

This includes an active participation of UNCCD National Focal Points and stakeholders involved in the national LDN process in national SDG working groups and further integration of LDN targets into inter alia the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

7. Ensure that national development plans are conducive to LDN

This includes the integration of LDN in UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAPs) and relevant national development strategies, programmes and budgets, including national land use management plans.

8. Need to improve knowledge sharing on LDN target setting and implementation

This includes the development and active use of a user-friendly and agile platform that eases the exchange of experience and LDN related knowledge, focusing on concrete issues, within the LDN community of practices, including participating countries as well as for external communication and advocacy purposes. If possible, the platform should be integrated in existing knowledge platforms such as the UNCCD knowledge hub.

9. Need to strengthen national LDN coordination working groups

This includes ensuring the enlargement of the LDN working groups or national consultation platforms to ensure their continuity and include stakeholders not yet participating, as well as decentralization mechanisms that ensure the participation of sub-national governments and local land users communities.

4. Annexes

Annex I

List of participants

	Country/Organization
1.	Algeria
2.	Armenia
3.	Belarus
4.	Bhutan
5.	Chad
6.	Costa Rica
7.	Ethiopia
8.	Grenada
9.	Indonesia
10.	Italy
11.	Namibia
12.	Senegal
13.	Turkey
14.	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
15.	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
16.	United Nations Convention to Combat desertification(UNCCD) Secretariat/Global Mechanism

Workshop Terms of Reference and Agenda

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

WORKSHOP

**LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY TARGET SETTING – FOLLOW-UP AND
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PILOT COUNTRIES**

Nairobi, Kenya

15 October 2016

Background:

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, and soil organic carbon stocks, which 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;
- Land Degradation Neutrality (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”;
- Parties are invited to “formulate 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 the decisions above, the Global Mechanism and the Secretariat of the UNCCD have jointly established a global programme in support of National Voluntary Target Setting for LDN. The main objective of the “LDN Target Setting Programme” (LDN-TSP) is to enable country Parties to define national baselines and to identify targets and measures to achieve LDN by 2030.

The LDN TSP builds on the experience gained during the LDN Pilot project, which was coordinated by the Secretariat in 2014-2015. The LDN pilot project assisted 14 affected country Parties⁴ that agreed to implement an LDN approach in (a) testing the indicators framework adopted by the COP, in particular the use of a core set of progress indicators for monitoring LDN; (b) the formulation of possible LDN national targets based on the aforementioned indicators, and (c) their integration into the NAPs and any other relevant national strategy to combat land degradation. Information on the implementation of the LDN pilot project was reported to Parties at CRIC 14.⁵

This workshop is for the UNCCD focal points of country Parties that participated in the LDN pilot project, and international partners.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the workshop are:

- Provide participants with an update about LDN and the LDN TSP;
- Take stock of the LDN process in the 14 pilot countries; and
- Identify required action to complete the LDN target setting process in the pilot countries.

Participants:

- UNCCD National focal points from the LDN pilot countries;
- International partners;
- UNCCD Secretariat/GM.

Venue:

The workshop will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, on 15 Oct 2016, at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), Kenya, at the following address:

United Nations Avenue, Gigiri PO Box 67578, Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: (+ 254 20) 7621234

⁴Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Bhutan, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Grenada, Indonesia, Italy, Namibia, Senegal and Turkey. National reports available:
<www.unccd.int/en/programmes/RioConventions/RioPlus20/Pages/LDN-Project-Country-Reports.aspx>.

⁵ICCD/CRIC(14)/4, entitled “Formulation, revision and implementation of action programmes in view of the post-2015 development agenda” and ICCD/COP(12)/CST/3-ICCD/CRIC(14)/7, entitled “Refinement of the UNCCD monitoring and evaluation framework in view of the post-2015 development agenda: strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3”.

AGENDA

Time	Session
08:00	Registration
09:00 - 9:30	<p>Opening Welcome by the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD</p> <p>Presentation of participants and expression of expectations for the workshop</p> <p>Objectives of the meeting,</p>
9:30 - 10:30	<p>Context</p> <p>Presentation of the UNCCD Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme</p> <p>Where do we stand after the Pilot Project? Lessons learned and achievements</p> <p>Open discussion</p>
	Coffee break
11:00 - 12:00	<p>The way forward</p> <p>Building Block 2. Assessing LDN</p> <p>Building Block 3. Setting Targets and associated measures</p>
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch break
13:00 - 15:30	<p>The way forward</p> <p>Building Block 1. Leveraging LDN</p> <p>Building Block 4. Achieving LDN</p>
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 - 17:00	<p>The way forward</p> <p>Leveraging LDN: Discussion on the LDN target setting at CRIC 15</p>
17:00	Closing of the Workshop